

# Narok Rooted in Jesus Conferences, April 2010

Covenant Church International, Kenya

Team : Canon Michael Samuel, Erasto Mollel, Geoff Stokes, Rev Amanda Johnson (team leader)

- *Michael* is the full time RinJ coordinator for the diocese of Kiteto, and has also been on teams to Zambia and Tanzania; he has a wealth of experience of RinJ and is our most experienced coordinator.
- *Erasto* is also a RinJ group leader, was a member of the team to Narok last year and so knows the situation and the people; and is a Masai so is working with his own people group.
- *Amanda* has been on RinJ teams to Zambia and Congo and is an experienced team leader.
- *Geoff* is one of the original writers of RinJ, a teacher, lay reader and experienced small group leader, and has been on many RinJ teams.

Amanda with Ben ole Kikoi & Michael



*This was a second conference to Narok, working this time with two different dioceses within this widely spread Masai denomination. The 2008 team led by Alison Morgan had introduced the programme to church leaders in 2 other regions of Maasailand. The previous conferences had been received well, but as a result of the drought the time and focus of the Maasai farmers has been on trying to save animals and to meet the needs of their tribes as a result of high animal loss; and although some groups (including one in the prison) have gone very well, others have by necessity made a slow start. David Kereto, the General Secretary of the Covenant Church International, decided that the best way forward was to run a second series of introductory conferences for leaders from two new areas: 'I want us to target Church leaders in our Conferences that will help the ROOTED IN JESUS to spread faster in our Maasai Churches.' The plan is that all these leaders will come together for a subsequent, followup conference perhaps in 2011.*

Ben ole Kikoi who attended the previous course is the Coordinator of the Rotian diocese as well as Coordinator of the RinJ programme overall. David Kereto had written to to all the churches in these 2 regions and invited the 5 officials from each church to come to the conference.

5th-7 <sup>th</sup> April	Rotian Diocese (1 <sup>st</sup> Conference)
8th - 10th April	Ntulele Diocese (2nd Conference )

## Conference 1 : Rotian

Held in a beautiful setting on a ridge surrounded by the rolling red earthed hills providing fertile soil for wheat and maize. We eventually had 28 attendees; a good split of men and women, many delayed in their arrival time due to their need to care for their animals before leaving home.



**The worship** was humble and meaningful. There was a great sense of the spirit. There was often stillness and the ability to listen was good. These church leaders were mature. Everything went very smoothly on this conference, once we had established the shortened timetable.

**Workshops** : all went well, many very much on the ball and anticipated what was being said and asked, joining in with confidence.

**Ministry** : On day 2: time to receive from God. Prayed in threes in the morning, and deep peace of God around us. Both Judith who was looking after us at the office and Erasto said independently of one another that the Maasai have a very deep heart in worship. Later in the day we prayed for them as they came forward and they all came.

**Future:** Ben and Mike met to plan implementation, and they then met with the local coordinators. After we commissioned everyone they all immediately went to their coordinators to meet with him or her. I saw that as a very positive step of the local people taking responsibility for this course and for their people and area.



One of the area coordinators William said how the Spirit had deeply moved them. He said the Maasai never cry but that he had not stopped crying all conference. He was a wise and mature man and I respected his enthusiasm and encouragement.

## Conference 2 : Ntulele

Setting was rural but right on the edge of a market town with buses running in and out. Much easier to get to. William ( another William) was the coordinator for this region or diocese. He was a good administrator and got things done quietly.

**Timing :** We ran into the same timing issues, but we managed to start by 10 am each day and usually had 96 people there by mid morning. 16 churches sending 5 leaders each!

**Ministry :** This was very moving as the very elderly amongst the delegates come forward for prayer and very quietly opened their hearts to the Spirit and wept gently. Again their deep heart was evident. There was much encouragement shared. It was much more obvious that men and women are separate in the church in this region. They ate and sat quite separately.



**Women :** In addition to our timetabled programme I gave a talk on Women and God, which was attended by mostly men! They had been asking about women leading groups so this was timely. However the women who were there were seen to be studying the references given and wanted to discuss this further on their women's conference being held two weeks hence. Ruth a social worker in this region and the most articulate took my notes to give the talk again more widely.

**Future:** Ben arranged a followup meeting for May 25<sup>th</sup> for all the coordinators.

## Summary

This was a neat 10 day mission. It is a privilege to work with our brothers and sisters in Africa and to learn from them. We saw God at work in engaging with people and in the way the conferences came together practically. Our team had just the right gifts and experience to cope. We prayed together each morning and evening and shared together and prayed for one another before during and at the end of our time. The intercessors' words and pictures were a huge encouragement and matched what we were facing on the ground each day. Clemency (the RinJ intercessions coordinator) was really on the ball and a real strength to me. David needs our prayers as he comes under a lot of pressure as he is a human force to be reckoned with. Ben needs our prayers as he acts as RinJ coordinator. I will be very interested to hear how he gets on. I am very aware of flooding now in Kenya and wonder just how this is affecting the set up of courses. RinJ has so much to offer. I pray there is much fruit in Maasailand.



Erasto Mollel