

HAPPY CHRISTMAS



Dear Family, Friends and Supporters,

As I start writing this, there is a Category 4 cyclone heading straight for Cairns, Cyclone Jasper, which makes it sound like something fun. It isn't. So, instead of Christmas shopping we're supposed to be stocking up and preparing for a cyclone and deciding which cupboard we will shelter in. We are still trying to use up the extra rice we stocked up on during Covid - fondly named the weevil rice! (Don't worry, we don't serve weevil rice to guests, and we do a pretty good job of removing weevils for family. Honest!) I think we've lived long enough in the tropics that bugs don't bother us too much any more, although I am still not a fan of cockroaches crawling up my leg which did happen this week and may or may not have elicited a squeal!



Joshua finished his degree in November and then went to Malaysia, followed by a Christian student conference in Canberra and then a week in Sydney. We are hoping we will catch sight of him at some point before he starts his new job in January! Pray that he will be able to find accommodation and a new church.

Bethany is enjoying the break after an intense year of study. She joined her brother in Canberra via Sydney. It is strange to see your children travelling independently when it seems that only yesterday they were toddlers. It turns out that children growing up is as much of a transition as having them in the first place!

Caleb has just finished his first placement on a dairy farm. No Wi-Fi, no phone signal and crack-of-dawn starts took a bit of getting used to! Ironically Caleb, who was actually only two hours drive away, was uncontactable most of the time whereas Joshua in Malaysia I could talk to easily!!

A WEARY WORLD REJOICES

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Matthew 11 v 28-30



Ruben is overjoyed to have all the family back together again, albeit briefly. He is still at the age where Christmas is magical, although he is growing up fast. (I have to say there are some large children in this family who still like to have a Christmas stocking!!) Unfortunately, he has been corrupted and thinks a hot sunny Christmas is the way it should be!!! He survived his first year at school without a sibling and will go into his final year of primary school at the end of January.

Daniel's health is variable but he manages to do everything as long as he is careful to pace himself. Please continue to pray for an improvement. I am enjoying my work for MAF. It is such an answer to prayer being able to do a job I enjoy and being able to work around Ruben's school day. Unfortunately I have a few health struggles of my own and am waiting to see a specialist. Please pray I can get these things sorted.

2023 has been a difficult year, as I'm sure it has been for some of you. As a Christian I don't think there are any easy answers to the struggles we go through, except to hold on tight; keep looking up, and sing, 'Hallelujah anyway'! This song by Rend Collective challenges us to find a way to praise even when we feel broken, and to find a way to be thankful even when life is a bit too real and hard. When the struggles continue and the prayers go unanswered, the song encourages us to fight through the emotions and praise anyway. So let worship be your battle cry and on those hard days and in those hard seasons say, 'Hallelujah anyway'.

Love to you all. Thank you for your continued prayer and support.

Daniel, Libby, Joshua, Bethany, Caleb and Ruben

Hallelujah Anyway by Rend Collective

Even if my daylight never dawns
Even if my breakthrough never comes
Even if I'll fight to bring You praise
Even if my dreams fall to the ground
Even if I'm lost, I know I'm found
Even if my heart will somehow say
Hallelujah anyway

I hear a hymn of triumph
In the wilderness of my lament
In the lowlands or the mountain tops,
I won't forget all that goodness that
You have shown me
The promises that You have kept
There's better days on the horizon up
ahead