

February 23, 2009—Arusha Report #7

Dear Family and Friends:

We are back in Arusha a day earlier than expected because some of our group had appointments here earlier than the rest. So they sent 7 of us down by Land Rover on Sunday. The rest will come on the bus on Tuesday (the day we fly home). It was an eventful day.

Following a hasty breakfast and brief devotional, the clinic people set up for checking eyes and teeth. We did not have a medical doctor this time, so were confined to the eyes and dental work. Some team members had brought 2000 pairs of glasses and had them all catalogued and stored in a computer.

So with the rented machines they brought to detect eye condition, it was a simple matter to get the right glasses for each and check them by actual seeing test. Many cases were beyond our simple solutions and had to be referred to an ophthalmologist for cataract surgery or dealing with glaucoma. The question is how can they afford to go down the mountain from Chome to where they can get the special help? Even with a late start the teams had given 55 pair of glasses and pulled 42 teeth by noon. As we left to come down the mountain there were many people lined up for service. Some had walked 20 miles to get there.

The dentists lamented that they could save many of the teeth rather than just extracting them, if they had the proper equipment and the means of using it there. The group representing World Health Services (chaired by Dr. Richard Bendall) listened to the appeals for a clinic in Chome near the school built by them a few years ago which now has about 600 students. They had a graduation for the 6th Level (first graduation in Chome) while we were there. But many of us could not attend because of having other commitments.

Willie Kisaka drove us down in his vintage Land Rover via the back side of the mountain. None of the roads leading to Chome are good in the final part. We learned that they did not use a bull dozer for any of it but just pick and shovel etc. When they came to big rocks, they just left them there and now the vehicles wind their way around and over them. Ruts

are standard fare, enhanced in the rainy season by rivers of water. Fortunately we are leaving before the worst of the rains come.

The appeals for a clinic/hospital are being studied and referred to others to see if it is feasible to do such. There is no question of need and desire. The appeals are pitiful as you hear of people who died with pregnancy complications on the way down the mountain to get help. The trip itself would bring on labor. One young wife of 30 died on the way down. A previous group involved with it took a collection to help get the body back up the mountain to be buried in familiar surroundings of family. It is traditional among the Pare tribe to bring the body home for burial. Care for children and older people is meager at present. They depend on the infrequent visits of clinic teams.

There is much more we can tell you about the history of the school and churches in Chome area but do not have space for them now.

We arrived in Chome Friday evening (we left at 6 a.m. from Arusha by bus) a royal welcome awaited us complete with brass band of students. I attempted to capture some of it on video, but the love and warmth seemed so sincere and joyous. It illustrated for me the royal welcome that awaits the children of God when Jesus returns to take us home with Him. They so deeply appreciate what has been done for them in building the school and other buildings by World Health Services. They almost worship Dr. Bendall for his part in pulling it off.

Many years ago the government built a school for them but did not run it well. It closed down. Then the local people tried to run it but could not do it well either. So it closed for some time again. Then World Health Services enhanced the building and built another including library, cafeteria, class rooms etc. and now they are thriving with the 600 students. More want to come also. It is in a beautiful mountain setting with pure air and fertile ground to grow good crops. On the way up you get glimpses of Mt. Kilimanjaro which gets a little snow on top but that has been receding in recent years with global warming. When we read of those who climb it and the conditions they endure to do so, we have no

desire to join that group. To us it is much more thrilling to help the people of the surrounding area. To help them physically but especially, spiritually.

The Pastor at Chome has 9 churches plus some other companies. Fortunately, in recent times he has been given a motor cycle to get around to them. Some are many miles away in the mountains. Others are nearby to the school.

We preached in the Shenenga church not far up the mountain from the school, on Sabbath morning. The weather was beautiful following a rain. The members were so welcoming and listened with rapt attention while I presented "the Gospel in Priestly Garments" and dressed up their local elder in the robes. He was just beaming with joy at the honor. I video taped the choir and congregation singing their sweet harmonious hymns without accompaniment. We will share a bit of it when at home. After the service they fed us in a little room behind the Sanctuary and the food was very good. We felt safe eating it since they had been coached about the special needs of Americans. They have 136 members and about 85 of them were present. Maybe more.

The church began about 10 years ago and they still have need to complete it with doors and windows and cement floor in some areas. On the platform we knelt on raw dirt which did not enhance the appearance of my blue suit since the dirt was red. We definitely plan to visit the dry cleaners when we get home before preaching in it on Sabbath. I inquired how much it would cost to finish the church and heard from my excellent translator (chaplain of the School who got his education at Spicer College in India) that it would take about \$1000. Mary Alice and I wondered if we could scrape that much together when we get home and see the church completed. But later when I talked with the pastor about it, he said it would take

\$2000. So we decided to let that rest a while. We want what funds we can give to actually complete something rather than just give another boost to the building program. On Sunday morning we visited the Lutheran church just up the mountain from the school and preached the Sanctuary to them. We dressed up the pastor in the robes. He always

wears a white robe to preach, so we started with that one rather than using ours. Then as we added the other robes and explained the meaning, the people were so excited and pleased. They sounded off with their special tongue vibrating joy that is unique. We have it on tape to share with you too. They send greetings to our churches back home. When the preaching was over they brought an offering to us. It was potatoes they had grown, eggs from their own hens, and flowers (bougainvillea). They explained that all the people would like to have invited us to their huts for lunch, but that was impossible since there were so many of them. So they just bring food to show their hospitality and send it with us. We left most of it with the kitchen to feed our medical group. The Lutherans are close friends of the SDA up there. I adapted the sermon to include the contribution of Martin Luther in recovering justification by faith to the church after it was lost in the Dark Ages of apostasy. I gave the pastor a copy of my book and suggested that he could get help reading the English and lead his people into a deeper study of the Sanctuary which illustrates so well Luther's teaching on justification by faith. He seemed pleased with it. Now we need to get a print of him dressed in the garments and somehow get it back to him. The Lutheran church had two choirs and each had special songs. We recorded enough to show you how they "feel" their music. It sounded beautiful. All the choirs we heard on this trip were very well practiced and had special voices. None of them have printed music before them when they sing. They must have had visitors from two other churches because their regular offering was taken by people coming forward and putting their money into one of three baskets, each with a different name.

