

Global Missions

Committee Report for 2021

St. Paul's, through the Global Missions Committee, continues to support their rural village, Mwitikira in Tanzania.

Last year, at about this time, we shared a written report with the parish of our activities in 2019 thru early 2020. This is a report for the subsequent year. [You can read 2020 Report Here.](#)

COVID-19

As in the USA, activity has slowed down because of the need to control the COVID-19 virus. In May, using a \$7000 grant from the St. Paul's COVID -19 Relief Fund, we provided Personal Protective Equipment, disinfecting supplies, analgesic medicines and hand-held medical equipment to the Mwitikira Clinic and its personnel. We also bought fabric, from which the village seamstresses made 2,000 masks. Furthermore, we paid trained Diocese of Central Tanganyika (DCT) personnel to teach villagers in the proper measures to protect themselves and others from the virus.

To date there have been no deaths from COVID-19 in the village and no known infections. The picture is, however, clouded by the government's policy of, since May 2020, not releasing any infection or death statistics and declaring, not without outside suspicion, that the country is free of the virus. To add to the uncertainty, the government is performing no testing and refusing to accept vaccines. At this point we remain in contact with the village and the Diocese of Central Tanganyika (DCT) by phone and e-mail, but are holding all plans for a return visit in abeyance.

Carpenter's Kids

This program, enabling AIDs orphans to attend Primary School, was the heart of our original mission to Mwitikira, and at one point, in 2009, we were supporting 156 orphans. As time has passed, the rampage of AIDs has been checked; also, DCT's policy has shifted to support of other programs. We have continued to support our Kids, but many have completed their education and at this point we are supporting 24 Kids in secondary school and none in primary. We will maintain our support until they complete secondary school, but have developed no policy for college or university attendance.

Rain and Hunger

Rain is crucial to the well-being of the village. It comes from November thru May. 2019 was a difficult year, and we purchased grain on the open market to support families with no harvest. 2020 was a generous year with, in fact, too much rain. Some fields flooded and their crop rotted; but farmers were able to salvage sufficient so that no supplemental grain has been

needed from us. 2021 got off to a slow start, but now the rains are plentiful and a good harvest is expected.

Round-table Conference

The earlier report covers the Conference, held in Dodoma in February 2020. One of the later outcomes was linking with the Diocese of New York and two other parishes in our Diocese. We are staying in contact, with the expectation of shared knowledge and joint programs. Another outcome was to see the effects of Conservation Agriculture (CA) programs conducted on a large scale and practiced over a 5 year period. The methodology of the programs was very similar to ours, but the extra 2 years it had been practiced (vs. our 3 years) has led to greater food security and continuously increasing yields, in part due to an increase in soil fertility that the CA practices have engendered. This has led to a decision to extend our program for another 2 years – from 3 to 5.

Another benefit of the conference was for Joe Kearfott and Roger Whitfield to see the range of programs/missions that DCT supports. They truly try to catch those who fall through the very threadbare safety net of the Government of Tanzania. They have:

- A school for the Blind
- A school for the Deaf
- A Hospital
- A University
- A Bible College/Seminary
- An English language Primary School
- Two Secondary Schools
- A Vocational school that includes farming using irrigation.
- A Development Services Corporation (DSC), initiating and developing infrastructure programs.

Our Conservation Agriculture Program

As mentioned above, we have extended our program for another 2 years. The program continues to show improved crop yields and growing participation. The techniques are, however, labor intensive and have limited appeal to the young and farmers with large acreage. The Two Wheel Tractor (TWT) reduces the labor, but so far has not been able to match the yields from purely hand cultivated plots. To flourish, CA must be mechanized. To this end, the DSC is establishing a committee to develop the mechanizing technology, and we have been invited to participate. GMC has accepted, subject to working out the details. Work will begin later this year.

Irrigation

A high cost scuttled the originally planned rainwater catchment pond, and we have asked DSC to conduct a study of alternatives, including use of groundwater (i.e. a well) to provide the

necessary water. We remain convinced that irrigation offers a viable way to diversify and expand Mwitikira's economy.

Water System

The water system hardware continues to function well. Although the new Tanesco -Tanzania's electrical authority - electricity supply is still not 100% consistent, the existing diesel generator can easily be employed when Tanesco has an interruption. The most significant problem it has is lack of use, and therefore lack of revenue. When the rains are good, the village's surface wells fill up with free rainwater and the not-free water system water is not purchased. To explore the Water Committee's options, we have asked for a study by DSC.

Primary and Secondary Schools

The Primary School is significantly over-capacity with 8 classrooms and 1059 students, averaging 132 per class vs. the national standard of 40 per class. The village has begun a new 8 classroom school with 2 new classrooms already in use, two more 40% complete and the foundations for a further two begun. The school has a new headmaster who is driving the new construction. He understands that the government will register the school when the sixth classroom is completed and, significantly, when new toilets are completed. This is an ambitious undertaking on the part of the village and is presently proceeding without our support.

Cashew Trees

Cashews are a cash crop in Tanzania with a reputation of trees being easy to grow and requiring little tending. The Diocese has begun a project to plant 100 cashew trees in each of its 500 parishes. A coordinator has been appointed (Rev. Emmanuel Petro), and he is accepting donations for each village of \$100 and will take care of the rest.

The Committee thanks the St. Paul's vestry and all parishioners who support their work. They also thank Rev. Canon Erasto Ndahani for his unflagging commitment to his parish in Mwitikira.