



September 2023

Dear Praying Friends,

Life is so busy; it is hard to find the time to compose a letter (then when we do find the time, news is old...). I apologize for the lateness of this update. Here is what has been happening:

During the month of June, Matthew, Grace, and I (Ruth) were able to go on a **mission's trip to the Solomon Islands**. I was able to deliver their baby; and Matthew was able to get involved in the work there. We praise the Lord for a safe delivery! Matthew was able to teach the Sunday afternoon Bible studies while we were there. It was wonderful to see my son serving God and teaching His Word. Thank you to those who gave to help make this trip possible! Matthew has expressed a desire to serve God as a missionary! There is no greater joy than to see your children walking in truth! We were also able to see the ministry of our missionary friends in PNG on the return trip. It was a great trip, but we were glad to be back in Madagascar. Seeing other fields deepened my love for my field of Madagascar! Thank you for praying for Richard and the kids; separation is hard.

Near the beginning of July, Richard had the opportunity to participate in the **ordination of 4 men** from the church here where we have been helping and working. It was a wonderful celebration as each of these men start a new chapter in ministry.

The last part of July and into the beginning of August, we went on a **trip up to Nosy Be**. This involved three days of driving (one way), taking a ferry, eating food from cook shops along the road, and spending the night in hotels that were in the bigger cities. The trips getting there and back were quite an adventure with all of us and the babies in the car on sometimes windy, sometimes bumpy, sometimes narrow roads. The purpose of the trip was to get a better idea of where God wants us. We were able to talk to people in the different areas and get a better understanding of land that is for sale (or seemingly for sale), where people are living, what people do for jobs, and where the needs are. We were also able to meet with some missionaries working on another island not too far away. There is one big city, two medium sized cities, and many small villages on Nosy Be. There is no Baptist church in any of the cities. We are looking at living somewhere in-between the big city and the smaller ones so that we can, Lord willing, reach all these areas. During our time there, we were able to canvas part of one city Dزاماندزار with tracts. We split up into 3 groups and went down both sides of the road of 3 roads. It is wonderful to have kids who are older and capable and are happy and willing to participate in ministry! We were able to share the gospel with people and give out over 2,000 tracts. And this was only a drop in the bucket compared to how many people were there. There are so many people lost and on the road to Hell! Please pray for us as we seek where God would have us go and how He would have us start.

About a week after returning from the trip to Nosy Be, we turned around and left for a trip to the States for my (Ruth's) **brother's wedding**. The Browns (some missionaries here) graciously offered to watch all the kids for us. Richard, Grace, and I just got back from that whirlwind of a trip. We were able to accomplish some of the things on our "to do" list, but not all of them. Aside from trying to help my brother get his loft apartment



(above) on the way to Nosy Be



(above) Fetishes on a "sacred" tree





ready before his wedding, we also got some schoolbooks and other supplies purchased. While there, we also had a good time of fellowship visiting our home church.

It was so good to see most of our family and many aunts and uncles who came together for the wedding! The time with them was so sweet! It is **really hard to say goodbye**. That is probably the hardest thing about living far away! I have found that if I focus and think about how I miss my family and how I won't see them and how sad I am, I will just stay sad and a bit depressed. I need to turn my focus and thoughts to what I can be thankful for. I can be thankful for the husband, my children, and my ministry. But most of all, even if I had nothing, I can be thankful for my salvation. I can be thankful that Jesus died for me. Because of this, I can have joy!

Thank you for praying for us! We had a safe trip back, though we weren't sure that we were going to make it. We had a **50-minute layover** to change planes in Ethiopia. Our plane arrived late, and we had only 20 minutes before our next flight was supposed to leave (and we were still in the airplane). Boarding closed in 5 minutes. Plus, our plane didn't park at the terminal but on the tarmac. We had to disembark via stairs and get on a bus... When we got to the bottom of the stairs, they asked us where we were going. We told them that we were going to Madagascar; and they told us which bus to get on. The bus took us directly to our plane. They opened the stairs, opened the door, and let us get on. We didn't go through security, and we didn't even enter the terminal. Upon arrival, to our amazement, all our luggage made it!!

Grace is 10 months old and just visited America for the first time. **All the kids are doing well**, but the little ones (especially Moriah) really missed us when we were gone. Matthew, Sarah, and Nate were able to go to the **teen camp** here. They had a great time in God's Word and playing games with other kids their ages! Matthew and Sarah are enrolled in the **Step Ahead program** at Ambassador again. The kids are finishing up last year's school. I am getting the books and materials ready for this **next school year**. Doing first grade, Algebra, Geometry, and all the other subjects is quite taxing especially when you add in a baby, a toddler, and a preschooler. We will really miss Rebekah! She was a huge blessing and help when she was here. When we went to the States for my brother's wedding, Rebekah didn't come back with us. If you are interested in helping with homeschooling and would like to come work with us, please let us know!

One of the biggest news and praises is that we **received our 10-year visas** and residence cards! What this means for us has not really sunk in! Not to have to run around after paperwork to renew our visas every 10 months is a huge weight that has been lifted! We are so thankful that these went through!!

Some missionaries here, the Browns, are planning to go on furlough in a few weeks. Because we are in a transition between language learning and starting a ministry in Nosy Be, we are at liberty to step in and do **furlough replacement** for them. (Furlough replacement is when someone fills the gaps for a missionary when they are not there.) For the next 5 months, we will be working, helping, teaching, and preaching at their new church plant until they return. This time will also cover the Christmas and New Year's seasons. There are many aspects to this ministry that we would love for you to pray for. Specifically, that we would have the Malagasy language to be able to preach and teach and disciple, and that we would be able to see people get saved and people grow during our time there. Please also pray for wisdom as we minister in people's lives. We are excited about this ministering opportunity!

In the Service of the King,

Richard and Ruth Jertberg,

Matthew, Sarah, Nate, Abby, Kezia, Hadassah, Moriah, and Grace

Prayer Requests:

- Continued Malagasy learning
- Words to impart God's truth when preaching and teaching
- God's leading
- The kids and I as we begin a new school year
- Many aspects of furlough replacement
- That there would be fruit from the tracts that were given

Praises:

- The safe delivery and good mission's trip
- Growth in the church
- Good trip to Nosy Be
- My brother got married
- Smooth travels
- We received 10-year visas!
- Opportunity to do furlough replacement