

Link Letter No.47 March 2010

Dear friends,

Baba

A couple of weeks ago I was delighted to attend the graduation ceremony of my colleague Baba at Uganda Christian University, Mukono. He has done very well studying in a foreign language and it was a fun day. It is great having him back working with us in Aru, where he was immediately put to work getting our accounts up to date and sorted for our imminent audit. I am really trying to take a back seat on the accounts these days, and hopefully now Baba is back full time that will actually become a reality!

Madhira

Another highlight since I last wrote has been the ordination of one of our longstanding nurses, Madhira. I have known him since my arrival when he was working as an A3 nurse in one of our health centres. He then studied to become a higher qualified A2 nurse at the Anglican nursing school in Boga, where he excelled and returned to be in charge of our main health centre in Aru. During that time he met his wife Tahbo who also trained as an A2 nurse in Boga and they now have three children, eight year old Mungu Feni, which means "Given by God", six year old Baraka, which means "Blessing", and three year old Asifiwe which means "Glory to God".

A few years ago Madhira felt God's calling to the ordained

Baba graduation



Francesca Elloway
 CMS mission partner
(Democratic Republic of Congo)

ministry, so he went to train at ISThA, the Anglican Theological Institute in DRC, and we lost an excellent nurse! He and his family returned to Aru last summer, and for a few months Madhira was again in charge of our health clinic in Aru, while waiting for the Diocesan Synod to confirm his placement and also while we were waiting for another nurse, Amule, to finish his A1 training and return to head up the health centre. I am delighted that Madhira has been appointed as our pastor for Aru, with the idea that he will also work part-time at our health centre, where his wife is back working for us full-time. It is so good to see how both he and Tahbo have matured both as people and in their faith over the years, and I am delighted that he will work part-time at the health clinic as he really is one of our best nurses, and the community love having him there – although I do wonder if he will really have the time.

An Australian visitation...

In January a group of seven Australian friends visited, lead by Graham Toulmin. Graham was an ex CMS Australia mission partner from DRC who with his wife was instrumental in starting our dental work here in Aru. He brought four dental students with him together with another couple, Anne-Marie and Andy. The dental work went very well! Goodness knows what they did but lots of patients were seen and went home happy if a little sore in the mouth! I think that it was a great experience for

PO Box 226
Arua
Uganda
elloway@kastanet.org



Madhira and Tahbo, and their children



Dental safari

the students. Andy did a fantastic job in fixing up a smart solar lighting system for our health centre in Aru, plus vastly improving the lighting in my house so that I can now both read in bed much more easily (which is great!) while also seeing what I am doing in both the toilet and shower room – which I guess is useful too! Anne-Marie was also a brilliant support and encouragement to me during the visit.

Ultrasound scanning

Back in November I spent three weeks at a large mission hospital in Kijabe, Kenya, with the aim of improving my ultrasound scanning skills. I learnt much from the Kenyan ultrasound technicians who went out of their way to help me (and certainly improved my abilities), although if I am honest I think I came away thinking: *“now I know what I don’t know”!* God clearly knew what I was thinking (and agreed!) as, through contact with a friend in Nairobi, in a matter of weeks from returning from Kenya a retired radiologist from the UK, Juliet, kindly offered to come out here for three weeks over Easter to work with me and also (we hope!) train one of my nurses. Thirty years ago, in my days as a physicist lecturing at Keele University, Juliet and I both attended a small mission prayer group in Stoke on Trent, although we didn’t know each other well and had no contact since then until now – so it’s amazing how this has all fallen into place. It is really fantastic having a portable ultrasound machine and to be able to take it around with me; it has been particularly useful when I have visited Mahagi hospital for helping the doctor there in making surgical decisions.

Long distance learning

I am very much enjoying my long distance learning studies in palliative medicine and somehow managing to keep my head

above water. The assignments are interesting and often challenge me on what I can do here to improve the care of terminally ill patients. I have just had to do a critique of palliative care where I work. It was, in fact, meant to be a critique of the out-of-hours service given, but as we don’t have any formal palliative care at all I did it on our situation in general. It was fascinating to reflect on the cultural differences which impact upon the medical care given here. These included differences in the perception and explanation of symptoms, the influence of traditional healers – especially for chronic or incurable diseases as folk look for explanations and cures that are spiritually and culturally related, and the difficulty for a medical practitioner to intervene in the last days when the patient is taken home to die as their work is seen as “done” even though there may be much that could be done to keep the patient comfortable. I am learning much and enjoying the challenge, except I thought my days of having to write essays were over!

Thank you

Thank you all as always for your support, encouragement and prayers. I fear some of you may be thinking that I have been a bit neglectful in replying to emails. I probably have, but my laptop crashed just after New Year and I have lost all my emails and, more importantly, all my email addresses. Thankfully I had saved the vast majority of my documents onto a memory stick, and of course should have done something similar with my email addresses. So if you would like to resume email contact, please could you send me an email with your email address so I can rebuild my address book and I promise I will reply!

With love from

Francesca

www.cms-uk.org



Church Mission Society

Watlington Road, Oxford, OX4 6BZ Tel: 01865 787400 Fax: 01865 776375
Email: info@cms-uk.org www.cms-uk.org Registered Charity Number 1131655
Executive Director: The Rev Canon Tim Dakin