

# Operation Well Worth It

“God’s involvement in your life is always apparent looking back; why do you not have faith that God’s involvement will continue into your future?”

This is a simple notion that makes so much sense to me. We are not promised a journey without bumps or without trials, but we are promised that God will abide with us, whatever trials we encounter.

Another notion that I am learning is to listen to God’s instructions in my life. Now I don’t hear a calling to fulltime missions; but I have listened to a call for short-term missions and I have been rewarded in those experiences. I want to tell you a story of how one thing has led to another opportunity to serve in a way that I could not have predicted.

My story began in 1990 when we moved to Birmingham, Alabama, and, through our membership at Vestavia Hills Baptist Church, became friends with Samson and Mary Mathangani. The Mathangani’s had come from Kenya for Samson to attend seminary at Sanford University. Over the eleven years that we lived in Birmingham, we saw and fellowshiped with the Mathangani’s and their three children, Gerhard, Marjory and Daniel, weekly at church and Wednesday night prayer services and came to know and love them.

In 2007 Samson organized a trip as part of his effort to bring advanced education to church leaders in

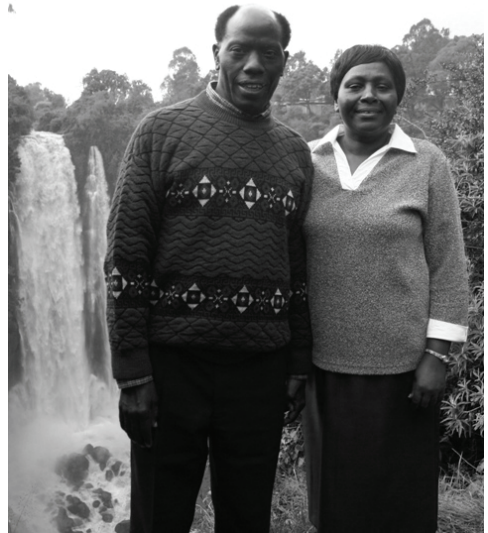


*Pastor Euticauls Wambua  
Director of Kariobangi  
Youth Center Nairobi*

Kenya. I had moved on to Pennsylvania by this time but learned through my friend Tony Giles that this trip was going to occur. Almost instantaneously, I decided to go to Kenya with Samson. I wish I could tell you it was only after prayerful reflection that I decided to go, but it was in reality more the result of curiosity and my affection for Samson and Mary.

I had images in my mind of what Samson and Mary’s homeland and culture must have been like and what an adjustment it must have been for them to come to America. I wanted to confirm my suspicions by taking this trip.

I cannot tell you all that I saw and experienced in Kenya in



*Samson and Mary Mathangani at  
Thomson's Falls, near Nyahururu,*

this narrative, but suffice it to say that the experience touched my heart and gave me insight into some things that I could do with my gifts and my resources. For example, I have been blessed to support a school for students in the Korogocho slums of Nairobi that my friend Euticauls Wambua runs. Euticauls has visited me here in Pennsylvania and I was able to take him for his first visit to New York City.

Another new friend is Richard Owiti who co-taught with me while I was in Kenya. He is a school principal at the Baptist High School in Nyeri, Kenya. Richard and I have remained in touch since my trip. And here is where the story gets interesting: Richard's son, Harold, whom I met while in Kenya, came to Arkansas last year to attend college.

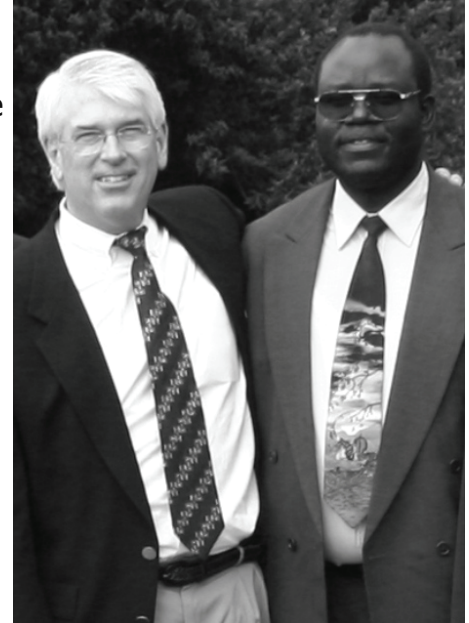
I tried to reach out to Harold to encourage him but found that doing so via email and Facebook left something to be desired. So one day it occurred to me that I might be able to do the same for a foreign student that might be closer by.

I called the Dean of Students at West Chester University and told her of my heart for Kenya and asked if there was someone that might benefit from "surrogate parents" while a student here.

