

Preparing For Your EXCELLENT ADVENTURE in East Africa

From the ELCA web page

Additional comments in red from Luanne and Bishop Skrenes that may be informative

East Africa – especially the areas we will be visiting in Tanzania—is the land of Mount Kilimanjaro, pink flamingos, Maasai people, safaris, beautiful wild animals, and ebony woodcarvings. It is often referred to as the “cradle of humanity.”

East Africa is also a land that has suffered severe drought and beset by international debt, where wealth and poverty coexist, where women and girls still face discrimination in education and employment, and where family values and family cultural traditions continue to enrich and sustain the society.

East Africa offers much to see, to experience, and to which to reflect.

As you prepare for this experience, here are some travel tips related specifically to the area in East Africa in which we will be visiting.

WEATHER

October is the beginning of the “short rains”. These won’t have any significant impact on what we will be doing; however we may experience rainy times, especially in the late afternoon. The October average temperatures in Tanzania are between 50 and 85 degree F. The temperature will be in the 80s in July near Dar es Salaam. Evenings will be cool when on safari.

CLOTHING AND PACKING

The best advice we can give is: Pack only what you think you need, then leave half of that at home. Try to pack so you will not be limited by climate or culture. Be prepared for extremes of temperatures and humidity.

Loose clothing will keep you cool in the heat. Remember that over-sized suitcases carry the image of wealthy, materialistic Americans.

Comfortable, respectable, modest, informal clothing is best. It is okay to be comfortable but remember that we will be attending church and need to dress appropriately for that occasion. Women should cover their arms and a dress or shirt should be worn to church. Slacks/Capri pants should not be worn by women to church events. Slacks/Capri pants

for women would be OK for the safari or when not at church events. Women DRESS UP for church. Men should probably wear a suit or shirt/tie to church. Men should wear long pants at all times, except while on safari.

We usually take about enough for a week's worth of clothes if staying for 2 weeks. Then re-use &/or wash. If you stay at Luther House, there is a maid available to do laundry. She should be paid for this service.

Do not take your valuable jewelry with you.

Remember the culture as you pack and long sleeves for both men and women will protect you from the sun and mosquito.

We will be allowed 2 suitcases and one carry on per person. Information can be obtained on line from your airline regarding luggage size and weight allowances.

COST:

Trip expenses will be discussed with you by your leader.

We would recommend taking \$300-400 per person for small purchases, worship offerings, etc. If you plan to buy Tanzanite or other more expensive items you'll need more.

GIFTS:

We will be generously hosted by the Africans. A gift to our hosts is normal. Some suggestions are wall hangings, family photos, health kits, tee shirts, gum, toys, Frisbees, balls, games for children, toothbrushes.

Bring along pictures of your family in a small photo album. Also bring pictures of your congregation, pastor, Youth, etc. to be left at your companion congregation.

Auctions are held at the close of worship. You may wish to bid on items to donate to a member of the parish or bring home.

SUNDRIES

Important sundries include sunscreen, a good pair of sunglasses, insect repellent (essential -bring a good supply of a kind that contains diethyl- toluamide, commonly known as DEET), travel alarm, small flashlight with batteries (Bring more than you think you'll need), small packages of tissue (can also be used in lieu of toilet paper! Bring plenty of this and/or several roles of toilet paper as you may not find tp in the bathrooms. African tp when available is very rough), and handiwipes. Antibacterial hand wash gel (Purell) should be carried as the bathrooms do not all have sinks. You might want to bring along a pair of binoculars for the game park experience.

Other PERSONAL ITEMS TO CONSIDER:

*--Bible --Passport Pouch --Camera --more film or disk space than you think you'll need
--money belt --Lip Balm --Hat --Neck Pillow for flight --Notebook or journal
flashlight*

ELECTRICAL ITEMS

It is better to leave electrical items at home. If you must bring some appliances, be aware that the voltage is 240V, 50 cycles AC. Both the voltage and the plug are different from the U.S.. The sockets vary widely. Bring both a voltage adapter and a variety of adapter plugs. These adapters can be easily obtained at Radio Shack, Shopko, Walmart...

FOOD AND DRINK

*In general, you can expect meals with plenty of meat and starch - ample but not gourmet. The fresh fruit is very good; however, it is best to eat only fruit, which can be peeled. A good rule of thumb: **boil it, cook it, peel it or forget it.** Local tap water is not potable. Don't use ice cubes. You will be relying on bottled water and soft drinks.*

Brush teeth with bottled water which will be made available to us everywhere. Also be careful when showering not to open your mouth. We may be in situations where we are expected to eat the food. If so, be sure to have your immodium & Cipro at hand. Ask your travel doctor about when to use these medications.

HEALTH ISSUES

General Precautions

- *The qualities of health care facilities vary greatly. Check your own insurance and the enclosed ELCA policy to decide what additional coverage you may need in the event of illness, accident or death while traveling. You may obtain supplemental insurance. We strongly recommend this. Or, if you wish to seek other agents such as AAA, AARP they would provide options for you.*
- *Taking care in what you eat and drink is the most important health rule. Bottled pop & water are plentiful. Drink bottled pop via glass or straw as contaminants may be on the bottle.*
- *Bring enough of any medication you are using—in the original containers. Bring extra in case we have travel problems.*
- *Bring a doctor's prescription along if your medication is life-essential. It is best to use the generic name of the drug.*
- *Bring along your eyeglass prescription if you cannot get along without glasses. Or an extra pair of older glasses*
- *See your doctor before your trip.*

