

# AMERICAN GOD PARENT SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION TRIP TO TANZANIA, AFRICA June 8 - June 23, 2006

Back in my Elementary school, some 55 years ago, we had a study unit on Africa. We made an African village to get an idea of local life. I remember cutting off the bottom of a Quaker Oats box, painting it, making a cone shaped roof and covering it with straw. This we said was a typical dwelling for the African people.

Well, there are still Quaker Oats box homes, but that is far from typical. Many of my pre-conceived notions of Africa were changed. I must confess, and ask forgiveness, for some of my prejudices. This trip has shattered them. These are wonderful, gracious, intelligent and industrious folks. They will give you what they have, even denying themselves. So, whatever I once called typical Africa, certainly doesn't hold true here.

Friday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, 9:30 pm. Day 1 in Tanzania.

These last two days have been amazing. First, we traveled 16 hours in the air, and had a 3 hour lay over in Amsterdam, getting us in the Kilimanjaro International Airport at 8 pm local time on Friday evening. We went through customs by way of a line for local residents, which had been arranged by the Northern Dioceses. We located our bags and got the cart of "red" duffel bags containing all the medications we brought for the Karatu hospital.

Out in the parking lot, we were greeted by our friends in Tanzania. Pastor Aaron Urio, with whom I've corresponded, pastor of Shiri parish, was there along with Pastor Baha, one of the Northern Dioceses officials. Pastor Urio found me immediately, carried my bag, and wouldn't let go of my hand until we were ready for the bus. A local congregation in the area of the airport brought their choir to sing for us. They have wonderful voices and great harmony. Each one of the 30+ choir members greeted each of us with handshakes and hugs, and gave us a rose. Pastor Urio had a small boutonniere made of a flower and silver paper just for Dwayne (Pastor Westermann, our trip leader) and me. After more handshakes and hugs, we got into the bus for a 3/4 hour ride to Moshi and the Uhuru Lutheran Hostel.

We checked in at the desk, got our room key, a few more handshakes - this is the standard friendly greeting for everyone - then to our room and bed. Saturday would prove to be an interesting and wonderful day.



Day 2 June 10<sup>th</sup>

Saturday began with breakfast at 8 am in the dining room. We had been told what was good and what to stay away from. Most all of the food here is good, standard western fare. No tap water, of course, but bottled water is abundant - 'Kilimanjaro brand'. Some things have a little different taste than what I'm used to, but I've tried a little of everything, and don't ask too many questions. We are not eating rhino or anything exotic. They are outlawed. It is just that they feed their beef different than we do.

After breakfast, we took a bus trip into Moshi, to see the town and exchange money. We only need a little in Tanzania shillings for souvenirs and church offerings, as most places will take dollars. Everything else on the trip was prepaid. After getting our shillings, and warding off the street vendors, which are persistent and everywhere, we went to a fabric shop. This was for the ladies (14 of the 17 in our group) to select material to have clothes made. They will be measured and the dresses will be ready before we leave for home. I bought a couple of T shirts and a safari hat.

We then drove to a small peddlers village, to see some wood carving dealers. Wood carvings are big here, very intricate and well done. There seem to be so many, I asked if any were turned out by machine, but was assured that they were all made by hand. I bought a fairly large carving of 3 animals and was told by the carver it took him three weeks to finish it. For that amount of time, he makes very little per hour, but nonetheless, a fair living for this area.

In the afternoon, we were to visit the Shiri Parish, outside of Moshi. Let me explain that these parishes cover a vast area. There is a central church, Shiri in this case, and outlying smaller churches. Matunda is one of four small congregations which are part of the Shiri parish. The outlying congregations are served by evangelists trained at a Bible College, but not ordained.

The pastor in Shiri, Pastor Aaron Urrio, visits each smaller congregation on a rotating basis, for worship and communion. Shiri has a church building but is in the process of building a larger one. The new church will seat about a thousand people.

At times, work on these projects proceeds slowly by our standards, because there is no such thing as a mortgage. There would be no money to make monthly payments. They build as they have funds. This is also true of families all through the area. One will see many dwellings in various states of completion that look like they have been abandoned. This is not the case. People are only waiting to have enough money to add the next courses of block, roof trusses or whatever the next phase is. We were told later that when a pastor is ordained, he usually begins building his retirement home. It will probably take him 30 years to complete it.

Shiri church is under roof and interior work is being done. Most central congregations here are large. Each one we visited was anywhere from 300 to 1700 members.

After showing us the church, Pastor Urrio took us to see the Heifer Project. Most of these families are very poor with an average income of a dollar a day. The church tries to do what it can to better the lives of its people, in this case by providing a cow. The church will give a cow to a family, which will provide milk for their home and some additional to sell. When a cow has a calf, the family agrees to give that new cow to another family. Milk from a cow, or sometimes a goat, seems like such a small thing, but it means a great deal to the family. We saw two such homes - one was a single mother with 3 children. The husband had died some years before.

