From Cornwall to Tanzania and back! – Grace Kanungha’s Story

It is not what you know but who you know that sometimes can trigger a great life adventure leading to moving to a foreign land, marrying cross culturally, bringing up mixed race children and then integrating them all into your own Cornish Heritage.

My first trip to Tanzania was in 2006, led by recently returned home CMS mission partners Paul and Christine Salaman. But it was in 2008 when I returned for the second time, my youth group from St. Austell Parish in tow, that God disturbed in me my sense of home. On return to St. Austell, I surprisingly felt homesick, for Tanzania. But after spending the best part of 10 years living in that beautiful country which I do now call one of my homes, I have finally learnt that my home is in God.

Perhaps as many do when they set off for foreign mission, I had a perception that I had something to take to Tanzania. Of course, I was wrong, Tanzanian Christians and their culture have enriched my life far more that I have theirs, not least to mention marrying Festo and the gift of our three precious children.

With Church Mission Society I went from being a short-term person in mission, to being, with Festo, mission associates (once married) and eventually becoming mission partners in 2018. From the very beginning I needed supporting churches and was very blessed as, initially, churches with whom I already had a connection with got on board. Later, the net was spread wider to include Festo’s church family in the UK and wider still by CMS’s wide network of supporting churches. We are so grateful for the financial provision that we have received in this way, as well as from individuals, BUT more importantly we are very thankful for the way we have been consistently covered in prayer. Even during the darkest of times we have been able to sense that we were being held up in prayer by the saints.

In Tanzania, our mission field was St. John’s Seminary, where Festo was Head Teacher of the secondary school, and the villages of Kilimatinde and Solya, which the Seminary sits between. St. John’s is comprised of nursery, primary and secondary schools alongside a bible college, all under the Diocese of the Rift Valley. We felt very much that God’s call on us was to see lives transformed through education and the love of Christ. This very much underpinned all the strands to our ministry both at school and in the wider community. We were gifted a plaque for the wall in our house which says: “Do what you can, Where you are, With what you have”. This was very much our modus operandi with the words of God to Moses ringing in our ears when he asks Moses “What is in your hand?” (Gen 4 v 2).

We are now based back in Cornwall, in Liskeard, working with St. Martin’s Church. I have taken on the Transforming Mission (TM) role of Pioneer Leader and Festo is also intending to serve in the youth and families team here, as a CMS mission partner. When we made the very difficult decision to return to the UK we knew very clearly that we did not want to leave CMS. Our hearts beat to know God and to make him known wherever we may call home on earth while we wait until that final day when we truly return home to the Father.