

THE CHURCH
OF CHRIST IN

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KEITH AND ANNE THOMSON:
P.O. BOX 11775
MERU, ARUSHA
TANZANIA EAST AFRICA

TELEPHONE
+255 686779250

EMAIL
KMCOTHOIMSON@YAHOO.COM
.AU



“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit”
Matthew 28:19

The Work Continues

KEITH'S REPORT

This report marks the end of our first month in Tanzania. I don't think we have ever had such a busy month and done so many things. The Lord has been so good to us and so many prayers have been answered. I want to thank all who have remembered us in their prayers; we can't over estimate the importance of our prayers.

Space wont allow me to write all of the things that we have done, but I will tell you about some of the high lights. The work in the church is going on well and I am pleased by what I am seeing here in Arusha and surrounds. The worship services have been going very well and we have enjoyed visiting some of the brethren in their homes.

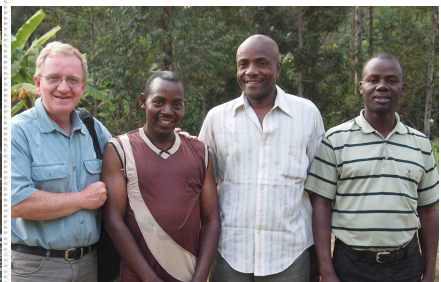
Noah, Msuya, the preacher working with the congregation at Karamu village, asked Allen and I to come and help him with a series of studies he was having with some Seventh Day Adventist men. Karamu is a village on the slopes of Mt. Meru about 20 minutes out of Arusha. We have been having the studies in Msuya's house and there have been at least four men in attendance at each study. Each study follows a similar pattern, I have been doing the teaching, Allen has been translating and Msuya had been dong the readings. We have been studying various topics and one man, Alfonz, in particular is very interested. Last Thursday Msuya asked another man, Francis, to come to the studies and he was very interested. At the end of the studies I normally ask if there are any questions. Francis wanted to know about baptism; what



Brother Msuya, myself and the men we were studying with



A new brother is born



Keith, Francis, Msuya and Allen

Arusha is the third largest city in Tanzania, East Africa. It is known as the Geneva of Africa and is the center for the U.N and the East African community.



was it? Was sprinkling baptism? Did you need to be baptised to be saved? Well, we studied for quiet a bit longer and Francis said he HAD to be baptised. We talked some more and he again insisted he HAD to be baptised! Of course we were very happy to assist this man in his obedience of the gospel and Allen baptised him in the Themti River.

MOVING HOUSE

Moving to another country involves a so many things – all of which we have been trying dealing with. Not only

did we have to find a house to live in we had to find all the things that go into a house. We were really blessed that in the first week here friends of ours told us the house next to theirs was shortly to become vacant. We looked at it, we liked it and we signed a rental contract, all in the first two weeks! We then went about finding furniture to go in it. We ended up with a combination of new, used and locally made things. We looked at the second hand electrical items and decided that new was the way to go for most of those. We got some 2nd

hand furniture, but most of it was so expensive, we found it was cheaper to have a local “fundi” (craftsman) make what we needed.

Anne and Allen’s wife, Hossiana, trawled local markets and smaller shops for kitchen items and came up with some great buys. Anne even found a great place for linen at a good price. While we haven’t got everything yet, we are well on the way to having our home in Tanzania set up.

Anne Goes Bananas

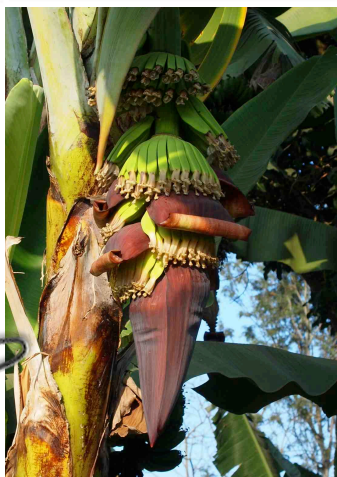
The guest house we have stayed in during this first month is very peaceful. One of our favourite spots has been the east facing verandah. This looks over a lush green lawn to a grove of banana palms. Though corn is grown on any available plot – roadside, vacant lot or any spare ground – so far I have only seen bananas grown on a big enough plot next to a house as at least a small grove, rather than just one palm clump. Having only seen bananas on the shelf before, ready to buy, it has been fascinating to see them start and develop on the stalk.

