

Joining Hearts and Hands – Mission in Kenya

Western Presbyterian worked with Joining Hearts and Hands, (JH&H) a ministry started by Bill and Joanne Cala in Kenya, www.joiningheartsandhands.org. The ministry worked on schools for the children. As part of the ministry, youth are sent to high school with a scholarship of \$400 per year. WPC provided the scholarship for one student to attend 4 years of secondary school.

In 2009, shoes were donated for elementary students in Kenya. We sold shoeprints and hung them around Fellowship Hall. *From the Sept Joining Hearts and Hands Newsletter*, Stop by and sponsor Western Presbyterian Church's Mission efforts; a table set up at Palmyra's Canal Town Days will be selling t-shirts and glass jewelry. They have set a remarkable goal to raise \$1200 this year for shoes for the children at our elementary schools." The shoes were made in Kenya, a micro business started with funding from JH&H.

In 2010, laptops were purchased for a school in Tanzania.

WPC continued in partnership with JH&H with the **Kenya Water Project** for a school in Kongasis, Kenya.



Kongasis Christian Education Centre

Created a partnership with Western Presbyterian Church of Palmyra and Kongasis, Kenya. Western Presbyterian is involved in a multi-year fundraiser to build a water retention pond for the community of Kongasis.



Three phases to project costing \$16,000:

- 1-Build a pump house and install pump
- 2-Run underground piping to water tanks
- 3-Install 3-phase filtration system and plumbing to buildings

Western Presbyterian Church of Palmyra ROCKS!!!

WPC is a small group of dedicated, inspired and energized people. In the past they have provided hundred of pairs of shoes for our school children, provided computers for schools and sponsored scholarships. Now they are really topping their past accomplishments. Kongasis is a small village near Kericho in Kenya. They have had serious water problems during a consistently reoccurring drought. WPC has raised nearly \$9000 so far to bring water from a stream-fed pond up a hill to storage tank for the elementary school and the entire Kongasis community. As I am sure you know, fetching water is a terrible burden. Mostly women walk for miles each day to collect water (that is usually contaminated) for their families. This project will save the Kongasis community from that brutal task AND.... the water will be CLEAN as the project involves the construction of a purification plant.

BRAVO Western Presbyterian!!!



Beginning of Construction of Water Storage Tank at Kongasis

It's done! We did it!

That is right; the members of our church embraced an enormous mission project which took almost 3 years to complete. This Kongosis water project was life changing to the members of a Kenya community.

- ◆ Completed the **water project** at Kongasis funded by Western Presbyterian of Palmyra., New York.



Joanne and Bill atop water purification plant at Kongasis

Through the assistance of the Western Presbyterian Church Community in Palmyra, NY constructed and implemented a water system for whole rural community



Stage three of the project. Water Purification via a two-stage Filtering process

Many of you probably thought that this past December was the final milestone of the project, when we presented the last check to Bill and Joanne Cala of Joining Hearts and Hands. The Cala's have shepherded this project in Kenya. They have slowly dealt out the funds as each phase of the project needed funding. At the completion of the third phase they inspected the completion of the project.

The initial water project proposal was presented to Session in the first quarter of 2011. WPC session approved the mission project with enthusiasm. It was stated that this is a powerful and meaningful mission project for our church.

Through our fundraising, we changed the fabric of a community. Kongasis is a small village where a school was established in 2001. The school is the caretaker of the community water system. Through the generosity of donations this school and the

community around it has prospered. One need of the community was drinking water. This need is greatest when the water collection barrels were empty during the dry season.

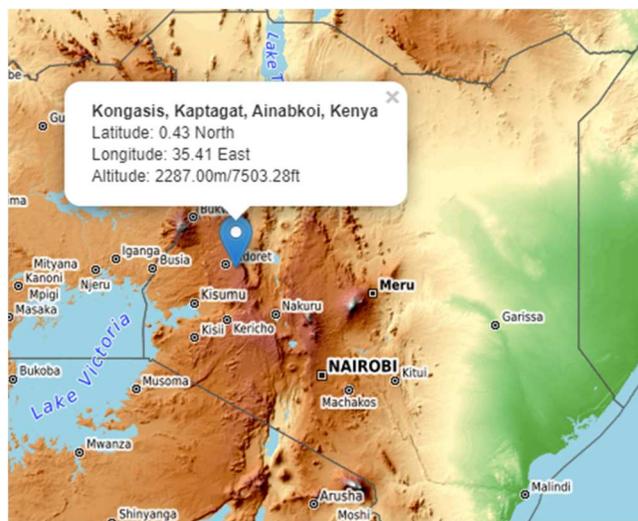
There is a spring in the hills some distance away from the school. In addition, there is a man-made reservoir close to the school for the farm animals. At the beginning of the project the intention was to pipe the spring water to the school. Due to the changing of ownership of the property where the spring was located, this was not an option. The retention pond was then to be used as the source of water for this project.

The scope of the Kongasis water project was to pump the water to the school and then build a water treatment facility for the water to be more drinkable. To simply prepare a meal or wash required the transport of water. As part of this project, the kitchen has inside running water as do the bathrooms. In addition, now there is a two-stage water filtration system in place.

The sons and daughters of Kongasis do not need to walk for hours to collect water. The weight of the water does not injure those that carry it. There is more time for all, boys and girls, to attend school now. With the filtration system there is less diarrhea and illness associated with water pollutants and parasites.

We as a church family have become stronger with this project. At the start of it we were fearful that it was too big. God has joined us on this quest. Many of us have embraced the need to bring clean drinking water to others. We have become stronger as a church with this mission. This is the signature of who we are.

Respectfully submitted by Randy Kennard



In 2020, the Kongasis Community reached out to WPC as the COVID-19 Pandemic spread. The community asked for a donation to pay the teaching staff living expenses while the school was closed, and WPC responded positively.

[Joining Hearts and Hands](https://www.joiningheartsandhands.org) <https://www.joiningheartsandhands.org>