- Record all vaccinations on an International Health Certificate available from your physicians or government health department. **For Tanzania you will need proof of your Yellow Fever inoculation.**
- Bring along some bottled water for the long flight. *This will need to be purchased once we cross the check point.*
- *Make sure you get up and walk several times during the long flights. We also recommend wearing compression socks.*

Precautionary Inoculations and Medications

- **Malaria medication is essential.** See your doctor for a prescription. *Tom & Luanne prefer the once a day malaria medication or Doxycycline. We had vivid dreams and trouble sleeping with the weekly med.*
- Yellow Fever inoculation is required in Tanzania.
- Recommended but not required are typhoid, Cholera, Hepatitis A, polio and tetanus. *You may also want to have meningitis immunization. This is not a complete list. The Center for Disease Control changes their recommendations on a regular basis. You should consult your physician and travel specialist for the most updated recommendations as the needs change. Each person is responsible for their own inoculations and medications for this trip.*

As always, follow the advice of your doctor.

CURRENCY AND BANKING

*The shilling is the national currency in Tanzania. In 2008 there are about 1,800.00 shillings to the U.S. dollar (check the internet for updates as this exchange rate changes). Cash is most convenient to take with you. Travelers' checks *may be difficult to cash.* Major credit cards are accepted *in many places in Dar es Salaam or Arusha.**

*The best places to exchange money are in the foreign exchange bureaus, where the rates are competitive and the commission charges are fair. In Tanzania, the exchange rate for the dollar is better than it is for travelers' checks, and the exchange rate is significantly lower when you use a credit card. **Always have someone from the Tanzanian Church when you make these transactions to assist and interpret for you.***

PUBLIC SAFETY

*It is important to remember that in these days of urban violence and hostile acts, no country in the world is immune from danger. We are taking every precaution to ensure our safety. **Never go out alone. Always have a Tanzanian friend with you.***

Some tips to consider:

- *Theft is happening everywhere in the world. The most important things to guard are your passport, tickets and money in that order. It is always best to carry these things next to your body. Please keep a copy of your passport and other important documents in the suitcase in your room. We also recommend that your travel leader have copies of these important documents including your travel insurance numbers. Be especially careful with cameras and shoulder bags. Fanny packs are advisable.*
- *Pay attention. Street thieves usually seek distracted people. Be aware if someone asks you for the time as another may take advantage of you when you are distracted.*
- *Don't leave your belongings unattended in public.*
- *Don't go out on your own. Travel in a group.*
- *Walk confidently and at a steady pace.*
- *Don't walk the streets wearing valuable jewelry or an expensive watch that is visible. It is advisable to not take valuable jewelry on this trip.*
- *If someone approached you for money, whatever the reason, the best policy is to ignore the request. It is common for Tanzanian church members to ask us to support their children or other family members in education or business. The only appropriate response is, "No. Our synod and your Diocese are working together for education and economic improvements and you will need to work through your Diocese for any scholarships or gifts."*
- *Remember, common sense and street-smarts are essential qualities.*

COMMUNICATIONS

Communication by phone, fax, or email is more difficult than in the United States. Internet cafes will probably be available for email.

MISCELLANEOUS THINGS TO KNOW AND DO

Passports

If you do not have an updated Passport, get one now! Go on line to get information and/or your application. You will need 4 photographs.

We will also all need Visas which will be requested once the flight arrangements have been made.

Be sure to bring photocopies of the biographical page in your passport, including the photo page. Keep this with you, in a different place from where you keep your passport. An additional form of identification such as a driver license is a good idea.

Travel Insurance

This should be considered in the event you need to cancel your trip prior to departing, need emergency medical attention and transportation while in Tanzania, and also might cover your valuables such as wallet and camera.

Photographing People

This should be approached with sensitivity. The Maasai are especially leery of being photographed, and in some places taking their picture is prohibited.

Photography Equipment

You are responsible for carrying your own photography equipment at all times - something to keep in mind if you are thinking of bringing any heavy equipment. Bring extra film and batteries.

Bargaining

Many purchases involve some degree of bargaining, especially with those things bought from a market, street stall or street vendors, where you will be expected to bargain. A good procedure is to decide what you want to pay and begin with a price at least 50% lower than that price.

Time

Time in Tanzania is Greenwich Mean Time plus three hours. That means that when it is 8 a.m. EST in the UP, it is 4 p.m. in Arusha.

Emergency Contacts

*Friends and family should not expect to be able to send you letters or emails. You may not be able to get through to them on email. **In case of an emergency, ask your family to call the Northern Great Lakes Synod Office 906 228-2300 (on weekends contact Katherine Finegan at 906-371-2256 or 906-204-2015). Leave the contact list given to you with your family.***

Travel Itinerary

Before leaving, give someone at home a copy of your itinerary, passport, and travel insurance documents.

Update yourself on Tanzania:

NGLS website NGLSynod.org

www.tzonline.org

www.tanzania.go.tz

www.usembassy.state.gov/tanzania

www.elct.org/ecd/indmpar.htm

Teach yourself Swahili by Joan Russell (2 audio tapes and books) from Contemporary Publishing, Lincolnwood, Ill.

Bwana Asifewe=Praise the Lord!

Karibu=Welcome

Asante=Thank you

Habari=How are you?

Amani iwe nawe=Peace be with you (singular)

Amani iwe nanyi=Peace be with you (plural)

Mungu ni pendo=God is love

Mnzuri=Very Good (food) (work) etc.

Mungu akipenda = God willing

Askofu=Bishop

KKKT=abbreviation for Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania