

AFRICA HARVEST OF HOPE

SUMMER NEWSLETTER

*Mtakuja reflection letter,
second children's home,
new pastors &
Tanzanian goods*



ISSUE No.2 // AUGUST 2023

Over the past 3 years, Alan and Shannon have not been able to visit Mtakuja because of COVID travel restrictions and other obstacles. Finally, during this last month of March, they were able to join our Tanzania team and continue the efforts of the ministry. There has been a lot of progress made and yet there is still so much work to be done. Here is a reflection letter from Alan and Shannon on their visit to Mtakuja.

After being away for three years, we stepped onto the tarmac at Kilimanjaro International Airport and it felt like home.

Day one: When meeting with Pastor Zac and Redemta the morning after we arrived, it was hard not to just sit there at the Green Bamboo Cafe and spend all day long catching up on the last three years, but we have work to do, so we try to stay focused on our itinerary for the next two weeks.

Our first day we had an ordination ceremony for Pastor Zac as the Archbishop of his denomination and also the graduation ceremony of the seven new pastors who had just finished their two year program. The day was full... full of joy and stories of amazing testimonies of great things that God had done in all of these lives. I wish we could share all the details but it would take a book. Hm... maybe a book is needed.

Saturday was a day of teaching. Alan shared with new pastors and their wives about marriage, ministry and what God's word teaches us about these subjects. He met with them from the perspective of someone who has been in the church for over 50 years and seen how we must follow these directives seriously and live them out in our own lives, in order to be effective for His glory. We broke off into groups and Alan spoke only to the men and I spoke only with the women. By the grace of God it was a beautifully productive day.

Sunday morning Alan spoke again at church and we agreed, God meets us and fills us when we depend on Him. Thank you Jesus! That afternoon we met with one of Alan's board members, Dr. Japeth. He and his family treated us to a lovely lunch at a remote little oasis in Boma Gombe. We'll certainly remember this gem of a hideaway.

Finally, we were on our way to Mtakuja to see the children. We met them as they were arriving home from school. They had grown so much since we had seen them last but their smiles and laughter were so familiar. It was as if we'd seen them only a month ago. Our visit was too short but we would return over the weekend for church the next Sunday. But first, a surprise for them on Saturday. We brought them out on a bus to Moshi to have a "pizza party". Something they had never experienced. The grounds at our new favorite find, "Courage Cafe", has a playground and a grass field to kick around a "football" (soccer ball), and even a trampoline. We had chips, salsa and guacamole, pizza, fruit juice, sodas, cookies and a huge chocolate cake. I was terrified they would be sick on the bus ride back to Mtakuja but not one of them got sick. Thank you Lord!

For the next few days we met with caretakers of several orphaned children who might possibly be selected to live in the new children's home. This was tough but after having to say no to some we saw God's redeeming hand in the agony of those "nos". Africa Harvest of Hope may be adding another avenue to our diversifying ministry. As God provides we will be sponsoring widows who want us to take their children for no other reason than that they cannot afford to care for them. They want their children to eat, be educated and have a hope for their future. It grieved our hearts and truly boggled our minds at how many of these widowed mamas would give their children away knowing that they would have these "luxuries of life". After several visits like this we could not help but know that God was showing us how we could help. Again, more on this subject soon... Please pray with us for God's wisdom in implementing this new direction.

Prior to leaving we had slots of time to shop for things, or just to get prices on items that we need to better the living conditions of the children and the property. We shopped for a brick maker, a generator, a booster pump, mattresses, bedding, appliances and housewares. We also needed to look at musical instruments for the children as many of them have strong pulls towards music. We bought a keyboard and we hope to bless them with drums and guitars soon. They have someone on staff that will help them with lessons personally. We will be blessed coming in and going out. Deuteronomy 28:6.

Another Sunday; Alan teaches a beautiful message on David's life and accentuates the courage he displays standing against Goliath and it was not like any message I had heard on this familiar subject. Not only were the kids drawn in but every one of us in this tiny little, tarp-walled church. We were all reminded that the most important thing is to keep our eyes on the One who is coming. Not on the situations we see.

