



March 2021

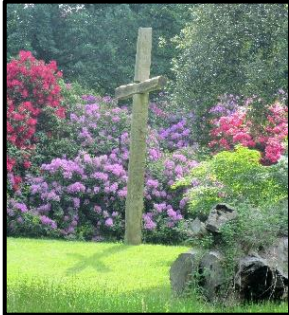


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Dear Friends,

Well, what a strange, challenging year with so much sadness,

but also wonderful stories of God at work, bringing hope and transformation in unexpected situations such as a group of Muslim leaders regularly reading the New Testament for themselves and baptisms amongst refugees.



We do pray you are able to work through the tough times that many have had, and look ahead with HOPE, as we trust in the One who gave His life for the freedom of each one of us. How wonderful to know He is alive and active today.

Daily life has not changed very much for us; we are grateful to have kept well and been well-occupied with regular zooms, Team chats, WhatsApp etc etc. We have been doing annual reviews with all our leaders over zoom (and one on WhatsApp); it is so good we have been able to conduct these, but we really do prefer the face2face! Each leader or team has faced many challenges, but all speak of God's enabling as they have spent time in prayer and trusted Him for wisdom and enabling.

Covid has not stopped ministry continuing in Africa, even though folk have had to think out-of-the box many times. All countries still have Covid concerns and there are many restrictions on travel (which is improving our carbon footprint!) And vaccines?? Sadly, disappointingly, none in sight for some countries.

Guinea-Bissau, with a rather depleted team has started to pray (together with some National believers) for God to bring workers (national and non) to serve amongst the Mauritians. There are a good number in GB, who tend to be the 'corner shop' owners (often in a converted container) and have been there many years. We do not think there are any believers amongst them. The Church is asking the Mission to help them with modelling and training members to be involved in cross-cultural ministry.



The Gambia had a very good conference in February. They were thankful for the loving and fun spirit amongst them all. It was great for us to be able to take a small part via zoom.

Chad folk are appreciating beginning to function as a bigger team again and getting stuck into ministry with the Nomad peoples. There is only one person teaching English at the Centre and they **desperately need more short termers** to join the team to help teach. There are Presidential elections on **April 11**. The present incumbent has been there for 31 years and there are concerns.

Mozambique now has 4 people who would like to do an online WEC Candidate Orientation, in Portuguese. We will help the ACTS 13 (Africa Membership Department) folk with the facilitating of this. Visas are not easy to come by these days, so Tania (due last month!) cannot return, and we cannot visit!

The north continues to be ravaged by the extremist insurgents, as recently reported on the UK news. The small believer's group in the northern town of Palma is almost cut-off now and feeling isolated. There are no supplies reaching them and humanly little way of escape. The Tanzanian border is closed. We are looking to God for a resolution.



Burundi has just one lady in the country at present, with a good secondment to an agency working amongst orphans and with a well-respected clinic and maternity unit. She has a lot of responsibility with training midwives, and loves the times amongst the children, together with several Burundians, running clubs and Bible classes.

Senegal is praying and discussing about how to keep supporting BCS, the much valued and loved school. They need a more permanent Director and administrator for the school, or a change of thinking.

While still in Sheffield, we have had the privilege and opportunities to speak at and lead a few online services, (encouraged by our excellent Vicar), lead a small weekly discipleship group, and continue our contact with some of the 'other-nations' peoples in the city. David has been doing a weekly distanced, English walk with an asylum seeker who has just been given 'leave to remain', which is great news.



The Family are well, having had their times of testing! Ruth and Mark, with Harvey and Sophia have had several episodes of quarantining while the Birmingham Betel communities coped with a Covid outbreak. Ruth was one of two extremely hard-working Covid response team. About a month ago they were declared clear. Harvey thrives at pre-school and Sophia loves to do all her beloved big brother is doing. Our weekly zooms with them are fun and sometimes chaotic. Esther keeps going with a variety of activities and responsibilities with International Nepal Fellowship. They had a small, excellent one day conference which we thoroughly enjoyed joining, for some of the time. She has bubbled with Ruth and family, which is super. We long to see them all again, in person.

We also look forward, so much, to meeting other family members again. David's father and Elizabeth are coping well, with David's sister seeing them each week.

We really appreciate your prayerful support as we try to support our leaders and teams in Africa; thank you so much.

May the joy of the Risen Lord Jesus encourage and strengthen you this Easter,

With our love and prayers for you,

David and Margie

Praise and Prayer

- **Thanks for:**
 - the group of Imams studying the NT and for the recent baptisms
 - the new initiatives in Guinea-Bissau, excellent conference in Gambia and returned workers to Chad
 - those in Mozambique wanting to do the WEC Orientation Course
 - our families
- **Please pray for:**
 - Workers to serve amongst the Mauritians in Guinea-Bissau
 - Those who sense God is telling them to go to other nations to take the Gospel from the Guinea Bissau church and the Mission's mentoring involvement
 - Short termers to help teach English in Chad and for peaceful elections
 - Setting up of the online Portuguese Orientation course for those in Mozambique
 - Running of BCS in the future
 - Getting our priorities right in our day-to-day ministry and serving – God's programme not ours
 - Preparation for:
 - D preaching on Palm Sunday and both of us leading the Good Friday meditation
 - leading a session on Africa at the WEC 24-hour global day of prayer on April 1st
 - a 3 short day conference in May with our Africa leaders(plus)
 - The International Office approaching successors for Hans and Elfi and us, for the end of 2022
 - ..and other points you pick up from the letter