
The Tanzania Weekly Update

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Tanzania 2000 Mission Work

Sponsored by:

Kensington Woods Church of Christ

415 S. 40th Avenue

Hattiesburg, MS 39402-1724

The Gee Family

Sponsored by:

East Side Church of Christ

P.O. Box 1434

Cleveland, TN 37364-1434

Local Address:

Jimmy and Trina Gee

P.O. Box 10622

Arusha, Tanzania

Local Phone Number:

*011-255-755-914-300 (calling
from US)*



Dear Loyal Co-Workers,

QUOTE OF THE WEEK: “Lack of direction, not lack of time, is the problem. We all have twenty-four-hour days.”

AN ELEPHANT NEVER FORGETS...but I did. I spent most of Saturday in Arusha and only at 11 pm when my head hit the pillow did I think about the weekly report which was supposed to be written and sent on Saturday. WHEN AT FIRST YOU DON'T SUCCEED, TRY, TRY AGAIN.

ON THE ROAD AGAIN. The TZ 2000 Mission Team director, Cy Stafford, his wife (Stephanie) and mother-in-law (affectionately called “Granny”) left this past week headed to the states to report on the progress in East Africa. Many who receive this report will be privileged to hear updates face-to-face regarding all the different aspects of the TZ 2000 Mission work and how this one-time dream has become a reality.

LADIES BIBLE CLASS. Having completed our studies on Genesis 1-25, it is the plan to review (asking questions, etc) as we did today to “cement” our learning. The Ladies seemed to enjoy it and it was encouraging to hear their answers, showing the knowledge gained over the past year.

JIMMY...continues to teach the Gospel of John on Sunday mornings (chapter 17 today). His study with Ammon and his wife on Saturday went well. However, concerning baptism, Ammon said (in reference to Jimmy's sermon last week about listening to God and not man) “Lutherans say there was not enough water in Israel long ago and therefore Christians did not use a lot of water. Sometimes they just sprinkled water on people's heads and sometimes they even threw dust on them.” Luke 6:46 “Why do you call Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not what I say?”

AGNESS RETURNS. Many of you will remember a very sweet Christian lady who was converted several months ago (6 days before giving birth to her first child, Joshua). She was very faithful in her attendance, even going against the local tradition of staying home for the first 3 months after giving birth. However, a few months after becoming a Christian her husband, Burtwell, decided that she and Joshua needed to go live with a woman cousin (about 10 hours away). I have seen (and heard of) this practice on several different occasions and I am still somewhat baffled. When I asked Burtwell about it, he replied that “Agness didn’t have anything to do.” To which I replied with a laugh (although I was serious), “You’re telling me that a woman who has just had a baby has NOTHING to do?” My TZ friend told me later that what he meant was, “There isn’t a job here that she can do.” So I suppose she was going to the cousins’ house to help her in some way and the cousin would “support” her there with food and possibly money for any medical care her baby would need. What I have seen is that sometimes when a baby arrives, the husband no longer wants to responsibility/stress/financial burden that comes with that precious little bundle so he ships the wife off to a relative. Finally, Agness has returned and has reunited with the church family in Kisongo. However, she has missed some services so we are hoping to encourage her more.

MARRIAGE SEMINAR IN MAY. Yes, you’ve heard us mention this several times and everyone at the church seems excited. In anticipation of it, it was requested that the married couples begin to sit together (only about 3 couples at present were doing so). It was announced that it would be “practice” for the upcoming seminar. Surprisingly, most couples seem happy to do so (at least the women seem to be) as if they needed a good reason, excuse or permission to do so. It was strange to me but the question was asked in the ladies class, “What about the single people or married women whose husbands do not attend? Won’t it make them feel bad?”

THEIR THOUGHTS ARE NOT OUR THOUGHTS. If there’s one thing we’ve learned about Africa, this is one of them. Ha/ha Oh, people are people wherever you go...same feelings, same needs, etc. However, take for instance “taste” in furniture or décor. I have decided (with Jimmy’s permission) to sell some of our present furniture and replace it with some dhow furniture made from boats used on the coast. This furniture is very sturdy and rustic and I can finally live out my dream of “Little House on the Prairie...in Africa.” I bought a dhow coffee table and after several Tanzanians looked at it, they laughed and said, “If you set that out by the road, no one would take it” and “This is just firewood. We need to take an axe to it!” It was all hilariously funny concerning the differences in “taste.”

GROW IN GRACE AND KNOWLEDGE. Lindsey continues to teach Therasia. Their last study was “How We Got the Bible.” Therasia is no longer working in the shop in Arusha (she quit due to moral reasons) and I have decided to give her a job with us. It is a win-win situation because I could always use extra help in the house and the small salary would mean so much to her. She’s a diligent worker, kind, honest and willing to help.

ACSOP. Jimmy will be teaching a Greek Readings class for the Master's students this week. Then, on Friday evening we are expecting Ted Cherry (Navasota, TX) to arrive to teach two more weeks of Master's classes. Then, after those classes are finished, we will take in a new Swahili class and continue with the second year of studies for the English class, if God is willing. We presently have 22 new students lined up for the new intake. Our goal is 30. We are still in need of support for these students. If you can help with the needed \$200 per month, in whole or in part, please send it to the Kensington Woods congregation (the address is on the first page of this report) marked “ACSOP - Student Support.”

FROM OUR HEARTS TO YOURS... Thank you for your desire to see this work prosper and grow. Thank you for all the prayers! It is amazing what can be accomplished when people work together.

In Christ,
The Gee's