

# Janene's Journaling

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The time since our last newsletter has found us very busy. We have traveled and become acquainted with some new people and enjoyed making some new friends. We traveled by car to Mombasa to minister in a small town called Mariakani. The people here think it is strange that David chooses to travel by car when we go a long distance. He is a good driver and has gotten use to the way they drive here so it doesn't bother him to travel long distances in the back country of Kenya. It can be dangerous if you get caught out after dark but we always plan our trips to be where we need to be way before it starts to get dark. We found Mombasa to be much hotter than Nairobi and very much more humid. We were supposed to stay in a guest house but it proved to be full and since David had told them we didn't need air conditioning, just a fan, they put us up with a family whose sons were away at school. There was no air conditioning and also no running water. Imagine spending a week with no water in the house except what was brought in by way of 5 gallon containers. You couldn't take showers or flush the commode, which we were just thankful to have in the house. It was very hot and reminded us of an East Tennessee heat wave. The family plus another lady from the church fed us and cared for us very well even down to washing some of our clothes for us while we were there. Jullianne and I enjoyed getting to know the ladies and had some really great fellowship over the small charcoal stoves they cook on. By the end of our week there we had learned how to grate coconut their way but need a strange tool. We learned how to make some new dishes and also learned that they use a lot of coconut milk and coconut to flavor several of their dishes there. I guess you learn to use what is easily available wherever you live.

David taught leadership and on a couple of days I stayed at the home where we were and visited with the ladies and went to the market. Markets here are very similar but the things they sell can vary depending on what is locally grown. I saw less of a variety of vegetables there but there was still a good amount. I bought some different wrap around skirts but not much else there. One afternoon they took us to the bush for David to speak at a small church. We traveled over very dry, dusty terrain and over dry creek beds before we reached the church. We were welcomed and then the children sang for us and gave us such a warm and heartfelt welcome I couldn't help but feel it was the best welcome we have received since coming to Kenya. They really outdid themselves in the music and the things they spoke for us. We had a bag of candy in our car so we got it out to share with the children. We try to keep a supply handy for such times as that. Children everywhere love candy. They call it sweets here. I loved being at this small mud and rock church where they really loved the Lord and you could feel it in the way they sang and worshiped.

David and I taught our first marriage seminar together in Mombasa. To be married 35 years is a big deal here and to only have one wife is strange to them as well. We talked a lot about husband-wife relationship and what God thinks is important. Women here are not well thought of and in a lot of instances they are considered property so we tried to get them to see God's plan for the wife to be a helper to the husband and not to be trampled on under his feet. We also talked about keeping marriage strong and the rewards of building a strong marriage for future generations. They really seemed to like what we talked about and we wished we had more time to teach because there was so much more we could have done had we had the opportunity. They have said they would like for us to return and teach a larger group next time.

After our week in Mariakani, we spent our last day in Mombasa at a hotel with air conditioning and shower and also sightseeing. We went to the beach there but there were so many hawkers and they wouldn't leave us alone so it wasn't fun to go to the beach. We did see a camel and wanted to take a ride but it was late evening so we decided we might be able to do it later but never got the chance. We visited the area around Fort Jesus and took a tour of Old Mombasa where we saw many Muslims and shopped for some things to take back to the US. We ate the best potato chips we have had since coming here outside of the fort. The man was making them on the street there and they were the thinnest chips and were wonderful. If we had known how great they were going to be we might have bought more bags of them. Chips here are called crisps and French fries are called chips so we are forever getting them mixed up when we talk about them.

In Malindi, we stayed at a resort and spent a wonderful relaxing week visiting the beach and just relaxing. We didn't have anything we had to do and so we went to the beach in the mornings and then laid around, read and

played many games of Scrabble. Jullianne and I had some tummy troubles there so didn't feel the greatest but we still had a wonderful week. We rode horseback on the beach one morning and I enjoyed seeing the ocean and watching the birds from the back of a horse. David was going to have us ride for two hours but we ended up doing it for one. By the time we got home we were thrilled for only one hour. The resort offered a seafood night and since we hadn't had any since we arrived we decided to try it. We were the only ones that took the resort up on the meal so we had a wonderful dinner with a beautiful view and American dance music from the 60's just the three of us. It was like we had the resort to ourselves for the course of the dinner.

When we arrived back home we discovered that David's grandmother was near death and Jullianne and I felt that David should return to the US to be with her and his mother. So we spent our first day back getting him ready to leave and making sure everything was going to be prepared for us to spend two weeks by ourselves in Nairobi. I can't help but feel God was preparing us to have this time by sending us friends from America because it sure made us feel more secure having them close by. We have also met another couple who live upstairs in the Brickman's apartment building. They are from Texas and run a conference center here. We actually got to go to a leadership conference the first week David was gone and heard some wonderful speakers from the US. Jullianne and I also helped out in a bookstore they run which gives the pastor's Bibles, reference material, teaching tapes and inspirational books, all free of charge. Jullianne also got the opportunity to spend three days with some Teens from Texas that were here doing mission work. She was thrilled and it was sure a blessing for her to have that time with them.

The second week David was gone our computer decided to crash and we thought we had lost everything. For several days we were without any way of talking to David or even anyone in the US. It sure felt lonesome and we felt so cut off from our family back home. We knew when David was to return but not anything else and it was so wonderful when he called us and told us everything we needed to know. Some friends that live close to the airport volunteered to pick him up and then we invited them to spend the night here rather than go back to their home as David's flight came in rather late. It was wonderful to have him home and also wonderful to have all of the things from America we have been missing. After he had been home a few days we had an American party and invited friends, most of who were from America. We ate nachos and hot wings with ingredients that David had brought back. We had a really great time and enjoyed the food so much.

Easter here was as different for us as Christmas had been. I have always made our children an Easter basket with candy and an Easter gift. Well I had a basket I could use for Jullianne but the Easter grass was a different story. If I thought Christmas decorations were sparse you should have seen Easter. There was absolutely nothing in the store! I ended up buying three shades of purple crape paper and cutting it in strips to make grass for Jullianne's basket. I knew that at Christmas there was one store that had Christmas candy, mainly candy canes, so I asked David to take me there to see if they might have Easter candy. We managed to find some although expensive and got her some. We also found her a gift so we managed to have some semblance of tradition. We had lunch with the Brickman's and Matheny's, who have become our Kenyan family. We also managed to color brown eggs with food coloring that was powdered. The children at the church didn't know what the colored eggs were and asked us if they could eat them. We shared the Bible story of Jesus death and resurrection and then gave them an egg to symbolize the new life in Christ. They loved getting the egg but weren't sure what to do with it at first. Needless to say another holiday has come and gone and we are learning how to cope in a land that is so totally different than our beloved America.

We have been here 8 ½ months and in some ways the time has gone fast and then in other ways it is sooooo slow, especially when we think of missing our family. David's going home was a blessing in that we got pictures and video of them but it also made Jullianne and I very jealous that he got to see them and hold Malachi before we did. I think in some ways it has also made us more homesick and more anxious to go home in September. We are settling here and things aren't so strange and hard to deal with as at first. I don't cry when I go grocery shopping anymore and I can go to the market by myself and ride the bus without fear. There are still things that are unsettling but God has been so good to us and shows us many times that he is in control and taking great care of us. Thank you for your prayers and please keep us there as there are still challenges we need to work through and some things only God can show us how to deal with. Good bye, until the next letter.