

DOWN to EARTH

Emmanuel International UK News
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El Mission trip to visit Tanzania

A team of 6 people from El Mission (El in the US) visited the work and team of El Tanzania in Mwanza from 30 May to 12 June 2021. EIM Chairman and the team leader, Mark Abbott, writes to tell us about the trip.



The team consisted of myself, my wife Sherry, Peter (25 year old son of EIM donors), his cousins, twins Liza and Luke, and our 23-year old niece, Rachel. That made 6 of us, which fills up one vehicle! After planning that started earlier in the year, EITZ Country Director, Joel Newby, arranged a schedule for us for our 7 days in Mwanza.

We arrived on 3 June, after resting a day and a half in Dar es Salaam following our 21 hours of flying from Seattle and 3 COVID testings in 5 days. I think we were the only ones in all of Tanzania that had been tested so thoroughly in such a short amount of time. After a fantastic lunch prepared by Samantha Newby at

their house, we met the EITZ staff at their small office and then later treated them all to dinner at a nice restaurant on Lake Victoria.

The next day the six of us were off early in the morning to visit the The Hive, a store in Mwanza where the El beekeepers sell their honey. Then we visited the Integrated Environmental Renewal Project (IERP) in Igumamoyo, a long bumpy ride from Mwanza. We listened to many testimonies from farmers involved with the project in their half-completed church building where we were given a gift of potatoes and cassava that they had recently harvested. From there we went to the Entrepreneurship



Visiting The Hive



Eating goat stew and ugali

Project in Igusa. EITZ staff Peter and Elisha both oversee these projects and interpreted for our group. Following a meal of goat stew and ugali (maize porridge) at a local kitchen, we visited another Entrepreneurship project along Lake Victoria, in Budilya. The evening followed with a dinner at a delicious Indian restaurant (served from the owner's home) in Mwanza with Laura Kelly.

Day three took us all day to Igombe Church. We hosted the Children's Ministry breakfast which was attended by almost 200 children. Next we met with a group of young women that Laura Kelly ministers to through the Strength and Dignity Project and listened to their testimonies. We also visited the shop nearby that sews the pads and bags for the Dignity Kits and the seamstress, Esther, who was going to be married the next week. Following a lunch of rice and



beans, Luke and Liza held a soccer clinic for the children's ministry and lots of other kids from the village that saw what was going on. Rachel and Peter made balloon animals for the kids that were too small or uninterested in soccer. The evening was highlighted with a relaxing dinner at the home of Simon and Victoria Ewing, along with their daughter Tabitha and son Reuben.

The fourth day took us back to the Igombe Church for Sunday's church service. Once a year the church service is run by children: "Children's Sunday." We were impressed with how well very young children spoke boldly and sang gracefully in public - well over 200 people attended. Following the service we helped host (we provided the cow) lunch that the women of the church prepared. A few of us tasted stewed tripe. Yum! We arrived back to our hotel in the late afternoon and the six of us dined at a nearby restaurant, after having a small boat ride around the shores of Lake Victoria.

Early on day five Simon picked us up in the 4 wheel drive and we headed to ferry boat #1 to begin our trip to Kome Island. After a 30 minute ferry ride we drove another 75 minutes to the next ferry dock, which was partially under water due to higher than normal water on Lake Victoria. After another 30 minute ferry ride, we were on Kome Island. We settled into the only hotel on Kome and had lunch at the hotel. Hosted by Emmanuel, Bhadtendi and Justina, along with Simon (who used to live on the island in the past for a week at a time) we visited Beekeeping, VICOBA (micro loan co-ops) and agricultural projects in Buhama. It also included a visit to the church led by Pastor Margaret, a long time associate of EI through the Tanzania



Boarding the ferry

Assembly of God (TAG) church. Her congregation gave us a generous gift of red bananas. In the late afternoon we travelled to a primary school where several hundred young children awaited our arrival to receive a soccer clinic from Liza and Luke. Once again, Rachel and Peter provided entertainment making animal balloons while Bhatendi and Justina kept all of the kids in a single file line! Not easy! After a dinner of grilled tilapia and stewed Nile perch (more on that later) we went back to the primary school in the dark where Simon set up his outdoor battery-operated cinema and showed the Jesus Film to over a hundred children and adults, with over 20 giving their life to Christ. The dark starry night



Each place we went to was unique. We met wonderful people, played with children, laughed and hugged and prayed together. I will forever cherish the memories of fellowship. I loved going to the churches and the school. I am still amazed by the EITZ projects and the impact they are having on the communities they have partnered with.

