



December 2017

CHRISTMAS IN TANZANIA

This Christmas season has been quite a different experience here in Tanzania than it is in America. There are not decorations everywhere, no people shuffling to buy presents, no Christmas music played in stores, no traditional American Christmas meals, and no snow or coldness whatsoever since it is usually in the 80s and 90s here. Also, many things this month didn't go quite as planned or as quickly as we had hoped. We spent two, sometimes three, hours traveling back and forth between Mwanza and Shinyanga, our new home town, as we made necessary preparations to be able to live in our house. Sometimes, we found what we needed and others times we didn't. We also found a reliable car that will suit our needs here in Tanzania (see more on that below) even though the purchase/pick-up didn't go as expected. During some of these travels we faced road closures and frequent police stops as well. As of now, we have also been living with our mentors, Linda and Eric Funke, and their two children while we prepare our home and will probably stay with them a few days longer. And to top it all off, there have been multiple power outages, store closures for holidays, rainy days, flat tires, and LONG wait times for items, paperwork, and deliveries. However, looking at the Christmas story, we realized how much of the Christmas story was quite unexpected as well. Mary didn't expect to have a baby before her marriage. Joseph and Mary didn't expect to have to travel to Bethlehem for the unexpected census. And people certainly didn't expect the Savior King to come as a baby who was laid in a manger. Through the Christmas story, we are continuing to learn how to practice having open expectations and humility to be God's servants during this new season of life. We are also very much looking forward to starting our ministry to children with albinism here when the schools start up for the new school year in Tanzania.

While this Christmas season here was not all lights and carols, we have really been noticing how God knows His children and delights in giving us the inmost desires of our hearts. The moments that we found ourselves struggling most with missing home and the season, God gave us precious "gifts" that we will cherish forever. He came close to us in the hardest of days; He is our Immanuel "God with us."



When we were missing Christmas festivities, the next day we found out that there was a Christmas market happening near where we were staying.



When we were missing home, God provided a house for us to prepare to live in, friends to commune with, and technology to communicate with our families.



When we were missing Christmas traditions, our mentor and host, Linda, hung Christmas lights in our room and suggested we make Christmas cookies.

Also This Month...



We had the chance to go to Ruaha National park during the first weekend of December. It was a great time to get to know the country of Tanzania even more and enjoy God's magnificent creation. We were able to see hippos, elephants, giraffes, lions, zebras, water buffalos, and a hyena just to name a few. Needless to say, we are so grateful that we had the opportunity to experience all of this. You can see more pictures on our Facebook group "Adventures with the Reeds".



We "graduated" from language school but we definitely look forward to learning more through the experiences we will have in Shinyanga. After two challenging months of learning Swahili, we can understand a majority of what is being said to us and speak back in complete sentences. All the glory to God. We were sad to say good bye to new friends that we met at the school but are excited to begin our ministry here in Tanzania. We have been continuing to practice our Swahili through meeting many people in the community and attending worship services.



We purchased a reliable car for us to travel to and from the different organizations we will be working with. We ultimately choose this specific car because it has four-wheel drive and is raised and sits high enough to handle the bumpy roads here. It has plenty of space to transport people and things, it was checked and is in very good condition, and finally came in significantly under budget. We pray that this car will be a blessing to our ministry here in Tanzania.



We celebrated the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ by participating in a local Lutheran church service on Christmas morning. It was fun to see the pure joy as they danced and sang about the Savior being born.

Support Update

Looking back over this last year, we are amazed and thankful how God has provided for us in His perfect timing through you! As of now, we have raised enough for all of our outgoing expenses and 88% of our ongoing expenses for the year. This means that we only need \$3,850 of support to be fully funded for our first year.

As the New Year approaches, we would love for you to join our ministry by become a monthly sponsor (of any amount)! Currently, we have 10 monthly sponsors but are praying for more to come along with us in order to become fully funded for our first year in Tanzania. If you feel God calling you to partner with our ministry in this way, you can set up a secure monthly, automatic donation at this link (<http://globallutheranoutreach.com/support-reed.html>).

How To Partner With Us Financially:

Make checks out to
"Global Lutheran Outreach".
Write "REED" in the memo line.
Mail to **Global Lutheran Outreach**
6709 Ficus Drive,
Miramar, FL, 33023
OR
You can give online using credit or debit card at our
website.
All donations are tax deductible.

THRIVENT MEMBERS:

Choice Dollars® charitable grant funds can make a world of difference to our organization as we work together to send missionaries! Your Choice Dollars directed to Global Lutheran Outreach go to GLO's "Global Missionary Fund" (unless we are otherwise informed). Our Global Missionary Fund supports GLO missionaries who are underfunded or are experiencing a temporary shortfall in funding. **Directing Choice Dollars is easy.** Simply go to Thrivent.com/thriventchoice to learn more and find program terms and conditions. **Or call 800-847-4836 and say "Thrivent Choice" after the prompt.**

Prayer Requests

- Thanksgiving for our wonderful mentors as they have been a huge help in this season of transition, for the love and support by people from all over the world, for the provision of a house and good vehicle, for the special "gifts" that God has surprised us with this month.
- That we can continue to learn and improve in our Swahili during this busy time.
- That we can build relationships and connect with many people in our new community.
- For a smooth transition into our new house and into living on our own here in Tanzania.