



the JERTBERG family

## Church Planting in MADAGASCAR



Dear Praying Friends,

June 2026



Thank you to those who are praying for us, all the things going on here, and for the **Easter outreach** in April. We showed a gospel film at the house-construction site. Several things could have gone wrong but didn't. There was some distant lightning and dark clouds but only produced a few misting sprinkles. Rain would have been very detrimental as everything was outside. Also, the electricity went off but only for 5 min. Most of the workers came (about 15-20 men) and quite a few people from the neighborhood. Each one heard a clear explanation of the gospel from one of the leaders from the church, and each one received a John and Romans. We pray that God would work in their hearts!



Several discouraging/sad events happened. Due to the war, there was a fuel shortage in the country **preventing us from being able to go** to the missionary retreat in the capital which was a disappointment to everyone who were all looking forward to the fellowship. Another sad event was when we woke up in the morning to find **our dog dead** in her crate. We are not sure what happened and were somewhat unsettled at the possibility of a poisoning which would mean there were ulterior motives, but nothing more happened. It was with sadness that we started our pet cemetery. Another discouragement was when the temporary **meter for our electricity was taken** from the construction site. We are back to using a generator for the construction until they give us the permanent meter.



On a positive note, God allowed us to legally **have a lemur for a pet**. He was hurt in several places when we got him, but he recovered well. He was very friendly... at first. Apparently, lemurs hold serious grudges which he took up against Nate and Richard. He bit them several times. Because we did not want to live in fear of being attacked in our yard, we took the lemur to where a troop of wild lemurs live and left him there. While we were releasing him, he gave Kezia a big gash on her leg. Both **Kezia's and Richard's gashes** got infected. They are healing now but slowly.



Another happy thing was that we "happened" to stop at a fruit plantation which led to us making a friend and being **given a puppy**. He looks like he will be a good-sized guard dog. All the kids are excited to have him and are working on training him.

The **house construction** continues. We offered the contractor a sizeable bonus if he can get part of the house to a livable state by the middle of August allowing us to move in before the baby is born at the beginning of September. There is still a LOT of work to be done, but he is optimistic that it will be done. Due to an inspector coming to inspect or audit our contractor's work, he plans to put all of his workers on one site – ours. There will be around 75 workers till the end of this month (June) to work faster! We are excited about this, but also feeling the added pressure. We have to be on top of buying the supplies (rebar, cement, sand, gravel, wood) and have to put in all the electrical wires and tubes (Richard is in charge of the electrical and plumbing work). Please pray for the many facets of this construction project!

(above) Kids on the scaffolding.  
(below) They put up "ketikety"  
to support the cement of the  
second floor.



There have been several things that have **unexpectedly increased the cost** of the house-construction project: they put in some pillars and built some things that were not in the plans and not correctly spaced, making the construction bigger than it was supposed to be (they added 27 square meters to the project!); they thought it necessary to reinforce things that may not have needed to be reinforced (extra material costs); the contractor underestimated the cost of materials and forgot to include some big items (if we had known, we would probably have done some things differently or not at all); the contractor was absent quite a bit causing not much work to be done (We have to continue paying rent in our current, rather expensive,



### Prayer Requests:

- Health for Ruth and growing new baby and a safe delivery
- Our personal walks with God
- We would learn this dialect
- Preaching, teaching, and classes would be well understood
- Sarah, Nate, and Abby to be able to communicate clearly in Malagasy to the kids' classes.
- People would be saved
- Kids and I as we do school
- Health, strength, and protection
- Construction to be fast and done well
- God would supply the finances needed for the construction
- We would have wisdom

### Praises:

- Good Easter Outreach
- Good church picnic
- A baby on the way
- Health and strength and healing
- Pets we can enjoy
- Kids who want to serve God
- The privilege to serve God here



rental house). (According to our contract, the entire project should have been done at the end of May.) All these "extra" expenses have added up to quite a few thousand dollars extra! Trusting God is not always easy in the pressures of life. We have to constantly redirect our focus back to God where it should be. "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding." Proverbs 3:5 We want God to be the One directing our paths.

In May, we celebrated Pentecost with a **church picnic** to the beach. We used our two vehicles to transport all the people from the church area to the beach (an hour drive one way). Everyone packed in! We had a good time eating together, talking, swimming (mostly the kids), and enjoying being together. Then we drove them back home.

On June 9<sup>th</sup> as I was making a cake for Richard's birthday, I was also monitoring a **lady in labor**. She labored all day and night at our house without much progress (early labor) then decided to go home for a while. Because the baby was born so fast, she did not make it back to our house for the delivery and ended up having her baby in a bajaj then stopping at the closest clinic. We followed up with her at her house, took some foodstuffs, and gave some needed postpartum education.

Next week is the last Sunday the church will be able to use the meeting room that we are currently in. After that, **we will have to move**. The church has put money on a property, but it is not cleared and there is no building or meeting place as of yet. The church family is working on getting the new site ready to begin meeting there. In the meantime, we will probably be meeting at the home of one of the ladies from the church. We are glad that the new meeting place is not too far from where we have been; and most of the kids should be able to continue coming. **Sarah** has been doing a great job **teaching the kids**. It brings us great joy to see our kids serving God and walking in truth!

Several neighborhood kids have been coming to our gate wanting to play with our kids. Nate and Abby took the initiative to start a **Bible class with the kids**. They have taught a lesson, taught a verse, had a coloring page, and played with the kids. I am very proud of them for seeing the need and acting without being told. They are very excited about this class! Please pray for the salvation of the kids and for them to understand the lessons. Please pray for Nate and Abby as they teach.

I am in my **third trimester**, and we are all looking forward to having a new baby with us! It is strange to think that the baby could be born in as few as 7 weeks! There have been a lot of emotions this pregnancy as I was looking forward to having my parents come for the birth (I really miss them!), but it doesn't seem like that will happen. It has been quite hard for me. Please pray for the delivery as we are planning a homebirth as we have done before, but this time will be just us.

A lack of thankfulness in our lives will soon lead to discontentment with what God has given and we start to desire what we don't have. Then we start to distort what we have (things we have seem worse than they really are); and we distort what we don't have (things we don't have seem better than they really are). Then we start complaining and stop delighting in God. This cycle which begins with a lack of gratitude will ultimately lead to despising the One who gave. We must delight ourselves in God and be thankful for what He has given in our lives! (from a sermon by Scott Tool)

If I dwell on what I want and don't have (more time with my parents and siblings), I will begin to despise what God has given. I get to serve God in a persecution-free, relatively safe country; I get to work with friendly people; I have access to many things; and I get to live in a beautiful place with a beach nearby. **God is enough**; plus, He has blessed me with a wonderful life!

In everything, **give thanks** – in every circumstance and for every gift!  
In the service of the King,

Richard, Ruth, Matthew, Sarah, Nate, Abby, Kezia, Hadassah, Moriah, Grace, Jeremiah, and baby Jertberg

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