



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

Dear friends,

A Euros final, a general election, the Olympic Games and civil unrest: it was quite a summer to be back in the UK. Thank you to each one of our link churches and supporters whom we managed to visit. It was a great encouragement to be able to tell our story of the last year and to hear news of what the Lord has been doing in and through his church up and down the country – we perceived many green shoots of Kingdom growth.

During a Steward's Trust house party in Somerset, we were inspired by the speaker Rev Sandy Christie as he ruminated on the week's theme, A Better Story. Focusing on a few of the parables of Jesus, we reflected on the disarming power of sharing stories in a world that in many ways has lost its narrative.

Neema Crafts' tagline is "Be part of the story", because of the many people's lives with which it has become intertwined. Now back in the SAFI Tanzania offices, we're excited to be woven into new stories as we begin to work alongside up to 80 deaf and physically disabled trainees over the next couple of years.

One such person is Doris, a deaf woman who lives just around the back of our new centre. Doris is our first ever female carpentry trainee in 13 years!

Doris's story

I can only remember growing up with my mum, because my father died when I was still very young. I had four older siblings, but they found it very difficult to play with me because I was born deaf. My mum sent me to primary school and I made it all the way through to Year 7. Unfortunately, I didn't learn to read and write properly because no one could communicate with me. I felt very alone there, without the friends that everyone else seemed to have. Although my mum was from a Muslim background, I started to attend the Lutheran Church when it got a sign interpreter – it was here that I learned my first sign language and I also got baptised.

After leaving school, I began to help my mum selling vegetables at the market and braiding hair. This made me just enough money to buy groceries, but when I had my first child (at the age of 17) I needed my sisters' help to get by. The father of my first child was not a good man, he was sent to jail for a few weeks and we've not seen him since. I now have a six-year-old son too, but he was taken away from me when he was



Ray family in London

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only four months old to live with his dad in Moshi. His mother thought that I couldn't look after her grandchild properly and now won't allow me to see him again.

I currently live in a rented room with my 14-year-old girl, we struggle to get by, but my sisters in Dar help us from time to time from what they get selling fish. I would love to earn a living through carpentry, I've had a little training elsewhere, but I'm now learning how to make lots of new things with Alan, the SAFI carpentry teacher. I dream one day of owning my own house.

Please pray that SAFI Tanzania can be resourced and equipped to support people like Doris to discover their God-given ability and worth in Jesus.

Unity of purpose

Soon after getting back from the UK, Ben flew to Dar to join a consultation of Tanzanian delegates to discuss the new CMS-Africa hub. This is focused on discipling people in Muslim-majority contexts. It was a great privilege to spend three days talking with bishops and church leaders from across denominations and particularly interesting to hear from those operating in the most challenging environments in our country such as Tunduru and Zanizibar.

People also listened intently to the story of SAFI and the Neema Crafts project and we discussed how people from all backgrounds are drawn in when they see God's love being shared in practical ways.

Please pray that the unity demonstrated at the conference can bring about significant outcomes for God's Kingdom in these most challenging areas.

High-flying art

As some of you may know, Ben doesn't hide his love for feathered creatures and Katy isn't unfamiliar with holding a paintbrush. A couple of years ago, Katy began to paint a few of Ben's favourite birds and the outcome is now a range of prints and cards. It's been exciting to see how popular these have proved at the SAFI shop in Dar and we're thrilled that their sale is contributing to the income for the NGO. Praise God for the chance to use creativity in such a fulfilling way. If you would like to view the range of prints for yourself, just let us know!

Back at school – phew!

Our children were strangely eager to be back at school after so much moving around over the summer! Zaki continues to grow in his love for nature and takes long walks most evenings with his camera and keeps a diary of nature notes. Alessia and Julia are continuing to deepen their friendships at school and share their parents' interest in drawing and making things at home.

School fees and rent are still weighing heavily on our CMS mission partner budget, so please do pray with us that we can close the gap in our personal support.

As we mentioned in our church visits, if you would like to be added to our WhatsApp prayer broadcast list, please do contact us on: benandkaty@hotmail.co.uk

With lots of love,

Ben and Katy X



Photos from top to bottom: Doris trains in carpentry; CMS-Africa conference; Katy's red-and-yellow barbet



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