

# GOSPEL FIRE NEWS



Big challenges

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Reports from SIM 2018

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The gospel for the Toposa!

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“My hands have made both heaven and earth, they and everything in them are mine. I, the Lord, have spoken!

I will bless those who have humble and contrite hearts, who tremble at my word.”

Isaiah 66:2; Hope for all



## Football fever and gospel joy in Lokichar

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Dear reader,

The topic of “mission” has always been a controversial topic: many feel that missionary work is completely unnecessary and there are always voices that say that missionaries are destroying the culture. During our many travels across Europe, America and even Africa, I’ve been talking to people who lump missionaries in with colonialists. With the rise of atheism, secularism and agnosticism, these misconceptions are becoming more and more popular in our time. The reality, however, looks very different!

Interesting at the beginning of the 19th century, the driving force for sailing around the globe was not just for exploration purposes, but, evangelizing the lost. Eventually, the gospel became the catalyst for a remarkable missionary work - in word and in deed.

Those 19th century missionaries followed the command of Jesus, and were shocked to discover all the horrors of untamed paganism. Peter Hammond writes in his book “The Greatest Century of Missions”: “The early missionaries encountered dire poverty, as well as recurrent famines and invincible diseases.

Cannibalism, ritual abuse, patricide, human sacrifice, sexual perversity, tyranny, patriarchal exploitation, burial of the living, tribal wars and genocide prevailed.”

But the message of the cross, Christ as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world and HIS victory over death, proved to be a liberating message! What the missionaries have achieved despite all the external challenges is very commendable. The average 19th century missionary survived only 8 years on the mission field ...

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# Football fever and gospel joy!

## Evangelism in Lokichar



Everyone came to the football tournament to watch the games and listen to our message.

**H**ow can you reach the young people in the semi-desert? Through football! Many young Turkanas had come to Lokichar because of job offers through newly discovered oil deposits. We wanted to capitalise on this and focus on the youth. What better way to attract a large crowd of youth than a football tournament? The whole city came together to be part of the games organized by Jonas Walliser, which were modelled after the European standard tournaments.

Football matches were hosted every morning while seminars for leaders and Sunday school teachers took place next door. Allowing us to reach a large

number of people with the good news. During the tournament breaks we had a great program with dances, musical performances, and short messages. With a special thanks to our great "Service in Mission" (SIM) team, who were able to bring a large amount of energy to the event.

In the afternoon we continued with a colourful children's program, lots of music, a powerful message and, of course, prayer for people who wanted to get their life in order with God. God was wonderfully present and powerful with many clear decisions to follow Jesus for the first time.

The unity of the pastors in particular touched us as we have experienced this kind of co-operation in very few places. Maybe that's why the miracles were possible ... But despite this blessing we also had a number of big challenges that we had to go through. (see report on page 3).

### Powerful healing in Lokichar

Many people were able to experience God's healing power: Violin Ekeno, an 11-year-old girl suffered from severe sore throat for four years. When she woke up one day, it seemed as if an invisible hand was choking her neck. Her mother took her to several hospitals, but the doctors could not find anything out of the ordinary. They even visited several witch doctors who were unable to help. During our gatherings God touched Violin! She was able to swallow pain free and the sense of suffocation was gone. She praised God for this miracle!



The joy of winning the football was great



Old and young have met God

### Foreword Continued...

On my travels through South Sudan I have seen the graves of former Servants of God who worked in Yambio in the 1930s. These men and women lived only a year or two before being carried away by disease. I also had the great privilege of meeting missionaries from the last generation who were real role models for me. I saw in them endurance and a deep desire for the will of God. They had all given up so much to ensure no one would get lost. I firmly believe that the gospel was and always will be the best way to connect with the human heart. Even in our evangelism celebrations and peace conferences, the good news of salvation is still changing hearts and lives and giving people a better perspective on life. After such a great legacy of God's servants, such as David Livingston, William Carrey, Mary Slessor, Robert Morrison, Adoniram Judson, Paul Keller, Heinz Battermann, Martin Franz and thousands of others, I am proud to be called a missionary. Today, our world has become a global village. Things have changed, but the message of God's love remains the same. God loves you.

- Peter Franz

Five-year-old Eric Ichumar was unable to stand because his legs were extremely weak. He could only crawl on his hands and knees. On the last day of the evangelization, the boy received his healing. His mother was overjoyed and so grateful to God. Eric could not only stand, but even be led by the hand. He began stomping, jumping and even dancing in front of the entire crowd. Thank God!



Eric is overjoyed! He can finally stand!

# Testimonials from the technical team



God made possible the repair of the truck and a scheduled start



The gospel is powerfully transmitted

**W**hen big victories are imminent there are usually some difficulties on the way. So it was in Lokichar. The journal of our technical employee David Mwangi reports:

## 9. August 2018

5:00 pm - Before we set off for the big meeting in Lokichar, we started the truck one last time, just to make sure everything was working fine. We were shocked to discover that the brake control valve had broken and the truck could not move, even though everything was working fine in the morning.

