

Christmas wabwino!

Happy Christmas!

December 2012

I'm writing this on our 'konde' – the covered veranda that many houses in Malawi have around them. I'm listening to the thunder rumble around Blantyre and praying it would rain. It's just too hot and humid! 32 degrees yesterday on Christmas day!



Neil, Sara, Ben and Grace Kennedy MALAWI


Presbyterian
CHURCH IN IRELAND
Mission Overseas

“What does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God”
Micah 6:8



Our (late) Christmas present to all of you is.... (don't get too excited...) a new fridge magnet! Just what you wanted! For those of you who get this by email, we'd like to send you one, **so please send your PHYSICAL ADDRESS to our prayer secretaries Campbell and Helen Killick at killicks@gmail.com** and they'll post it to you. For those who get this by post, hopefully it will come with a magnet!

Thank you so much for your prayers over the last few months which have sustained us through an extremely busy time - it's only in the last week or two that I've felt on top of things.

Deputation in Ireland went well, though the break from the family is difficult. We were encouraged by the response to the 'Resurrection' talk, by many people who've signed up to pray for us, and by the financial support we received for the One-Stop-Centre or the work at Queens.

The One-Stop Centre is going really well. The team are passionate about what they do and we're seeing some great results – not least an increase in prosecutions against offenders. The ambition of the team is inspiring in the face of the challenges they meet - cases being dropped at the last minute after money changes hands, or young children forced to give evidence in open court. So at a recent team meeting, we decided that one of our aims over the next few months is to meet with senior officials in the Ministry of Justice to advocate for a meaningful change in judicial practice. The head of DFID in Malawi has promised to help us meet the right people.

As the service becomes known, more and more clients are coming – there is *such* a need. A few days ago, we were receiving gifts from a local charity when a 13 year old was carried in, bleeding copiously following a gang rape. We quickly got the shocked visitors off-side and she's now making a good recovery after theatre. We've made good progress in getting services for adults up and running, though there are lots of practical issues still to resolve.

The other big news from the College was the opening of our second teaching campus in Lilongwe – 4 hours drive away. All of our 3rd years are being taught there now. This involved a lot of prep, quite a bit of travelling and multiple sleepless nights. On the whole it's gone remarkably well. My colleagues in Lilongwe have done a great job, and I'm confident that the standard of course we're offering there is good. But the college is very short of cash (like most of Malawi right now since the devaluation), so

resources are in short supply, we're doing everything on half a shoe-string, and senior management hasn't always given the support that's needed. The Lilongwe student Christian medical fellowship group has gone well – merging with the local clinical officer training school group.

We've had a nice Christmas as a family. The new-to-us Landrover was used for its first significant trip as we went camping / hoteling (depending on the X and Y chromosomes) on the Northern Lakeshore. All well apart from one puncture, but we got to use the suitably named very large 'Safari jack' – so not all bad news. Ben's street-kid work received a god-motherly boost with the tremendous news that we've got funding to feed the children at least once a week. Sara is enjoying the Christmas break from class. Grace is enjoying her new saxophone! Thanks to everyone who has sent us cards and greetings.



Some items for prayer:

1. Give thanks for the way the way the One-Stop is working. Pray for Charity, John, Salifu, Patricia, Tandu and Emmanuel that they'll be able to persevere in bringing a great service to the clients despite all the frustrations.
2. Pray for our plans to try and influence the way the justice system handles sexual violence cases. Pray we'll get to speak to the right people and make good practical suggestions.
3. Pray for the teaching we do – in Lilongwe and Blantyre. Pray the standard will be good and the students will see examples of good practice that they'll want to emulate in their own work.
4. Pray for Ben – mocks in the next few weeks.
5. Give thanks that George passed his re-sits and is now a full paediatric consultant – the 8th to qualify from our program in the last 4 years.

Thanks again for reading and praying. Don't forget your fridge magnet!

Neil, Sara, Ben and Grace.