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Monday, November 09, 2009

Dear Brothers & Sisters,

God bless you and greetings in His wonderful Name. I trust this letter finds you walking in the Light of this Hour. On January 25th to February 1, 2010, I will be taking a special missions trip to Arusha, Tanzania, where Bro. Zephaniah Peters will host a special convention for East African Believers. We anticipate a full schedule of services, and a minister's meeting to be held during this time.

We also plan to establish a network for printing and distribution between churches in Tanzania during our trip. Our ultimate goal is to bring the local churches together so they can work as a team to print and distribute material in the Swahili language throughout East Africa. We will be bringing computers, monitors, software, a crate of toner for the printers and other technical equipment to be distributed through 7 cities where we have already placed the HUB printers. We will have three or four technically inclined brothers from my church and one from Canada to set up this network. They will also train the translators and librarians on how to use the Message Hub with the new computer system.

There is yet another purpose for this trip. For the very first time, I will be accompanied by Dr. Chuck Shaffer, MD of Christiansburg, Virginia, who has volunteered to administer medical care to the Believers in Tanzania totally free of charge. We have made arrangements with Bro Zephaniah and Bro. Masawi, a medical doctor who is also a Believer in the local church, to set up a clinic during the day before the evening services. Kingsway Charities, Inc., a charitable organization in Bristol, VA is donating most of the medical supplies he will need to conduct a full clinic. Through this organization, we are able to purchase quality medicines at or below wholesale cost. We actually have purchased over \$40,000 worth of medicine for under \$10,000. Most of the costs of computer equipment and medical supplies have been paid for already or have been donated. One of our major costs now is shipping the materials to Africa in time for our arrival. We are planning to ship by air, and by container ship, and we will hand carry the medications ourselves into the country.

To my surprise, on Sunday (Nov. 8th) I received a letter from Bro. Elias (see below) who informed me of the impending famine and difficult conditions in Tanzania at this time. It appears that our trip will coincide with a great time of need for the local Believers, and we have already sent some monetary aide to the local church in the Mwanza district. They have assured me that food aid and supplies will reach the saints in approximately three days. The Believers are very excited about this special convention. Our primary concern is to minister the Gospel to them, and allow them better facilities to print from the HUB system in their own language. However, now that they are experiencing famine conditions in Tanzania the medical care and supplements will be a huge help naturally speaking. Today, we purchased medicines, supplies as well as 100,000 chewable vitamins for the people there! Famines in this region amplify poor health conditions, and it will be very difficult for some of the believers to even attend the meetings. We trust this opportunity will be both a physical and spiritual blessing to our brothers and sisters in Tanzania. We need your prayers as the arrangements are being made, and we still have room for others who would like to join us for this trip. If you cannot go but wish to support the effort to bring famine relief to the saints, or in the expense of our trip, I would love to hear from you. I have been to Tanzania many times, and have developed a deep love for the Believers there, especially our Bro. Zephaniah Peters. I really do look forward to this unique opportunity to again minister to the Bride of Christ in Africa.

Sincerely,

Bro. Barry Coffey,

"...as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Joshua 24:15

Letter from Bro. Elias (11-08-09):

Dear Bro. Barry. I am writing this email as a response to your email regarding your visit in January 2010. First of all, we greatly appreciate your concern and love towards us. We had a deep discussion on how we are going to conduct the meetings. We would like to inform you that people here are seriously unstable financially. We tried to find means of getting money to run the meetings but it is so tough for us. For your information, it took us almost a year to plan and arrange last year December meetings and especially sourcing the money. (We cannot find money for this short time i.e two months.)

For now there is famine in Tanzania. Some people cannot even manage to pay a bus fare of \$2. We even received several requests from various churches asking for food assistance. Even here in our church, we had small projects which we have not even managed to start. This is the real situation here. So, we are requesting you if you can assist financially. In fact we will need funds for:

- a) Meals*
- b) Transport and*
- c) Accomodation*

I think you will understand our situation and we are waiting to see you all in January.

God bless you,

Bro. Elias

World Banks Sh40bn Boost to Famine War in Tanzania

By The Citizen Reporter, Mwanza

The World Bank has issued \$30 million (Sh40 billion) to Tanzania to help it deal with the imminent food shortage facing 40 districts on the Mainland and the Isles. The funds were channeled through the Tanzania Social Action Fund (Tasaf), its director general, Dr Silvanus Likwelile, has said. Addressing a meeting called to gauge the country's preparedness for the imminent famine here recently, he said the Government had signed an agreement to that effect with the Bretton Woods members on July 26, this year. Through the second phase of Tasaf the funds would be sent to famine-stricken families via their city, municipality, town or district councils and wards, Dr Likwelile said. He was optimistic that the funds would assist the country in cushioning the impact of drought, global economic meltdown and surging prices of oil on the world market.

However, the relief food to be supplied would target disadvantaged groups of people. They include the disabled, elderly, people living with HIV, youths and children living in difficult conditions, he said. The World Bank representative, Ms Ida Manjoro, underscored the need for the relief food to reach the targeted people in time for her institution to continue extending support to the country. Ukerewe District in Mwanza Region and Kishapu District in Shinyanga Region are among districts in the Lake Zone regions which are reported to be facing an acute food shortage.