

Winter 2023

Joining with Mark and Sarah Newnham as they  
serve with MAF in Kenya

# Riveted Together



As we draw towards the end of another year we wanted to take this opportunity to wish you a Merry Christmas and Gods blessings for 2024. In Kenya, we know that Christmas is coming not because of colder temperatures or frost, but because the jacaranda trees bloom. As the flowers fall they leave a beautiful purple carpet on the ground....it's breath-taking.

However, the warm temperatures will not stop us from celebrating with a traditional roast dinner and Christmas pudding, an item that came back with us in our suitcases in August. We are also very much looking forward to having Sarah's Dad with us for the holidays.



The children have been keeping busy with school and youth events and are looking forward to the Christmas break.

Amy

has just turned 18, so we have another adult in the house!

She celebrated by taking a mountain of cinnamon rolls to school to share with friends and a family meal of sushi in the evening.

She has recently submitted her UCAS application and is now waiting to see what offers she will get from Universities.

**Josh** is on a Btec school trip to Singapore and Malaysia as we write to you. It's an amazing opportunity and will hopefully help him with some of his Btec assignments going into next year.

### **Abby**

has had a great first term to this school year. She is growing in her love for and skill as a budding artist. She was thrilled to come 1st in her age group in an art competition, with her drawing of a rhino in an orchid forest.



### **Transition update and more...the sequel...**

As the end of the year draws closer I am looking forward to drawing a line under current responsibilities and getting into my new role fully. Things are coming into place for me to do that, for which I am very glad!

In Oct/Nov I was able to travel to Cairns, Australia for just under three weeks with a 5 day trip to PNG in the middle to see an operational program in our Asia Pacific Region. MAF International has a split Head Office - with part in Ashford, Kent, UK and the other part in Cairns, QLD, Australia.

My time in Cairns was spent meeting with my team mates and boss for my new role, catching up with some old faces that I have known over our years in MAF, and visiting Mareeba where our Australia Maintenance Facility and Flight Training Centre are. My visit to PNG was an amazing experience. I met the MAF team based in Mt Hagen and in particular spent time with the Maintenance Control and Engineering staff.

I was able to join an operational flight which gave me good insight into the challenges of flying in mountainous terrain with challenging weather. It is quite different flying at 9,000ft with terrain above you either side and picking a path through the clouds. During this flight we had an unplanned overnight due to weather which turned out to be a great opportunity to catchup with one of the pilots who had been a colleague in Liberia with me!

The visit gave me a good picture of how things work in the region and it is always good to meet face to face and build relationships with people which will be valuable going into the new year.





## Sarah Steps Into a New Role



We mentioned in our last prayer letter That Sarah was looking into possibilities to use her Speech Therapy Skills more.

God has clearly led her to have significant conversations with the right people and an opportunity has come for Sarah to work as a consultant Speech & Language Therapist with Bee Heard Kenya.

She recently faced her first job interview in over 20 years! Whilst feeling a little inadequate after so many years away from paid employment, the interview went extremely well. She has been offered a contract to work 3 days / week with Bee Heard starting in January. All of the documents for her work permit were submitted last week so we are praying the process will go smoothly.

The exciting thing is that there is an expectation from Bee heard to offer several hours of voluntary work on top of the consultancy hours. So Sarah can also volunteer her skills at Heshima one day a week.

## Praises

- For the rains that have fallen in Kenya in recent weeks that are allowing crops to grow. When they came they were very heavy and sadly caused flooding and destroyed crops in some areas.
- That Amy, Josh and Abby are each doing well in school in their own ways. We are thankful for good friends they each have and opportunities to learn.
- For the opportunity that has come up for Sarah to use her Speech & Language Therapy in Nairobi. She is excited to begin working in a place where there is much need but also so many opportunities.
- For Marks trip to Australia and PNG which enabled him to get to know people and helped equip him with ideas and vision for his new role.

## Prayers

- For God's clear leading in University application process for Amy
- Pray for Mark as he fully steps into his new role in January.
- For a replacement to be found to take on Marks old role.
- For Sarah's work permit to come through and for her as she begins her new role which initially will be a steep learning curve.
- For our whole family as we adjust and transition to having both Mark & Sarah working.
- For the country of Kenya & it's people. We see people struggling and are getting more frequent requests for help as the value of the Kenyan Shilling falls, costs of living increase, and government taxes/fees have risen.

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## MAF Flight Bridges the Gap for Noella and Kargi Community

When heavy rains and dense clouds meant it was not possible to land in Marsabit, MAF pilot David Graaf had to alter his destination to Kargi. This change was a relief for Noella Achieng, as the new route favoured her destination.

Noella recounts, *"It was my first time flying, and initially, the plan was to land in Marsabit, and I was concerned that the weather conditions from the heavy rains would lead the plane to leave me there. I am happy they brought me home. If I had travelled by road, it would have taken more than the normal 13 hours we use on road, a contrast to the two hours flight"*.





If Noella had landed in Marsabit, she would have had to wait for many days before connecting to Kargi by road. This is because the bridge linking the two locations was swept away by heavy rains, rendering the road impassable.

A joyful Noella adds, “The flight with MAF was amazing, I am happy they brought me home. If I had travelled by road, it would have taken more than the normal 13 hours we use on the road, a contrast to the two hours flight.”

Noella is a certified teacher by the Teacher Service Commission in Kenya, and she runs an organisation called The Virtuous Women Global Network. She also serves in Christ is the Answer Ministries (CITAM) missions.

“My primary goal is to empower women through education and now that schools are closed in the country (for holidays), I would like to use my two-month break to teach the Swahili language to the women from the pastoralist community with the aim of breaking the language barrier,” she said.

“It brings me so much joy and satisfaction to know that I can use my gift to empower these women through adult literacy. I thank God for this opportunity, I have so longed for, it’s a calling.”

