

# Krismas Njema!

*Merry Christmas!* Holiday greetings from Florida! Knowing that we may not have another opportunity to visit the Sunshine State for quite some time, we made an impulsive decision to drive here from Texas and visit friends for about 10 days. We have been touring Texas, Montana, Idaho, Oklahoma, and Tanzania since Dave separated from the military in mid-July and are so grateful for your support, encouragement, thoughts, and prayers over the past five months.

Since February of 1998, one month before our wedding, we have been looking forward to following the Lord's call for us to become missionaries to Tanzania, East Africa. We didn't know what our future would hold after Dave ended



A view of Mount Kilimanjaro from the front yard of the house where we stayed.



David and Crystal in the backyard of I.E.C.'s founder, Eliudi Issangya, in Tanzania.

his military service and sometimes struggled with the uncertainty we faced.

We took a short-term mission trip to Tanzania this fall, and the Lord began revealing small steps for us to take after we had been there a couple of weeks. We returned to the U.S. two days before Thanksgiving and since then have found ourselves in the midst of a whirlwind of activity as God has shown us the next big step in His will for our lives.

In this newsletter you will find a variety of photographs, a donation form you may use if the Lord is calling you to help us cover costs from this trip, and information on our plans for the immediate future. We hope you enjoy this travelogue of our five weeks in Tanzania. May God bless and keep you and draw each of you closer to Himself as we all celebrate our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ this Christmas season!

## Safari Yetu ya Tanzania: *Our Journey to Tanzania*



Kindergarten children cling to Crystal.

From Tanzania we sent a few lengthy e-mails (well ... you know me!) detailing our activities in Africa. If you didn't receive these updates, that's because we don't have your e-mail address. Please be sure to send it to us ([garvin@homewithgod.net](mailto:garvin@homewithgod.net)). In the meantime, our faithful Web site designer has posted each update under the "news" link if you'd like the long version. To leave room for plenty of photographs, we'll just summarize the trip here.

Our mission work in Tanzania included creating graduation certificates for the trade school and Bible school students; teaching the Compassion International children's Saturday Bible class; manual labor in a Christian school building project; assisting a well-drilling team in giving water to villagers in surrounding areas; helping with Compassion International office work; creating and plant-

ing a test plot for irrigating through the hot season and growing different kinds of crops on the farm that supports the Bible school; playing flute with the worship band; teaching a few classes for the Bible school; and supporting a missionary nurse who worked in the area for three weeks. (Our work in the clinic included counting pills, giving out prescribed medications, making maternity baskets for pregnant women, mixing fungus cream, sacking beans and sugar for malnourished patients, helping treat wounds, sorting clothes to give to needy families, helping pull a tooth, taking out stitches, and even attempting to translate between nurse and patients when no other translators were available.) Those of you who know us fairly well might have fun trying to match each of the above activities with the correct person.



Dave attracts a young following on the road.

Although the work we did was very rewarding, we learned the most from individual interaction with the people. We witnessed intense hunger for God and diligence in studies among the 122 Bible school students, many of whom not only attended prayer at 4:00 a.m. and classes all day long but could also be seen studying and reading their Bibles late into the night. We enjoyed the welcoming attention and interest shown by children everywhere we went. They were easy to fall in love with and quick to return affection. And we will never forget the friends of all ages we made and were able to converse with through a combination of rudimentary Swahili on our part and basic English on their part (or sometimes very good English on their part and little or no Swahili on our part). If all else failed, we found translators or simply communicated without understanding all of the words. Truly



The view from our porch after a rain shower. Notice the rainbow directly over the word *Yesu* (Jesus) on the seminar/church building.



David with the well team on the drilling rig in the Kisongo village.

our hearts communicated with these warm-hearted brothers and sisters in Christ. Our hearts broke over the pain, suffering, and poverty we saw, but we rejoiced over the hunger for Christ and the wonderful things God is doing among these beautiful people.

We excitedly look forward to returning to Tanzania and seeing growth of the many ministries the Lord has planted in this relatively unknown area of Africa. We also caught the vision for new ministries that are being raised up as a result of the Lord's work through International Evangelism Outreach ([www.sakila.com](http://www.sakila.com)).



Above and below: David helping a masonry team build the second phase of buildings for a tuition-free Christian school.



Above: Crystal sorting items for maternity/midwife baskets to give to pregnant women.