We then drove to Matunda Lutheran Church, the partner congregation of Christ Lutheran. We received a tremendous greeting. Men and women came to our bus, waving banana leaves and chanting. We were given flowers, and then led into the

church. It now had a completed roof. All of the \$2200 that Christ Lutheran sent, plus \$400 from a local church, went into the completion of the roof. We were led to the front, where a large buffet table had been set with chairs for each of our group of 17. We were offered drinks. Bottled water and soft drinks are always available, and the congregation of 50 or so sang to us. Then the speeches began. Pastor Urio recognized Pastor Westermann, and then he came to me. He thanked Christ Lutheran Church and me for the funds for the roof, and gave us gifts for the congregation, and for Audrey and me personally. I then spoke thanking them for the warm welcome, and was able to give them an additional gift of \$1300 for continued work on Matunda church. My friend, Gilead Mmushi, then spoke, reading a letter of thanks, and also outlining what yet needed to be done. It was an overwhelming celebration, and display of African graciousness, the first of many. It should also be noted they added a kindergarten class room to the building we first saw in the pictures that were sent to us. The church has a teacher who runs a daily Montessori program. We later learned that this was the practice with almost all of their churches.

After a jubilant goodbye, we headed back to our hostel. By the way, I found out an interesting fact about the church, which fits well with all we have taught about the work of the Holy Spirit. The word Matunda in Swahili means “fruit”. What we can do for them is all a part of the fruit of God’s Spirit.



Day 3, June 11<sup>th</sup>, Sunday

I feel like I have had more packed into two days here, than any 2 weeks at home. We had an early breakfast, 7am, and were to head out to church at 8am. African time never works as planned, and it was about 8:30am when we got away in our 20 passenger Hostel bus. (There is a saying here that God gave Americans watches. To Africans, He gave time.) We were going to worship at Msae Lutheran Parish up on the slopes of Mt. Kilimanjaro. There had been a heavy rain most of the night, but the day turned out beautifully. We headed up the road through various villages until the paved road came to an end. This is quite normal in Tanzania as there are only 2500 miles of paved road in the whole country. Fearlessly, our driver continued on as the ride became more rough.

We approached a fork in the road. To the left is where the climbers begin their ascent of the mountain. There were numerous lodges, stores and people milling around. We took the fork to the right to continue on up to the church. We still were miles away. The road became more rough to the point where the bus couldn't continue with all of us on board. So we got out and began to walk. We still had about 4 km (2.5 miles) to go and Dwayne was getting more disturbed at the Diocese's office for not telling us about the location of the congregation. But on we walked, We can literally say we climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro to go to church. Finally and thankfully, the bus made it up behind us and took some of us the last mile. A few brave ones chose to continue to walk.

These churches are amazing. On the hill, half way up Mt. Kilimanjaro, was this lovely church that seats about 400 people. People come from all around, young and old, all walking. The pastor and congregation were there to greet us. African hospitality is more than gracious. Handshakes from everyone. We were led into the pastor's office to sign the guest book, another tradition we encountered everywhere.

That being done, we walked around to the front of the church for the beginning of the service. We were led in by a brass band - three trombones and several other horns - not always in harmony, but compensated for by their enthusiasm. We took our seats up front on the left, in the choir section. We were honored guests. The service was all in Swahili, but beautifully liturgical. These people are wonderful in their worship, and destroyed any stereotypes that we Americans might have brought with us. If we had understood the language, all at Christ Lutheran would have felt at home. The Pastor's assistant chanted parts of the liturgy in a beautiful voice and the congregation responded, many from memory, and all in unison. The choir sang several times. All of the music we have heard, with the possible exception of the brass band, has been absolutely beautiful and in wonderful harmony. Pastor Westermann preached with a translation of Swahili; 7 or 8 new members were received; several hymns sung - of which we knew the tunes well; and church was concluded after two hours, which didn't seem that long at all.

They were also going to serve us lunch this day, so we had to wait around a bit until all was ready. The food was cooked in stainless steel pots, over an open fire in one of the side buildings, though in this case, "building" is a bit too generous a word. Many of their buildings are made out of dung and straw brick with corrugate tin roofs, but they are very proud of what they can do, and they go all out for guests. The lunch was served in the balcony of the church, a large enough area to accommodate 30 or 40 people. They had two long tables set up, with lovely cloths and place settings. It was as good as we do in our fellowship hall. There was a second row of chairs behind the table for their church elders. They do not eat until all of the guests have eaten. The buffet table held about 8 pots with various foods - fried bananas, carrots, various vegetables, fried pork and another meat. Most of us ate cautiously, but tried most everything, and all has

settled well. Bottled water and assorted soft drinks were included. When we finished, it was time for the elders to eat, and they really enjoyed it. It was a feast for them. They piled their plates twice as high as anything we can do at our covered dish suppers. We were told later that they don't get that opportunity often. Their daily fare being maize (corn), vegetable and only occasionally some meat. We were ready to take our leave, but there was a bit more ceremony, a prayer, and many more handshakes.

Oh, an item of the service I forgot to mention. They always take 2 offerings. The first is their regular tithe, in which all come forward to the offering plate to drop in what they have. Some, we noticed, put a hand to the plate and with the other hand, made a brief sign on their forearm. This, we were told later, was a sign of humiliation, because they had nothing to give. The second offering was for those who wanted to offer special thanks for something that had happened to them during the week. Perhaps a third came forward. But that is not all to the offering. Some, that had no money, brought other items - a hand of bananas, a few eggs, several avocados, stalks of sugar cane, or a bundle of firewood. After the service, all went outside in a courtyard and these items were auctioned off. The church elders/auctioneers could give any of our home town auctioneers a run for their money. Most of the items were sold for 500 to 1000 Tanzanian shillings, 50 cents to \$1.00 in our terms. A few of the better off member would buy some of the items and give them to others. Especially the sugar cane, giving that to the children, which they love to suck on as candy.

