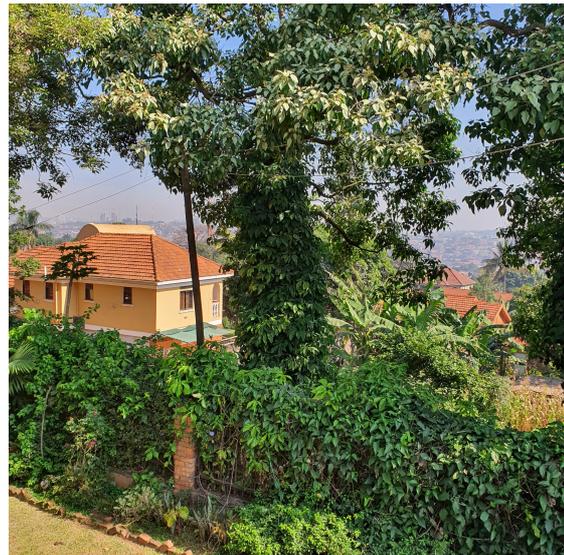


So we made it! After two and a half years of planning and preparation we finally arrived in Kampala, Uganda, and even though we have only been here for 5 weeks now, it has been quite an adventure already!

Our trip from the UK with Qatar Airways went really well, until we arrived in Uganda. Unfortunately, during the short lay over in Doha, which was only 55 minutes long, our bags didn't make the connecting flight so after spending two hours in immigration we got out into the baggage hall to find that none of our eleven suitcases had made it to Uganda!

Luckily, in her wisdom Steph had packed a few changes of clothes in our hand luggage so we managed to survive over the weekend until the bags arrived a few days later.

We also had to move into the MAF guesthouse for a few days because there was still renovation work being carried out on our house, but this worked out quite well as we had other members of the MAF team around to guide us through our first few days.



The MAF team have been so welcoming and it has been great to get to know everyone!

We have felt so blessed to have people cooking for us, taking us shopping, giving us driving lessons (which is very much needed in the chaos that is Kampala traffic!) and showing us how life in this new place works.

We are now moved into our house and hopefully we will get our container with all our belongings in it soon, so that we can start making the house feel like a home. Unfortunately, there seems to be a bit of a problem with the paperwork that is needed to get the container released from customs, so we are not entirely sure how long it will be until we see the container again.

The kids started school on the Monday after we arrived, and they have been loving school, which is great. Starting school so quickly has been really good for getting them into a routine and they are all starting to make friends which has been very positive. They're all enjoying taking part in the after-school clubs with Evelyn doing football, Raya doing toy making and Lexi doing puppy training!

At the moment it is the hot season in Kampala and because of the changes in temperature we have been treated to some awesome thunderstorms! Apparently, thunderstorms here are very common, but we can honestly say we have never heard anything like them before. On one of our first nights here we were woken at 4am with thunder that sounded like a bomb going off! The lightning was spectacular!



After having a week to settle into life in Kampala and make sure the kids were all happy at school, I started working in the hangar on the second Wednesday after we arrived. At the moment things are a bit quiet, due to a downturn in flying after the Ebola outbreak, which is thankfully now over, but I've been told that they anticipate things getting busier over the next few weeks. The quiet time is actually a bit of a blessing as it will allow me to get to understand the MAF way of working and learn their processes and procedures before things gather pace.

There is one aircraft in the hangar that I have been working on over the last few weeks though and it actually doesn't belong to MAF.

There is a missionary called Peter Swan who has his own Cessna 206 which he uses to fly out to remote people in South Sudan. The aircraft he uses did at one point belong to MAF, but after being used by another operator for a while it was purchased by Peter a few years ago to allow him to disciple church leaders across South Sudan. You can find out more about him by visiting [www.pursuit53.org](http://www.pursuit53.org).

The aircraft requires a complete overhaul, so while things are quiet for MAF, they have agreed to carry out the required maintenance to allow him to keep operating. At the moment the aircraft has had its wings and engine removed and we are carrying out some inspections to make sure the structure will continue to be safe for a long time into the future. Myself and another of my colleagues are replacing one of the upper wing skins, which is putting to use some of the sheet metal repair skills that I learnt at previous jobs.

## A Word From Steph.....

First Impressions! Expect everything and nothing.

We had finally arrived, and while we had visited in August this time it would feel very different. Arriving at the airport, going through the usual processes to depart, and traveling into Kampala, apart from the little issue of lost bags, all felt encouragingly familiar. A sense of unexpected peace surrounded us as we met our drivers. God had things covered, he truly had gone before us. Even down to the news we wouldn't be going straight to our house, didn't faze us and we were learning the importance of flexibility and patience.

Spending the first week in the MAF guesthouse meant we could rest from traveling, and begin to process our new life in Kampala. The girls enjoyed playing with Timon, the German Shepherd that lived with the MAF couple below us, and who we would unexpectedly end up adopting in just a few weeks' time!

It has been an exhausting first month, from interrupted sleep due to incredible storms, dogs barking, all night party music and the morning call to prayer from the nearby mosques, which has become our 5:30am morning wake up alarm, to constantly learning. Everything is different and we are learning a new way of doing everything!

One of the things I was most nervous about was driving! With no real rules of the road, no right of way, cars and Boda Bodas (motorcycle taxi's) driving at you from all directions and on the wrong side of the road at times, it can feel pretty scary! Once we had had our driving lessons, and from the observations we had made in August, we were figuring out the method and it started to feel a lot less scary. You really have to expect everything (cars and bikes driving down the wrong side of the road!) and nothing, nothing is the same!

Every time we drive around the hills and see the view across the city, I am amazed at how beautiful Kampala is and I am falling in love, not just with the incredible scenery but also the community. Ugandans are so friendly and welcoming and everyone will greet you with a smile and a "how are you?" something you don't expect in the UK.

God Bless

St



## **Prayer Points**

Please pray that:

- That our shipping container with all of our belongings in would be released by the customs agents quickly and delivered to our house.
- That we would find a Church to be part of and be able to get more integrated with life in Kampala.
- That Steph would be able to get some better sleep (Kampala can be very noisy at night and she has found it hard to get a full nights sleep).

## **Praise God**

Give thanks that:

- We had a great end to our time at All Nations Christian College and a good time with family and friends over Christmas.
- We are settling into life here in Uganda and have been well looked after by the MAF Uganda team when we arrived.
- The girls are loving school and are making lots of friends!

*Copyright © 2022 Those Drapers Abroad, All rights reserved.*

**Our mailing address is:**  
thosedrapersabroad@gmail.com