

Friends and Family,

Praise God for his provision for us in all situations and difficulties! I am reminded of how often, despite unpredictable circumstances, that God shows us his faithfulness. In the past weeks and months we have faced many unexpected issues, but God sustains us and gives us the strength to keep going.

Medical issues are always tricky here. While we can handle certain sicknesses like malaria, other more complicated illnesses or injuries require travelling to South Africa in order to get better treatment. In September, Amy had a health issue that required her to take a quick trip to Johannesburg for testing. Thankfully it came back clear and there was nothing to worry about. What in the States would take a morning trip to a hospital, requires two days of travel just to the airport and back, much less the appointments once you are in South Africa. It also meant that, in this case, I had to take over many of Amy's roles while she was gone.

At the end of September, Maggie came down with an illness. Our first thought was malaria and we took her to get tested, but it was negative. She was really tired and had a lot of headaches. We decided the next day to get her tested for anemia since some of the symptoms lined up, but that test came back fine. She still wasn't better so we took her back to the clinic and had her tested for typhoid which came back positive! The recommended treatment is about 2 weeks of antibiotics, so we got her started on that. However, Maggie had been vaccinated for typhoid, so it seemed strange that she would get it, though not impossible. The antibiotics seemed to help and she started to have her symptoms lessen, though very slowly. After being on the antibiotics for two weeks and beginning a second antibiotic treatment, she started to regress and complained of very low energy, constant headaches, achy joints, and fevers. After consulting with some doctors we decided that it would be best for her to go to South Africa for further tests. That evening we bought plane tickets for Amy and Maggie and they flew down the very next day. Amy and I were inclined to wait a day before leaving so we could get organized, but we decided to go as soon as possible since that was Maggie's preference. Thank God that we did, because they flew down on Monday and Tuesday morning at 8:00 they were able to get in to see a doctor!

One of our old teammates, Rose, who taught our kids for three years, is currently living in Johannesburg, so Amy and Maggie are staying with her and her husband. We are really thankful for their hospitality. One of the tests we wanted done was for dengue fever, a mosquito-borne illness that has symptoms similar to malaria. We had tried to get tested for that in Mozambique but it wasn't available. That test came back positive, and the doctor ran more tests for typhoid which came back negative. (They explained it was common to have a false positive for typhoid, especially since she had been vaccinated.) Among many tests that were ran, Amy asked if they could test for Lyme's disease. There isn't any Lyme's disease in Africa, but since we were in the States in the last year, it was a possibility. When the tests came back, Maggie tested positive for Lyme's disease (although it may not be 100% accurate), tested negative for dengue fever on a follow up test, and tested positive for shikungunya—another dengue-like mosquito borne illness. Currently she is being treated for the Lyme's disease. Shikungunya is a virus that doesn't really have a cure, but one's body fights it off on its own. Like any virus, sometimes it can take a while for your body to recover, which is likely what has happened in this case. In the meantime, she is on another antibiotic for the Lyme's disease, and staying down in South Africa for the time being. Besides all the other things that Amy normally does, she has really focused her attention on taking care of Maggie for almost a month and a half. So she has really been doing a lot for Maggie's wellness and has been navigating the South African health system for the past two weeks. The latest report of the doctor is that Maggie is showing signs of improvement and unless something new comes up, she should be able to return to Mozambique in about a week.

Of course there are other obstacles we face regularly in addition to health. Whenever I am in another country and I turn on the tap and see the water come out I am truly thankful. Here the city