Pastor Westermann, concerned about our descent down the mountain, called a friend to come get us with his 4 wheel drive vehicle just to be on the safe side. But the bus made it down without mishap, though very bumpy. We were glad to see a hard surface road again. Our next stop was at the Mwiki Bible College

Mwiki Bible College is a Northern Dioceses training center for pastors and evangelists. The Principal of the school is a very enjoyable man, by the name of Israel Natse. Israel was able to accompany us for the remainder of the trip, so we got to know him fairly well. The school provides the courses we would know as traditional Bible study and theology. All of the people we met are highly intelligent, well trained, and deeply committed to their faith and their task. They are conservative Bible believing Christians. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania does ordain



women. The training at Mwiki includes music, and some non-traditional things like raising cattle, which is necessary for many of these parishes. The campus, established in the 1950s, is large and beautiful and the many buildings serve the students well.

We were back at Uhuru Hostel for dinner and Pastor Aaron was able to join us. We had a wonderful talk and were able to get to know each other better. He and his wife (probably late 50's) are committed and hard working people. After the dinner, the pastor and his wife took Kristin, Dwayne's daughter, and one of the group leaders, and me, to the Usharika wa Neema (Church of Grace), teacher training college for training in the Montessori teaching system. The Northern Dioceses is very committed to this method and has implemented it in most of their parishes. The electricity happened to be off for the evening, which is not uncommon, but most inconvenient, so we could only see the outside of the buildings by moonlight and get some description of the program. Kristin decided that we would work in a regular visit to the school on our last day in Tanzania, so I will be able to share more info then. One blessing of the power being out is we got our first look at the snow-capped peak of Mt. Kilimanjaro by moonlight. Truly beautiful.

Day 4, Monday, June 12<sup>th</sup>

The Northern Dioceses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania (ELCT-ND) is highly organized and does wonderful work. Lutherans here have their roots in German missionary work of more than 100 years ago. Further, the government of Tanzania is the most stable democracy in all of Africa. There are two major political parties and three or four smaller ones, but no rebel groups or insurgents as in other African countries. The present government and constitution are about 40 years old (1961). Their first democratically elected president Julius Nyerere wisely did a number of things, to unite the 120+tribes that make up this country. He made Swahili the national language and then, or a bit later, English. This is a dual language country, and many do have some English. There has developed a strong mutual cooperation between Christian, Muslim and indigenous religions. Everyone in this country is religious in some form. This makes evangelism a bit easier. They don't have to battle atheists and agnostics as well as materialism. The people who accept Christ seem deeply committed and know Him in their daily life. They have so little, but their faith is strong. Money does make a difference though. The Arab countries send in money to the Muslim leaders here, who in turn provide things for the people, thus advancing their Muslim faith. The Christians seem to do it all through local congregations and foreign church donations. I asked about the government starting something like our old CCC program before WWII, but was told that the government has no money for such a program. They are strapped for funds, even with the World Bank forgiving a substantial part of their debt.

The government does try to manage the land, by giving portions to groups that will develop programs to benefit the people, like the vocational/technical school we are to visit. Since the Zimbabwe government kicked out foreign plantation owners, many came to Tanzania, buying up land and driving the price up. Land has also been sold to out of country groups who grow flowers for Europe. This has raised funds for the government, but puts some people off the land they were renting. One of Tanzania's great problems is that too much of their money flows out of the country.



A program that is promoted for families is called subsistence farming. A family will rent a piece of land, about an acre, for \$40 per year. The plot is called a "shamba". On it, they grow what they can, usually maize or other saleable crops. They keep what they need for their family and sell the remainder. We were taken to one such Shamba. In this case, a church in Virginia provided \$2000 so this family could buy their acre. This gave them a tremendous advantage. Mr. Mwasha is father of a family of 7 children. Most are older and away at school. Two are still at home and in grade school. He retired as a school teacher in 1996 and receives a small pension. Small is underlined since he only made \$80 a month when he was teaching. His acre of ground is 20km (about 12 miles) from his home and he either walks or takes a cheap local bus to his land everyday. The last four years have seen severe drought. This year has been good with plenty of rain and his maize is about 8 ft. tall. He expects to get 20 sacks of grain at 100 kilos each (220 lbs). He will use 4 sacks for his family during the year, and will sell 16 at about \$30 per sack. That will give him an income of \$480 for the year. Mr Mwasha is well educated, speaks English well, and is the organist for his church. He is more well off than many. He believes that the Lord has blessed him and he gives thanks for his life

Mr. Mwash's son, Calvin, traveled with us. He is intelligent, articulate and studying to be a doctor. These people are amazing!

We made 2 other stops today at different training programs that are in the development stage. Each is the vision of one man. The Hai Technical/Vocational school was the dream of a civil engineer. There are so many young people, age 12-16, in the country with nothing to do. Many are orphans, and many don't have the aptitude to continue in higher education. They could be given a good life with a proper trade. He will train them in construction, carpentry, and electrical trades with others added as time and resources permit. He currently has 8 students and their first project is to build the buildings at the school. The government has given them 14 acres of land. The students built a kiln to fire bricks and they have 3 buildings under roof. The vision and prayer of one man, and the financial assistance of a few American churches has brought the dream this far. Later we would see another established Vo-Tech program in the Arusha area.

An important point with finances, is that a little in this country can go a long way. One member of our group presented this engineer with \$2000 that had been collected from their church. With it, he said that they would complete the bathroom and the whole septic system. Another member of our group pledged \$1500 to put in all the electricity needed.