Right: Bible school students trained in evangelism, preaching, teaching, church planting, and pastoring wave goodbye. This class graduated Dec. 6.



Above: David bids farewell at church on our final Sunday and shares with the people how they touched our lives.



Below: Crystal plays *filimbi* (flute) with the church's worship band.



# Watoto wa Tanzania: *Children of Tanzania*



Left: Compassion International children worship during the Vacation Bible School offered each Saturday. Middle: Local Sakila children show off their handmade wooden scooter. Right: Baby Sharon, daughter of our friends Jonas and Violet and niece of our friend Tumaini, warms up to the mzungu (white person) and her camera.

**Future Plans:** The Bible says that a man's heart plans his way but the Lord directs his steps (Proverbs 16:9). While we thought we would relocate to Tanzania permanently in the near future, we now know that the Lord has set a somewhat different path before us.

While in Tanzania, Dave became interested in the International Evangelism Centre founder's vision for a ministry airport near the Bible school. Currently plans for a runway are in the final stages of approval with the government. We believe the site will eventually house an airport to be used for delivering ministry supplies, transporting pastors and evangelists to remote areas, and allowing missionaries and ministers to store their airplanes or to use airplanes for other ministry needs.



Rogathe (right), who lived with Crystal's family to attend high school, and her fiancé, Brighton.

About two weeks before we returned from Tanzania, the Lord began showing Dave that he will be a key player in this exciting project. As it turns out, the Lord wants to fulfill yet another of Dave's dreams by using his mechanical abilities and aviation interest for mission work. Shortly after we returned to U.S. soil, God directed us (hold on to your seats!) to Tulsa, Oklahoma and a school that will allow Dave to inexpensively receive top-quality training in aviation mechanics and simultaneously earn pilot's licenses. We know it is the Lord who told us to go to Tulsa because it was one of the last places on earth we might have chosen ourselves!

Just prior to driving to Florida we spent two days in Tulsa registering for school and looking at apartments. Please keep us in your prayers as we embark on this new adventure. We are praying for direction on where to live, and I am believing the Lord for a great-paying and enjoyable job that will allow us to return to Tanzania next August during Dave's summer break. At that time we hope to find some land to purchase as a site for our future home there, and we will also have the honor of being the *wadhamini* (basically best man and matron of honor; the word literally means "guarantee") for my African sister Rogathe's wedding. All plans are subject to change, of course, as we have recently learned.

However, this is the direction we believe we're heading right now. We look forward to settling in Tulsa soon after the New Year as Dave will begin school January 14th. You can always contact us by e-mail, and we will e-mail our new mailing address and phone number from Tulsa. *Mungu awabariki!* (God bless y' all!)

*A note about donations: We are so grateful for the generous and faithful financial and prayer support so many of you have given. Because some of you have asked, we will tell you that donations have not covered all of the costs incurred for this trip. At this time, we ask only that you seek the Lord regarding whether He would have you donate financially. We also encourage those sending monthly support to discontinue doing so. Riverside Church will continue accepting individual donations for us to make gifts tax deductible. If we happen to cover all costs and begin receiving funds beyond what our meticulously-kept financial records show we have spent on ministry, we will inform you immediately. In that case we would give you the option of allowing us to tear up or send back your check or forward the funds to International Evangelism Outreach for ongoing operations in Tanzania.*

## Donation for the missions ministry of David and Crystal Garvin

*Light of the World Missions • garvin@homewithgod.net • www.geocities.com/crystallizing*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Fill in address and/or phone number below if you have moved or are making a donation to this ministry for the first time:

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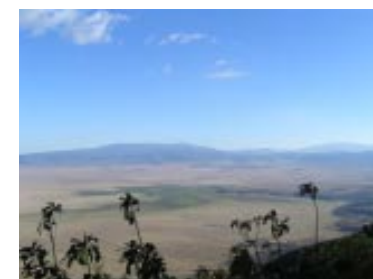
Your e-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Return this form to: Riverside Church; 2300 24th Ave. SW; Norman, OK 73072.

Please make your check payable to **Riverside Church**. You may write "Missions: Tanzania" in the memo field of your check, but do not write our names on the check if you would like your gift to be tax-deductible. You will receive a tax deduction statement from the church for your gift. All donation forms will be returned to us.

**Thank you for partnering with us to take the Gospel to East Africa!**

### A glimpse of our one-day safari to Ngorongoro volcanic crater ...



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