

Tabora, December 22, 2018

Matt. 1: 23 "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel, which means: God-with-us."

Dear friends,

First of all, I wish everyone a blessed Christmas and all good wishes for 2019!

The rainy season has started in Tanzania and the Flamboyant tree has dropped a beautiful carpet of red flowers and announces that Christmas is near. Here they call that tree the "Christmas tree" Everything is fresh green again and people are plowing and sowing everywhere. We hope and pray that enough rain will fall for a good harvest!

The work in the village is going well and we have been able to help many people again this year, not only in the medical field but also through teaching and giving advice. Last month we taught for a day, together with local officials and Pact, an organization that deals with HIV/AIDs, orphans and widows.

About 30 adults came from the village, most men! (It is usually the women who come) Many of these people cannot read or write and most of them only speak their tribal language. Unfortunately, Pact's people did not know the local language, so much of the teaching about HIV/AIDs and the importance of testing was lost.

Another topic was about the importance of the health insurance that people can take out. For 10.000 Shillings (about 6 Canadian Dollars) the villagers can insure themselves for a year so that they do not have to pay for testing of Malaria, Thyphoid, etc. as well as for their medicines. Most people see the expenditure as too large because it has to be paid in one go. During the teaching we showed how much it actually saves them because if someone has to go to the clinic once, they already have about TZsh 6000/--. Almost everyone has a medical problem at least five times a year, so it is cheaper to pay the 10.000/-Shillings. That explanation has helped and more have joined the insurance.



Our work is now more concerned with Home Based Care. We have about 30 elderly people in their eighties, who cannot walk to a clinic but need medical help. We have groups of these people in 4 villages and we have organized to do H.B.C in each village once a week. The people from the villages meet with us at one of the homesteads under the shadow of a tree. Thomas, my medical worker does the check-ups: test for high blood pressures, which most of them have, see if they have anemia, fever, etc. Many of them are malnourished and have pain in their lower limbs and have paralysis symptoms. Our visits not only give these elderly medical help but it is also a pleasant morning to come together, chatting and listening to their stories. We share Christ with them and by the time we have prayed for them and leave again almost everyone is happy. Sometimes we leave with some Mangoes or Cassava roots. It is such grateful work.



This is one of the homes we visit. This 80 year old woman was attacked and raped about 1 month ago. She has o from this brutal attack.

We also do home visits with people who live with HIV/AIDs and who are in a very bad condition. These people have to walk too far to pick up their medicines and get medical care. Unfortunately, if they cannot get their ARVs most of them die within a short time and leave more orphans, some of whom also have the virus. We have now been able to place 3 of those orphans in an orphanage in the neighborhood. These children need a lot of care, so that is one big challenge for the workers. These children need to get regular check-ups and every month they need their ARV's. With any medical problem they need to be taken to a clinic right away. Yesterday evening we took Margeth back to the orphanage together with my kids. We visit them occasionally and they were happy to see us. We joined their evening service and it

was great to share some Christmas joy with them. who does a great job at the orphanage and we joined their evening service.

At home everything goes well even though I have had quite a few challenges in the last few months: Christina, (Kiri) is now 16 and has the typical behavior of a teenager who tries to push her own will. That started getting out of hand and I went to Social Services who tried to talk with her. It caused me quite a bit of stress. She eventually came around and took her to her boarding school on time. Madam is very intelligent and therefore gets high marks. She also likes the school. She is very close with Jacky, who also goes there. Unfortunately Jacky started to get sick and I had to take her out of school 4 times and take her to Mwanza for medical examinations. This means a long one full day's drive and a day back after the stay in Mwanza. In Tabora there is no medical help for her problems. She appeared to have gastric ulcers, which are now under control, but she also began to show symptoms of paralysis in her lower legs. Eventually she was diagnosed with Osteomalgia, a very rare disease for which there is no medicines in Tanzania. It occurs especially when she is under stress. She has just finished her 2nd year of secondary school. Now she has to go to another school in Tabora so that I can keep her at home and take care of her better. Of course, this situation also caused problems for Kiri who missed her sister at school and was very worried. Now that Jacky will have to go to a school in Tabora, Kiri is not very happy about that but after a good talk she agreed that this is for the better and for her to change schools might not be a good idea, so she has agreed to return to her high school. Praise God! Jacky herself has been very unhappy because she likes to go to her school where she has many friends. She was so down and stayed in bed all day and had little appetite for food. I have tried to talk with her several times and encouraged her, but that did not help. Finally, after asking for some advice, I gave her a very low dose of an anti-depressant since the day before yesterday. Yesterday, she was like her old happy self again and together with Kiri they were baking in the kitchen with a lot of chatting and laughing. Really nice to hear and see them both like that again!