It is certainly true that all is not rosy here. Alcoholism and unemployment are both high. There is crime and most places are very careful with security. But when these people are given an opportunity, they work hard to better their lives.

The second school program we visited, is the vision of a Tanzanian Lutheran pastor, Johnson Lyimo, who had been working with Maasai tribal people. The Maasai are nomadic, but have been forced into certain areas by progress and population. They greatly devalue their young girls, see no reason to educate them, often marrying them off to older men when they are only 12. This pastor wanted a school, where he could bring some of these girls, give them some education, let them return to their tribe, and begin to change some of the destructive patterns. Two buildings are currently under construction. Again, vision, prayer and financial help accomplishes a great deal here.

Let me say a bit more about tribalism. I already mentioned the uniting of the 120 tribes in a peaceful existence. The tribes, however, still maintain their own customs. Pastor Urilo was telling me that his son is planning to marry a girl from another tribe. Last Sunday, Pastor Urilo and his wife had to visit the bride's family to work out an agreement for the dowry. The groom's family is expected to pay the bride's family for the loss of their daughter. Pastor Urilo and his wife are both highly educated and well traveled, but the local customs must be observed. In this case, the bride's tribe is somewhat wealthier than Pastor Urilo's and expects a larger dowry. Of the money our church gave to Matunda, I designated \$100 just for Pastor Urilo and his wife, to use as they saw fit. He said this will help with the dowry, and was very grateful. In the midst of national unity and peace, local customs must be observed.

So much for another day. We ended it with a dinner honoring the families being helped by the American God Parent Scholarship Foundation, our trip organizer. We then had a brief team meeting with Dwayne to summarize our thoughts so far and ask any questions. He and his daughter, Kristin, have done a wonderful job in organizing this adventure.

The American God Parent Scholarship Foundation (AGPSF) was founded a few years ago by Pastor Westermann out of his concern for the Tanzanian children. The Foundation accepts donations and provides tuitions for students in primary and secondary schools, and a few college students. At present they are supporting 90 students.

Day 5, Tuesday, June 13<sup>th</sup>

Before breakfast, I tried to send an email home, via the "Internet Cafe" here at Uhuru Hostel. I got almost all of my message typed out when the power went off. Not unusual. It was still off when we came back from our day's journey.

After breakfast, I had a wonderful conversation with Winnis, an architect trained in South Africa. He is a Christian and works for the ELCT-ND. We were to head out to the Mongai Parish. He would accompany us on today's trip. He was sharing an important insight into the difference between northern and southern Tanzania.

The north is strongly Christian, having been missionized over a hundred years ago. With the missionaries came self respect, the importance of education, a work ethic and most important, a heart changed by Christ.

The south is a mixture of Christianity and Islam, and there is a different attitude among the people. They are not as hard working, and they have a jealousy if they see their neighbor getting more or better than they have. There is more to this insight, but that is sufficient for now.

We left about 9 AM for the town of Marangu and then up to the Mongai parish, 5900 feet up on the eastern slope of Mt. Kilimanjaro. This area is amazing and teeming with life. As on our previous trip, the hard surface road gave out at about the 1/3 point of our journey. The remaining 2/3 were on roads that even the western hills of NC cannot match, but our driver and 4WD Toyota van continued undaunted. We traveled to within about 1 mile of the end of the road where there are no further inhabitants on Kilimanjaro. But this entire area is full of homes and stores in the most unlikely (by our standards) places. After an hour and a half drive, we reached Mongai Lutheran Church with a gorgeous view looking north into Kenya. Mongai is a 1700 member Lutheran parish with a church building that seats about 500. These people are wonderfully gracious and giving. They greeted us with cheers, hugs and handshakes as usual.

The handshake is unusual. It is triple. One shakes hands in the traditional way, then rotates the hand slightly upward to grab the thumb, and then back to the traditional position. Interesting. I was told that this is simply to emphasize the greeting. Also, with the hand shake they sometimes place their left hand on their right forearm as a sign of humility.

The pastor of the Mongai parish travels 18km (about 11 miles) on a motor bike to get to the church over these roads, and does it everyday. Mongai had worked very hard to become self sustaining and improve their people's way of life. They have many projects going up here on this mountain. St. Stephens Lutheran Church in Williamsburg, VA, helped them buy a grain mill for \$2000. Once installed the local people would bring their maize to have it ground into flour for a small fee. (Of course, they had to build the building to house the mill and with help, get electricity up there). The church made 2,144,000 Tanzanian shillings (about \$2100) for their parish last year and the people had flour to eat and to sell. After the grain mill, they installed a seed press to refine cooking oil from sunflower seeds. Each of these projects is a joint venture between the parish, other local Christian sources, and American churches. The government has no funds for such help. This is a country where a little donated cash can go a long way with these industrious people. The parish has bought a welder which they use to train young men in this trade, as well as make various iron items for homes in the area. They are also considering a carpentry program in the future. They plant a little coffee and they cultivate coffee seedlings which they sell for 100ts (10 cents) each to local people to start their coffee production on a small scale.

We began our visit to the parish with a brief devotional time in the church led by the pastor and translated for us from Swahili. After devotions, and some conversation, we were invited to sit down and eat. This was very simple and we thought it to be our lunch. Yet after our tour, we sat down to a full meal with a variety of foods. The former had been a "tea". They go all out in their hospitality, giving beyond their means.

