



# Bethesda Shighatini



April 2009  
Bethesda Lutheran Church  
Ames, Iowa

## Meet Pastor Elirehema Mwanga

Pastor Mwanga began his duties at Shighatini Parish in December 2008. The Shighatini native earned a B.S. from Luther College in Decorah and studied at Yale and New York College for his Ph.D. Former Pastor Walter Msangi began study for a four year seminary degree at Makimura Lutheran College in Arusha in October.

February 1, 2009—  
Mary Engstrom  
with Pastor Mwanga



## Letters demonstrate caring and encourage personal relationships



Mary Engstrom with letters from Shighatini Parish members, February 2009

When a devastating drought destroyed Shighatini families' corn crop last year, Bethesda members responded by sending personal letters of caring and encouragement—a single effort that has become a trans-Atlantic postal exchange. When Pastor Randy visited in June, he was surprised and impressed that each family he visited brought out a Bethesda "Easter Letter of Hope" they had received. Since then, more than 200 new names and pictures of Shighatini Parish members have been received. In February, Mary Engstrom brought back 100 letters from Shighatini members responding to the Bethesda families who had sent Christmas letters. Super Wednesday youth also have begun a pen pal relationship with Shighatini Sunday School youth. Photos and addresses will be available during coming weeks for Bethesda members and visitors to again send Easter Letters of Hope because a dry fall again left Shighatini farmers with no corn to harvest.

## Guest house rehabilitation results exceed original budget

The Parish Guest House is receiving a \$19,000 update—thanks to the generosity of Bethesda members and the do-it-ourselves skills of Shighatini Parish members. Installing the new metal (termite proof) roof required only \$11,000—allowing Parish workers to also replaster the 18-inch rock walls in the building originally constructed by German missionaries in 1900. Remodeling of the bathroom and septic system is scheduled to begin soon. "Their pride in providing detailed cost accounting for funds received is equaled by their desire to get the most they can from donated funds," reports Gerald Klonglan.



Before remodeling . . .



## Mark Your Calendar: Shighatini Weekend April 4-5, 2009

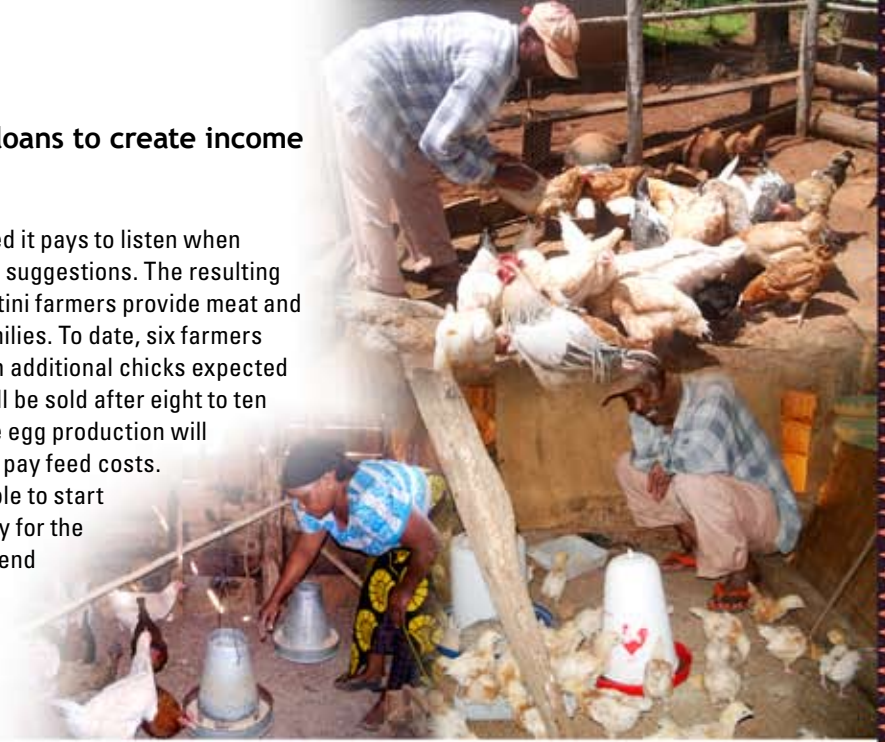
- Come prepared to sing and move—as we worship in the Tanzanian tradition
- Come prepared to marvel—view photo displays and learn more about the caring relationships being built with the Shighatini Parish
- Come prepared to feast—with Tanzania food samples served Saturday evening and a full Tanzanian meal served after both Sunday services
- Come prepared to buy—Tanzania items will be available in the Commons on Saturday and Sunday; plus each service will close with the traditional Shighatini "Auction Offering." The new Bethesda Lutheran Church Tanzanian Cookbook also will be for sale with all proceeds going to support Tanzania Ministry activities



And after remodeling

## Poultry Program uses micro-credit loans to create income and increase food security

Shighatini and Bethesda members have learned it pays to listen when Pastor Walter's wife, Christine Msangi, makes suggestions. The resulting project uses micro-credit loans to help Shighatini farmers provide meat and eggs to the community and income to their families. To date, six farmers have each received 50 chicks and 30 hens with additional chicks expected to be delivered in early March. The broilers will be sold after eight to ten weeks to pay down some of the loan, while the egg production will provide enough income to pay off the loan and pay feed costs. Once the project gets going, farmers will be able to start a new poultry cycle every 18 months. To qualify for the micro-credit loans, farmers are required to attend classes in poultry health and nutrition, credit, and management.



## What's next?

Here's how you can help. *The Bethesda Council of Ministries has authorized collection of a special offering to support three new projects that have been planned with the Shighatini Parish.*

### **Binti Mama Women's Programs** GOAL: \$1000 for two new women's empowerment programs



Binti-Mama (meaning mother-daughter) is the general term for a series of 13 train-the-trainer programs developed by Mwangaza, a Lutheran Educational and Leadership Center in Arusha. Trainees need \$500 for the two-day training session, transportation, meals, supplies, and handouts. Since 2004, Bethesda has provided funds for one or two programs per year. Shighatini planners aim to hold one seminar in May/June for adult women and another in December when secondary school girls are home for the holidays.

### **New dairy processing facility** GOAL: \$10,000 to purchase equipment to help parish members add value to their products and increase their incomes



Being able to produce marketable amounts of pasteurized milk, ghee, yogurt, cheese and other value-added dairy items requires a commercial facility. Since 2003 Bethesda and Shighatini members have been working closely with Land O'Lakes in Tanzania and Heifer International Tanzania in designing a new dairy processing plant in Shighatini. For the past four years, Arne Paulsen has taken Shighatini farmers on two- to three-day trips to visit newly built milk processing plants. He also has demonstrated the process using one-gallon pasteurizing machines and has taught them how to make yogurt in their homes. Shighatini farmers now believe they are ready for the next step. Church leaders encourage the step, not only to help increase food security in the community, but also to increase income opportunities that will allow Parish families to contribute more in support of church activities.

### **New motorcycle for Shighatini Parish** GOAL: \$4000 to purchase a new motorcycle for travel by Parish staff



Shighatini is a walking village made up of sub-villages, each including several neighborhoods of 10 to 15 families, spread across a mountainous area similar to the Appalachia Mountains of West Virginia. Steep trails lead off from one main road. Distance is measured by the time (one, two, or more hours) needed to walk from the parish house (church). Twelve member homes are designated as sites for full worship services: communion, singing, offering, etc. Having a functioning motorcycle means staff can visit more people in a given day, as well as travel to nearby towns for supplies or business.