CHURCH MISSION SOCIETY

Ben and Katy Ray

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Location: Tanzania

What we do: Working with people with disabilities, providing training so they can earn a living

Equipping and encouraging where followers of Jesus are in a minority

Dear friends,



Us outside our tent

Greetings from a dusty safari tent in the bush!

We write having just returned to the cool of Africa from a sweltering England. Ben spent several weeks apart from the family over June and July, visiting link churches and dealing with various other matters back in the UK.

It's always a joy to visit our churches, many of whom we have now partnered with for more than 15 years. There were so many signs of God's kingdom on the move: from an adult baptism service beside a busy road on a Reading council estate, to a country Church of England primary school encouraging its children to "let their lights shine". This stood in some contrast to the disheartening and exhausting process of renovating our mistreated flat for new tenants. Nonetheless, the Lord used it as a way to reconnect with old friends from Holy Trinity Combe Down who offered a huge helping hand.

Back in Tanzania, Katy was managing three children, multiple events at the now flourishing SAFI Cafe, and packing up our family home. We weren't sure until the very last minute whether the rest of the family would all be able to join Ben in England, but the Lord made a way, through a very generous individual, for us all to spend the summer in the UK. As well as seeing wider family, a highlight was joining a Stewards' Trust family house party at King's Bruton school.

Jehovah Jireh

We've started sleeping in a tent, and for good reason! Even before moving to Arusha, we had in mind to build a volunteer house for our family rather than continue paying the high rents further north. But after two years of a disappointing search for a suitable space, we have, by what can only be described as a miracle, found ourselves the owners of four acres of scrubland, including a half-built garage/cottage and a shipping container.

In the last week, we've been connected to electricity and internet, although the water supply, which needs to be pumped up from the river, remains a challenge. As well as reducing our monthly rent, we're praying into God's vision for this large space. We would like to use part of it to generate income to support us in our work here, but also as a place where we can welcome the many visitors and volunteers we find ourselves hosting since moving to Usa River.

Please pray with us for the many practical needs as we begin to build, but also praise God for this amazing provision!

Support Ben and Katy:
churchmissionsociety.org/ray

With Jesus
With each other
To the edges



SAFI news

Following last year's growth at the SAFI Centre, this year has been focused on strengthening what we have before the next training and recruitment push. Gideon Menenengu, our project manager, has been key to managing the centre, and we were reassured to see how well he and the rest of the team kept SAFI functioning while we were all away over the summer.

SAFI now aims to train 50 more craft entrepreneurs over the coming year, many of whom will use the new business incubation park that we intend to start building soon. Please pray for these groups to develop naturally, and for creativity as the new craft enterprises begin to form.

Business incubation park

Thanks to last year's appeal to fund shipping containers (and the generosity of individuals and churches), we now have enough to purchase and convert around seven containers into business incubation studios, complete with electricity, storage and roofing.

In his perfect timing, the Lord has provided a CMS volunteer, Martin Barnett, a semi-retired building contractor who will oversee the layout and establishment of this new business park. As well as being a great space for fledgling craft businesses to thrive, we hope visitors and tourists will enjoy seeing the crafts being made and perhaps even make their own crafts alongside our artisans.

Please pray for Martin as he prepares to join us from late September, and give thanks for Malcolm Crawford, who volunteered his accounting skills earlier this year.

Fellowship of faith

Our little English-speaking fellowship, which has continued meeting at the SAFI Centre over the last two years, has been a great source of joy and spiritual encouragement to us as a family (despite often very low numbers).

Around Easter, we put out a little advert inviting people to our Sunday service and since then we have seen it draw in people from many unexpected places. The SAFI Cafe has been a wonderful way to let people know that we meet, and a place to quietly offer to pray for people and talk to them about Jesus.

Through helping to lead the fellowship, Ben has become interested in pursuing some theological training. Please pray for him as he discerns whether this is the right time to begin further study, and for the ongoing work of God's Spirit through the synergy between the cafe and the fellowship.

Family update

Zaki and Alessia both took the bold step of being baptised this year. Julia was keen too, but decided to wait until she is a little older. They're all still thriving at their school in Usa River, and Zaki has been made head boy as he enters his final year.

Alessia missed lots of school last year because of sickness, but we think we may have found the major cause of this now. Please continue to pray that her health improves and that she can enjoy a more settled year ahead.

Thank you, as always, for your prayers, encouragement and partnership with us as we pursue God's calling on our lives here in Tanzania.

With love and blessings, Ben and Katy x







Photos from top to bottom: *Allen, a carpentry teacher; Zawadi Toys enterprise group; SAFI volunteer Malcolm Crawford and the team signing his name; Alessia gets baptised*



Equipping where followers of Jesus are in a minority

It's encouraging to hear about other people working with CMS. People like Grace, who have completed training for local mission and are now discipling Christians in their rural churches in South East Asia. And in Lebanon, CMS partners are supporting local churches to respond to the urgent physical and spiritual needs of families displaced by conflict. Find these updates, and more, at **churchmissionsociety.org/equip**

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