Jacky, Baraka and Kiri at their High School

Ngassa is now a young man but he still functions as a younger boy because of his chronic illness and psychological problems. I am so grateful that he finally finished his high school. Now we are looking for a vocational school for him as he really seems to have a natural ability for solving electrical problems. Two weeks ago he went to visit the orphanage where he attended Secondary school but was expelled. He stayed 2 weeks and fixed their sound system! He loves being there as he now feels valued and appreciated.

Baraka has finished primary school and will start secondary school in January. With the States exam he got all A's and one B! He is very intelligent and he now wants to become a lawyer. It is nice to have him at home because he is a lot calmer and more helpful and gets along better with everyone. Really wonderful! Yesterday we were play fighting and yes, I still conquered him! He is almost as big as me and is still growing.

Faraja continues to be cute as ever. He has Adenoids that need to be removed. The steroid medicines he was using have not helped. The best news for him and me was that his testicles are now in his bags and won't need surgery for this. He is growing like a cabbage at the moment. He was very disappointed with his school results. When I got him out of school he looked sad and said "I have failed!" When I looked at his figures he had 94% ..., all A's, average! Another intelligent child! He cheerfully helps us in our household showing that he also is maturing.



Mfaume is and remains a very nice and helpful young man. He is a stabilizer in our house because he remains calm and encourages everyone and loves to joke and tease them. He also sets a great example by always voluntarily mopping the floor, doing the dishes, washing my car, watering the garden, etc. He has to wait until May before he can continue with the

Pharmaceutical studies. He is really looking forward to that. Now he is engaged in cultivating. A few years ago I had bought a piece of land for Baraka and Faraja, where I built a wall with a gate this year. There he has planted corn, beans and spinach. I also have a well on the plot that has enough water to help with the construction of a house. But for now he can water the vegetables. After the harvest, I hope to build a small building with two spacious rooms. Each room will have a shower and a toilet. Then the older boys can move there. The plan is to eventually build a family home. Fortunately, the costs here are very low compared to other countries. The building with the 2 rooms will cost about \$7000/- Canadian. Now that I get some pension money on top of my normal monthly income, I can save up and pay for it. God is good!!

Margreth now works as a supervisor at the orphanage in Tabora and loves her work with these little ones as well as with the other workers. She is doing a great job. We are happy to have her come home for Christmas.

Mahona, my Albino boy is doing great at the university and will be ready next year with a master in administration for education. He will probably get a job immediately when he is done. They will put him in a safe place. (Yes they still do horrible things with albino people here) Mahona continues to have problems with skin cancer and this week he will be treated while he is home for a few days. My good friend, Dr. Kathrin, brought us the medicine to treat skin cancer for him. That treatment works well but is very painful for a few days. He will be home tomorrow and we are looking forward to spending Christmas with everyone!

With me everything goes well, although I do feel my age now and then, and want to slow down a little...(not too much!) I have discussed this with my bishop. My plan is to stop with the project around the beginning of 2020. This will give the start another development project there and get a church going. Thomas will also stop work at the end of next year.

These are about the latest news items from beautiful Tanzania.

Once again my kids and I thank you for all your prayers and support for their schools and other needs. We wish everyone a very blessed Christmas and the best wishes for the New Year!



Hanneke Cost Budde

Serving with AIM Int. 1641 Victoria Park Ave, Toronto, ON. Canada. M1R 1P8

Email: hanke255@gmail.com