



Diocese of Tabora: 2nd – 18th July 2000

We were invited by Bishop Francis Ntiruka to share ideas about evangelism by the local church and also to teach how spiritual gifts might be used in the context of Anglican liturgy. There were five of us; Chris Grundy of Chilworth, Helene Cross of Derby, Ann Rigby, my wife Margaret and myself from Christ Church, Guildford. The sixth member of our team was not able to come at the last moment because of the illness of his father-in-law. We first took the opportunity to visit a link missionary, Jo Sayer of Crosslinks, who is working at Msalato Bible School in Dodoma. The two days in Dodoma were an excellent introduction to Tanzanian life. From Dodoma we travelled by train on the eleven-hour journey to Tabora. The Diocese is only eleven years old, having been formed to minister to Anglican who had moved into this part of Tanzania from elsewhere. Most of the clergy are not indigenous but come from Western Tanganyika Diocese. The Bishop has a deep concern for mission and evangelism to all people in the Diocese.

We were comfortably accommodated at the Swedish |Pentecostal Guest House, which is next door to the Tabora Anglican Training Centre (TATC). The Bishop had invited all the diocesan clergy and various evangelists and church leaders, and their spouses, to the seminars, which were held at the TATC and also at St. Stephen's, Tabora. Chris Grundy and I had a heavy teaching load but the talks were well received and we had some good times of ministry. After a couple of rest days, we divided into two parties to visit the deaneries. Chris and Helene went west to Urambo where they had excellent numbers and a powerful time of ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Margaret, Ann and I went north to Nzega where we found a demoralised and divided church, who were feeling inadequate and overshadowed by a strong Islamic, Roman Catholic and noisy Pentecostal presence in the town. It was encouraging that after poor attendances at the seminars, the church filled up for the final Holy Communion service on the Sunday. We felt that we had left the church in better heart and more confident to know that the Holy Spirit can be experienced in an Anglican context. This part of Tanzania is poor and parched after two years without proper rains. But the warmth of our welcome and the unstilted generosity of the people tremendously lifted our own spirits.

Jeremy Collingwood