



This will not be a typical Christmas letter because this has not been a typical Christmas season for us. It is with heavy hearts that want to let you know of the death of Pastor Paulo Sandamu, our dear friend and coworker in ministry. He died on December 10, 2011 in Nairobi, Kenya. Sandamu has been ill since we returned to Tanzania in March and has progressively gotten worse over the past few months. After exhausting the health care options available in Tanzania, we took him to Nairobi to try to get a diagnosis. The doctor suspected that he had lymphoma that had already affected his liver, kidneys, spleen and pancreas. He died shortly after the final test that would have confirmed the diagnosis. He was 39 years old.

Sandamu's death leaves a great hole in our lives, both personally and in ministry. Since we became the directors of Theological Education by Extension (TEE) four years ago, we did not make any ministry decisions without his input. He was the facilitator of our TEE group in Dodoma. This group is by far the most successful group in the country because of his leadership and encouragement.

While his death is so difficult for us, our grief pales in comparison to that of his wife and children. Sandamu and Sabina were married for 12 years and had a very special marriage. He cherished his wife and they were truly partners in ministry at their local church.



Sandamu and his wife, Sabina -- April 2011



Sandamu and his beautiful family. His sons, Ricky (8) and Abiud (4) and his daughter Balabina (11) -- April 2011

Sabina and the children will stay in her home village for some time while their grief is fresh and then return to Dodoma to make a decision about what comes next. The house that they've lived in for the past 7 years is a parsonage, and while Sandamu had hoped to build a house of their own he didn't have a chance to while he was healthy.

We are struggling. We need God's encouragement, His comfort and His wisdom to know how to move forward in ministry. As the Christmas season draws to a close, will you pray that we will sense the true and abiding presence of Emmanuel, God with us.

*Mike, Heather
& Madalyn Webb*