

- Kilifi Baptist Association -

Christian Leaders Training College Project

March 2012 Update



Some of the Association gathered for teaching during our recent visit to the Kilifi District in Kenya. They all walked or rode bicycles to attend and were most eager to learn.

*A project of the
Northern Rivers Baptist Association*

In July/August last year (2011) Pastor Graham Eggins and Cliff Stone, both from the Ballina Baptist Church visited Mount Meru University, Arusha, Tanzania and Kilifi, near Mombasa on the coast of Kenya. They were invited by Rev Joseph Kahindi who had visited Northern Rivers Baptist Association Churches in May 2010, to visit and see the work God was doing in Africa. During their visit to Africa they saw some amazing spiritual vitality amongst the local people and identified a key strategic project in Kilifi, Kenya which is worthy of support.



Pastor Stephen Charo (Left) and Rev Joseph Kahindi (Right)

Southern Baptist missionaries came to the Kilifi District bringing the Christian Gospel with them. In 1974 Joseph was one of the early converts. He subsequently studied to be a pastor at the International Baptist Theological Seminary of East Africa (now Mount Meru University) at Arusha, Tanzania. Upon graduation he came back as a

home missionary and planted the first Baptist Church in Kilifi (1982) and became the first secretary of the Kilifi Baptist Association which now has over 150 member Baptist churches. Graham and Cliff also met Pastor Stephen Charo who has been the President of the Kilifi Baptist Association for the last 18 years. He is a fine man of God.



Kilifi Baptist Church - the first Baptist Church in Kilifi that Joseph supervised the building of in 1985-86

Baptists have been reaching out to the poor. Virtually everybody walks to church along the dusty roads. Some ride bicycles. Most pastors have had no or very little formal training. Pastor Stephen Charo (who supports himself through teaching and some preaching) helps provide training for many pastors and emerging leaders through monthly meetings at the very modest Association Headquarters located at the Kilifi Baptist Church originally planted by Joseph.

Only a few are able to go away to Mount Meru University and train to be a pastor as it costs about \$3,000 (to cover tuition, accommodation and food costs) for the 2 year Diploma of Theology Course. Most cannot afford it.



Dera Baptist Church where Pastor Stephen Charo is presently pastor with traditional mud and stick walls and thatched roof

The opportunity has come up for them to purchase the Southern Baptist missionary house in Kilifi, as the Southern Baptist Missions Board has a policy of focusing now more on unreached people groups. They are using funds gained from the sale of mission houses all over the world to fund this new emphasis. Joseph, who is now Deputy Vice Chancellor at Mount Meru University and Stephen have a vision to develop a local Christian Leaders Training College and

feeder campus for Mount Meru University at Kilifi to train local pastors and leaders and this mission house would be ideal. They have no financial capacity to purchase the house/property. Graham and Cliff are currently raising funds through the NRBA to purchase the property for the Kilifi Baptist Association for that project.



The Southern Baptist Mission House at Kilifi for sale.

This mission property has a 3 bedroom western style dwelling (149m²) with detached storehouse (36m²) with two rooms and a servant quarters (32m²) with two rooms, toilet and kitchenette on 2.05 acres (0.8301 hectares) with two freehold titles. The property is located about half a kilometre from the Indian Ocean.

We believe that to secure this property for the Kilifi Baptist Association to establish a centre for the training of pastors and church leaders would be an extremely worthwhile and strategic boost to the Gospel mission in Kenya. Costs to sustain, train and send

missionaries from Australia to Africa are huge and when they get there they then have to further learn language and culture. Furthermore, costs for local pastors to travel to Mount Meru University (interstate) to train are prohibitive. When there are so many willing and able national Christians in the churches who are eager to learn and who can then naturally relate to locals, it makes strategic sense to provide a good local training and resource centre. Negotiations have been underway since last October with Global Properties and the Southern Baptist International Mission Board. Local fundraising has also begun. An offer has been made and accepted for 9,000,000 Kenyan Shillings (approximately \$100,000 depending on exchange rates). By March 2012 commitments of approximately \$30,000 have been received and a commitment for an interest free loan for the remainder. So we need to raise this \$70,000 plus a further estimated \$10,000 for legals and other costs.



The back of the house showing the storage and servant quarters

