

Greeting in the name of Jesus from Mtwara, Tanzania - to all of you who have encouraged me in my faith and supported the work God has for me in East Africa (now 17+ years).

As you may or may not know, the past 9 months have been some of the most challenging in my life. For reasons economic, professional, academic, and personal I decided to return to Tanzania for two months (mid-May to mid-July). Yesterday, in church I met a missionary that I have know for many years - he was surprised to see me and he chuckled because year after year I have declared that I'm am leaving East Africa - and yet I find myself here yet again. Perhaps I am like Jesus when he prayed in the garden "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me, yet not my will but yours be done." And I hope like Joseph when he found himself in prison, though he did not wish to remain there, he made the most of it in service and good work until God released Him. Or maybe I just don't know how good I have it, and how rich this experience is, but God does, so He keeps me coming back digging deeper and new holes!

Praises:

1. Though it is my hope, somehow to put down roots away from this place, God is blessing this time richly as I settle in to Him and the project. There is alone-time enough for me to reconnect with God and reflect on the challenges, changes and hopes of the past months. As well, I have many hours of good work with the team here to advance our MaKuYa Museum.
2. Literally hundreds are children of all ages (and other visitors) are coming to our museum weekly (over 450 last week alone). When asked why the come, they say they come to learn.
3. We had a meeting with teachers last Friday who were enthusiastic to engage with the museum to help them improve their teachings. We expect to meet again in two weeks to consider a pilot program of teacher support.
4. I have a good team to help get things in order - systematizing everything is the plan: Chilumba in the head curator dealing with research and management issues, Filbert is in charge of maintenance and construction, Daudi is focusing on translation, and Bonface is assisting with education programming.
5. Cooler days have arrived! June and July is the cool season. By Wednesday the temperatures at midnight are expected to plummet to 68 degrees (20 centigrade). - Highs about 87 (31c).
6. Regular steady(ish) electricity.
7. I have brought my son Daudi to assist me. Accompanying him are his wife and three children - it is great to have time with the grandkids.

8. My first three Sundays here I was too exhausted from Monday to Saturday work to want to go out for church, I expected this it be the case each week. However, this past Sunday, I happily returned to my local church, and so much enjoyed being there (wow, how God can transform our spirits!).

Prayer Requests:

1. That the tree of my life with too many branches will be trimmed by God's wisdom so that what remains will be strong and healthy.
2. That I will be content to be smaller and just a normal guy in this world.
3. That I (we) will be very very organized and productive in documenting all our museum artifacts in a professional manner - with appropriate paperwork, including photographing all items and posting many on our website.
4. That I can keep up and expand the website (www.MaKuYaMuseum.org) and my blog (and that people will read them and "like" them - and that they will go viral ;-)
5. That I can approach new educational ideas and stratagem in a more academic "evidence based learning" manner. And not to launch under-ripe proposals.
6. That we can develop programs completely enough to seek funding support (plans, budgets, justifications, etc.).
7. That ADEA can secure basic funding to pay the team here and deal with running costs for now, and then longer term funding to look ahead to 2019 and 2020 (we would like to pay the rent for two years ahead, with out this, we hesitate to make costly improvements to the facilities.
8. That, if God would have it, I might find a research topic for a dissertation for which I can have passion. As well as focused time to start the dissertation proposal process.
9. Or, discernment if I should put the dissertation on the shelf (maybe just for a season).
10. I must make plans for where I will be and live and earn some income beginning in mid-July - and maybe put down some roots. But where?
11. Afri-Mak, the artisan group that grew out of ADEA, is struggling. I have agreed to take the gift shop under the ADEA week to an extent (I will not go back to the level of full care as in the past). Charles Msoga (painter) and Mama Patakula (tailor) are working together with me to put together a very systematic way to keep the gift shop going, profitable and manageable. Sadly, there are very few expats in Mtwara these days.

Thank you for your prayers, your friendship, your faith, and your service to God in the place He has chosen for you.

In His care, on the sometime bumpy road of life and faith - Douglas

