



Greetings once again, this time from a more settled situation (for now at least!).

Here's an update on our past 3 months.

### What we've done

In early July Steve was able to leave Chad and join us for a month's break, thanks to a miraculous situation that allowed him to get a seat on a flight that was officially full.



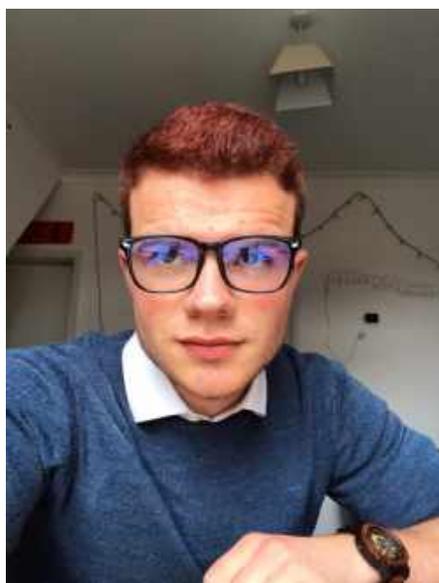
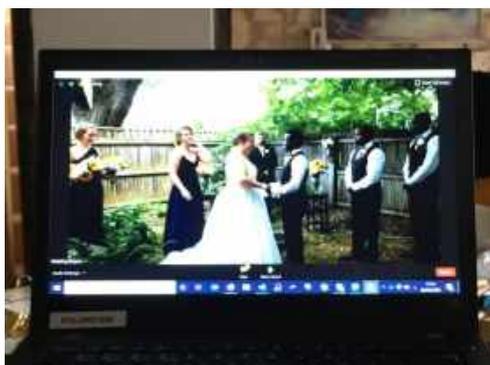
After completing his essential pilot's medical, the five of us managed to get away to France, which was a relaxing and refreshing break. While there we celebrated Jack's 21<sup>st</sup> birthday; not in the way that he had been planning at the start of the year, but it was special day nonetheless.



On our return we were offered the opportunity to house sit for some friends back in Combe Down and just down the road from the house we rented earlier in lockdown. We enjoyed a few days of socialising (all within the rules of course!) including a wonderful picnic with the extended Machell family. After Steve's return to Chad at the start of August, the rest of us were able to stay with Katie's parents until going our separate ways again; appreciating as always their hospitality, their willingness to lend a car, their flexibility towards our ever-changing plans, and the relentless determination with which Grandma oversaw the purchase and construction of a basketball hoop in their previously picturesque back garden. We trust it will be well-used in the coming months.



We are so thankful for the amazing ways that God answered prayer in getting Steve to the UK, and for all the ways we were provided for. Although we had no plan and no way of knowing how things would work out, so many people were so kind to us and we were never left homeless or hungry. We thank God for his incredible care for us.



### **What we've learned**

That you can do almost anything over Zoom! Apart from the usual work meetings, church and the weekly family quiz, we also attended a wedding, participated in Toby's prizegiving and leavers' celebration, 'met' with teachers for parent's evening, recorded a song as part of a virtual choir, had a travel health consultation with a doctor, and drew the MAF Chad team together from two continents for Prayer Day. Our maintenance team in the hangar also discovered you can use it to change a lightbulb...but that's a story for another day. We also learned not to fear the frequent emails from Air France entitled 'Your Flight is Cancelled'; and that 'timetable' is a highly nuanced term. And that Covid tests done properly will really make your eyes water.

### **What we're doing now**

Jack is back in Durham, preparing to be part of the team welcoming the freshers who will arrive shortly. During the summer he moved to his final-year home, and is starting to think about what he might do after graduation in 2021. As the term starts, like others he is facing the challenges (and inevitable disappointments) that will accompany strict social distancing, mostly online learning, bible studies and church meetings over Zoom, no team training with the American Football Club, and other restrictions. However he remains positive, and hopeful of more opportunities opening up over time.

Toby also celebrated a big birthday during lockdown, turning 18 in August just a few days after receiving his A level results. Many of you will be aware of the fiasco surrounding this (the results, not the birthday – that was celebrated in a reasonably orderly manner) and the outcome for Toby has meant a complete change of plan. He has cancelled his gap year and is going to the University of Winchester to study Sport and Exercise Science, starting this week. He has taken these changes on board with great adaptability and enthusiasm, and is really looking forward to what's next.