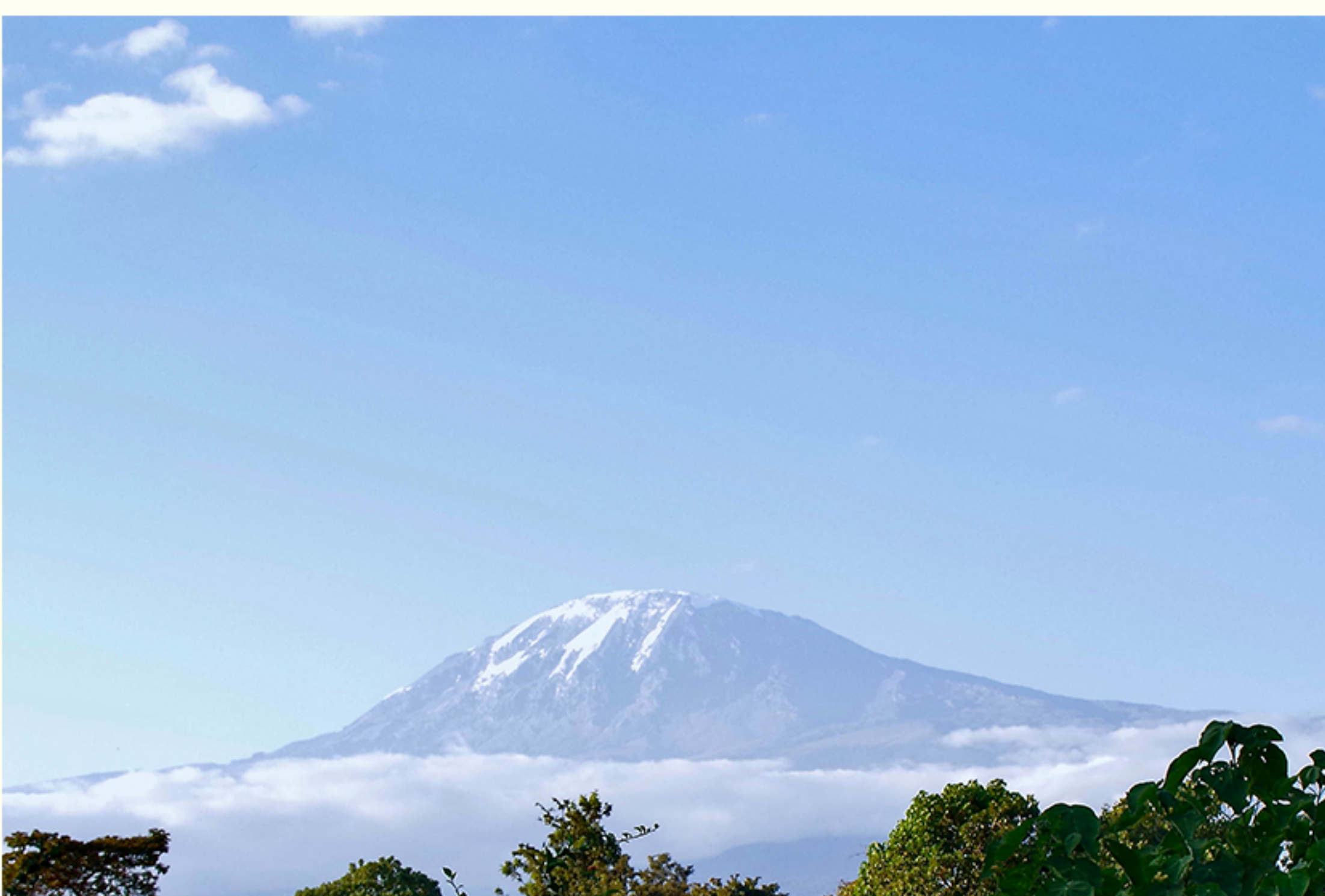
It's time to leave but not before we meet up one more time for business. Right before we grab our bags we sit together for a board meeting and one last dinner together. A kind of solidifying our "occupying until He comes". We're all tired and there is a feeling of, "when might we meet again", and we have this hope that our meeting again is a plan we will make, but we know that HE WILL DIRECT OUR STEPS. Proverbs 16:9