Facilities at the houses where we stayed (all owned by Willie) were not as special as we had heard. There was a lack of water for all purposes and we chose not to pour/shower but used the wet ones we brought. (This morning back in Arusha at Willie's house) the warm water pour/shower felt great. It will feel even more great to be in our own shower back home in USA. The food was good and abundance, but as in most African food, there was too much oil. Mangoes are ripe and delicious, so we are getting our fill of them along with pineapple and bananas along with a variety of vegetables. We have risked even eating salads here because they use boiled water to clean the ingredients. We do this only in controlled situations.

On the way down the mountain we were glad to be in the Land Rover rather than the bus which swayed ominously going up the mountain when the driver hit those ruts in the road. It is a long, long way down to the bottom of the deep ravines right beside the road. We did not hear of any occasions where the bus "lost it". Willie told us that there is only one bus strong enough to take loads up that road to Chome. The big comfortable ones don't even try. The switchbacks would be too short for them to turn. It was a

memorable ride in any case. Mary Alice celebrated her 77th birthday on that ride. She will never forget it.

Willie has many good traits, but driving slowly is not one of them. He has several cars in various places, but all of them have mechanical problems. When you ride with Willie over "home made" roads, you find it easy to "Pray without ceasing" (2 Thess 5:17). He got us safely down the mountain and we have all experienced the "shaking time" on those rides. You get vigorous exercise whether you want it or not. But it is better than the locked in a cramped position you endure with seven in the small Land Rover. They are

built for strength, not for comfort. Willie's venerable father, Dr John Kisaka, sat in the jump seat in the back amid the luggage. Willie drove and the larger Pastor St. Clair Phipps (uncle of Wintley Phipps) had the passenger seat in front. The other four of us (Napenda, Mary Alice, me, and Dr. Tekla, the dentist) were stuffed into the back seat. I actually welcomed the car troubles that necessitated stops where we could get out and stretch legs and get circulation going again. By now we had a new driver since Willie bailed out in the small village where we had met the rest of our group on the way up. Willie took a motor cycle back up the mountain to keep on directing that operation.

And stops there were! First it was an overheating engine with smoke coming up through the vents. We stopped to add water. I urged them to check the oil, but that didn't seem to register. We knew there was an electrical problem also because in the mountain the headlights went out periodically. One night we tried to get back to the house where we were staying with Willie driving and another on the running board holding our two flashlights. Fortunately, the lights came back enough to get us

there. But now we were hastening to get as far as possible before dark. The plans had changed yet again to have us ride in that car which would normally be left in Same and we go to Arusha by bus, clear to Arusha which would be another 3 hours. And we had begun with the usual late start.

When the car began losing power and driving slower and slower, we crippled to a place on the outskirts of Same where they replaced two bulbs that allowed the headlights to function on bright beam only. So we got lots of signals from oncoming cars as we plowed ahead. They put in a big jar of oil also and much water. We took extra water and set out again. Not far down the road the same problems seemed to appear—slowing down with lack of engine power. People advised us that we needed to stop and check out the car. We did again and again adding water each time. Then the car quit with a bang and rattle. I thought we had thrown a rod in the engine. We saw a piece of the “drive shaft” and “universal joint” (as I thought) lying on the road. We wondered how we could make it to Arusha. Wished we had stayed in Same where there is a decent hotel (Elephant Hotel where we had lunch on the way up) till the car was really fixed. But here we were stranded by the side of the road with evening coming on. Of course our “prayer without ceasing” was still in place.

A truck with a heavy load of building materials stopped and 3 men came back. Dr. Tekla said they were moslems from Zanzibar by their dress and looks). They were most kind and helpful. They had some tools and worked with our driver under the car determining it was not the drive shaft but a piece of the 4 wheel drive that had sheered off. (It must have been that special bump Willie hit on the mountain road where we could hear something crunch). At least it brought us safely down the mountain where 4r wheel drive was often used. After a while they got the car going again and even the water problem seemed to require less stops.

In appreciation I gave each of th 3 one of the special nutrition bars recommended by Dr. Neil Nedley. They seemed pleased. We shared the remaining four with those in the car, Mary Alice and I abstaining. To

make some sort of close to all this, we did manage to get to Arusha before midnight. We dropped off Dr. Tekla at his clinic near the Union Compound, Dr. John Kisaka and his guest Pastor Phipps, at their hotel, and came on to Willie's house where we are staying. Got to bed (minus the expected shower) before midnight, tired and happy to be able to stretch out. We are very grateful to the Lord for His hand over it all. (I didn't mention the stops by police check points because the tail lights were not working. They chewed out the driver, expected money which they did not get, but finally waved us on "because of the American guests who needed to get rest rather than spending the night by the side of the road there). In appreciation, we gave the driver what we had left from our own private lunch of apple rings, Mary Alice's crackers, and cashews. It was a little way of rewarding him for all he had been through that day. He seemed pleased. All is well that ends well. Praise the Lord!

Love,

Glenn and Mary Alice (Dad and Mom)

THE REST OF THE STORY WILL COME LATER