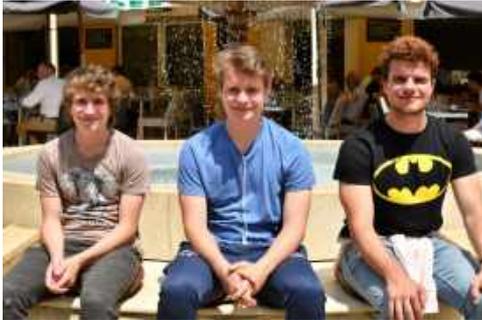
Ethan skilfully navigated the ever-changing travel regulations and managed to have a holiday with a school friend, which he had been looking forward to since the beginning of the year. He recently returned to school and so far seems happy with his new room, his new timetable, his new rugby boots and school shoes (not easy to procure in the start-of-term rush!) and the new ways of learning and socialising that Monkton has introduced.



*Please pray for Jack as he gets ready for his final year. Pray that he will be able to participate as fully as possible in university life, even with Covid restrictions. Please pray for his plans following graduation, as he works through his options and seeks to follow God's leading for his next steps.*

*Please pray for Toby as he starts university, with limited opportunities to meet people face-to-face, and with lots of online learning. Praise God for his great attitude to his new situation, and pray that he will continue to be motivated and enthusiastic.*

*Give thanks that Ethan has had such a positive start to the new school year. Please pray that there will be clear guidance for GCSE students this year, and that he will be committed to his studies.*



Steve and Katie are back together in Chad, continuing with their usual MAF roles. We are very grateful for the help we have received from two colleagues who have braved the uncertainties of international air travel and the inconveniences of quarantine to support us with training and supervision for our colleague Becki. If all goes according to plan (!), she will be fully signed off to fly the Caravan (our bigger plane) by October. We are however short of an engineer, since our Malagasy colleague Michel took a well-earned break in August, but then became ill and has not yet been able to return. A minor problem with the aircraft could effectively ground our operations without an engineer here.





*Praise God that Michel was able to get back to be with his family, and pray that he will be able to return to Chad soon.*

*Please pray with us for an engineer and also another pilot; we would love to have even greater capacity to serve our partners and help more organisations reach the isolated people of Chad.*

Thank-you so much for continuing to support us in our work!

Best wishes and much love to you all,

*Steve, Katie, Jack, Toby and Ethan Machell*

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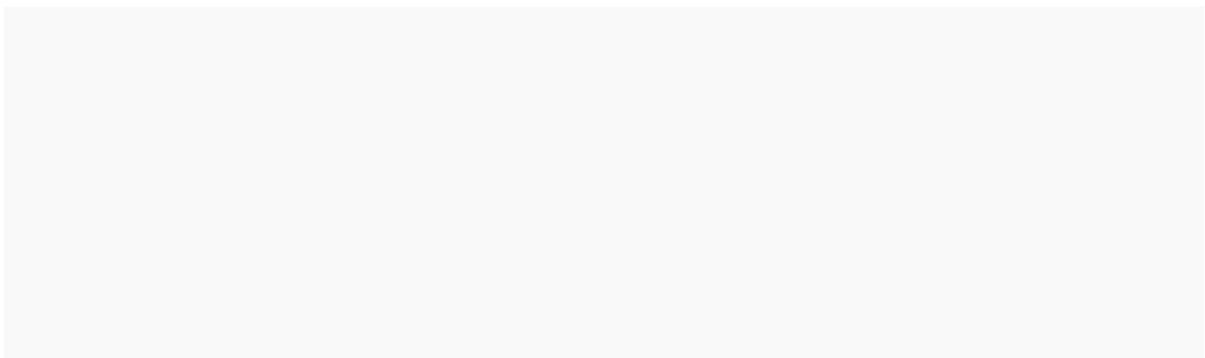
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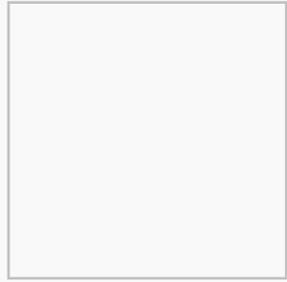
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