

VISION AND MISSION TRIP, 2011 WORK CREW

Bob and Deloris Langseth, Reporting Photos by Raisanen, Kozar, and Langseth

At the request of our Tanzanian companion, Bishop Alex Malasusa, a work crew of seven folks from the Northern Great Lakes Synod was recruited during 2010. Jean Hannemann from Prince of Peace, Harvey, Michelle Kemp of Community Lutheran, Palmer, Tom Kozar and David Mason of Immanuel Lutheran, Escanaba, Christine Raisanen of St. Paul's, Mass City, and coordinators Bob and Deloris Langseth of Faith, Calumet, responded to God's call and departed on June 7, 2011. The goal was for God to expand our vision of Christ's Church, build relationships with our companions and assist in the infrastructure development at the Kisarawe Lutheran Jr. Seminary for pupils grades 6 - 12.

The school's physical facilities must continue to develop as enrollment has grown from 20 girls and 20 boys in 1992 to 720 students in 2011. By next semester Kisarawe will reach its maximum enrollment of 800 students. The school's reputation has grown. There is now a waiting list of pupils desiring to enter.

Our crew got off to a rocky start. First, when the pilot was ready to gun the motor for lift off, word came that the runway at Detroit was closed and the pilot should return to the terminal. The delay caused us to miss the remainder of our scheduled flights. We were delayed 7 hours in Amsterdam, rerouted on Kenya Airlines, and flew over Mt. Kilimanjaro. Climate changes have left only a halo of snow on the peak. Tanzania will suffer when the water from the snow melt is gone.

Our original intent was to help construct a dorm for 120 boys which is being supported with a \$500,000 grant from USAID, American Schools and Hospitals Abroad. However, the paperwork necessary in Tanzania to fulfill USAID requirements was incomplete. We rejoice that such AID has strict requirements and accountability standards but it meant construction will be delayed for a month or two. Thus, our crew spent a couple of days being educated on the culture, history and future of the nation plus the diocese before arriving at the school.

Dar es Salaam is a large city with the church visible in its core district. Modern twin towers accent the skyline. At the Cultural Center we were educated as to the best home constructions which fit the arid or mountainous terrain, shown a traditional tribal dance and ceremonial masks.

The diocese has its own radio station for evangelism outreach, which we viewed. The Diocese also has an award winning center for the differently abled. We toured the facility and because this is their winter we handed out knit hats and hand knitted dolls to the residents. Large smiles and joy resulted.

Each weekend we were hosted in individual homes and became acquainted with their family life, their Sunday School and their lively worship.

At 4 p.m. Sunday afternoon we headed 43 miles S.W. To Kisarawe. We met farmers pushing bikes piled high with charcoal bringing the fuel to market. In the rural areas the road sides have fresh fruit for sale. Villages have grocery stores and retail shops. And notice the toothbrushes on the wall of this country home. The Jr. Seminary is built on the "Hill of Hope" and we look out the rear window at the Kisarawe village.

+++ CLEAN WATER! +++

We arrive at the school and focus on the priorities of Headmaster Mkongo. Water has been difficult to secure at Kisarawe. Students have needed to carry water from a stream a mile away, or from cisterns collecting rain water from the roofs. In the past 12 years three attempts to develop a well failed. A drill bit broke on the first effort. A dry hole resulted next. The third try resulted in an artisan flow but it was too salty for human consumption.

In 2009-2010 the township discovered a wonderful source and formed the Kisarawe Urban Water Authority. Pipes were laid up to the property line of the school by June 2011. Our crew thus assisted in digging a 175 yard long trench, laying pipe, and backfilling the trench which brought the water into the school's central pumping station. A \$1,000 gift from a synod member purchased the pipe, the connectors, the valves and the gauges.

On June 24th the Headmaster excused classes, brought the students and staff together, as the life giving stream of water gushed forth under 40 lbs of pressure. We laughed, we cried, we read Proverbs 25:25 and sang "Bwana, Bwana, Bwana wa majeshi tunia" which means, "The Lord, Lord, Lord Almighty is with us!". Prayers of praise and thanksgiving were offered as we sprinkled one another. Sickness and class absences will be reduced due to clean water. It was a momentous occasion which the headmaster described as nothing less than a miracle!

+++ OUTDOOR TABLES +++

Previously students had no place to sit other than in their classrooms, beds or on the grass. Priority # 2 was to create "picnic tables." Our crew designed them. Timbers were purchased, smoothed at the town's sawmill, and assembled on site. Six tables were created, sealed twice, and placed under the trees. They were a big hit. The students lavished the crew with thanks. The pattern was left for the maintenance folks to create more.

+++ ZANZIBAR WEEKEND +++

The diocese requested the crew to visit the island of Zanzibar. Although the population is 95% Muslim, the Lutheran congregation is sharing Jesus Christ with love, with a dispensary, a hostel and a growing congregation. As companions we desired to support their faithful witness.