Then, 38 hours later and we're home again. 😊

PS We would be remiss if we did not thank each of you who prayed for us before and during this trip. Many of you know, Alan has been dealing with his health for over a year, so we are beyond grateful to God for allowing us to make this trip and all of you for your prayers.

- Alan and Shannon

It's been exciting to have Alan and Shannon finally reunite with the ministry team and the children. The goal of this ministry has always been to be present in Tanzania as much as possible and by the grace of God, that is becoming more frequent. Praise the Lord that Africa Harvest of Hope is back on track and we are also so thankful for every one of your prayers and donations that continue to fuel this ministry.



Ministry Updates

The ministry work in Mtakuja covers a wide variety from physical labor to education and caretaking. We are very proud of our team and all of the things they have brought to fruition.

Let's look at a couple major updates in the ministry highlighting this work.

SECOND CHILDREN'S HOME



We are very excited to announce that, in this past January, our second Children's Home finished construction. During this year's visit to Mtakuja, Alan, Shannon and Pastor Zac started the process of finding the next 12 children that would become their very own family in this new home. The process itself is difficult and emotionally taxing but absolutely worth it in the end. By the time this newsletter is published, these 12 children will have been chosen and are on track to be moved in by the end of the summer. We praise God for the addition of these children and their new home.



NEW PASTORS

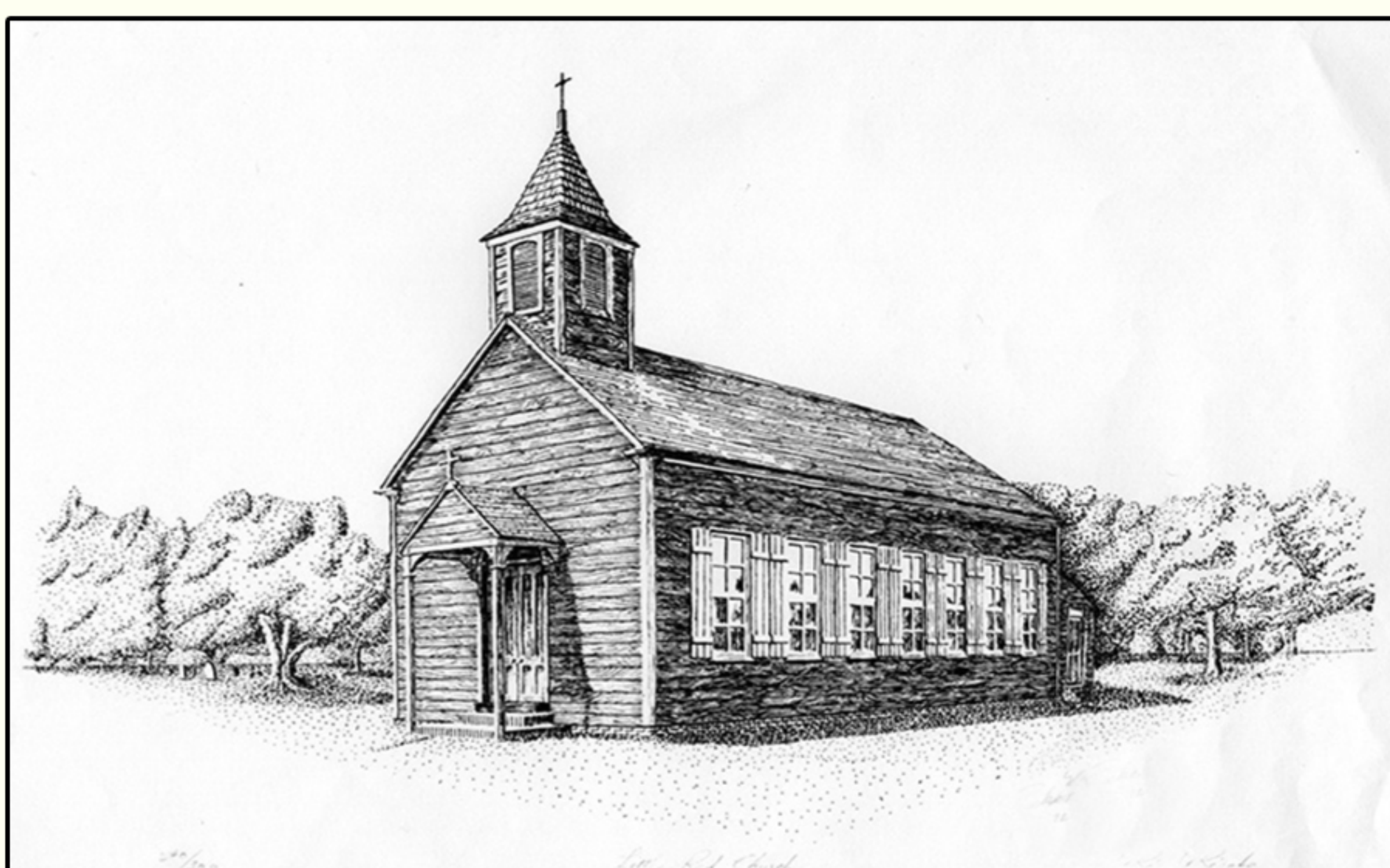
Pastors are an essential part of God's Kingdom, without them we cannot have leadership, good counsel or union in the church. This year, we had the privilege of celebrating the ordination of three new pastors; John, James and Mika. Through the support of this ministry, this now totals five pastors that were funded in their education.