water hardly functions at all, so years ago our team had a well dug on our property. This is great, but every few years the pump on the well will go out. When this happens we have to stop everything else, buy a new pump, pull the old one out, and replace it. This happened in June, so we were without water for a few days but we got it sorted out. Every day one of my chores is to go and turn the pump on and an hour later turn the water off. The water system can go to one of five places: my house, our school teacher's house, our two teammates' houses, or the Bible school. Each time I run the pump I change who gets water on that particular day. When the water is on, it feeds into a large cistern at each location. From the cistern each of us have a smaller pump at our homes that feeds a small tank on a water tower which serves as a gravity feed for us to have running water. With many moving parts, there is a risk of one of these parts is not working. About two months ago, someone decided to steal my small pump that sends water to my water tower. I replaced it and put in some better security measures, but I bought a knock off pump in the local market that died after less than a week. Later I bought a better quality one for half the price in the city that is a 3 hour drive from here. In the meantime, there was no running water. Also, because it is the dry season, our well is producing less water than it does in the rainy season, so we are using water at a faster rate than we are filling our cistern. When we run out of water, we have to call for a water truck that comes and pumps water into our cistern. Sometimes the power goes out as well. (Like it just did as I typed this). This means that even if I have water in my cistern, I can't run the pump to send it up to the water tower or run the well pump to fill the cistern. So if the power is out and I run out of water in the water tower, I still don't have running water. (The power just came back on.) Last week, I needed to do laundry, but the power was out one day, so I couldn't run the wash machine. The next day I ran out of water in the cistern, so I had to call the water truck to come, which wasn't until late in the day. The laundry had to wait.

Power outages have been happening a bit more frequently lately and we just had a really bad heat spell with about a week and a half with temperatures in the 100's or upper 90's. When the fans go off and the fridge isn't running in that weather it can get hot rather quickly. This was probably the worst heat wave that I can remember in my time here. Thankfully the power has been more regular and the temperatures are cooler now. Whenever there is a brown out though we have to hurry and turn off our fans, freezer, and refrigerator so their motors aren't damaged. The days I am planning to work on my computer and we have long power outages I have to make a plan B.

Another issue we have here are critters. Mosquitoes are the most dangerous, but also the most easy to control. Termites are another type that love to eat any paper or wood products. Several books in my library have been lost to a termite invasion or two. Rats are normally not a frequent problem, but they can create a mess when they come in. Last month our guest house had a rat invasion and we had to declare all out war on them looking to seal any hole that we could find, using traps, and poison. After killing 9 rats and finding the hole where they were entering we finally solved the problem. Something else that invades our house every year from June to November is dust. Six months of the year with no rain falling creates a lot of dust! I recently did a deep clean of my office and had to remove a large amount of dust that had accumulated, not to mention termite tunnels, and old rat nests (as well as a carcass or two).

I don't share this to be negative, but often times these details don't make it into my news updates, but they are issues we deal with on an almost daily basis and can constitute rather significant distractions from the work that we want to do. They are necessities however, and we know that God multiplies all our feeble efforts to serve him. We know that God has us here and that he is using us, and he presents us with new opportunities each day to serve him.

Last week we were able to host a 3 day seminar and translate four more Psalms (62, 112, 124, and 130). In two weeks we will have another week long seminar and translate several more Psalms. I have also had the opportunity to engage with some young Muslim men who have been coming to our teammate Brooklyn's English classes. Pray that our conversations bear fruit and that they can recognize

Jesus as Lord. This has been a busy week as our school teachers had to leave the country to try to apply for a more permanent visa. This means I am homeschooling for the weeks while they are away. Also, pray for Mozambique. Last week there were elections in all the cities in the country for mayor. In 64 of 65 cities the same party won, which raised a lot of eyebrows. There have been riots in several cities with some people being killed and many being arrested. There were some protests in our town, but they were done peacefully and nothing bad happened. We praise God that we are able to serve him here and show the love of Christ to those around us.

Praise God for:

- Finally getting a diagnosis for Maggie and signs of improvement
- No election violence in our town
- A new church plant in the Hucula area
- Work done on Psalm translation
- Bibles continue to be sold (last week I sold 20 in one day!)

Pray for:

- Continued and complete healing for Maggie
- The Bible studies I am having with some young Muslim men
- Peace in Mozambique
- The visas to be approved for our teachers, the Bunches
- Our upcoming Psalm Seminar