Days 6 and 7, Wednesday and Thursday, June 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>

These were days of rest and relaxation. The tour had built a fun break into our various ministry visits. We drove from Moshi to the Tarangeri National Park and the Tarangeri Safari Lodge. This is a beautiful place comparable to our 4 star hotels, with the exception that our rooms are really modified tents, yet with full bath. A picture would have to be the thousand words. (And this can be seen on the DVD that I made after I came home.) The park is a vast stretch of grasslands with Acacia and Baobab trees where the animals are protected and roam free. On three occasions, we went in Safari cars through the park and saw elephants, giraffes, zebra, gazelles, impala and a host of other wild life. We took many pictures. We were told that while we were in the park no one was allowed out of their cottage after 10 PM. This was the animals' country, and an elephant or lion could wander past the tent at night.

The second afternoon, I was tired and took a nap from about 3 to 4:30 pm. After I got up, I was told that monkeys had been playing on the table outside my tent flap. I had not remembered to zip up the tent flap, but fortunately, the monkeys didn't notice, or I would have had a rude awakening.

This evening after dinner, we went outside on the stone patio and looked at the stars. I have never seen the sky so bright. Here, without all of the man-made lights to obscure the heavens, we could see the Milky Way, which I had never seen before, and being in the southern hemisphere (about 400 miles south of the equator) the Southern Cross.

Part of the benefit of this break time has been the conversations with the Tanzanians who have come with us. Pastor Baha of the Northern Dioceses, Pastor Johnson (his first name), the one building the school for Massai girls, and two students plus our car drivers were great company. They have shared wonderful information about their work and their country. Tomorrow, we are off to Karatu for more ministry visits. This has been a wonderful break. Where else can one go, and sit on their front porch, watching the elephants gather at the stream below.



Day 8, Friday, June 16<sup>th</sup>

We left Tarangiri Lodge after a good breakfast and began a four hour drive to the town of Karatu. On the way, we passed through the Great African Rift, the valley that was created by the shift in tectonic plates, and runs through Africa and up to the Dead Sea in Israel. We stopped on the mountain on the western side to take pictures of the valley and Lake Manyara. The lake is interesting in that it is briny and devoid of fish. Tiny red shrimp do grow in the lake providing food for thousand of flamingos coming to the water's edge. The flamingos, themselves, take on the red color after a sustained diet of these shrimp. This lake is also referred to as Flamingo Lake.

Following the photo stop, we got off the hard surface road and headed up the mountain toward the Kilimamoja Lutheran parish. This is an exceptionally poor region with about 500 families in the area. The last few years drought caused great hardship with people resorting to eating bark and other things they could find. Children were eating berries that caused diarrhea and dehydration from which some didn't recover. The parish was given ten 100 Kilo (220 lbs) sacks of maize by College Lutheran Church (Dwayne's congregation), which they were distributing on the day of our visit. Because of the drought last year, the price of maize has risen from \$30 per 100kilos to \$63. A real hardship.



The people waited for our visit to distribute the maize. The pastor called all the women together and each in turn came with a sack to receive 5 kilos each. For a large family, this would last only a couple of days, but for others somewhat longer. Even a ton of food helps, but doesn't last all that long. These people are far poorer than at the Mongai parish on the slope of Kilimanjaro with their grain mill. Even in their poverty, they invited us into their nice church building and offered us water and soft drinks.

From this parish, we drove a short distance to the Karatu Lutheran Hostel, our next residence for the following 5 nights. After a good lunch (we've been served 2 hot meals each day), we drove a short distance to the Karatu Lutheran Hospital. This is a work of the Northern Dioceses and is the only hospital for many miles. The ratio here is one doctor for about 20,000 people.

They have set up a system of 6 dispensaries in outlying communities which can provide basic care. We were taken through the 100 bed facility which is primitive by our standards, but they do have x-ray and ultrasound equipment, a lab for many tests (the more specialized ones they must send to another hospital and wait a week to a month for the results), a pharmacy, room for sterilizing clothes, and an operating room. They do about 400 major surgeries a year. One of the most astounding features (or lack of features) is that no meals are provided. Families who bring patients in are expected to provide their food. They are given space in a dirt floor building to cook their relatives food over an open fire. They all do the best they can, and it is far better than nothing. There are about 100 on the whole hospital staff. All seem well trained and competent.



The day was concluded with dinner and a short group meeting at the hostel.

Day 9, Saturday, June 17<sup>th</sup>

This was one more incredible day on top of all the others. We left the Hostel at 9:30am for a 2 1/2 hour drive up into the Ngorongoro Preservation area. This is west of Karatu and near the rim of the Ngorongoro crater.

As a side note, most Swahili words are pronounced pretty much phonetically. The only difference being the syllable on which the accent is placed.

We were heading up 15 km (9miles) off the hard surface road to the Mbulumbulu Lutheran Parish. It takes about an hour and a quarter to traverse these 9 miles. It was noted on a previous day that we have nothing comparable to these roads that our 4 wheel drive 9 passenger van had to traverse. On a good stretch, Moro, our driver, could use 2<sup>nd</sup> gear, but had to go to 4 wheel drive in a number of places. And yet, there are small buses that carry people up and down these roads all the time.

When we reached Mbulumbulu, there was a choir of uniform dressed school girls who met us with singing. Each of our team was presented with a flower necklace, and many, many handshakes. The sincere warmth of these people is wonderful. We were led in procession up to the church, another beautiful building, not quite complete, but usable. We were then shown into a side room normally used for tailoring classes. Table and chairs had been set up for us to have some refreshments. Water, coke and other soft drinks were offered as well as a few food dishes. The church pastor ate with us, but as usual, everyone else held back until all of us were finished. We were then given a tour of the church project.