Ministry Plans

As we continue on in the year, we are solidifying plans for this Fall and Winter. Firstly, we will be attempting a second visit to Mtakuja by the end of the year. Consistent travel to another country is tricky and can easily present major roadblocks. By God's grace, we hope to return again this year so we can help the ministry grow in its efforts. Two plans for the year we are excited to reveal is Kili-Vanilla and a Chapel for the ministry property!



This year, we are introducing locally sourced Tanzanian goods. The first to come of this is Kili-Vanilla. A small bottle of 5 vanilla beans, grown at the foothills of Mount Kilimanjaro. These vanilla beans are perfect for aging vanilla extract to use in baking or to use for specific vanilla recipes! These are currently only available through the website and will soon be available in person at select locations and markets around Redlands, CA. The goal of these products are to not only fund the ministry efforts, but to also help stimulate the local economy in Mtakuja.



MULTIPURPOSE CHAPEL

By the end of this year, our hopes are to have building plans for a multipurpose chapel that we would simply call, "The Chapel". The Chapel would be used to not only create a space for church

but to also serve as a place for large meal gatherings, celebrations and other recreational events. The Chapel is in the earliest stages of planning, but as awlays, keep this project in prayer that we may receive the funding and resources to be able to make this happen.

Africa Harvest of Hope exists to serve God by showing His grace and spreading the gospel to those in Tanzania, primarily Mtakuja. The primary way we see this is happening is by preserving the children of the next generation and improving their environment so that they can thrive and make the best of the lives that they have. The same goes for anywhere else in the world, but in a country like Tanzania, children by the tens of thousands lose their parents to HIVs or are abandoned each year. Almost 20 years ago, Alan and Shannon had the conviction and devotion to start doing something about it and to this day, the ministry has been supported by hundreds of donors that have become the main driving force of the ministry. We are truly thankful for each and every one of you that has made a contribution to the ministry efforts. If you are not in a place to make a financial donation, we ask that you would at least pray for the ministry, that God would protect the staff and provide the ministry with the resources we need to accomplish our goals.

Thank you for taking the time to read this year's summer newsletter and from everyone at Africa Harvest of Hope, we wish you well and God bless.