
Ben and Katy Ray - Our Mission Partners in Tanzania - Update

Ben and Katy are 4-years in to a 6-year mission as Directors of the Neema Crafts Centre for people with disabilities in Tanzania. Their mission aim is: *“To show the love of God for the most marginalised in Tanzania by providing training and employment opportunities for people with disabilities”*.



In Tanzania, people with disabilities are often considered to be a burden or even a curse. People think that nothing can be done for them. They are often left uneducated and told that the best chance they have is to beg on the streets. The Neema Crafts

Centre is changing people’s perceptions of disability and provides high quality training and employment for disabled artisans, chefs and technicians.

As directors of Neema Crafts their job is to ensure the many facets of the centre (seven different crafts workshops, shop, cafe, conference room and guesthouse) are all on track and that the products and services are attracting customers and promoting the work of people with disabilities. They also oversee various other projects including the entrepreneurship training course, tailoring training, computer and English teaching, mobility access and their latest house building project for their staff.

Christ Church Downend have generously supported this mission for the first three years. The money will support Ben and Katy’s salaries. They are now half-way through their six-year plan and it will be so important to be able to support them through to its completion.

The support provided by Christ Church goes beyond the financial; it **includes prayer**; providing an outlet for the Neema craft products to be sold locally in Bristol and sending a **youth mission in the Summer of 2015**.

Ben and Katy are **local (Bath origins) Christians** with big hearts for the broken, the poor and the disadvantaged in society. Their mission is Christ-centred, focused, inspirational and they very much lead by example, demonstrating an outpouring of God’s love.

They regularly run Alpha courses for the staff at Neema and their families. They support the staff by providing help that is both practical and spiritual. There is a chapel on site at Neema.

As part of their mission, Ben and Katy are training local people to continue their work after they leave. Their legacy will include a self-sustaining project that will not rely on external funding to continue.

Letter from Ben and Katy, this last weekend (19th Nov. 2017)

Dear Christ Church,

We have just got back from Dar-es-Salaam and our biggest market of the year (after 20 hours round trip in the car!) and are pleased to say that we had our best market yet selling Neema craft. We took £11,700 in six hours - 25% more than our previous record. Tunamshukuru Mungu (we are thanking God!). Things were so busy people had to resort to emailing us their orders as they couldn't get to the stall to buy.

- Please pray for the staff at Neema Crafts that their holistic needs would continue to be met by the centre.
- Please pray for Malcolm, Irene and Dom as they stand in to cover our work at Neema whilst we are away - that they would be equipped with all that they need.
- Please pray for the Diocese of Ruaha and our Bishop Joseph Mgomi and his team as they pursue their vision to see empowered communities living life in all its fullness.
- Please pray for our little family that we can get the much needed rest we need and time together whilst on furlough.

We are now gearing up for the Arusha market on the weekend of the 9th Dec, before closing up Neema for Christmas and heading back to the UK on the 18th for a short break.

We send our love to all at Christ Church!

Ben and Katy (Zach and Alessia) xxx

Bryson's Story

Bryson, now aged 50, was born with cerebral palsy. It mostly affects his lower limbs which have limited use. He had spent his life relying on relatives and the kindness of strangers. He lives 300kms from Neema, but he had heard about this amazing craft workshop that helped disabled people. He crawled to the railway station, then crawled to a bus, to get to Neema. He really wanted a hand-trike (an amazing machine) to help him get off the ground. Neema were able to build him a hand-trike and put him on a list for training for a job. He prayed for Neema when he left.

Praise God and his work through Neema and Ben and Katy.