Like the leaves, the flower stem grows upwards out of the trunk, but is bowed over by the weight of the “flower” at it’s end. This looks like rather like a huge, very dark red, unopened rosebud, now pointing to the ground.

As a “petal” slowly curls back from the “bud” point the actual flowers – tiny and creamy white – are revealed in a row. Bees buzz around them busily. As the bananas form, the flowers wither to become the black “bottom” tip. The new bananas point down and straight as they start to develop, then will bend back and up as they mature. Each row of bananas on the stem was once a row of flowers under a “petal”; the next row was formed as a new “petal” unfurled.

The rows of fruit stop after the palm has enough to support; the stalk and “flower” keep on, but the stalk is now bare as successive “petals” and flower rows wither from it.

The whole trunk is cut down from the base when the stem is harvested. Another palm will grow up to replace it from the clump.



Bananas flowering



Different stages of banana growth



See how the bananas are turning up



KISWAHILI CLASS

One of my main aims in these first few months here in Tanzania has been to learn to local language, Kiswahili. I have thought a lot about it and wondered how we would feel if a Tanzania preacher came to work in our local congregation back in Armadale, Australia. If he could not speak English we would want him to learn it so we could speak to him in our own language. I don't know if the reverse would be true, but I very strongly want to be able to talk to the brethren and those I study with in their language. I know it would take me a long time to be able to preach in Kiswahili, but it would be nice to have simple conversations.

To that end Anne and I sought out a Kiswahili course. Friends pointed us to Alliance Franco Tanzanne, part of an international language school that specialized in French, but also teaches Kiswahili in Arusha. They offer 3 month courses, but as the course was already started we had to either wait until October or take an intensive course to catch up to the students doing the current regular course. Bwana (Mr.) Sotera worked Anne and me very hard. We had 3, two hours long classes, after each of which our heads were spinning! Bwana Sotera then announce that we were ready to enter the regular class. I can tell you our heads did not stop spinning! We are continuing with the classes, going in for two hours on Monday and Wednesday nights. It is tough and we feel like dunces at times, but we are learning slowly, or as they say in Kiswahili, "pole, pole!"

SOME KISWAHILI TO LEARN

Jambo - Hi!
 Nzuri - I'm fine
 Karibu - Welcome
 Asante sana - Thank you very much
 Tafadhali - Please
 Rafiki -- friend
 Unazungumza kiingereza? - do you speak English?
 Kwa Heri! - Good bye!



Alfonz, Francis and Allen Mkita

Dear Brethren,

I am glad to write hoping that all is well. The same applies in the country.

My name is Allen Mkita married to the beautiful wife called Hossiana. We have been working for the Church and God has been good to us all through. We thank him to be part and parcel of his beautiful work. We still have a lot to do for him: that is making his will known to everyone.

Mostly, people are interested to know more on the word and Christ's church. In fact, they wonder how comes that the Bible is one and yet many churches. If we all follow the scriptures, we will all be Christians and nothing less, more or else!

Therefore, I would like you to keep us in your daily prayers remembering that we all need each other as the body. Also, we will do the same and let you know more as time goes on.

Romans 15:33

In Christ,

Allen Mkita,

P.O BOX 13696,

Arusha, Tanzania E.A

Allenj164@hotmail.co.uk



KEITH'S 50TH BIRTHDAY

The Thomson family has had the tradition for many years of doing special things on each other's birthday – these are always a surprise for the birthday boy or girl. For example on Anne's 40th birthday Jamie and I rented a houseboat and travelled the length of the Serpentine River. One year when Jamie was a little boy we organised a trip for the day by train to the city of Bunbury, which blew his mind.

Well, on the 23rd of August I turned 50 and Anne continued the family tradition.

