



# Report From Tanzania

## *Christmas in Tanzania a Refreshing Change!*

I pray that everyone had a blessed Christmas and I wish you a prosperous and happy 2006.

As you can imagine, Christmas in Tanzania for me was quite different from Christmas in Newfoundland. Having said that, however, I can say I found it to be a refreshing change.

Seems as though in the western world we get so caught up in the commercialism of Christmas that the true meaning sometimes gets lost in the hype. Here in Tanzania there is very little emphasis put on gift giving and shopping and commercialism. This is due partly to the poverty conditions but I think also partly to the fact that here in Tanzania people have very strong faith and everything revolves



around faith, church and God.

Christmas in Tanzania is more about going to Church, having a nice meal and being together with family and loved ones.

As you can see, we did have a Christmas tree, although it was much simpler than most of those at home.

I spent a true Tanzanian family Christmas with the Simfukwe family in Dar es Salaam. I attended Church on Christmas morning at the

Anglican Cathedral in Dar es Salaam (St. Alban's). The services here are not very much different from that at home. The one thing I do always find interesting is that instead of someone taking up the offering, everyone in the Church goes to the front during the offertory hymn and places their offering in the boxes themselves.

We sang the same hymns and carols as I would have sung at home – "O Little Town of Bethlehem", "Hark the Herald Angels Sing", "O Come All Ye Faithful", just to name a few.

After the Church service I went to Mama Simfukwe's where preparation of the meal got underway. We had pilau, sweet banana, rice, chicken, meat, beans, peas, and salads. It was a very enjoyable meal and it was nice to be surrounded by a family who have adopted me as one of their own.

After the meal the rest of the day and evening was spent just sitting and talking and laughing together. Of course there were some presents for the children and we did have fun playing with the children as well.

I did have an opportunity to speak to my own family as well which completed the day for me.

Although it was probably one of the quietest Christmases I've ever had, I enjoyed it immensely and found that the true meaning of Christmas – the birth of the Christ Child – was very prominent throughout the entire day.





## Images of Africa



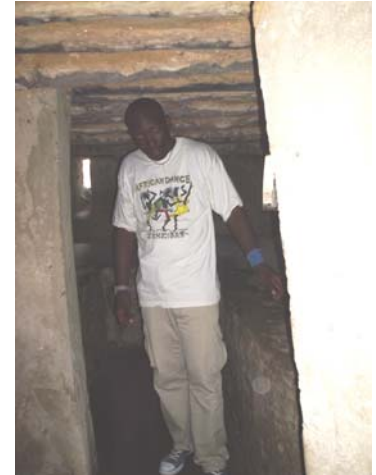
When you hear "Africa" you don't often think of beautiful sandy beaches and very blue water. Zanzibar is one of the most beautiful places I've ever seen and these photos provide some evidence of that.

A view of the beach, Nungwi, Zanzibar



View from the hotel where I stayed - The Paradise Beach Hotel

In Zanzibar we visited the site of the former slave market, where the Anglican Cathedral is now situated. We also visited the site where slaves were kept after having been sold at the market prior to be shipped to the various countries.



It really made me realize the extent of the horrors which these people were subject to during slave trading. Fortunately, there were people who were brave enough to fight slavery and African people are now free from this horror.



## A Very Special Thanks To All My Supporters!

Without your very generous financial support, and more importantly, prayerful support, this mission would not be possible. I would like to say a special thank you to everyone who has supported me and I look forward to continuing to share my experiences with you throughout the next two years by way of this newsletter.

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