

VMK JULY 2020 MINISTRY REPORT



V I S I O N

M I N I S T R I E S K E N Y A

MORE, EFFECTIVE, FLOURISHING CHURCHES

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Introductions

Our moment of crisis confronts us with the question of whether our present ways can sufficiently guide us.

The church's identity is fundamental to her visibility and therefore, witness. The church's visibility is considered the most powerful message the world can receive, a message the world can trust because it shows the presence of God in our world. In Kenya, believers have missed in person church worship since the ban in *March, 2020*.

Kenyan church reopens.

In presidential address on *6th July, 2020*, the Kenyan head of state stated that the phased reopening of places of worship will see only 100 congregants allowed into sanctuaries.

“In line with the guidelines issued by the inter-Faith Council, only a maximum of one hundred (100) participants will be allowed at each worship ceremony and not more than one hour. Sunday schools shall remain suspended until further notice, and in-person worship shall not include congregants under the age of thirteen (13) years or above the age of 58 years or persons with underlying conditions,” he said when he lifted the cessation of movement for Nairobi, Mombasa and Mandera which had been in effect for the past three months.

Kenyan president said that the Inter-Religious Faith Council had recommended vulnerable persons, minors below the age of 13 be exempted from the services.

In the last four months VMK has reached the local partner church leaders and believers digitally, most notably through our Facebook account, organizing zoom meetings, making calls, sending mails and sometimes convening some mini-meetings to help reach and hear from the church leaders.

Nairobi Region

Almost all VMK affiliated churches in Nairobi are trying to resume their services. From the reports received from various church leaders in this region, it is now clear to us that resumption has not been as easy as we thought it would be. The government protocols allow a hundred believers to gather for a period of one hour but in real sense this isn't applicable in most of our churches. You will find that some of our churches which are smaller in size, when social distancing protocol is adhered to they can only manage to host about five to ten believers at a time.

In Nairobi, the following churches have so far managed to resume;

- Outreach community church- Kayole
- Hope Bible chapel- Kiambiu
- Grace Conservative Brethren assembly- Mathare
- Outreach Community Church'- Kware

The ones that are yet to resume are;

- Kayole Chapel
- Tala chapel- (new member)
- God's Everlasting Hope- Kibera
- Huruma Chapel

When Covid-19 pandemic struck Kenya, Nairobi was adversely affected. In fact until now, it remains the corona epicenter. Most people were scared and until now they still look scared. Many believers haven't returned to churches because of the fear and trauma about church being a possible place for one to contract the disease.

The normal modesty of services have been interfered with. There is no children in church, no daily breaking of bread, no vibrant worship praises, no greetings and those in need of healing will have to stretch their faith further through live streamed services if they have the electronic gadgets because the guidelines don't allow them to visit the church during the service.



Hope Bible Chapel Nairobi



Conservative Grace Brethren Assembly ladies' fellowship

Challenges highlighted by leaders in worship resumption in Nairobi;

- Most churches lack Sufficient sanitization and hand-wash stations
- Observation of 1.5 meters social distance between believers is a challenge to some small churches
- Most churches are lacking thermal guns that should be used to detect those who may have indicators of illness during the church services

- Regular cleaning and disinfection of the worship place after every worship session is actually a challenge.
- Reaching out to Sunday school children at home with the gospel is a challenge

Nyanza Region

We have had consultations and discussions with the Nyanza leaders. Most of discussions have been on one on one basis with the regional chairperson and Brother Ishmael.

A good number of churches affiliated to us resumed their services on 2nd, August, 2020. We are told that in some churches members flocked in making it difficult for church leaders to adhere to social distancing rule because some of these churches are small in sizes.

Those that have proper structure like Grace Bible Chapel and Arombe FPGC were able to observe the social distancing rules without any problem.



Grace Bible Chapel fellowship on 2nd, August, 2020.

Most pastors have continued with home to home visits which is turning to be a platform for ministering to the Sunday school children and other church members that are considered most vulnerable to the disease.

The following are some of the activities that nyanza region members agreed to involve in during this first phase of reopening;

- Planning prayer and fasting sessions for leaders and church members
- Organizing leaders meetings for the region to chat a way forward in making the churches more vibrant during the pandemic
- Reaching the Sunday school at home and the members with preexisting conditions or the church members considered vulnerable.

Kajiado Region

Maasai churches across Kajiado reopened immediately the church ban was lifted. At Olkesumet prayer centre, Rev.Mokinyo has been receiving several leaders at the mountain booking for prayers since 7th, July.

Rev.Mokinyo in his phone call report informed our office that leaders are trying to ensure that all protocols outlined by the government are followed during the phased reopening of the church.

Vision ministry Kenya, Kajiado region leaders will be planning one on one meeting in the cause of this month to help churches in the region develop proper regulations that will enable the Kajiado and Namanga VMK partnering churches become more active during this new normal times.

Challenges that leaders highlighted in this region are similar to the ones Nairobi region gave.



Maasai leaders meeting at Olkesumet in July for prayers and fellowship

Western Region

Western region churches had conditions to be met before in person worship resumption. The county government of Busia warned pastors not to resume until they meet all the conditions set by the government.

This made most of churches we are affiliated to not resume.

From the report received from pastors Peter and Matthias, the region treasurer and secretary respectively, confirmed that only two churches affiliated to us reopened.

The team in this region continued with home to home church services. The leaders are however working hard to ensure they resume this coming Sunday.

Conclusion

As in person worship resumes in Kenya, we keep reminding our leaders to keep their 'flock' safe. We encourage the believers and the leaders to wash their hands, sanitize, keep social distance while in church and other public gatherings, put on mask and pray for the world.