

REFLECTIONS OF KENYA by Karen Fesperman

How we got here: Over 20 years ago, DCPC was asked to help a fellow Presbyterian Church in Kenya solve a problem. Working together, we would build a school to serve orphans and the most impoverished families in the Sigona community. For two decades, this ministry has fed and educated hundreds of children, preparing them for a more hopeful future. As partners with Sigona Presbyterian Church and Sigona Presbyterian Academy, we support one another through prayer, planning, discussion, financial support, time and talents.

Goals of this trip: Our visits to Kenya and their visits to Davidson, (switching every other year) allow us to see and understand the day to day lives of our siblings in Christ. These trips are packed with the exchange of ideas, strategic plans for the school, love, laughter and support. In 2023, we specifically met to discuss the extension of our partnership agreement and construction plans for a new kitchen, dining room and classroom.

What were your impressions of our work in Kenya

The school is thriving. It provides employment to a staff of 16, feeds and educates over 140 students and provides uniforms/clothes to those who can't afford them – and operates with a balanced budget. I was amazed at what DCPC's financial support can accomplish there. And the touching part: every student, teacher and church member KNOWS us by name – they pray for DCPC and graciously (lovingly) give thanks for us...as their siblings in Christ. My hope is that all members of DCPC can reciprocate this awareness and love for them.

Why did you choose to go?

Initially, it was out of obligation - I thought it would be "good" for me to go since I was chair of the global mission committee, and I wanted to prove to myself that I could travel that far and get out of my comfort zone. When other DCPC members who have visited the school encouraged me to go, I didn't get the full impact of what it was going to be. It was more (MORE) than I ever imagined.

What one or two top things did you learn from the trip?:

Their hospitality, food, traditions, conversations and their amazing prayers (long & thoughtful...off the cuff) were lessons for me.

Anything you want the congregation to know?

Visitors from Kenya are coming to DCPC in 2024. I hope many people get involved in planning our hospitality for them. DCPC will also be helping fund the construction of the new Kitchen. My hope is that we can find a way to help them go ahead and build the dining room at the same time (rather than delay construction of that phase for years in the future.)

(PHOTOS ON PAGE 2)



Current Kitchen & dining room. A 3-story addition will replace this structure (1st floor – Kitchen; 2nd floor – dining room; and 3rd floor – classrooms)



Dining room currently used on rotation for each class.



Eddah cooks on an open fire to prepare breakfast, tea and lunch for 150+ students and staff.