

# MCDONALD FAMILY

KENYA, EAST AFRICA

October 2024

Dear Pastor and Praying Friends,

After four long years of praying and searching, God has allowed us to lease our own church property! The details behind funding the property and finally making it ours are nothing short of a miracle. We are now located right on main-street Ruaka! As many of you know, we started to look for a place to lease over two years ago, but we found that no one seemed to want to rent to a church. Most of our inquiries were a bit far from the town center because of available space and high prices.

Around February of this year, we found a three-bedroom house sitting on one-eighth of an acre right on the main road. The realtor connected us to the property manager, who showed me the property. The location and price seemed unreal. After viewing it, I inquired with the realtor about leasing the property, telling her we were a church. She communicated with the owner, and we were told she said no. She would not allow a church, a school, or a pub to lease the property—and she had offers for all three.

We requested a meeting with the owner, but the realtor did not deliver. A couple of months passed, and we prayed for God's direction. We kept coming back to that property, which was still available. After many attempts to talk to the owner, I reached out to the property manager, as I still had his number in my phone history. He readily gave me the owner's phone number when I asked him about the availability of the property!

I spoke with the owner and was finally able to come to understand why she did not want a church to rent her property. If there was ever a dispute about the land, the government would always side with a church, as they add to the community. Sadly, many churches here have been less-than-honorable in their business dealings and rental agreements. After explaining my vision for the future to the owner, and that this property was more of a steppingstone for our church and not a final destination, she agreed to meet with me and discuss it further. The meeting went very well. We finally closed on a lease in August. Praise the Lord!

On September 1, we were given the keys and began a 1½-month-long cleanup and repair, which is still ongoing. The property includes a small, three-bedroom bungalow and an outside toilet. We have put up a 40 x 20 semi-permanent tent over a concrete floor for the church auditorium. The house is being used for Sunday school classes, a youth room, a church kitchen, and the pastor's office.

We started at this location with a few roll-up signs, a portable speaker with 2 microphones, 2 plants, 2 folding road signs, 20 songbooks, 8 Bibles, and a lightweight podium. Our first purchase was 100 stackable chairs. We met for 3 weeks in the house until the tent and floor were ready to move into. Thanks to the generous giving of friends and family, we have really made this place a beautiful house of God. Having things like lights, landscaping, and a piano were an overwhelming blessing.

God's hand has been all over this process. At the signing of the lease, a small doubt crept in about how we would pay the monthly increased rent bill. Knowing all that had happened to organize the mere opportunity to have this property, we moved forward in faith, knowing it was His will. Within a week's time, God provided an additional \$200 a month through a one-time generous donation that we can parcel out for the next 10-12 months to offset the rent increase. We are so amazed that God would use us. Over and over again, He has provided the funds to furnish each need that has arisen.

Since moving, we have had visitors every week and souls saved. Last week, we held a special Grand Opening celebration and had 13 first-time visitors, 6 returning visitors, 2 baptized, and 1 saved. The members came together in a great way in the decorating, cleaning, greeting, cooking, and serving for this special day.

The week prior to our Grand Opening, we went out and handed out flyers. From that, a 14-year-old named Wayne came to church. He lives right behind our property. He raised his hand for salvation during the invitation. After the service was over, I asked if he would like to be sure he was going to Heaven. After about 45 minutes, he called on Christ for salvation. He has come to every service, including the midweek service, since.

That same Sunday, another young man named Dennis asked if he could get baptized. What a great question—I had been slowly witnessing to him for over a month. What I didn't realize is that my son Corey Jr. had led him to the Lord while they were gardening together. Praise the Lord! Dennis got baptized at our Grand Opening, along with a faithful attender named Elly. Elly had been sprinkled when he was younger. For about a year, he has struggled with whether or not his baptism was Biblical. In obedience and through Biblical growth, he submitted to the conviction last week.

We held our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Youth Conference in August. Five local churches were in attendance, with over 96 delegates. Highlights included over 2,000 verses memorized, souls saved, and 3 new teens added as faithful church members. Two young ladies from the States came to help us with the conference. They were from the Northeast and were not used to people being open to taking a tract that is offered. They were so excited by the reception they were receiving on the street that we went out Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday to encourage the youth to join us at the conference. One young lady I talked to was named Hela (pronounced Ala). She was invited on Thursday and came to the conference on Friday and Saturday. Each day, she was the first to arrive and had a great spirit. On Friday, she got the assurance of her salvation. Since the conference, she has been to church every Sunday and Wednesday, and on Saturday afternoons, she has come with 5 other young ladies to clean the church for Sunday service. It has been amazing to see God move and add to our numbers. As God continues to give us breath, we will continue to find ways to serve Him more every day.

**Please Pray for . . .**

- The health of our family.
- Annabelle's diabetes.
- Marydia, who had an unexpected seizure.
- Parasite prevention.
- My constant foot pain and for general safety.
- Continued protection from thieves. We have hired a night guard for our church to help keep thieves at bay. However, one guard has already been suspected of stealing missing building materials. Elizabeth also had her cellphone stolen recently.



The year 2024 has been a year of Job. If there has been a way, there has been an attack, yet through every trial, we have felt His grace and come through by His strength.

Your missionaries,

Corey & Elizabeth McDonald and Family



