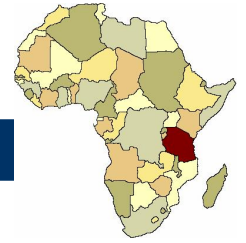


Tanzanian Testimony



VOLUME 3; ISSUE 2

LORIEN KNAPP

FEBRUARY 2009

Dear Friends,

What a busy month it has been. On Feb. 22 I reached my one year anniversary of being in Mwanza. It has been good to reflect on where I started in this new culture, and how far I have come in my understanding. Though there is still so much to learn, and my language still needs improving, many wonderful relationships have developed during this year. I am reminded that ministry is all about relationships. It is easy to become busy with all of the other parts of life, and certainly we need to strike a balance, but without relationships we have no hope of reaching to people where they are. One can never understand a culture or community without loving the people first. I have been blessed through hard situations, and fun moments, to deepen my relationships with the people of Mwanza. Love that is shared in fellowship is the agape love which binds our hearts together.

I have become more and more aware of how important it is for the Christian community to be a beacon of love. God gives us so many opportunities to communicate to friends and strangers with love. When we respond affirmatively many lives are touched and we are testifying to the example shown by Jesus. One doesn't have to be in Africa or Asia or any distant land. We will all be given opportunities to offer love wherever we are. It is important for us to accept the challenges God places in our paths so that more people will see imitators of Christ in their lives. Look for those society turns from, those who are often looked down upon by the church... and shine a little love their way. This is the mission given to each of us as children of God.

PRAYER CONCERNS:

- ✓ **Praise God for friends, family, and all of the relationships which strengthen us.**
- ✓ **Praise God for his continued provision.**
- ✓ **Please pray that TCRC will grow in its vision and outreach so more lives can be touched.**
- ✓ **Pray for the boys to be encouraged and strengthened by the love of the leaders at TCRC. Pray for us leaders to be good examples of Christ, especially as leadership changes are underway.**

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Your support and encouragement are appreciated!

A New Season

As with all ministries, there are moments when changes come and new seasons begin. TCRC will be experiencing such a moment this year as our founder Micah Ngussa returns to the center to resume his role as our Director. Mr. Ngussa went to the USA for further studies and will be finishing his program this year. We look forward to his return in mid-Summer.

As the visionary for the ministry I look forward to learning from Micah, and working beside him. I had the chance to visit with him this winter and he reminded me that TCRC has always been a faith driven ministry. We have not always had certainty about where funding would come from, or how the government programs would react to the center, or even how we would support all of the children that came our way. The only thing we did have certainty of was that God would provide.

Indeed the past decade of ministry has been proof of God's faithfulness as TCRC has been able to grow and continue in its mission to the streets. I pray that we can continue to grow and reach more children in Godly ways so that they can know of his tremendous love. The children of the streets are an unreached group in so many ways, and society has placed such a stigma on them. It is a difficult work which must be driven by love and faith, and certainly hope.

As the new season begins, another one will also be ending. Marc Brown, a fellow missionary from Canada, came to Tanzania in 2005 to take over the responsibilities of Micah as an interim director. As Marc, his wife Loralee, and their two girls prepare for their departure it is a time of closing one part of the story and beginning a new path. I can't imagine how hard it is to sort through the years of African life, to prepare for a big move back to the West. As they prepare for departure they are also looking forward to the arrival of a third child. It will certainly be a change to be without this family here in Mwanza, as they have always been a beacon of kindness and hospitality.

Please join me in prayer over the next months as Micah and the Browns prepare for the big changes ahead. Pray that they will have peace and strength as they pack up for big moves. Pray that they will find rest and assurance in the days ahead.

Continued Education

This month I had the opportunity to take a short course at Nassa Theological College. For two weeks I became a part of the village life, meeting many interesting bible students and teachers, and enjoying rich fellowship with other believers. In many ways the college is a good spiritual getaway. Being surrounded by the teachers, mature men and women believers, there were many opportunities to hear their fascinating theological viewpoints. Our guest teacher, a Pastor from Portland Oregon, offered valuable insights and encouragement as we studied the book of 1 John.

Not only was it a time of bible study, but it was also nice to have time in a different environment so I could refocus on the tasks at TCRC. Each time I have a chance to get away from Mwanza I am reminded of how important it is to find a time of rest and refreshment. I was also reminded of how important it is to continue in study of the Word. Reading the bible in a time of personal devotion is valuable, but having instruction in the Word and interaction with other believers is also equally important. Before coming to Africa I was involved in a very special weekly Bible Study at my church. That group of believers was such a source of strength and refueling and I have really missed that fellowship. I have not found a bible study group yet here in Tanzania, though I hope that I am able to find one soon. I also hope to encourage our TCRC boys to form bible study groups so that they can continue to grow in their understanding of the Word.

Being a part of the NTC class was a great reminder of how important it is to be in a study group with others. Diving into the word together is a bonding experience and a great encouragement as well. Please pray for me about how I can find a more permanent study group for myself, and how I can encourage the kids to also join a group.



On the final day of class, my classmates, their wives and our teacher joined together for a time of celebration.

1 John 3: 18

Dear Children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth

PROJECT TIME

I originally came to TCRC to assist in community development projects. As an Engineer I hoped to use my background to assist the center in developing a good foundation for improved health and growth. I had ideas about water systems and electricity and many other things... but God showed me that my first year needed to be one of observing rather than of action. It is so important to understand the dynamics of a community before trying to make changes, otherwise there will be little hope of the changes lasting and being owned by the people. It is also important to have a foundation of love and relationship with the people rather than just uprooting their system to implement western ideas.

Now that I have a year of relationship building under my belt, I am excited about the prospect of many projects at TCRC. We have already started a project to assist with drainage and waste management. Hopefully by eliminating many dump sites we can reduce the number of fly and mosquito breeding sites... which will lead to improved health. There are many more projects in view, but all things take time because we are doing the work with our own hands. The boys and several of the teachers have really impressed me with their willingness to volunteer to do hard labor for the benefit of the community. We are able to eliminate many of the costs by using our own hands, and the added benefit is that the boys have ownership over the projects.

My goal in leadership is only to be an inspiration, but that many of the ideas can come from the community itself. The people have so many ideas, and they are GOOD ideas which need only support to come to fruition. Please pray that we can continue on this road of change, and that all needs will be filled so that we can grow and become healthier as a family. Praise God for the work that has already started at TCRC.

(I hope to include photos next month, but my camera is broken and I am trying to get it fixed...prayers for that also please...)