Through that outreach we met Anne Okelo, a graduate student pursuing her Master degree in non-profit Administration.



*Anne Okelo who came from the village of Angiro, Kenya and recently earned her Masters Degree from West Chester University*



*Richard Owiti and I conducting seminars at the 2007 Institute in Nairobi*

Anne is a Christian and has attended church with us since we met a year ago. She has been embraced by our small Growth Group from church. We have been able to help her in small ways and she has blessed us with her love and friendship. I believe our association has been mutually beneficial—and God-led.

The next part was unexpected.

As we got to know Anne, we learned of the water problem in her village of Angiro, located in west Kenya, near Lake Victoria, about 8 hours' drive from Nairobi. Her village has seasonal water—a river during the wet season, nothing during the dry season necessitating substandard hygiene. Water must be foraged from pits and must be transported considerable distances.

This task falls disproportionately on the women of the village; young girls' education takes a backseat to the tasks of daily living. Women often drop out of school to complete



*This river is for washing clothes, bathing and drinking and cooking water. It dries up part of the year*

these tasks.

The poor quality of the water contributes to overall poor health of the village. The villagers have learned to live with dysentery and other ailments related to dirty water. This reality is common across Africa and, thankfully, many Christian and secular organizations are working hard to alleviate the lack of clean water. Unfortunately, it may be years before these organizations arrive at remote villages like Angiro.

Anne is a most humble and unassuming young lady; she is grateful for the many blessings in her life and gives thanks to God for His daily involvement in her life. She is a constant inspiration to me. One day in our conversation, Anne said that she did not know why God has put her in West Chester, Pennsylvania, but that she knows that there is a reason.

The reason, I now am certain, was because God used Anne to put a burden on our hearts to do something for her village. Yes, we, Dan Lawson and I, became convicted with the notion God was expecting us bring fresh water to Angiro, Kenya. Doing so would bring better health to Anne's family, her mother, her brother and 3,500 villagers. It would relieve the women and young children of the daily burden of fetching water—a distraction that hampers their commitment to school and advanced education. It would reduce the severity of illness that is a way of life for each villager.

We became convinced that providing fresh water in Anne's home village was something that we must do. It would extend our Christian outreach to a fitting group of people. Yes, it would be well worth it.

After prayerful consideration, we began a search for a suitable organization to actually perform the work. We talked to numerous organizations, both Christian and secular and found the perfect partner, Water Missions International ([www.watermissions.org](http://www.watermissions.org)), based in Charleston, SC. WMI, we learned, had installed systems in Kenya and, in fact, had a permanent staff there. Their Kenya office in Kitale is only about 100 kilometers from our village of Angiro (God's planning, we are certain).



*This water source serves many villagers. They must stand in line to get water and then carry great distances to their homes*

WMI not only provides the technical systems for clean reliable water, but also delivers



*A completed filtration system installed by Water Missions in another Kenyan village*

the message of the “Living Waters” as part of their commitment to The Great Commission.

In their own words, “When people see the ‘miracle’ of filthy disease-laden water turned into clean, clear water, they see tangible picture of what God does in the lives of those who believe in Him. He cleanses us, washing away the filth of the past, so that we can offer our lives as vessels of hope to the world

around us.”

WMI visited Angiro in April, 2010, and met with village leaders. Shortly, afterward they conducted hydrology studies to determine the suitability of the location we had selected—the Angiro Primary School property. The results were encouraging—water appears plentiful at a reasonable depth of around 80 feet.

At this point we were able to finalize a budget for our undertaking, \$35,000.

The village is about 3,500 in size; our project, therefore, equates to \$10 per villager. This amount includes a solar powered pump to raise the water from the well, and a complete filtration system to serve the village population. The budget does not include any travel expenses for those of us who plan to visit the village upon the project completion—those expenses will be borne by the travelers.



*Angiro Primary and Secondary School where our water system will be located*

Water Missions International has received a four star rating, the highest designation for efficiency, by Charity Navigator ([www.charitynavigator.org](http://www.charitynavigator.org)), an organization that rates the fiscal performance or efficiency of non-profit organizations.

“Operation Well Worth It” is the name of our project only and is not a legal entity nor can it receive any funds. Donations must be made by check to “**Calvary Fellowship Church**” with “**Kenya**” noted in the memo line or to “**Water Missions International**” with “**Angiro Project**” in the memo line. Both organizations will provide donors with a receipt suitable to the IRS for amounts over \$250.

Please Mail your contribution to:

Operation Well Worth It  
816 Shadebrush Rdg  
West Chester, PA 19382