After three hours on the Indian Ocean we landed and were met by our hosts. Zanzibar is famous for its spice farms and we were treated to a walking and tasting tour of one farm. What a delicious cup of fruit awaited us on Sunday morning! During the 19th Century Zanzibar was the auction center for slave trade to Europe and India. We stayed in the hostel at the former auction grounds, saw the memorial, viewed the cathedral built by the slaves when they became free, and knelt at the altar where a core from the "whipping tree" was placed in the floor as a permanent reminder that Christ was whipped, offered himself to death in order that we can be free from sin, and liberated from death and the devil.

A three mile boat ride to "Prison Island" where unruly slaves were sent gave us a chance to wade in the blue ocean or walk the sandy beach.

+++ CARPENTRY AND ELECTRICITY +++

In addition to the outdoor table construction, numerous hinges on the windows of the buildings needed fresh screws. The same was true for backs of chairs and table tops. All frames are hard-wood so as to discourage termites. Blisters from screwdrivers were lessened once we purchased an electric drill.

Electricity was brought to the school in 2005. But connections and outlets are sparse. Our electrical skills were put to good use in reconnecting and expanding some of the wiring. This allows students to have outdoor study hours "under the lights." The students made use of them every night we were present from 8 p.m. To 10 p.m. They are studious!

+++ REHAB CLASSROOMS +++

Two classrooms needed cement floors resurfaced and walls painted. Crew members broke up the old concrete and carried broken pieces away. Buckets with a 4 gallon capacity were used to move 3 tons of washed sand into twelve "volcanos" in each classroom. Each volcano contained 15 buckets of sand, 1 bag of cement and 4 or 5 buckets of water. We were the carriers and mixers. Cement experts from the area leveled and smoothed the floor. Crew members then gave the walls two coats of a cream colored paint.

+++ PROFESSOR GODFREY'S QUESTION +++

Professor Godfrey has taught at the school almost since its beginning. He was one of the exchange teachers who came to our synod for two months in the mid 1990s. He asked us, "What has motivated you to help us with the development of the school's infrastructure?" Our response was, "God called us."

"Yes," he said, "and we thank God for all that has taken place to help our students."

The 110 year old mission house remains. But the old first aid room has been replaced with a qualified doctor and dispensary. The two egg crate book shelves have been replaced with a modern library, books for each student and a computer lab that is better than the Dar es Salaam University. Kitchen stoves have been supplemented with gas stoves and a new dining hall. The "bunk house" type of girl's dorms and outdoor toilets have been supplemented with a 120 dormitory which has indoor toilets and washbasins. It is no wonder the students who live there nickname it 'heaven.' The boys are eager to have construction begin to remove their over crowded dorm. It isn't yet built but since it will be similar to that of the girls they have already nicknamed theirs "paradise." Our partnership has motivated the diocese to erect four new classrooms.

Not only is there is a new sense of pride in our campus but there is also a new level of academics. Committed teachers made certain that all 12th grade graduates qualified for university level studies! The

U.S. Embassy recognized the quality and selected Kisarawe as a pilot project for a new program of accelerating English on the secondary level. Out of the 3,204 secondary schools in Tanzania Kisarawe was selected to be the pilot school. Twenty of the top students were invited into a two year project. It will be intensive where the students supplement their regular studies with weekend classes on Advanced English. The Assistant Ambassador handed out certificates to students completing their two weeks of orientation.

New pride is also evident as students use these hand tools to "mow" the campus each Friday to keep out snakes, as they now gather at the new spigots to draw water for drinking or for washing their clothes in a bucket, or as they chat together at the picnic tables. God is indeed alive in our companionship and educational efforts.

+++ OUR LEARNINGS +++

The families we stayed with on weekends excel at being hospitable hosts. Companionship occurs much better around the family table than in a hotel. Every crew member was in awe of the vibrant home devotions, public worship hours and evangelism outreach. Numerous facilities are being expanded to seat 2,000 worshipers. And some parishes have 4 to 6 sub-worship centers where families start as house churches, expand to chapels and develop into congregations. Services are anywhere from 2 hours to 5 hours in length in which the choirs, like that of the Jr. Seminary in concert, knock your socks off with their praises. The crew gained a fresh vision of the Holy Spirit at work in our world. We can benefit by inviting our companions to come to our synod and share their lively faith with us.

Congregation to congregation relationships were strengthened, our personal faith was enriched and the students at this new outdoor table join with us in exclaiming Bwana Asifewe! which means "Praise the Lord!" We thank you as individuals and congregations for your support in prayer and any financial participation provided. It is a privilege to be companions with such a dynamic diocese.

Bob and Deloris Langseth,
Coordinators