



Ferguson Report



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“Go ye unto all the world”

November 2009

Chimala in November

It is frequently useful for the mind’s ability to remember things by associating memorable events with blocks of time. The month of November will no doubt be a reminder to Mary and me of the time we spent in Chimala, Tanzania. To date, this visit has been our longest time spent in Tanzania since we left Arusha in 2003. Normally when I go to Chimala to visit, I basically allow enough time to get there, make the day drive, teach for 2 weeks and immediately head for home. During this trip, however, we had a few extra days padded on both sides giving us the opportunity to do additional things and actually get a “feel” for life on the mission.

With that said, we came to Chimala to fulfill two primary purposes: 1) Garry Hill and I taught four of the short courses; and 2) to participate in the awarding of seven CBC graduates the Bachelors of Biblical Studies degree from the Bear Valley Bible Institute of Denver. It was decided to have the graduation exercises indoors due to threatening rains. The ceremony was a pleasant tribute to each of the seven graduates who received not only their diplomas but



CBC student body and staff.

also a nice study Bible and a monetary gift. Bashan Kayira addressed his fellow-students as the class’s valedictorian. Following the graduation was a dinner prepared by several of the local Chimala mission ladies.

Among other things we were able to do on this trip, Garry and I both had opportunities to preach in

some of the nearby village churches. While we taught the adults, Mary was frequently able to teach children’s classes which normally outnumbered the adult attendance.

Finally after over a year, we were able to get all the student permanent grade records updated. This was no small task since there has been no really consistent recording system used uniformly by all the teachers. And, it didn’t help that a former CBC director suddenly resigned without any warning leaving CBC scrambling for replacement teachers. Furthermore, the CBC computer crashed earlier in the year losing all the student record data. Fortunately, I keep a back-up; but it was still over a year behind. Nevertheless, Mary was invaluable in getting all the records caught back up.

Another thing I have wanted to do for several years now but never had the occasion to do, was drive up the mountain road behind the mission through those 52 hairpin curves and see the “old” mission that I had heard so much about. It had been raining; so we weren’t certain we should even attempt the trip. But as soon as we started we realized the dirt road was pretty much intact. Bill Stinson, who drove the Land Rover,



Fallen ruins of a once beautiful mission house at Ailsa on the plateau south of Chimala at about 6,000 feet elevation.

and his wife, Cyndi took Mary, me, and Garry up to see this old historic mission originally built by the Germans around the turn of the 20th century. It was once a flourishing Christian mission community with several mission families, an active and growing church, and a preacher-training school called the

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“Ferguson Mission”

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Tanganyika Bible School. There's nothing left now but old fallen ruin lying amidst breathtaking mountainous scenery. Today, no one knows of the whereabouts of the Tanzanian Christians who once worshiped there. Bill spoke of trying to re-evangelize the area in the future. It would have been nice to use existing structures providing a place for a new church to meet, but the old fallen buildings exhibiting fine quality German brickwork are beyond restoration.

When time would allow, Bill and I were able to discuss some future plans for the Chimala Mission as well as consider some of the existing challenges to the work. As I mentioned in last month's newsletter, there is a great need for missionaries. I'm still hoping someone reading these newsletters will look deep within and give the idea serious consideration. Besides the need for missionaries, finances are always a challenge. There are a couple of possible projects that hopefully will help alleviate some of these financial strains.

The new secondary school is nearly completed in its construction which is planned to exist as a self-sustaining program. While this has been a great financial strain on the mission itself, its completion and inauguration should free-up some resources to go back into the operation of the weightier matters of the mission (i.e. preacher training).

Oh course, no mission work is perfect. But if God blesses the future plans and dreams of the

Chimala Mission, it could increase tremendously its influence for good far and wide in the region of eastern Africa. Your prayers would certainly be desired and appreciated.

Before I end, let me say that we did get a chance to go to Mbeya in hopes of seeing what progress has been made on the construction of the international airport. I admit I was a little skeptical, but there are signs of progress as we saw additional new structures built and heavy road equipment in place for completing the runway. Lord willing, the long trips from Dar will become a thing of the past and will be replaced by flying within an hour of Chimala. Howell

A Note About Ukraine

The heating situation for the BVBIU building in Gorlovka has been making considerable progress. The new high-efficiency boiler system has been installed. However, the power source cable connecting the system to the city's power is stalled out temporarily. It was originally to be an underground cable; however, the development of a new neighboring play yard has made that plan unlikely. Instead, the cable will have to be routed above ground which has its own set of problems. Also, the cost continues to fluctuate (not uncommon in Ukraine). Please pray that this can be resolved soon as the temporary space heaters do a very poor job keeping the rooms warm in mid-30 degree temperatures.

Howell