

## GREETINGS FROM MATONGORO

A Message from our friends in Matongoro, Tanzania to everyone at St Stephen's:

We are so happy to call you members of our family – gifts of time and love are surely the basic ingredients of a truly merry Christmas. “Christmas waves a magic wand over the world, and behold, everything is softer and more beautiful” We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

### Update on CCM



St Stephen's has funded Tearfund's Church and Community Mobilisation Process in 5 communities (Matongoro, Mlanje, Nolini, Songambe B and Mkoka) over the past 3 years. Due to the success of this, the PCC earlier this year agreed to extend funding for a further 3 years to enable CCM to be introduced to a further 5 communities (Zoissa, Leganga, Songambe A, Chinangali and Wangazi).

The first 5 churches are now working towards building stronger relationships with their local communities. Together they are deciding upon the issues which are most crucial to them – issues such as healthcare, water, and education, and putting plans in place to help bring transformation in these areas.

Recently, they started a new training module focussing on “Description Skills” which aims to help the church realise who they are, where they are at currently, and which direction to go in the future. During the training they consider their history, the resources which they have, the resources which they have lost, the challenges that they have passed through and the successes that they have achieved so far.

The 5 churches who are just starting their CCM journey have been taking part in the first stage of the process, “Church Awakening”. This gives church leaders, facilitators and local government leaders opportunity to learn more about CCM. The next stage is focussed on creating action plans.

### Challenges

**WATER** - There was little rain last year and the rains have yet to arrive.

**MALARIA** - resulting in the loss of many children under 5. Other chronic diseases are rife as people are unable to afford treatment.

**ISOLATION** - In one of the new communities, a elderly widow lived alone in her house with little food, no love, no visitors, no healthcare. She died alone and was discovered 3 days later. This has touched the whole community! The church is now working to identify isolated widows and orphans and show them the love of God.

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### Thanksgiving



In Mlange, the church is really becoming salt and light in the community. The local government is not doing anything without consulting the Pastor. All government announcements are being shared in church. The church is now part of the community!

In Zoissa, When we visited in June, new toilets for the primary school were being constructed. Now, church members are now participating in all community projects and church contractors are taking charge of the project.

In Songambele A, there was an open Crusade where people were healed from different diseases, were freed from demonic powers, more than 150 received Christ and 10 were baptised.

In Matongoro, a huge new water tank is being built.

### Prayer

- Although the rainy season has started in some places in Tanzania, as yet there is NO RAIN in our communities. Please pray for each community, that they will receive good levels of rain and feel a sense of peace amidst this uncertainty.
- Please pray for the CCM facilitators in each of the communities as they nurture their groups.
- Praise God for the office space in Mkoka given to Aman Msanjila and Erasto Goima who Co-ordinate CCM and for provision of motorcycles to enable them to travel around and give encouragement and support to the 10 communities.
- Please pray for children suffering as a result of disease and for their parents.
- Please pray for churches as they start to come alongside those who feel isolated.
- Pray for completed healing for Grace, a young child suffering from hydrocephalus disease, so she can live a full and happy life. Pray too for her family. Her symptoms improved following surgery, but then the headaches returned and she cried. She received prayer at Songambele A's crusade, and her symptoms have improved again. Praise God for the church which due to CCM is now supporting the child and her family both spiritually and physically, even raising funds for transport and accommodation needed for future hospital visits.