They are very involved with trying to give their young people the skills to better their lives. The one I was particularly interested in was the carpentry class. They offer a two year course for boys and men from 16 years up. It is taught by a retired school teacher by the name of Samuel David. He lives 8 km away and rides a bike over these roads to work. Pictures are necessary here to show the "shop" and the kind of work they do. They primarily build furniture out of eucalyptus and occasionally cyprus. With rudimentary hand tools, (there is no electricity up here), they build living room arm chairs; a two person settee; coffee tables, small stools, etc. They sell a three piece set of two arm chairs and a settee, which takes about 7 days to make for 50 to 60 Kts (about \$60). The school charges \$40 a year tuition. They are in great need of tools for the shop - saws, clamps, planes, etc., which would cost about \$1000 to outfit the shop.

Their tailoring class makes the cushions for the chairs as well as clothing. It is this class that will be sewing garments for our ladies. Before leaving, we were asked to be seated outside. Surrounded by children and serenaded by the girls' school, we were each given gifts. Their outpouring of affection and honor is overwhelming. Many were in tears, especially Niane, (one of our ladies) who was singled out for special honor, because she and her church had helped this parish. We took our leave to more singing, only to have an even greater adventure ahead among the Maasai people. The Mbulumbulu church had established a congregation 1/2 to 3/4 hours further up in the hills among the Maasai people. This congregation is know as Lositete.

The Maasai are probably more the stereotype of what we think an African tribe to be, but they are not typical for Tanzania. The Maasai's history is that of a nomadic group in North Western Tanzania and southern Kenya. However, today the growth in population and the establishment of national parks, has narrowed their area and forced many into a more localized life. They do continue to fiercely maintain their traditions of independence, Maasai language, polygamy, (girls being promised to an older man at birth and being married off at 11 to 13 years of age), and wealth being measured in the number of cows a man has. This last item is why girls are married off. The girl's family receives cows as a dowry for each daughter. Nonetheless, the church has made inroads

into this community, and has established the Christian faith in a number of places. It is also why Pastor Johnson Lyimo is working so hard to establish a school for Maasai girls, as I mentioned on a previous day. If he can educate some of the girls and send them back to their people, some of these customs will slowly change.

When a Maasai man becomes a Christian, the church doesn't require that he get rid of all but one wife, because he does have an obligation to care for them. But they do tell him not to take any others. Teaching and changing centuries of ingrained customs is a slow process.



As we approached the village, we were met by a large group of men and women singing and chanting. By the time the afternoon was over, the crowd had probably swelled to a thousand people. One of the things that happens among the people is, when there is a commotion and especially music, the non-Christians gather with the Christians to see what is going on. The evangelists often use this to reach out to the unbelievers.

When we arrived, we were led to the church where the traditional "tea" was served. It doesn't really mean tea, but rather bottled water, soft drinks, bananas, and a few other food items. After "tea", we were shown outside to a pavilion that had been set up for us, made of poles and canvas and open on the front side. Chairs had been placed there for each of our group. Then came the gifts and speeches. They welcomed us, presented us with beaded crosses and other items. As was always customary, our group leader, Pastor Westermann, and the two other pastors had to sit in the middle. All Tanzanians show great honor to their pastor, leader and the elderly. In each of these situations, Pastor Westermann always responded by giving some gift, usually financial, to the pastor or leader of the parish. The gifts that AGPSF gave were always generous. Following the gifts, we went back into the church for lunch, always an act of their honor and hospitality.

There was time just before lunch for a stop at the choo, an outhouse of somewhat less distinction than our "one holer." Lunch was good with a variety of hot and cold items, that were safe to eat. No one that I heard of got sick from these meals. Following lunch, it was time to go back to the pavilion for their performances.

The young girls performed first, all dressed in dark blue ground length dresses. They sang and acted out several Bible stories perfectly and from memory. The Maasai women then sang for us and danced, all in traditional garb and well done. I have some video of these dances.

One part of the traditional dress is the beadwork. Each woman wore a collar made of tiny beads about 15" in diameter. We were also told that if a woman had an earring, it signified that she was married.

The Christian faith has taken hold among many of these people which is evident in their songs and worship, as well as the importance of the church building in their midst. It was then the men's turn to perform.

Since this is a male dominated culture, they have to demonstrate their superiority. They do this by chants and dances which included three or four at a time jumping in place. The height of the jump is supposed to impress the women. Occasionally, one or two of the Maasai "warriors" would rush toward our group with spear in hand. We had been told not to flinch! No danger really. After more singing, flowers and handshakes, we took our leave driving the 2 hours back down the mountain.

Day 10 Sunday, June 18<sup>th</sup>

We set out for an hour drive to the Qurus Parish (pronounced CU-RUS accent on the second syllable and trilling the R). southeast of Karatu. This parish was founded by a Finish Pastor many years ago.

The drive was on a hard surface road for the first 10 minutes then the remainder on our equivalent of our farm lane, reasonably flat and rut free. The main disadvantage on these drives is the dust, fine and red, coating everything including us. About a mile out from the parish, we met up with a contingent of men on bicycles meeting our four vehicles, greeting, shaking hands, inserting branches on the vehicles, and leading us in procession to the church.

