

*“Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water"*(John 7:38b).

Imagine yourself standing in a river ... the cool water swiftly passing over your feet. After swirling around you, it quickly travels down the river never to return. Imagine, also, trying to seize a handful of that water knowing that as it rushes by, ever too quickly, you will never have the opportunity to hold that particular handful of water ever again. Overwhelmed by its force, and unable to slow it down, you realize that you must cease that moment, enjoy it and live it to the fullest. Does it seem as if life is often like a rushing river? Does it feel as if we could drown in such a fast paced world filled with demands and exploitation? In order to not succumb to the swift forces of this world, we reach for the only thing that can save us; the Word of God. *“His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness”* (2 Peter 1:3). Kiwira Coal Mine Congregation has found buoyancy in the promise of God’s Word and a newly built well. Nourished in both body and spirit, they can now offer living water to nearby villages and in hopes of quenching their thirst. Do we thirst for God’s Word or do we miss out on the energy that flows from it? (Erwin Raphael McManus, *The Emerging Church*). Just as the water rushes swiftly over our feet, so the Holy Spirit swirls around us offering us gifts of hope, peace, joy and love. But when our days are filled with hurriedness, hurt and hostility there is little room for such energy and enthusiasm. When our hearts are filled up with unnecessary things, when we choose to ignore the gift staring us in the face, the Spirit’s energy flows right past us. Tanzanians will be given the chance to embrace the energy that flows from the Word of God, the same energy offered to us every single moment. I pray that you will embrace the newness of life that God’s promises us which begin in a manger. Nestled in manger hay, humanity and divinity came together, offering us hope and the energy of God’s love. Trust that God will meet you where you are. Why else would God came to earth wrapped in baby softness? Don’t stand along the bank, but rather dive in and grab hold of life as it swiftly passes you by and then share this living water with everyone you meet this year. God bless you in all that you say and do in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. *“With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation”* Isaiah 12.3.

***Pastor Cheri***