

February 19, 2009—Arusha Report #6

Dear Family and Friends:

This may be the last report before we fly home on the 23rd since we close our meetings tonight and go by bus to Chome early tomorrow morning. Last night I presented "Why I Am A Seventh-day Adventist" and told my personal story with a review of the major teachings we hold. At the end I made an appeal for those who would like to be SDA to stand up and immediately a host of them literally "sprang" to their feet. It was a beautiful sight. It was 8:30 and dark so I did not call them to the front, but many came up to register their names afterward. The pastor said it was better that way so that they would not be so obvious to those who would want to discourage them immediately from joining the church. I don't know how many will be baptized, but that is up to the Lord. I am confident there will be a large number. The electricity went off, as usual, but we prayed it back on in time for Mary Alice's health talk and my sermon. They upgraded the generator and voltage regulator so that filled in during the absence of town current.

Earlier we had shown them slides of our recent ice storm in Gentry and the damage it did. We don't need to climb Kilimanjaro to see snow and ice! One Elder asked what the animals do in that ice. Mary Alice explained that their coats get thicker in the cold and also some people put out food for them. We also showed them some pictures of our family which they seemed to enjoy very much. It helps make it more personal. They have really taken us into their hearts as we have taken them into our hearts. They need a church building and are saving toward it. Our coming brought another \$1000 to their building fund from the Bendall budget in addition to our paying \$1000 to cover expenses of the meeting. So we will see how the Lord provides in the future to make their new church building a reality.

Yesterday we were invited to the home of a lawyer who is a member of the Shamsi church. Her husband is a Lt Col in the Tanzania Air Force. He was not there but I got to talk with him by phone. He was very cordial and welcoming. He is an SDA but the members say he has backslidden because of his work probably. We hope that will change for the better. He

was one who helped drive out Idi Amin from Uganda when they invaded Tanzania in 1978. Idi is now sheltered by Kaddafi in Libya. Two large photos of the couple hung high on the wall. Under hers it said "Welcome" and under his it said, "Feel at home." And we did.

The occasion of our being in their home was a special meal provided by the Shamsi church. They first met in the yard of this home when the church began. Then when they got the lot where they now meet, they moved the temporary building there and continue to meet in it until their new church

is built. We had great fellowship together. Two Maasai members attended the gathering in their traditional clothing. The church got from one of them a cane and sword which they will replace, as a gift for us. They know of our interest in the Maasai. Several new members from our first baptism

were Maasai. We enjoyed their traditional food and as of this morning have not gotten sick from eating it.

One suggested that they have an artist who paints pictures. They wondered if we could help market them in USA since he wants to give money from sales, to their church building fund. We told them we would photograph the pictures this morning and show them in USA as occasion permits. Then any who would want to, could purchase and pick what they want for shipment later. We don't want to try to bring a bundle of pictures back and be responsible for their sale. But we want to help them in any way we can.

On the way to our meeting site we noticed a painting of Che Guevarra, the Cuban revolutionary who with Castro made Cuba communist. I don't think that is likely in Tanzania. The Moslems are trying to become the majority here by even paying people to come Moslem. If they do get a majority they would press for Islamic law to be used here and that would bring very difficult times for Christians.

When we visited the Maasai village, the last house we went to was of a close friend of Willie, our host. They were harvesting beans at the time and we got brief video of them winnowing the beans in the breeze. It was

so heart warming to see the sheer joy at having us as their guests— probably the first white people to ever be in that home. We had run out of the groceries we had purchased to bring to the Maasai families we visited. Willie had not planned to visit this home because it was so far off the beaten path and the roads are horrible. The 70 year old “grandma” wanted to fix us a meal out of their meager store, but we refused because of the time it would take to get it ready etc. So I gave some money to help them.

They were so pleased at the gift. When we were showing interest in the woven basket they used in winnowing, they insisted in giving it as a gift. I could not pay for it. Also they gave Willie a little package of the beans they were harvesting. Napenda fixed them the next day for our lunch, and they were very good. They are not SDA or even Christian, but their eager hospitality was a lesson to us. I wonder if Paul's observation in Romans that when the “Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things contained in the law, these although not having the law, are a law to themselves, who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness...” applies here. We can hope that the SDA message will reach them and give them real hope for the future. She took a real “shine” to Mary Alice and we have a photo of them together. We must find a way to get a copy to her because it would mean so much.

Coming here this time and conducting the meetings and Sanctuary programs has been one of the most rewarding of all our mission trips. And, we nearly cancelled the trip when we could not get sufficient communication early enough to know what to bring and what to expect when we got here. Satan would have loved for us to scrap the trip and miss all the good that has come out of it. Our \$90 phone call saved the day.

We heard that in Chome I may have to preach to the Lutheran church as well as the 3 SDA churches combined for the Sanctuary. We will learn it all when we get there. (usual procedure). Willie and Dick Bendall planned to leave yesterday morning early, but with last minute details to care for, did not get away until afternoon. Dick said to me “Schedules

here are different". We learned that also at the meal. We were told by pastor we would be picked up between 11 and noon. But we actually got there about 3 p.m. and stayed until we had to rush to get back and ready for the evening meeting. In Indonesia and the Marshall Islands, it is called "rubber time." At least we applied that to the Marshalls when we were to leave by boat in the morning from an Island where we had a short series of meetings.

But the Queen's daughter was also there and wanted to ride that boat. The Islanders had a special feast for her and so we did not get away until nearly 5 p.m. as I recall. When we left the Marshalls to head on to Korea, we stopped in Japan on the way and had a long layover in Tokyo. So the airline offered us a place to stay and a trip to either a temple or a shopping center. We opted for the temple. We were told to be back at the bus by noon and the bus would leave exactly then. We made it but some others did not and had to find their own transportation back to the airport. Different people have different ways!

This morning we have several errands to do and will include the Internet Café where we hopefully can get this on its way to you. Last time the "net" was so slow we almost did not get to send the emails, but it finally worked and we were on our way.

With love to all. Hope to see some of you in a few more days.  
Glenn and Mary Alice (Dad and Mom)