It started out with breakfast out (thank goodness that Jamie is over MacDonalds and they are not in Tanzania) which was very nice. She then told me she wanted to take me into town so I could pick a painting or photo for my birthday present. After visiting several store we ended up at one next to a café. "Why don't we stop for a coffee?" Anne asked - well you don't need to ask me twice, so we sat down and were enjoying our lattes when Scott and Kerri, friends of ours, just "happened" to pass by. Of course we invited us to join them and we had a great time chatting. Anne obviously had other plans for the day so she said it was time to move on. "Do you want to join us at Kundayo (where we are staying)?" Anne asked our friends. I thought they were going to join us in the restaurant for lunch.

When we arrived we didn't stop, Anne said I had to take our bags (she would not tell me what were in the bags) and put them in Scott's SUV. We all got in, I had to sit in the front with Scott and I had to have my camera. Off we went out of town. After about 20 minutes we turned off the highway and headed towards the Mt. Meru National Park – I thought I had worked it out! Bu no, just before we arrived at the gates Kerri told Scott he had to turn to the right and drive just outside the park to get there... (where, was left hanging). We drove for about 10 minutes down this dirt track when it was decided that no, it was not the right road and we went back to the Park gate where they would ask directions. After about 15 minutes Anne and Kerri came back to the car and said that we had to go through the National Park. They had paid the fees (how much I still don't know) and went through the boom gate. Almost immediately we saw game. In the distance there was a large herd of buffalo and another of zebra. There was also a family of warthogs playing around. Just down the road there was a huge troop of baboons – they obviously own that section of road. I was so excited.

But we were not at our destination yet. We drove on through the Park and after about ½ an hour we went through another gate and exited the Park. And still on we drove. The

landscape was changing all the time. As we drove we were climbing Mt. Meru (an old volcano) and we went through lush jungle and grasslands, we were now on boulder-strewn flat lands. Finally we stopped and in front of us as a sign,

HATARI!

Lodge

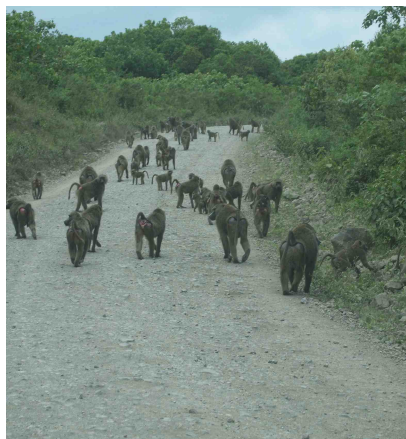
Anyone who has seen the 1962 John Wayne movie called Harati! would know this name (it means DANGER!). We were finally at our destination. The lodge was formerly owned by one of the stars of the movie, Hardy Kurger, and had been used as a base for the movie (the actual house used in the movie was just over the hill). Anne had arranged a great lunch for the 4 of us and even a chocolate cake. We had the cake and coffee down on a deck overlooking a big grass field. In the distance was a herd of buffalo and there was a family of warthogs feeding near by. The lodge manager pointed out to us a giraffe in the distance – it was a wonderful setting.

We had to get back to Arusha, Anne and I had a Swahili class at 6.p.m. So off we went. We had to drive back through the National Park and saw some more game on the way.

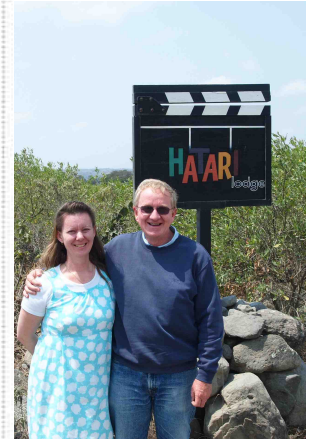
Considering she had only been in the country for 2 weeks, Anne really out did herself on this birthday surprise. I had no idea what she was planning and Scott and Kerri were in on it and didn't let on at all.



Keith, Anne, Kerri and Scott - notice the cake!



"THIS IS OUR ROAD!"



HATARI - Danger!