

Report on a trip by Graham Pountain (UK coordinator)

20 days April 28th to May 18th 2024

Travel to Bethany: I travelled with Turkish Air. The cost was £655.07 return

The first flight was from Manchester to Istanbul (27th April)

(4h 25min) 10.35 – 16.50 (2 hours difference). 1h 30min wait

Istanbul to Dar es salaam (7h 30min) 18.20 – 01.50.

The next flight was with Air Tanzania Cost \$160 (£126) including an extra \$20 for an extra 23kilo bag

Dar es Salaam to Mwanza flight TC110 leaving at 05.15 and arriving Mwanza at 06.45.

Pleased to say all flights were on time. I had an empty seat next to me on both flights to Dar.

Went through customs without having to open bags for inspection.. Jesca and Yonah were waiting at Mwanza airport. The trip to Bethany took a further 1 hour 45 minutes in the Bethany Land Cruiser. This was probably one of the best trips ever. I arrived with 2 x 23kilo bags plus hand luggage of 8 kilos and a shoulder bag of 2 kilos

Travel Home: All flights on time. On the 8-hour flight from Dar to Istanbul I had an empty seat next to me but on the 4-hour flight from Istanbul to Manchester no such luck.

On both flights with Air Tanzania to and from Dar the seats were all taken but fortunately, the flights are only 1.5 hours. On the way to Bethany, I always take 2 x 23-kilo bags (usually included with the flights charge). At Dar, I had to pay an extra \$20 to Air Tanzania as they only allow one 23-kilo bag. On my way back I put one bag inside the other so I don't have to pay an extra \$20 to bring an empty bag back. On my way to Tanzania, I took 2 bags each with 23 kilos and on my return I had one bag that weighed 10 kilos. In future, we are asking that all volunteers take an extra bag full of things Bethany desperately needs. I can help provide suitcases and holdalls (one which will fit inside the other).

Daily routine: I get up at 06.30 and have two slices of toast with blue band and Jam (plus several cups of tea) I attended the morning prayers with the care workers at 07.30 (lasting about 30 mins). At lunch, at noon I have either rice or chips with fish, omelette, beans or cabbage. At 5 pm I would eat a further 2 slices of toast. I only expect Grace who looks after the store to cook me one meal per day (she can be very busy). I drink the lake water but boil it first. There is bottled water if required (at extra cost) I attend the evening prayer time at 06.45 which lasts about 30/45 mins. At 9 pm I go to bed.

Internet connection: We use a router (which uses a mobile phone connection) which works most of the time. In the 20 days I was there I used and paid 160,000 Tsh (£53) mainly for downloading drivers for printers and updating laptops. Visitors may find they only need to use £10/20 depending on usage and what they want to download etc. The connection is unreliable and slow at best. Volunteers including me have to pay for the internet use (added to the bill at the end of the trip)

Meetings with staff and children: I had an input with the care staff at prayers each morning and also with the children at evening prayers. We covered various topics usually encouraging good behaviour and hard

work, also topics of the day. I met with Std 7 to ask about how they felt they were doing at school etc. I also met with Form 3 secondary school children to encourage them. I regularly met with Theleza, Kabula and Mgesi who all helped me with the English lessons I took.

I met with all the teaching staff and with the members of the senior leadership team.

English teaching: I took Std 5 from 9 till 10 am each morning and Std 6 every afternoon 1.30 – 2.30 pm. I also took a class for the care worker each afternoon from 3 – 4 pm.

Bible study: I covered John's gospel and the letter to the Galatians together with Theleza, Jesca and sometimes Dotto.

Laptops and printers: I repaired two very old printers used in the head teacher's office one of which is nearing its end of life. I gave Happiness a newly refurbished laptop to use in the Office and also 4 teachers were given refurbished laptops at a subsidised price of 400,000Tsh (about £125 each). They pay 50,000 Tsh off the loan each month. The two nearly new printers were sorted out and are now printing OK although one of them will not connect through the USB cable and can only be used in standalone mode as a photocopier although very slow.

Donorsee projects: I took several videos for various donorsee projects including reading books for the school, Solar power for the Chapel, Photocopier for the school, Loan repayment for Chama, Loan repayment for Susan, second-hand clothes for the boys, second-hand clothes for the girls, Towels, bed sheets, flipflops and mattresses. Also 6 short videos for sponsoring individual children.

Goods brought in luggage: New video projector for the home. 10 ink bottles for the Epsom printers, toner cartridges for the brother printers. Two more refurbished laptops. Several rechargeable light bulbs for the dormitories, and several small torches for the care workers. 50 Catechisms donated by Debbie Mahoney (150 more to come). Various books etc. etc

Climate: The weather was good whilst there with just a few showers mainly at night. Most days were sunny, and the temperature most days rose to about 32 degrees C mid-afternoon and 24 degrees C in the evenings. Most days had a light breeze coming from the lake.

Trips away from Bethany: None

Wage Review: Discussed with Jesca the wages for the home staff as the school staff had an increase recently

Films watched: Various short YouTube videos to help with the teaching of English. The children watched 'The little girl who believed in miracles', Ben Carson 'Healing Hands', and a couple of others.

All the teaching staff watched 'The Little Girl Who Believed in Miracles' and had to complete a 15-question test paper about the film.

Photos and videos: As usual I took a good number of photos and lots of short video clips which I shall edit and show on the website as soon as they have been processed.

Songs: the children learnt some new songs including 'I am a new creation', 'I speak Jesus' and 'Who am I'

I printed off the words for 'King of Kings' and 'I the Lord of Sea and sky' plus video clips from YouTube so the children could learn them.

