

THE CHURCH  
OF CHRIST IN

# TANZANIA

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“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit”  
Matthew 28:19

## WE HAVE ARRIVED IN ARUSHA, TANZANIA

Warmest greetings in Christ from Arusha, Tanzania, East Africa. Anne and I are so happy and excited about being here finally. It has taken a lot of work from a lot of people to achieve this and we are thankful for all the assistance.

It is a long journey from Perth, Western Australia to Tanzania and Anne and I broke the trip with a layover on the island of Mauritius. This was a very good move as we were both totally exhausted from all the work we had to do to achieve this move. The rest we were able to take ensured that we were able to arrive in Tanzania reasonably refreshed.

Leaving our home and our son to move to Tanzania for 3 years has been one of the hardest things we have had to do. There is so much we have left behind; our dear son Jamie, our beloved brethren in the church in Armadale, our wider family – it has not been easy. However, the Lord has given us this wonderful opportunity to serve Him and we are so thankful and pray that we may prove to be equal to the task that He has set before us.

We arrived in Arusha on Saturday evening and were met by the preacher here, Allen Mkita and his wonderful wife Hossiana. It was so good to see these terrific Christians as we exited customs, the smiles were broad and the embraces were warm. Allen told me that there were a number of brethren who also wanted to come out to the airport, but as it is 45 minutes away from town and it was getting later, Allen told them they had best not come.

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## ANNE'S THOUGHTS

After an extremely busy time leading up to our departure from Perth at 1.30 a.m. Monday 26<sup>th</sup> July, Keith and I were very glad to have to do nothing but take time out on the tiny Indian Ocean island of Mauritius between available flights. The famous Dodo bird was found there, fairly briefly, by European sailors and explorers before it was brought to extinction by over-hunting and the introduction of pests. Mauritius was named after Prince Maurice of Holland, then was a French possession before the British won it in the early 1800's. The French influence is still very strong today though – most islanders would speak French at home (or Creole) and English as the official language. Sugar cane has been the main island crop since early settlement.

Another early start (4 a.m.) on Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> saw us fly out to Nairobi airport in Kenya. Unfortunately, by then I had well and truly



*Allen and Hossiana Mkita with Anne and Keith Thomson at the airport*

Arusha is the third largest city in Tanzania, East Africa. It is known as the Geneva of Africa and is the center for the U.N and the East African community.





started a head cold – any airport is not a preferred place to be in that case and we had a long wait until our next, 6 p.m., flight. A much smaller plane took us to our final destination, flying near Mt. Kilimanjaro to reach Kilimanjaro International Airport, an hour's drive from Arusha. Most of the other passengers seemed headed for safari tours; Serengeti National Park and Ngorongoro Crater N.P. are just two of the world famous reserves within easy distance from Arusha for the tourist industry.

Arriving back in Africa after 2 previous short visits within the last 2 years, I am struck by how different the visual clues are here compared with Australia or the U.S. At first what sticks out is the out-of-dateness from the airport building and onwards – not quite kept up since the 60's or 70's or 80's. The new advertising billboards by the highway for Pepsi or cell phones are a huge contrast to the people walking by the side of the open country highway, balancing loads on their heads or making their way back to their villages. The squared concrete block one room adjoining shops along the main road often have iron security grills in the windows instead of glass; the paint is a bit rough, the painted shop names above the doors a bit basic looking to a Westerner. But though the footpaths are unsealed and dusty and rutted, they are scrupulously clean as are

any shop verandahs and floors; the people are differently but neatly and cleanly dressed, the children are happy looking and not begging.

Driving seems crazy at first as we turn out of the airport road onto the main highway. Cars drive on the left – same the U.K. – but not a lot much else seems the same about the road rules. A 2-lane highway with very little shoulder either side suddenly can become a temporary 4-lane as the drivers coming either way overtake. But instead of road rage, its more a case of a different set of unspoken rules that everybody understands and follows. I find I am quickly seeing less of the dust and more of the community feeling this time.

### OUR ARRIVAL From Page 1

Allen organised a mini bus to take us to our accommodation. The trip normally takes about 45 minutes but about 10 minutes from town the traffic had come to a standstill. We were told there was some kind of accident involving a semi trailer. Our driver decided to take us another way. I had been on this dirt road before, and the scenery during the day is very nice, but in the dark it was just a long, dust and bumpy trip. We finally arrived at our apartment about an hour later. It

was a good introduction to our stay in Tanzania.

We were so pleased to be arriving in Arusha on a Saturday night because that meant the first thing we would do here was worship with our brethren here. On Sunday morning we got a taxi to take us to the church building. The brethren currently meet in a tiny schoolroom with wooden benches with desks attached. We arrived there fairly early and there were brethren already there waiting. We had such a warm greeting from them all. As the start time drew nearer more Christians arrived. They did not wait till start time (10 a.m.) but started singing songs they wanted to practice. By 10 we had a full house and the worship service began. They had me teach and as I taught I was so gratified by the attention the brethren were giving the word. All who had Bibles were following along and quite a few were busy scribbling notes. The rest of the service went very well with the singing being particularly good. We ended up with too many people for the little room and a number had to sit outside the door on a bench they found from somewhere. Allen Mkita translated for me and did an excellent job.

We had a quiet Sunday afternoon, settling into our new home and getting our heads around all that we are doing.

Anne and I are planning on learning Swahili (the local language). We both feel that an ability to speak directly to the locals we be a real asset to us as well as to the work. So, we are planning of finding a school or a tutor that deals with intensive language courses. We also need to find permanent accommodation and a vehicle. There are a lot of things to do, but we are going to take them slowly, one step at a time.

I want to thank all those who have assisted us in various ways on this move and asked for your continued prayers.



*The Brethren after services*