Rachel

Tanzania was challenging, both physically and mentally, but yielded some of the most rewarding days of my life. We agreed that it was 100% worth all the effort it took to go out there because of all the amazing projects we got to see and the incredible people we met. The projects that EITZ are working on seemed very well operated and meaningful to the people of Tanzania. The things I learned will stick with me forever.

Luke

Going to Tanzania was one of the best experiences I've ever had. While there were lots of challenges to overcome, it was incredibly rewarding to see how EI has made such a difference in the lives of so many people. It inspired me to become a better Christian and I realized just how much of an impact we can have on others' lives when we trust God and give to those who are in need. The strength of the people's faith and trust in God was truly inspiring to witness. I've never met so many people who were so open about being born again in Christ.

Peter

What impacted me most when in Tanzania was, while we visited the churches or projects, no matter how less fortunate the community or lifestyle, each church member was abundantly rich in their love for the Lord! This Love is spread and nourished through each of the missionaries working there. Every project begins and ends with the purpose of the Gospel! I felt welcome and loved because no matter how far apart we are on this earth, we are one body in Christ Jesus! This will forever be one of my greatest experiences!

Liza

above was amazing. I've never seen so many stars packed into an evening sky!

On the sixth day we had a chapati breakfast and headed through a protected forest to visit the TAG church in the beautiful fishing village of Mchangani, led by Pastor Charles. The congregation gave us all a gift of beautiful cloth sashes. The brotherly love of this village was evident to everyone. After our goodbyes, we had to make a mad dash for the ferry so we would get back to Mwanza in time. We made it with a few minutes to spare! Another mad dash to make the next ferry and our goal was accomplished! Simon had obviously made this drive several times previously! We finished the evening with dinner at Joel and Samantha's house, enjoying the company of their daughter Hephzie, son Ethan and baby son Coen. We brought some supplies to top off the evening making S'mores over Joel's BBQ grill.



Early on the 7th day we did not rest but drove to the airport and caught our flight to Dar es Salaam, very tired from the last 6 days of travelling on bumpy dusty roads, thoroughly enjoying the beautiful people we met along the way!

From Dar we took the ferry to Zanzibar, took our COVID tests so we could travel back to the US and then spent the

following day on the beach before leaving for Seattle the following evening.

No trip like this is without risk. On the way to the airport we received our COVID test results... Mark - negative, Rachel - negative, Peter - negative, Liza - negative, Luke - negative. "Sherry, why is your's taking so long to download?" "Positive!" Sherry had no symptoms, but clearly her test said "UNFIT TO TRAVEL." Sherry and I had planned for one of the kids to test positive and one of us would stay behind with them but didn't take into account one of "us" might be positive. Liza had the stewed Nile perch on Kome Island (apparently the only one) and since that time had been on charcoal tablets and later Imodium. Since Sherry felt fine she insisted I make sure Liza got home safely. So, Sherry had a suite at the Tembo Hotel with a view of the beach and harbour for a week while she isolated with room service with many praying for her to test negative in 7 days. Prayers answered! Sherry never lost her taste or smell and tested negative after her week of isolation and has returned home. She enjoyed her time in Stone Town, Zanzibar. Thanks for your prayers.

Liza developed very serious nausea 2 days after returning to her aunt's home in Washington state. They took her to the hospital where she fainted. They put her on an IV and she was strong enough to return home after a night in the hospital. She tested again for COVID and was negative but she was positive for e-coli. After several days of rest she is pretty much fully recovered and she has also returned home to Colorado. Thanks so much for your prayers!

Dates for your diary
Board Meeting: 30 July 2020 in London