

The BETHANY Project (Tanzania) UK

NEWS - UPDATE - MAY 2014

SCHOOL BUILDINGS

Firstly, a big thank-you to all our supporters as our school begins to take shape. As you can see from the photos the building work is well under way. We now have 4 classrooms and a staffroom ready for the ring-beam to be installed together with window and door frames. After that the roof will go on followed by tiling, electrical and plumbing work. We believe we have enough funds to finish half the school. The next half will be the building of the next four classrooms and toilet block for children and staff. However, the next half may take some time as we will have to wait for the funding.

NEW ACCOMMODATION BLOCK

You will see we are also building an accommodation block to house our teachers (Jesca, Emma, Minza and others). The small house consists of 4 small bedrooms together with a joint lounge area. We hope to finish this before Jesca and Emma return in July!

NEW CHILDREN

As of April 2014 we have 114 children on site with others in higher education or on training courses. Once the school is completed we hope to double that number. Obviously we will need to build some new dormitories and buy another two wood burning stoves so it may take a few years.

Our Resident BETHANY CHOIR

From September this year we should have 8 older Bethany girls studying at Blackburn College. Sophia on the PGCE course, Fatuma on year 2 of her 3 year degree course. Rehema, Mpelwa and Debora on the 2nd year of their diploma course and Nkamba, Elizabeth and Stella on the first year of the diploma course. The girls love to sing and dance in their spare time both traditional Sukuma or Swahili songs as well as in English. They enjoy singing at Weddings and other events and of course at Christmas they will go carol singing. They also support other charities with their singing. If you have an event and think they would be an added attraction or a stand-alone event then please contact us.

FUTURE VISION

We hope eventually to add a secondary school to the primary school we are building and perhaps eventually to have a small Teacher Training College.

JESCA and EMMA return

Jesca and Emmakulatha have both finished their teacher training and are ready to return to Bethany (July). We are holding a **Farewell Party** for them on the 22nd June (3 days before they leave for Tanzania). They have great enthusiasm for the challenges ahead and are hoping to share this with everyone who comes to the Party. They have requested that they don't need presents but a small donation towards the work they are starting will be very welcome.

If you intend coming please RSVP

Beating of Children and Subjugation of Women

Sadly our local government schools use corporal punishment often excessively causing bruising. Many of our children hate going to school due to this. Obviously this will not happen at our Bethany School!

Also women in Tanzania are treated as second class citizens and traditionally have few rights. Men pay a 'bride price' for their wife and expect her to produce children, provide for the children and her husband. So a typical family living in our local village may consist of man and wife and several children. It is the wife's responsibility to grow the crops for the family to eat. She will do all the household chores with the help of her daughters including fetching water and firewood. After she has cooked the meal she will present the best food to her husband and then go and sit to eat with the children. By selling some of the crops she has grown she will buy everything the family may need. Many of the men take little responsibility for their families welfare preferring to perhaps catch fish which they may sell to buy locally produced alcohol. Emma and Jesca feel this should change!

WHY A SCHOOL?

Most of our children have no parents and their relatives are unable or unwilling to support them which is why they end up at Bethany. When our children have finished secondary school or when they reach 18yrs they have no home to return to for support. The local government schools are under-resourced and understaffed. Over 90% of the children fail their secondary education and therefore return home to work on the small plots of land they have to grow the food they eat (shambas). Our children need to pass their secondary school exams and go on to High School or other training courses so that they can live independent lives. We know that if we could obtain a licence from the government to run a school then our children would stand a much better chance of passing their secondary education. Not only that but we intend to help both the local government primary and secondary schools with extra lessons at Bethany in the evenings and at weekends. However education is not the priority but the changing of values. Tanzania still has people who will murder old ladies living alone because they think they may be witches, some also believe that Albino body parts will make you rich. Many also believe disabled people are cursed or bring bad luck. Many things need to change!

BETHANY SUMMER SAUNTER

A 7.5 mile walk following the route taken on our Bethany Winter Wonderland Walk. This consists of about 4 miles on the canal tow-path and 3.5miles on other country paths through Rishton, Great Harwood and Clayton-Le-moors. It takes place on Sunday the 15th June from 12 noon at Junction 7 Business Park (BB5 5JW) car park. On our Winter Walk about 90 people took part and raised over £3,000 for the building of the school. This time we are hoping for many more.

Please see our Web site: www.bethanyss.info for information on the walk or email; graham@pountain.net or phone 01254 879694

PROMOTING BETHANY

The Bethany UK team are always looking for opportunities to publicise the work we are doing whether that is visiting Schools, Churches, Mothers Unions or other organisations. We are only a phone call away and we can do very short presentations of 10mins to a full hour. We have video and slides and often the eight Bethany girls who are studying at Blackburn College are able to come along too.