

February 13, 2009 - Arusha update #3

Dear family and friends:

Once more we have a little time before other pressing things and will try to get a few more details sent your way. It is a busy Friday and we have to get sermons and health talks ready for the next three days when the schedule will be tight again. Willie has gone back to the mountains to get

more work done but plans to return this afternoon. Napenda, his wife, has gone to their villa to oversee the work being done there. So we are holding down the house here. Fortunately they don't get many visitors here so we will not be embarrassed by our lack of fluent Swahili.

Last night we had electricity clear through the meeting but learned that even Africans won't stay too long after it is dark. We now start the meetings at about 6 or 6:15 and get the Pastor's sermon in during the light time. Also the Choir numbers and our story for the children. Then Mary Alice gives her health talks with slides to illustrate and they show well on the screen. Since the color is now better on the screen (which faces the setting sun and does not reflect real good anyhow with just paint over plywood) we show the Jesus video next. Last night we showed two segments to try to catch up a bit from the past losses. People come in large numbers to see it. But then the sermon comes with good color but with a tired audience and restless children. We like to have the sermon challenge be the last thing they hear before going home—to influence their thoughts during the night and maybe even their dreams.

This morning, considering all the above, we have decided to put the Jesus video to the last so they will not lose part of the sermon because of time and lateness of the hour (8:30 p.m.) Most of the people live close by and just walk home, but they may need to eat after meeting and do some of their work prior to early rising the next morning. The challenge is to balance out things within the many different needs.

Thursday afternoon we were invited to lunch at the home of the pastor (John Kimbota). He lives in the parsonage of his larger church (Burka). He has about 400 members there. They bought it from the South African Orthodox church and so it is somewhat elegant in comparison to most of the others. Besides the Shamsi church where we have our evangelistic series (it grew out of the Burka mother church which dates from 1960 and is the first one in Arusha) pastor has two other churches and six companies. They have a large compound with the Burka church and have an elementary school of about 130 students and 8 to ten faculty.

Pastor's wife also assists at the

school. Several of them were also with us at the lunch provided by Pastor's wife. The food was very nicely done and in abundant supply. Pastor and his two elders and the headmaster of the school took us on a tour of the school, carefully pointing out its many needs, and the church. They want us to present Sanctuary there in the afternoon following my presenting Sanctuary at the Shamsi church in the morning. Also there will be a preliminary baptism at Shamsi that afternoon before our evangelistic meeting that night. So, you see, it will be a full day. At Burka they have a screen and computer and video projector and so want me to give power point instruction also in the afternoon. The church there would have been much nicer surroundings to present the evangelistic series, but we would not have reached as many non SDA as where we are in their midst rather than in the "compound" with its protected surroundings. This morning Dr. John Kisaka is to come so we can video his story. He was the first SDA missionary to the Massai and has many interesting things to share. He worked for 7 years among them before he got his first 3 converts

and they eventually left. It is a hard group to reach, but now we do have at least one Massai church. Willie plans to take us on Sunday to visit a Massai village not far from here. That should be an interesting opportunity.

Mary Alice keeps up with our laundry and I help hang it out on the lines when there is a little space available. It seems secure here. In some places it would be a one way trip to the clothes lines. The laundry would disappear before you got to it when it was dry. We were pleased to learn while here from an email by elders of the church in Mwanza where

Glenn's evangelistic series was held (Mkonanai church we bought land to build on) that they have now baptized another 32 who attended that series, making the total baptisms there at 49. So they are careful to follow up when we are gone. That is encouraging. They are still hoping for help to build that church. The conference has now given them the \$2000 toward it, from the computer and video projector we gave them following the last series. So they at least have a start. They have revised the cost downward to \$15,000 more needed, but we know there will be more following that. They were very sorry we cancelled that part of the trip. We knew that we could not meet the financial expectations they had on us there. So we are using the funds given in ways that will accomplish more, or so it seems to us now. The \$2000 we saved in personal expenses and airplane fares from here to Mwanza and back, can do a lot in completing the little church in the mountains or whatever else it will be used for.

We have discovered that we can buy phone cards here that enable us to phone USA MUCH cheaper than to phone here from there (without a phone card there). Our one call from USA to Willie over here cost us \$90. We won't repeat that mistake. It came by force since Dr Bendall phoned and said Willie was waiting for our call to give the information we had not been able to get via email from him. It was very important for us to know some details in knowing what to bring and what not to. The problem with phoning from here is getting use of the phone at a time when it won't wake people up in USA during their deep sleep time.

All in all, the weather here has been quite pleasant. The heat range is in the 70s and 80s. There is a lot of pollution and the air quality is not good. Most people live in very deprived conditions. It breaks your heart to see the little children trying to play in such filthy conditions. But their bright smiles show that surroundings are not the most important thing to happiness. We can't help but think how much more could be done in developing countries with funds that are used for personal gratification in the West. The Lord will have to sort all that out in the judgment. We appreciate all the sacrifice that is represented in our coming here at all and doing what we are able to do.

We want to wish you all a Happy Valentine's Day. It will be here 9 hours before it reaches you.

With Love,

Glenn and Mary Alice, Mom and Dad, Grandpa and Grandma (Bubu and Bebe)