

BROWN

Family Mission

CMF INTERNATIONAL
MISSIONARIES TO
KENYA

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So much has been going on in our little family world lately. Our schedule has been a series of stop-and-go ... complete rest or utter exhaustion. And we are left scratching our heads and asking God, "Just what is it You are up to?"

I find myself battling between two thoughts most of the time. Either I want to just throw my hands up and tell God: "Fine. You are in charge, and I will just follow You in YOUR time, YOUR way. After all, You know all things, and I am just a teeny tiny part of your show." On the other hand, I really, really, REALLY want to know what is coming up and what I am supposed to do in the meantime. I hope you all can relate.

The "meantime," it seems, is where we really begin to question both God and ourselves. It's this time when patience and faith are supposed to be our allies, but, in fact, I often find myself short-tempered, confused, and grasping for something tangible onto which I can hold. I look for small victories and tasks to keep me going, but even these are fleeting and quickly fade. So I am left no better off than when I first began, except for the additional stress and worry that I have placed upon myself.

At first reading, I know it seems like I am ranting a bit (and I am), but that's okay – God can handle it. My hope is that through our newsletters we give you all a realistic look at who we are as people and how we handle the situations in which God puts us. Tammi and I (and our kids) aren't super human, super spiritual, or super gifted beyond any of you who are reading this letter right now. We struggle with the challenges that life throws at us all, but we do take the opportunity to try to communicate with you to celebrate our small victories and to ask for help in



the tasks that God lays before us. And we have been blessed beyond words because of your prayers and support. So, I want to continue this tradition and open our lives a bit more to each of you.

Our family is at a crossroads of sorts. That isn't a bad thing, but we are in that all too familiar place of not knowing when our next big step will happen. Since we have been back in the US, almost everyone we speak with presents us with the million dollar question: "When are you planning to go back to Kenya?" We usually have a pat answer that our furlough extends to January 2010, but the fact of the matter is that we must raise our financial support back to a sustainable level before we can return.

There is another factor hidden in this answer to which most of you are not privy. Tammi and I would like to take this opportunity to share some wonderful news with you all: We are expecting a baby in late February. Yes, we have known for some time. When we first suspected, there were some extenuating circumstances that kept us from becoming too excited (a third-world pregnancy test that gave us a false negative and the stress of moving our family halfway around the world, to name a couple). But perhaps the biggest factor in not announcing this news earlier is that we just didn't have answers to the questions that this announcement would bring. And, we still don't. We are very happy and excited about our new addition, but logistically (which is how I think) this throws a wrench in my mental image of how God is supposed to be working.

But at least I can shed some light on the question of our return now. The facts are that Tammi won't be able to fly within 6-8 weeks of her due date. Ultimately, we will not be able to return until our support is raised. So, if we are fully funded by the beginning of January, we will return to deliver in Nairobi which is our ideal choice. However, if our support is not in by that time, we will have to deliver here in the US, then get a birth certificate and apply for a passport for the baby. That process will likely delay our return by some months. Additionally, if we are delayed, I will probably have to make a trip to Kenya to move from our apartment and find a place to store our stuff until we return as our lease is up at the end of February. This would take a chunk of our ministry funds, but would be very necessary.

So, we are quite literally living our lives in a constant state of flux. While we enjoy the familiarity of the US and reconnecting with everyone (and Walmart), we are very much still in Kenya. This is probably the most difficult thing to communicate when we share about our work and lives in Nairobi, but we really miss it. I get updates via email from my furlough replacement, Richard Mangel, multiple times a week concerning new challenges and ongoing business issues, but I am limited in the amount of work that I can actually do from halfway around the world. Even while we are surrounded by so much abundance and technology in America, I constantly find myself wondering how I can implement these things into ministry overseas. And sometimes the smallest things – such as the rain which we have been getting much of, and often – remind me of the droughts that are so much a part of life in Kenya. I am so anxious to return and put my well drilling skills to the test! There is such a sense of urgency within us to return and continue the work to which God has appointed and equipped us.



But, as with all things, we are faithfully waiting on God to move. In the meantime, we are doing our part to meet with churches and individuals to share our work in Nairobi and what is needed for that work to continue. We are planting seeds with the knowledge that God gives the growth. Along those lines, we would love the opportunity to share our stories, pictures, and experiences with anyone who has a heart for reaching the lost.

PRAISES AND PRAYER REQUESTS

- Praise God for our family's health. The kids haven't had any major illnesses beyond fevers and coughs,

but at the time of this writing, Tammi has been a little sick with cold symptoms – cough, fatigue, and general achiness. Please remember her in your prayers and pray along with us for a healthy pregnancy.

- Praise God for Jeff's opportunity to go to Haiti with Haitian Support Ministries, November 17-21, to help with some administrative stuff. This was not a CMF funded trip, but a personal trip to help with some administration at a ministry that we have supported in the past. Thanks to all who prayed for safe travel and efficient work.
- Praise God that we were able to attend my brother Mike's wedding on October 17! This is one of the

biggies we were hoping to be back in the States to attend. What a great time. I finally have a sister, Kristen!



- Praise God for the welcome we have received since being back. Life can be very challenging

and even lonely in a foreign country and feeling out of place becomes the norm. It is such a great feeling to be on solid ground culturally and among people who understand our American idiosyncrasies.

- As always, please continue to pray for God's provision in our ministry and for all who are working to bring His name to every tongue and tribe and nation. He knows everything we need and provides accordingly.

In His hands, in His will, in His time,

Jeff & Tammi

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