

Arizona Ministry Builds 74 One-Day Churches and Baptizes 186 in Africa

By Phil Draper

Living Waters International, an Arizona ministry based in Payson, has been quite busy in Kenya over the past year. Teaming up with Maranatha Volunteers International, ASI and the East African Union, Living Waters has erected 74 of the One-Day Churches in the Central Kenya Conference and the Kenya Lake Conference. The locations of the churches ranged from the Kibera slums in Nairobi, to the bush of Nyanza providence, to the islands of Lake Victoria.

Joby Oft, son of Living Waters founder Daryl Oft, spent six months erecting buildings that are now providing places of worship, schools and medical clinics for more than 15,000 people. Traveling across Kenya, he lived and worked with the Kenyan people to start this work. Four Kenyan men were trained to work with impact drivers, squares and a variety of tools to provide the steel frame and roof



Daryl and Mary Jo Oft direct Living Waters International from their home in Payson, Arizona.

building. The completion of the walls is the responsibility of the local congregations of which many choose brick, reed, metal siding or just open ventilation.

The buildings were provided to congregations that had no church structures and met under a tree, or their current structure was condemned, or the current building was much too small to hold the number of people meeting there. In most cases, the size of the congregations has doubled since receiving the new structures.

“The thing that amazed me and I did not expect,” reports Joby Oft, “was that many of the churches were used seven days a week for schools, nurseries and a place for medical services to be provided. It isn’t just a church, it is a place for community activities during the week.”

Five of the structures were ferried in canoes across large bodies of water to two islands in Lake Victoria. Then all of the materials were hand-carried up steep mountain trails as much as two miles inland where some of the churches now stand.

He continues, “The work was grueling, but in the end all of the construction team was very satisfied to have a part in providing a place of worship for so many.”

Stories of miracles abound and God provided His hand of safety to the crew. On April 28, Daryl Oft and his son Justin returned to Kenya to erect 37 more churches in the Kenya Coast Field. This is a particularly challenging location as the majority of 75 to 95 percent are Muslim.

Maranatha reports that 1650 One-Day Churches have been erected in 22 countries worldwide. Living Waters has built just fewer than five percent of those churches and continues to increase that number. East African Union has requested

Not only a church, these buildings are often used for schools, nurseries and medical services during the week.





Builder Joby Oft stands with church members who look forward to worshipping in the newly constructed One Day Church.



Brick walls were erected to enhance the One-Day Church overlooking Lake Victoria.

“It isn’t just a church, it is a place for community activities during the week.”

one container for each of their eight conferences. With 37 churches per container that would equal 296 additional places to worship and serve God in Kenya.

Living Waters also takes a part in filling the churches. In February 2011, four members of the Payson church and a family member from Oregon traveled to Kenya and held two concurrent evangelistic campaigns. The fishing villages of Litare and Lwanda, both in Kenya Lake Conference, had two weeks of meetings which resulted in 186 baptisms in Lake Victoria.

Husband and wife teams of Russ and Sharon Judd and Daryl and Mary Jo Oft directed the campaigns. Daryl Oft’s sister, Twyla McKinney, provided children’s meetings and health talks and many Kenyan nationals assisted to make the meetings a success. Many nights the average attendance at each site was over 1000. The meetings were held outside with cattle, goats and

pigs walking through the meeting sites.

All of those baptized were provided with Bibles which often became their most prized possession. Although everyone requested Bibles, they had to be limited to just those who were baptized. The funding for the Bibles came from the Payson SDA church.

Besides the joy of so many giving their hearts to Christ was the collateral benefits. The Litare village councilor reported to Sharon Judd and her team, “The late night drinking in the village has stopped

because of your meetings. And where our men were hardly catching any fish at all, now their nets are overflowing!”

Living Waters operates a feeding center in Kaswanga, Kenya that provides weekday meals, school uniforms and medical care to 135 orphan children. There are six full-time staff employed by Living Waters to manage and operate the center and provide security and gardening in the two-acre garden. 28 of the children attending the feeding center have been baptized.

Living Waters is also the major sponsor to Kaswanga SDA Academy where 56 students attend grades 1-4. While the team was in Kenya they erected the steel frame and roof for the new school.

To learn more about the Living Waters International ministry, please go to www.LivingWatersIntl.org or contact Daryl Oft at 928-978-3899.



A feeding center is operated by Living Waters for 135 orphan children in Kenya.