



# Aaron Stanbury

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**Location:** Kenya



**What I do:** Connecting with children and helping them with basic literacy, setting them on a path for an education that will help them out of poverty

To my wonderful friends and family,

Thank you very much for your continued support. It has been amazing to feel so welcomed and supported by so many wonderful people. I have been encouraged through your warmth, your love for God and through your inspiring testimonies.

## What has the first three months looked like?

The past three months has been a roller coaster. I've had the blessing of moving country, immersing myself in a new culture, starting a new job and learning a new language. Although I've also experienced culture shocks, being unable to connect with locals due to a lack of Kiswahili, while missing my family and life in Plymouth. Safe to say, these past few months have been filled with a multitude of new experiences and new discovery.

I arrived in Kenya on Saturday 2 December 2023 and was greeted at the airport by Karobia from the CMS-Africa team. I went from a cold English morning to a warm Kenyan night. At this point it felt real. After greetings, I went straight to stay with a Kenyan family who graciously hosted me for just under three months. I lived with a family of five: mum Elizabeth, dad Patrice and their children Gloria, Josiah and Joy.

My first days in Kenya became quite interesting and unexpected. Unfortunately, on the Monday, my second day in Nairobi, a dog bit my hand and went through a nerve so I spent the next couple of weeks making trips to the hospital and later needing surgery. It was a different welcome to Kenya than I predicted. I will mention, my hand is now fully healed and is getting stronger week by week.

## Christmas in Kakamega

Christmas in Kenya was also very different to what I am used to. I was lucky enough to stay in Kakamega with a lovely family. Kakamega is situated in Western Kenya, and it is hot! I spent my Christmas break in shorts and a t-shirt, and Christmas dinner consisted of roasted meat and a BBQ. Safe to say, I didn't expect to wake up on 25 December and help prepare the chickens I said hello to the day before. This was a very different Christmas to the ones I experience in England. No coldness, no presents under the tree and no family dinners with brussels sprouts... Not sure if that's a good thing or not.

For the following two months, I spent the majority of my time learning Kiswahili at language schools here in Nairobi. I say schools, as unfortunately I had complications with two schools and after attending both for only one month each, I had to leave. I will say, that despite having to leave the schools prematurely, I enjoyed learning



ACK Christ Church, Westlands,  
where I work and worship

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Kiswahili and it helped me to build relationships here in Nairobi. For the rest of my time, I went to local shops and food places to practice my Kiswahili and build rapport with local people. In addition, I went to various events in order to develop friendships with people.

Church has also been an important part in my life. I attend a church called ACK Christ Church in an area called Westlands. This is my workplace but also my regular place of worship. I have now attended this church for three months and it is starting to feel more homely. I spend my time with the adults in the 8am service and I help lead the youth service at the 10am service. I am getting better at balancing the different elements and am starting to build relationships with the congregation.

### What does a typical week look like?

I split my time between three main things. For a couple of hours a day, I have language study, learning Kiswahili with a private tutor. I do this to better connect with local people and the children that I work with. I am also finishing my TEFL course, to gain experience and gain a qualification for teaching English. The rest of my time I spend at work, at ACK Christ Church.

I have primarily worked with the youth. Some time is spent with the “Kids to Kids” programme, which gives education, nutrition and spiritual guidance to children living in the local slums. I've been asked to look at ways to improve or alter this programme with the team. I also spend time looking at programmes for the church youth and again have been asked to consider if there are ways to improve the Sunday services. I've even had the opportunity to lead services and preach.

I have also had the privilege to go to Kawangware and Kangemi to visit the local slums to visit 11 more children and encourage them to attend the “Kids to Kids” programme. This experience was eye-opening as I was able to experience their living conditions and their lack of resources. The 11 new children have attended the programme for the past two weeks and are now settling in and enjoying themselves. This has been a blessing for them and for us the project team.

I am now starting to feel more settled in my new job and my work relationships appear to be growing. I am hoping that these relationships continue to grow and develop. In addition, I am also praying that the “Kids to Kids” programme continues to grow and that we can offer more children education, nutrition, and spiritual guidance. Another prayer that I have, is that our youth church continues to grow. We are currently seeing new teens giving their lives to the Lord and we are continuing to pray for more still.

Thank you for your continued support. I appreciate all your prayers and for those who support financially, thank you very much. It is because of you that I can live here in Nairobi and am being used for God's ministry.

### Prayer points:

- ▶ To build long-lasting relationships in the church
- ▶ For the “Kids to Kids” programme to grow and to provide education to more children living in the slums.
- ▶ God would continue to guide me and my work.

Blessings, Aaron



*Photos from top to bottom: Kids to Kids classroom; a surprise encounter with elephants; visit to Masai Mara; post-Christmas getaway with my host family.*



## Going further with Church Mission Society

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