This was only the beginning of their hospitality. We arrived at the church and were given flowers and were introduced to the pastor. This parish has no full time pastor and is served by an evangelist. Evangelists can do all pastoral duties except for the sacraments. The Pastor, Pastor Delles, fills in here, but oversees a vast area. He was there this week because we were coming. The congregation of 3 to 400 plus our group went into the church, while Pastor Delles, my translator, Pastor Israel, and I met in his office for prayer. As at our service the week before, all was quite traditional. All of our people would be able to follow the service with a translation. The music is wonderful with several choir songs in perfect harmony, and several hymns with fairly familiar tunes. Since Swahili is phonetic, as mentioned earlier, one can sing these hymns even not knowing the words. The service proceeded with the pastor chanting in a beautiful voice. When the time came for the sermon, Pastor Israel and I went to the pulpit and proceeded with the greeting and message, line for line in the two languages. It went very well, and really was not awkward or detracting from the message. The service concluded with prayers, The Lord's Prayer and the benediction as usual. After the formal service, gifts were exchanged. Pastor Delles gave Pastor Westermann, Pastor Scott Bensen, and me the traditional cloth used as robes by the men. We had to open each package and allow them to drape the cloth around us. Then each member of the group was given a can of instant Tanzanian coffee.

Then in response, Pastor Westermann gave them a card signed by each of us, a cash gift, and a set of paraments for their altar and pulpit. After the gifts and a prayer, we were lead to another building for lunch. This proceeded as previous times with one exception. As a special honor, they had roasted a goat. Most of the people, especially the men are in western dress. The service is western liturgical, but many of their customs of honor are from their own traditions - the greetings of flowers, singing, gifts and meal, and now the goat.

This is the first time we experienced this. We had eaten the foods provided, rice, cucumbers, bananas, potatoes, carrots and beef stew. At the conclusion of the meal they brought in a whole roasted goat, head, legs, tail, and all. It had been roasted for three hours before we came. The goat even had a branch in its mouth. Four men began to carve the goat into small pieces, inserting a tooth pick in each piece and distributed them to all of us. Actually, it was pretty good, though a couple of our ladies had to get up and leave. One said she couldn't take the goat looking at her. A large piece of the breast was given to Pastor Westermann in honor of his being the leader and bringing our group. Dwayne thanked them graciously and passed the large piece onto the elders of the church, which is an acceptable practice. After many thanks, we headed for the vehicles and a ride back to the Hostel. We changed clothes and went out to Gibbs Farm, a coffee plantation, tourist attraction, and cottages, for a relaxing afternoon. Some went hiking, but I got a beer and began writing this. Such has been a good day as we head back to the Hostel.

Day 11, Monday, June 19<sup>th</sup>

Today was a visit to the Bashay Primary School. Education here works as follows: Primary school is grades 1 through 7 and is supposed to be mandatory for all



children. 90% of the children follow the regulations, but about 10% are too poor to pay the school fees. Even public school is not free here. There is a school fee, and parents buy uniforms for the children. After the end of 7th grade, the youngsters take a test to see if they qualify for Secondary school, grade 8-12. For a variety of reasons, less than 10% nationally go on. Bashay has a better record at about 30%. Following Secondary school, there is another test to determine admissibility to college. They are also in the process of providing some pre-primary (kindergarten) education for 5 and 6 year olds.

Bashay is a government owned school, but depends on a lot of outside help to continue functioning. It is 1 of 96 primary schools in the Karatu district. They have 652 students and a teaching staff of 15. The students that don't pass the test have several options - to go to a vo-tech school, go to a private secondary school if parents can afford it, or stay at home.



Fees for uniforms (required), books and supplies runs a family about \$200 per year per student. The government does pay the teachers' salary and provide some money for operation. The buildings, however, are the responsibility of the community. If a new building is needed, the community is expected to build the foundation and walls, then the government will put the roof on. Repairs are needed to

some classrooms and more houses are needed for teachers. The government sends them from a distance so they live on the school campus. The school day is long. The students arrive about 6:45AM. They do some work on the grounds, which are lovely and well kept. Classes start at 8 with a break around 10. Then they go home for lunch from 12-2, returning to classes until 4:30PM. This is presently a holiday time for them, but almost all of the 650 students came back to put on the program for us today. They are well disciplined and patient children. I say patient because they all

stood lined up for about 4 hours waiting to perform for us. When they did, their program was between 45 minutes to an hour, including songs and a skit all memorized and choreographed. As with the other visits, we've made, it included tea time, lunch and more gifts. The principal is an impressive man and is working hard for his school.

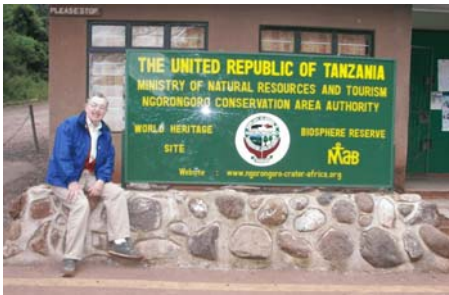


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Day 12 , Tuesday, June 20<sup>th</sup>

Today we have another short rest and relaxation time at the Ngorongoro Crater. Last night, I tried to call home on a satellite phone one of the women has. Unfortunately, I only got our answering machine. I left a message, but couldn't say too much. I started to cry. This has been a wonderful trip, but I've been away from Audrey for too long. This is the longest we have been apart in 40 years. Since Sunday, I have really been longing to be home. Well, Friday will come, the Good Lord willing and I will settle into familiar things again, and especially be back with Audrey.

