

Dear family and friends,
(From Michael)

Jesus says, "I am with you always" (Matt 28:20). Come rest with him, our burden is heavy, his is light. Rest as we move from one country to another, from one culture to another, from one language to another. He knows our experiences. He also moved between countries. He knows different languages. He knows what it is like to be on the move.

From April to June, we were at Kiswahili language school. This was a temporary housing arrangement for our family in a little apartment on the school's grounds where others cooked for us and helped watch our children as Naomi and Michael met for about 4-5 hours a day for language class. We then took turns with the children in the afternoon while one of us was with the kids and the other was studying. It was a full three months, and we feel like we did well trying to learn a new language while also being present in our children's lives.

The children have also started to learn some Kiswahili. Ford can greet in different ways. He knows ways to say goodbye, how to count up to 10, and some other words or phrases. We continue to be shocked by all that he knows and understands. Soon he will be teaching us about the language! Jael also is slowly saying a few Kiswahili words as she develops her language skills in English also.

As we reflect on our time in language school, we know that God was with us. He helped us learn. He helped us amidst our transitions from the US to the largest city in Tanzania, and then to where we went to school. We prayed that He would open our minds, our ears, and our tongues to speak, and He has. We are not fluent by any means. We have a good foundation, and we now need to build on it. We are thankful for God answering many prayers.

A few reflections on learning Kiswahili: we laughed with our language teacher as we made mistakes, tried to learn how to pronounce words with sound structures different than English ones, and built new neural pathways for constructing grammar rules. Some of the pronouns sound very similar to Komba, but they are not the same. Also, the future tense in Komba is the past tense in Kiswahili! Things like these examples make it a little challenging to speak because what comes out of the mouth is a conglomeration of Komba, English, and Kiswahili resulting in two confused people (me, and the person being spoken to).



We are thankful for the opportunity to set aside time to focus on learning Kiswahili. Our teacher, Nelson was great. We had plenty of laughs with him and opportunities to challenge ourselves. After language school, we rode a train back to Dar es Salaam for several days of orientation and then flew to Mwanza.





The language school we attended was in a different part of the country than where we are living now. The climate there is different, with higher elevation, next to tropical mountains and cooler weather. We celebrated the end of our language school by hiking up some mountains to a beautiful waterfall. This is a view overlooking the city. Tanzania is a beautiful country with very friendly people.

After language school, we moved to Mwanza to live in a guest house for about a week before moving into our new house. We have been in our house for several weeks (as I write this letter). Much work was done to prepare the house for us: masonry, plumbing, electrical, and carpentry, among other things. We feel very welcomed by the diocese here and our colleagues. We are thankful.

July has been filled with addressing items around the house that have needed fixing, ordering, getting set up, etc. It was a completely empty house, and now we have a fridge, oven, and washing machine. We needed to decide what to buy, to arrange transportation of those items to the house, and then to make sure they can be set up. For example, I needed to get a gas can, hose, gas regulator, clips, a specific masonry drill bit, hook, and lock for setting up our oven. For the washing machine, I needed to plan where we would have the water come from and drain. Then, working with a plumber, we got it set up. Our time in Ghana prepared me for doing these household tasks. Our list of set-up tasks is getting shorter.

Jesus has been with us throughout all the transitions, and we are thankful. He is with us. He knows change. He knows every culture. He knows every language. He knows our thoughts, and He walks with us as we stumble while learning new things. He shows us love through our colleagues and our children. He shows us love through you. We are thankful. We hope that we can extend this love to others around us as we build relationships.

Confident in Christ,
Naomi and Michael Ersland

Prayer Requests

- Pray for our family as we transition to life in Tanzania.
- Praise for a good foundation that has been laid for learning Kiswahili.
- Pray for our family as we continue learning Kiswahili.
- Praise for a wonderful house to stay in and that our family can start to create routines.
- How may we pray for you? Please let us know!



About Us

Michael provides training and mentoring for multiple Bible translation teams. Naomi's management of the family and daily life extend beyond the house as she builds relationships and walks alongside neighbors.

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