10:45 pm - The problem is finally resolved and I went home to rest after a long days work.

## 10. August

7:20 am - We were all set to go. We prayed together as a team. Then off we went. After 10 hours of driving, we were almost there with only 30 kilometres remaining. When suddenly the truck came to a stop. Our propshaft was worn through. The police told us that this is a very dangerous place where many raids happen. It would be best you leave the truck here and leave for your own safety. It was already dark. So we tried desperately tow the truck with the Land Cruiser. Unbelievably it worked! Someone must have helped!

11:30 pm - We found a safe place on the side of the road, parked our cars and tried to sleep on the roof of the truck. It was a bitterly cold night.

## 11. August

6:00 am - I lay down under the truck and began to remove the propshaft. It could not be repaired.

10:00 am - Departure with the Land Cruiser back the 350 kilometres towards Eldoret to find a spare propshaft. One of the staff stayed behind to keep an eye on the truck.

4:00 pm - Arrived in Eldoret. Searched for the part everywhere, unsuccessful.

6:30 pm - At GFI Base with Peter and Becky, we discussed what to do. We will have to go five hours down to Nairobi to look for the spare part there.

## 12. August

8:45 am - Arrived in Nairobi as a team of three people, we split up to search everywhere for the part. Again no success. The search continues outside Nairobi. But nowhere is there a propshaft for our "Magirus Deutz".

5:00 pm - I met a man who referred me to a man who might have this model of the propshaft... Since I could not reach him, we had to stay overnight in Nairobi.

## 13 August

6:00 am - Getting up and trying again to reach the person by phone - unfortunately unsuccessfully.

11:00 am - Finally reached Mr. Muri! I went home with him to check out the part. I called Jackson and Stephan, my fellow workers, but they could not locate me as the place was very difficult to find.

1:00 pm - The owner had the correct part but he did not want to sell it. Finally, Jackson and Stephan arrived. Together, we negotiated with the owner.

3:00 pm - After a going back and forth, he was then ready to sell the part, for 1200 euros!!! We needed it urgently because our truck was the main stage for the large meetings that were about to take place. The next challenge was how to get the money? Becky was able to send the money in parts over mPesa (Kenyan phone money transfer). So we were able to buy the part.

10:00 pm - Arrival in Eldoret and drive straight on to Kalimorok, where our truck was still standing.

## 14th of August

3:15 am - Arrive at our truck in Kalimorok and immediately installed the new part. Truck started. Everything was alright again! Continued on to Lokichar

4:30 am - Arrive in Lokichar. Started with the set up of the sound system, as we were now three days late. Everything had to be set up by the evening.

1:00 pm - Finally breakfast, then back to setting up 3 days work to do in one day.

4:00 pm - Lunch.

6:00 pm - Sound test and praise God, it all worked !!!

## 15th of August

The meetings kicked off as planned. And everyone gathered had no idea how close a call we had just had! That is a miracle of God!

At GFI we have really dedicated employees. Who would give anything, suffer no food, comfort, and no sleep to reach the people with the Gospel of Jesus.

A big thanks to our employees!



# Experience God's work live

## Testimonials from the SIM team



SIM getting fully involved!



This year's SIM team (Jan, Lukas, Martin, Silvia, Steffi, Jessie, Andrea, Natalie, Priscilla, Josh & Valor.)

### Priscilla:

My dream has long been to travel to Africa. But what I experienced with SIM has far exceeded my expectations. I was allowed to experience God in a new way, seeing how he still does miracles today, how he heals people and how he holds everything in his hand and carries us. In addition, the encounters with the people in Turkana were very enriching and encouraging for me. We were received with so much love. The joy these people have, even though they have very little materially, has once again directed my gaze to what truly matters in life: God's love for us!

### Natalie:

Joy in life, gratitude, generosity and hospitality - this and so much more I have learned from the people of Kenya. Through their love and open nature they have enriched my life unbelievably in the short three weeks of the SIM. As well as the people it was also amazing to see the landscape and wildlife of Kenya. I am incredibly thankful to God for a wonderful time, big and small miracles, as well as a great sense of community.

### Sylvia reports:

The time with the SIM in Kenya was thoroughly amazing. Kenya is not a new country to me because I was born there. Nevertheless, I was able to discover so many new things. What struck me most was that the people of Turkana have shown a heart for prayer. Every morning at 6 o'clock we had early prayer for the meetings, which took place that week. Everyone who was there prayed. It was not just pure presence, but encountering God. I was allowed to experience, that one may worship God with all their emotions and with their whole body. There was such a freedom to stand before God. In the evening events, we experienced miracles, just like in the Bible:

The lame walk and the blind could see! On a Sunday, some of our team to preached in different churches. In one church, I noticed that God was really present in this little parish hall. The pastor gave his testimony and worshiped God after the sermon. I really had to cry because I was so touched by God that he found this home in the middle of the desert. Here, where people have nothing, God has abundantly gifted them with faith, faithfulness, and joy.

