

‘Never forget that you can talk to God when ever you want . . . He will always listen to you.’



For five years Katy Morgan (pictured centre) longed to go to Africa. Her chance came this year when she and friend Esther Sutherland, both aged 13, joined a SOMA team going to Tanzania. Katy writes . . .

I've wanted to go to Africa ever since I was about eight, and Mum started going every year, sometimes to Zambia, to Kenya, to Tanzania or others. She'd come back with exotic gifts and I always used to look at my new wooden carving of a baboon, green stone cross necklace or tasselled bag wistfully and wonder if I would one day go to one of these places myself. My friend, Esther, shared a similar longing, and we decided as children that if ever the one of us were to go to Africa, the other would come too.

When my mum finally said to me casually, 'I've been invited back to Tanzania, Katy, and I think you're old enough to be a useful part of the team. Would you like to come?', I jumped at the opportunity and lived in a state of excitement for weeks, even though nothing was fixed down. I'd long forgotten the promise I'd made with Esther but the Lord wanted her to come on the team, and He put it in Mum's mind to ask her, along with her own mother, to come to Tanzania with us.

Esther and I worked hard during our week's stay in Tanzania. We marked work: English, Maths, even Kiswahili.

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We taught the eight- and nine-year-olds songs, which they sang with great gusto, especially Baa, Baa, Black Sheep. We learnt as many names as possible. We taught them hockey, did races with them, played that game that nobody knows the name of (Down on One Knee?). We laughed with them, let them laugh at us (suncream is hilarious, apparently). But most importantly, we taught them how to pray.

In Tanzania, in this school, the children are taught very formal prayer. They sing a little song for grace before meal times. They knew no communications with God except the most proper, official ones. They were astounded when Esther and I came into their midst and got them to pray together. We asked them if they were ill; some said yes, some no. We put them into groups and asked them to pray for each other within their little circles. Next, we

asked everyone who was ill to stand in the middle of a circle we'd formed. We ended up with three-quarters in the middle and one-quarter round the outside, so we formed a big huddle. The headmaster asked them to touch the part of them that hurt, and I prayed for them all.

Later on I glimpsed the headmaster talking earnestly to my mum. I asked her what about just afterwards, and she explained that all of the children who we'd prayed for had been telling everyone else how wonderful the prayer session had been. What we hadn't realised was how very formal their prayer was, and that they'd just never come across healing prayer before. Praying together, for each other: it was all new. They were asking for more.

The evening before our departure, I wrote a note to the children. 'Never forget that you can talk to God whenever you want', it said. 'He will always listen to you.'

Esther and I sowed some seeds in these children's hearts: as my mum put it, two Christian girls coming, making their afternoons interesting and helping them to pray for each other is not something children forget in a hurry. I'll never forget my experience in Tanzania, ever. The seeds are sown, and soon the faith of these children will blossom into fruit-bearing Christians, through the will of God. I feel so honoured that God worked through me and pray that He will do so again. The sweet children we got to know have roots that need nurturing, and I hope and pray that one day soon I will go out there and help to water God's little plants. 

about the writer

Katy Morgan joined the SOMA team to Kibeya, in the Diocese of Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, in November 2007. She and her friend Esther Sutherland worked for a week in the English Medium Primary school at Kiteto Christian College, while the other team members led a Footed In Jesus conference in the Cathedral. Katy is in Year 9 at Leicester High School. She has felt for a number of years now that God may be calling her to some kind of mission work overseas.