We took the two hour drive from Karuta to the valley of the Ngorongoro Crater, formed by a volcano collapsing back on itself many centuries ago. This is the opposite of Kilimanjaro which is a volcanic mountain, last erupting more than 200 years ago. The crater is all part of a national park and a protected game reserve. The scenery is beautiful as the photos will show. On our safari drive, we saw a variety of animals, including a rhino, two pools of hippos, and eleven lions who decided to rest themselves beside the road. At one point, there were more than 16 safari cars there to watch and take pictures. Several lions even decided to relax in the shade under one of the stopped Land Rovers.



We returned back to Karatu about 3pm and were free to rest until 7pm when we had dinner with Pastor Baha and his family. Tomorrow we return to Moshi and the Uhuru Hostel, along with several stops in Arusha and another vocational training school.

Day 13, Wednesday, June 21<sup>st</sup>

I had started coughing yesterday and by evening my chest was pretty sore. I didn't know whether to attribute it to the red dust that is everywhere or to the start of a cold. By the morning, it had pretty well been settled that it was the later. Today was a travel day so I tried to shut my eyes in the van for a while to rest, with only partial success.

The drive from Karatu to Moshi is about four hours on hard surface roads. It took us longer because we made four stops along the way. Some of the ladies wanted to go into the "T shirt Shack" for some last minutes items. We stopped at a tourist trap we had previously visited on the way up for a potty break and quick box lunch.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN TANZANIA KANISA LA KIINJILI LA KILUTHERI TANZANIA			
GROUND FLOOR ROOM NO.	FIRST FLOOR ROOM NO.		
GUEST HOUSE - 10	TYPING POOL - 124		
TEA ROOM - 13	ADMINISTRATIVE SECR - 125		
AUDIO VISUAL - 20			
FIRST FLOOR ROOM NO.	SECOND FLOOR ROOM NO.		
ASST. EXECUTIVE SEC. - 101	WOMEN DEPT. - 201		
EXECUTIVE SECR. - 102	MISSION & EVANGELISM - 202		
MKUSI OFFICE - 106	PROJECTS & DEVELOP. - 203		
BUILDING DEPT. - 110	ROOM NO. 206		
PURCHASING OFFICE - 111	TREASURY DEPT. - 211		
INFORMATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPT. - 113	LUTHERAN MISSION COOPERATION TANZANIA 0672172006		
LITERATURE DEPT. - 116	TIGA AT (E.A.) LTD. - 221		

Then we drove on to Arusha where the ELCT has its offices and bookstore. We did more shopping. This trip really wasn't about souvenir

shopping, but about the Tanzanian items, especially wood pieces. They are very reasonable and unique as gifts to take home.



The final stop was at a church run vo/tech school for the handicapped. This is a fairly large facility teaching carpentry, welding, tailoring, ceramics, and helping people especially 16 years and up, gain occupational skills and begin a local business. They also have physical therapy sessions to help in that way as well. The center also has a gift shop, so the ladies had another go at shopping.



Tonight, back at Uhuru Hostel, we are having dinner with ELCT church officers and a time to ask questions. Tomorrow is packing, last minute odds and ends, and I am hoping to see Pastor Aaron and Gilead again.

Day 14, Thursday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, our last day in Tanzania

This was to be a day of packing and odds and ends, but it turned out that we had several interesting visits. We went to Shaw Industries, a business established 50 years ago by an Indian family by the name of Shaw. Mr. Shaw (67), the second generation owner of the business, gave us a tour. This is what we would call a craft and souvenir manufacturing business. But some large and very quality items. They specialize in wood and leather products. A wonderful feature of this business is that many of the 40 employees are handicapped. Mr Shaw has provided valuable work for many who would otherwise be on the streets begging. Many of his people have been with him for 15 or more years. At one time, he had almost 300 employees, but a high tax put on the raw leather has made him cut back. Nonetheless, it is a large shop with beautiful items sold all over the world. Mr. Shaw has really tried to be a benefit to the people.

On the way back to Uhuru, we made a quick stop at the wood carvers' shop, where some of us had previously ordered items. I bought a carving, about 20" long, of three African animals. It was expensive, but not by US standards, and is a beautiful piece of work. As it was quite long, I was concerned how I would get it home. Unfortunately, when we got back to Uhuru, I took a fall down four concrete steps and broke the carving in half. With a few bumps and scrapes to me, the problem of packing the carving was solved. (Note: I was able to glue it back together when I got it home)



We had lunch and then one final visit to the Montessori teacher's training school I have previously mentioned. About half of our group drove the short distance out of Moshi to the school campus. Pastor Urio and his wife, Sophia, have their home there, and Mama Sophia is the principal of the school. This large campus was established in 1961 by the Northern Diocese beginning as a home and training center for deaconesses. Eighty-five deaconesses still study and reside there, going out to their various ministries during the day. The teachers' training school was started in about 1990, now having 64 students in the 2 year training program. The campus has cattle, pigs, chickens and turkeys, all carefully taken care of by the sisters. They have their own well for water supply and have used a number of energy saving systems like solar water heating and bio-gas generation from manure for cooking. All of the campus is beautifully landscaped as the sisters care for half of it, and the teachers take care of the other half. There are about 15 lovely and well maintained buildings. The visit had to be cut short because we were late getting back to prepare to leave on our flight home. Pastor Aaron and I said warm goodbyes, and we boarded the bus. We had a light supper at Uhuru, more goodbyes and the half hour drive to Kilimanjaro International airport. This began the normal travel, hurry up and wait routine, for the 20 hours it took us to get home. It has been an amazing experience with so much to share and hopefully new insights for ministry.

