

Santastic Travels

SERVING WITH MAF IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Santastic Prayer Letter - Home Assignment Edition

In about 7 weeks, the Sants will be boarding a plane back to the UK for home assignment. We feel blessed that MAF gives us the opportunity to come back to the UK – to see our families, reconnect with friends, and update you on the work in PNG. We are very excited to come and see you all!

While we are in the UK we will be trying to get to as many places as possible. Please see below for the places that we are visiting, so you can join us if you can.

HOME ASSIGNMENT

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

02/06/24 THE CHURCH ON THE HEATH, FLEET, GU51 1HA
 09/06/24 TRINITY CHURCH, SCARBOROUGH, YO12 7PL
 16/06/24 CHRIST CHURCH CENTRAL LEEDS, LS2 9NG
 30/06/24 SINFIN MOOR CHURCH, DERBY, DE24 3DH
 07/07/24 CARNHELL GREEN CF, CAMBOURNE, TR14 0LY
 14/07/24 CHRIST CHURCH DERBY, DE1 1LR
 14/07/24 STENSON FIELDS CF, DERBY, DE24 3JG
 TBC CARDIFF, SOUTH WALES

The Hostel



SIL's Ukarampa site from the air

Those of you who have been keeping up to date with our time in PNG will know that Abi goes to Ukarampa School, a 40-minute flight away from Mount Hagen. She lives with some amazing hostel parents. 2 months ago, they informed MAF that they would be leaving at the end of the current term (June).

MAF are trying to recruit new hostel parents in time for the start of term in July. Due to the amount of time it takes to bring people into programme (training, visas, work permits etc), it is unlikely that all of the processes will be completed in time.

We have volunteered to move to the hostel from July to December to enable Abi and other students to continue their studies, and to allow Emma to start at the school, while MAF are still recruiting. The move requires Dom to commute back to Mount Hagen every other week to ensure he is effective in his job, while Sequoia looks after the students.



The Lutheran Hostel, Ukarumpa

Please pray that God would make clear the right people to take on the challenge permanently, as there are 2 other MAF families who would like to send their children to the school but cannot until new full-time hostel parents are found.



Dom with one of the team in Timor Leste

General updates

In January, Dom travelled to Arnhem Land and Timor Leste for 2 weeks to complete an audit of their safety systems. This was a very useful learning experience, however while he was away Sequoia got shingles, and Emma and Isaac fell ill. This made the next period particularly challenging as they recovered.

Abi continues with her studies at Ukarumpa. She is doing very well and has an active social life. She loves baking and we heard this week that the boys in her class will often gatecrash the girl's bible study in order to sample her cakes. We are thrilled to see how mature and independent she is becoming.



Abi supporting with sports at school

Emma has continued home schooling this year. She enjoys coming into the office with Mum and Dad, getting to know the MAF team, and it has given her a perspective of the work we do. She has also started thinking that she might want to go into engineering! Unfortunately, Emma's best friend left the programme a couple of weeks ago to head home to the Netherlands with her family. But God, in his amazing timing, brought a new family from South Africa into the programme - we have really enjoyed getting to know them, and Emma has made instant friends with their daughter, Jana. Praise the Lord for his providence. Emma will start at Ukarumpa in July when we are back from home assignment.



Jana and Emma, a new friend from South Africa.



Isaac in a PNG headdress at school

Isaac has 6 more weeks at the local school he has been attending for over 2 years. He enjoys the social aspect of being there. He will start home schooling in July. Please pray as he prepares for this. We are particularly praying that God will help him to maintain some relationships with friends or make new ones. We love how Isaac loves to play outside and make friends, but we are a little worried that homeschooling will not fulfil his social needs, and the move to Ukarumpa might make relationships harder to sustain.

Sequoia will finish working in PVM in 4 weeks time in order to prepare for home assignment and pack for our move to Ukarumpa. She has LOVED working in the facilities team. Praise the Lord for the work she has been able to complete in supporting them. She has made some amazing friendships and will miss the work. Please pray for Sequoia during this transition.



Sequoia with some of the PVM team

Dom continues with his Safety Manger role. Within the last few weeks, the programme had a fairly serious security incident that Dom is mid way through investigating. Dom will likely be commuting from Ukarumpa to Mount Hagen every other week following home assignment. Please pray for him and his team as they prepare for this.

We continue to run the Mount Hagen MAF Young People group every other week. Our numbers have been steadily increasing over the last five months.



The obligatory youth group corner sofa photo!

We are really looking forward to our time in the UK but are aware of how much will have changed in the 2 years that we have been away. Please pray that we prepare well for the feeling of being split between two places - our 'home' in the UK and our 'home' in PNG. We have been warned that the first home assignment can be a challenging experience.

We look forward to seeing you all in the very near future.