



The STAMPERS

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Merry Christmas

May God give all of us a blessed Day as we celebrate our Lord and Savior's Birthday

Today it is a beautiful warm sunny day with a temperature near 80 degrees F. The sky is mostly blue with a few puffy white clouds moving around. The air is filled with the songs of many birds and the flowers add their beauty to the day. Having grown up in a different hemisphere this still does not seem like Christmas time, even though we have lived in Africa for much of the past thirty-two years - not that we miss the cold and snow!!! We still have many of the things that are a part of Christmas - cookies and breads baking in the oven, Christmas carols filling the rooms with their sweet melodies, decorations all through the house, packages being wrapped, shopping for that special gift for a special someone and decorations in the malls in Nairobi.

On Christmas Day we will have a special church service - no matter what day of the week it is.

There are many things going on here at this time. The college and institute are closing for this term. The Kenyan children are finishing up this year of school. The kindergarten students are waiting to hear if they will enter Standard 1 in January. The Standard 8 students have just finished some very difficult exams and the scores they made on these exams will determine what school they attend next year. The older students' scores on their exams will determine if they will be allowed to attend the university.

Some unusual things are happening around here also. Last night we heard what sounded like a gunshot near our house. This morning we learned that the Kenya Wildlife Authorities had shot a hippo very near our house. The hippo came from a pond that is about a mile away and took up residence in a small pond near our house. They have tried to encourage it to go back to the big pond but it wouldn't go. So last evening the rangers had to shoot it. Hippos are very dangerous animals. Despite their popularity in zoos and cuddly portrayal as gentle giants in fiction, the hippopotamus is among the most dangerous and aggressive of all mammals. The average hippo weighs about 3,000 to 4,000 pounds and average 11 feet in length and 5 feet in height at the shoulder. A hippo's lifespan is typically 40 to 50 years. The only animal larger than a hippo is an elephant. This morning many people were down at the pond getting pieces of the meat to take home and eat. We have heard hippo meat is very tasty. We could hear a chain saw at work as the meat was being cut.

We have some great news! I had the tests for cancer done recently and there are no signs of any cancer at this time. Thank you for your prayers. Also my heart is doing great.

This is election year here in Kenya. The people will elect their president for the next five years. They will also elect the members of Parliament. This election has been called for the 27th of December. Please pray that these people will elect the man the Lord wants for this job. Also please pray for safety and calm here during this election time. There has already been some violence and more is expected.

Our prayer is that each of you will have a joyous Holiday season.

Bob and Betty Stamper