

St James Church, Clitheroe
Steering Committee and PCC

Partnership with King's Highway Church, Eldoret, Kenya: January 2025

Introduction

Sam Johnson has recently returned from a visit to our partner church in King's Highway Church, Eldoret, Kenya. He had a wonderful week, joining with their month of prayer and fasting, hosting a Family Fun afternoon, visiting members of the congregation in their homes, leading and teaching on some of their outreach activities, preaching on the Sunday morning, leading the teaching in two of their 'Schools of Prayer', visiting their sister church at King's Gospel Church, and also visiting and meeting the staff at King's Highway School. King's Highway Church were delighted to host the visit from St James, and were so welcoming and friendly to their visitors. They clearly valued the partnership with St James which had been running since 2018, and thought it was an important aspect of their life and ministry in Kenya. Sam is very grateful for the financial support of the PCC which enabled the visit to happen.

Partnership Agreement with King's Highway Church

Whilst with Rev Henry Wedende of King's Highway Church in January 2025, Sam Johnson was able to update and sign a new three-year partnership agreement. This extends the formal partnership between the two churches until 31st March 2028.

The purpose of the partnership is to:

- develop relationships between the two church communities
- connect ministries and individuals together for mutual encouragement and learning
- share our experiences of God's work amongst us, supporting and spurring one another on to go deeper with God and His purposes
- learn from each other about our different cultural backgrounds, using this experience to reflect on how our cultures impacts on our relationship with God
- share resources and knowledge with each other in appropriate ways.

The Partnership Agreements sets out the key aspects of how the relationship, communication, and support between the two churches will operate. This document agrees that the two churches will:

- Pray regularly for each other's specific needs, which we will actively identify and share. We will develop frequent leaders' prayer meetings and regular times when the wider church families can pray together.
- Commit to regular communication, especially by WhatsApp and Video Messaging, to help keep the partnership living within the wider congregations.

- Stand together in joint times of fasting and praying
- Share stories of church family members in a consistent and structured way to help the different congregations follow the faith and life journeys of particular individuals in the church.
- Look for opportunities for share the experiences of God's power, love and works in our congregations with each other
- Plan regular visits across the partnership with teams visiting both Kenya and the UK.

There is also a financial aspect to the partnership, with St James' making a contribution to the ministry and operating costs of King's Highway Church. This is set at £4,500 per annum. In particular this is split into supporting three distinct areas, as discussed and agreed with the church. These are:

- To continue to support the cost of securing internet and wifi connectivity within the Church building. This is approximately £1,000 per annum.
- The continued implementation of the Education and Training Fund. This is a vital ministry where the church is able to support the further education – post high school – of a number of their young people to train them for professions such as teachers, nurses, lawyers and engineers. St James' contributes £3,000 per annum to this fund, which in effect pays for the educational fees for 5 or 6 young people. The three-year commitment to the partnership is so helpful for the church as it enables them to support with some degree of certainty that the young people will be able to be funded for the duration of their studies.

To add a further context, in conversation with Henry and Fred, they estimated that approximately 12 further young people from their youth group are currently 'waiting', trying to earn money, and trying to save to be able to access further and higher education. It is likely to take them several years before they can start to study.

- The 'Daughters of Hope' ministry. It was explained to us that in Kenya widows are often abandoned 'by everyone' including the family of the deceased husband. We certainly witnessed a number of instances where this had happened. King's Highway Church current supports 12 widows in its congregation. They gather together to support and encourage each other regularly, and the church tries to provide essential resources for those most in need, particularly those trying to support and bring up a family. The Partnership Agreement has committed to £500 per annum to enable the widows to have a drink and something to eat when they meet, and to provide a limited amount of support for those most in need.

It is anticipated that St James' Church will continue to make a contribution to the financial aspects of the Partnership Agreement of £3,000 per annum through the

Mission Tithe. The church family and fund raising activities will then be asked to contribute the additional £1,500 per annum.

Forward Planning and Next Steps

There are a number of important steps to put in place to ensure that the partnership is a success over the next three years.

These are:

- Ensure that there are regular opportunities within church services to tell the stories of our partners in Eldoret. Perhaps re-introduce the termly 'Eldoret Stories' where teaching about the church in Kenya and the lives of people of faith in that community can be shared and explored.
- Establish a convenient and committed time for shared prayer in the same space, and the right format and platform for doing it. This was particularly important to King's Highway Church.
- Establish a timetable and rota for sending 'monthly prayers' to King's Highway Church. This could be done through the form of a video each month from someone who has visited Eldoret with 'what to pray for at St James this month' - with individual, church, community and national prayer points.
- Ensure dedicated pray time for our partners in Eldoret. We should aim to specifically pray for King's Highway Church at least once a month in Sunday and Wednesday services, with a section of the Sunday Prayer Meeting each month reserved for praying for King's Highway Church
- Remember King's Highway Church each time we have Holy Communion
- Commit to mirroring King's Highway's calendar of fasting in 2025, together with teaching about fasting.
- Introduce a small number of members of King's Highway Church to the St James' Congregation – through the telling of their stories – with the aim of following these four people through their life and journey of faith over the next three years
- Identify three or four individuals willing and prepared to share their life and faith stories with King's Highway Church over the next three years
- Receive regular updates on those being supported through the Education and Training Fund
- Establish a fixed notice board in church to tell stories and show photographs of the partnership
- Ensure regular greetings are exchanged, particularly around religious festivals such as Easter, Pentecost and Christmas.
- Communicate clearly to the whole congregation the financial aspects of the Partnership Agreement, and particularly the need to raise £1,500 per annum through church family giving.
- Recognise the commitment to work towards a visit in June 2026 of Francis, Henry and Fred. It is anticipated that this will cost around £5,000 and these funds will

need to be raised. On-going fund-raising and gifting would be required. These could be paid into the current Eldoret Account.

- Recognise the importance of a visit to Kenya for the new incumbent and work towards that happening in January 2026. This will cost about £2,500 if accompanied by Sam Johnson.
- Encourage the youth to engage in the partnership, to explore the lives of those of faith in Eldoret, to communicate with them and hold them in prayer.
- Build up the partnership between the two schools, with regular communication and prayer support, and also dedicated fund-raising to assist with the challenges of delivering primary education in Kenya.

Conclusion

The partnership with King's Highway Church is immensely exciting, life-giving, challenging, engaging and God-breathed. It is our aim to engage all the members of the church in the partnership, to provide good teaching, good information, and prayer and fasting opportunities, whilst getting to know better individuals and those living a life of faith in Eldoret.

The partnership will be overseen by a Steering Group which will meet regularly and communicate as appropriate through the PCC, Network and Church Services.