I'm really so thankful that I was able to experience all these things within a secure framework of the SIM family.



SIM in a Turkana village



Painting a local primary school



Dancing with the Turkanas.



Doing a variety of activities with the children at a local school.



# Finally the gospel for the Toposa!

## Our plans for Naliel in South Sudan



The Toposa live similar to the Turkanas in the semi-desert

Several years ago, I had the opportunity to fly over the region of South Sudan where the Toposa live. As far as my eye could see, I saw thousands of small villages. The Toposa still live today as the Turkanas before over 50 years ago. They speak the same language as the Turkanas. This was a region where many have never heard of Jesus! Naliel, the village we have chosen to start with, is about 700 km from the town of Eldoret. Although the Joshua project claims that this tribe is already reached with the gospel, local information shows otherwise. Our missionary Rev Mark Keter has been working in Lotimor on the Ethiopian border for twelve years. He often travelled back and forth on this route and told us that you could drive over 250 km on this road and not find a single church. Something has to be done!

### Our plans and strategies

**Phase 1 (February - March 2018):** Preparation for long term work in Naliel.

**Phase 2 (April - June 2018):** Return to Naliel for an intense time of getting to know each other, learning the language and building relationships with the Toposa tribal people.

**Phase 3 (July - September 2018):** Construction of mission houses and preparation for the arrival of families.

**Phase 4 (October - December 2018):** Continue to work on the "base", settle in with families and develop strategies for how and where communities can be established.

**Phase 5 (from 2019):** Work continues at a high level. Mission candidates from Turkana, Kenya are accepted for start-up work.



One of the newly formed small groups



Showing the Jesus movie



Challenges on the way



Three of our four missionaries

### Our goal:

- Establish 100 churches in five years,
- Establish lasting community development.
- Establishment of a training centre for the indigenous population to systematically open communities.
- School development: there are no schools in this region. This gives the missionaries a great opportunity to begin school foundations to enable the children to attend school.
- Each missionary will have his family with them on the field. Most are already experienced in missionary work.
- Inform and help the supporting churches to mobilize other Kenyan nationals for the foreign missions.- Have a holistic approach, to meet the physical and spiritual needs of the people.

### Current status

After just three months in Naliel, 17 'Fireplaces Fellowships' have been established. People gather around the fire, sing the newly learned songs, talk about the Jesus movie, and study the Bible to grow in faith. Mark Keter is currently on site working on the fencing of the property and the construction of a well. The next step is to build small houses. Donations are still urgently needed. The whole project will cost about 30,000 euros.



Another small group in deep conversation

**THANK YOU!**

See page 6 to find out how you can give.



## Family News

It was a great privilege to have our whole family together here with us this July and we as Grandma and Grandpa could fully enjoy the time with our grandchildren! Meanwhile Miriana, Simon and Deren are back in Germany. Deren will be studying at the Theological Seminary (ETS) starting in September. Jessie and Josh are staying here with us in Kenya. They have settled in well and are a great asset to the whole team.

## Germany with Eunice

During our trip to Germany we had a great travel service with Eunice Njeri, our praise singer from Kenya. The highlight of our service was the "Africa Festival" in Freudenstadt, where Eunice could sing and testify for an hour on the main stage. Through our booth on the market square we could have some good talks and the Sunday morning church service in the Kurhaus was very well attended. We have organized this service together with the Volkermission and the church of God. How nice when churches together want to reach their city with the clear message of Jesus. May many listeners re-think about a relationship with God!

## Benja's recovery is progressing

We are so thankful for the good progress Benja has made with his injury. He has recovered well from the operation. We were able to visit him as a family and had a little celebration together. Many thanks to everyone who helped pay for his big hospital bill!



(from left to right) Becki with Benja, Miriana with Simon and Lukas, Josh and Jessi with Valour

## Please pray with us:

- Construction of the Sudan Base, the construction of the well (the only water supply). Also the payment of the outstanding costs. The budget is 30,000 euros.
- We need prayer and wisdom about what to do with our old Land Cruiser. There are always major repairs, because he is now 25 years old. The many miles that it has driven is now becoming very clear.
- The twins of our deceased chef are now ready to go to university for the second year. We are very proud of them for mastering your studies so well. The total cost for the second year is 1,200 euros. Please pray that the money comes together for them.
- Pray for Josh and Jessie and their little Valour that they settle in well.

THANK YOU  
FOR YOUR  
HELP

## Events

- 21 - 22 September, in Volksmission Freudenstadt Germany
- 24 - 27 September, GFI booth at the BFP conference Germany
- 29 - 30 September, Bramsche Germany
- 12 - 24 October, Madrid, Ministry service and World Missions Congress
- 02 - 04 November, Free Christian Community Zwickau Germany
- 11 November, Christian Center Weinstadt Germany
- 19 - 27 November, Preparation for evangelism in northern Uganda
- 28 - 2 December, Evangelisation in Ojugis, Kenya

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0722492202  
PAYBILL NO. 516600

**GFI USA:**  
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