

# OWENS' NEWS

Observing Lent | Epileptic Dogs | Missing Cats | Family Times

## Swahili Sayings:



*“If you see a tortoise on a fence, you know he had help”*



*You suffer from the smoke of the firewood you fetched.*



## Lent: 40 Days of Reflection

**During Lent:** Arusha Vineyard is using the temptations of Christ to review our own lives and realign ourselves. Christ faced 3 temptations in the wilderness:

1. the temptation to be relevant. 2. The temptation for power; and 3. The temptation to be sensational. It is in the quiet, reflective intimate place with Jesus that we gain revelation for the tasks in front of us and how to do them. We are using this season to recommit to authentic sincere obedience, without the bells and whistles.

**Family Travels:** What a couple of months we have had. The Lord blessed us with a short but amazing time in the States.. jam-packed with laughs, scares and wonderful friends and family! We only had a little under three weeks in total to travel from Arusha to Phoenix, including a return road trip from LA. We were blessed to have places to ourselves in Phoenix, where we all converged except for Celeste who couldn't join us because of work. We missed her! The condition of our free accommodation in the two places we stayed, was to care for two cats and three dogs. That was an adventure in itself, where we managed to lose one cat (only for him to return a couple of days after we'd left – phew!!) and then watched one of the dogs go into, what we thought were, death spasms. As it turned out, the dog was epileptic and ended up just fine, but we hadn't been told. On several occasions, we experienced bursts of hilarity and fervent prayer within seconds of each other .. an adventure that I suspect will grow over time with the telling!



## What Would Magafuli Do?

**The new president, John Pombe Magafuli ('the Bulldozer')** continues to surprise everyone with his corruption clean-up. He has introduced tree planting and clean up days once a month, plus alcohol cannot be served in bars before 4pm on week days. Please pray for his protection .. change-agents tend to have short life-spans in this country!

## Guinea Fowl news

Mama Guinea fowl and her new husband are in a loving steady relationship. She has laid around 16 eggs, of which around 12 have been eaten by the local Mongoose family.

## Mongoose Trap

We recently had a Mongoose trap made to see if we could catch the culprit who was killing our baby chickens and eating all the eggs. It wasn't until the trap was laid that I realized a baby chick was being "sacrificed" for the others. Although he was behind a netted off area, he was positioned as bait for the mongoose. His loud chirps made for emotional listening. Unfortunately, our dogs were not abreast of the plan and ruined everything by eating him as soon as they were alone with him!! The savagery of Africa!!



## Judi's Job.....

Little did Judi know, her work at Caucus for Children's Rights was to end just after her return in January, otherwise we would never have done the trip and had such a great Christmas. But God knew and He's the one providing. Since starting this newsletter Judi has accepted a part time position at an Organization which protects widows and women called Inherit Your Rights.

## New Year challenges .....

We landed into Kilimanjaro International on New Year's Day, blessed by our time away but looking forward to the new season and busy start to the New Year.

## Funeral .....

Our first Sunday back, we were so blessed to see a former member of AV, Angela, visiting from Dar. I had married her and Yago the year before last (you might remember the pictures of a wedding in the wild).

However, it was a shock to hear that she was in town because her mum had attempted suicide New Year's Eve and was just coming out of a coma. Pastor Ringo and I visited her and had a short but special time of prayer with her. First thing the next morning, preparing to be discharged, she collapsed with difficulty breathing. Even though in hospital, Angela could not get anyone to come urgently and her mum died, suffocated due to sheer negligence. We were all devastated.

The funeral was very precious as was the celebration of her life held in our church that night, though delayed for a couple of hours due to power outage and a recently serviced generator that burnt out the moment we switched it on. Mmm..



### Water news....

We have had chronic water problems re the church property, digging wells both on and off our property, laying pipes from the local village that would serve our neighbors as well as ourselves. Result – our neighbors have regularly got their supply but we’ve not. After a couple of years dealing with local water committees, business people etc .. still no success.

However, the good news is we have raised enough money and put on a new roof on the church that will harvest rain. Now all we need is ... rain!

In the meantime, we truck in the water .. all quite expensive.

### David’s Health....

David’s health continues to be a challenge with his tick fever being recently identified as Rickettsial Disease which is a rare form of tick fever or Lyme disease. We value your prayers as we seek to deal with this naturally however, whenever symptoms hit, using simultaneous antibiotics seems to be working for now. We are asking if this is David’s thorn in the flesh or a battle to be waged, until we get an answer it’s the latter.

### Other news and prayer points.....

Here are some prayer needs we are currently facing:

- David is traveling to Malawi for a week on Tuesday for the African Vineyard Leaders Meetings and also, Judi is heading back for a quick visit to see her mum and dad in Casino on the 22nd March.
- Our second Vineyard Diploma Course in Contextualized Theology was a great success, starting with 15 students and ending up with 25 by the end of the week! Next course planned from 22nd April.
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- We have a new roof, thanks to the Arusha Vineyard Church’s tireless fundraising.

