

February 14, 2008

Dear Friends,

Rejoice with us as we are now transitioning from full-time language learning to full-time ministry among the Maasai. God has been abundantly present with us this year and we have been blessed to see what God is doing within us, within the Endoinyo Erinka community where we live, and within the CMF Maasai team. We hope that you, also, have been blessed with us.

When Joshua and I first arrived in Kenya, I prayed almost daily for God to grant me love for this people among whom He had placed us. Everything was so overwhelmingly new and different that it was difficult to feel anything but the strangeness. I longed to have the feeling of love, not just the decision to love. God is answering that prayer. God has granted me three women with whom I am friends, truly friends! We don't totally understand each others' words, but I feel joy every time I see them.

Recently, as I was sitting in church listening to a sermon spoken at a Chicago-style pace, my southern ears caught only a word now and then. Though I strained to catch words with my ears, even more, I strained to listen with my heart. What I heard were people crying out to God. Many women came forward after the sermon and others around me were weeping as everyone lifted their voices to God in a great outpouring of need and longing. As I watched the strong Christian men and women praying earnestly over these women who had gone forward, saw the tears of the women in front of me and heard the voices of the Christian community, I realized that I do love these people very much. God is indeed answering our prayers.

That Sunday I joined my loved ones here in crying out to God and my heart cried out to be part of God's answer to their prayers. Lately there has been so much confusion and upheaval around us, and yet God, Himself, has been our Rock and our Fortress. He has given us a certainty that this is where we are to be and when we are to be and who we are to be among. God has blessed us with a love and an ache for these our friends and neighbors. God has blessed us with our children's' peace and joy in being here. God has blessed us with Alitzah's new desire to learn the Maa language. (We have not pushed the girls to learn the language but have encouraged them while allowing them to choose when they are ready.)

God has been a strong and true foundation. We are secure, and yet the storms rage around us.

Even as we have begun our ministry by learning more about the needs of the churches and discussing ideas to meet those needs with the Maasai church leaders, we have found the raging storms to be distracting. We have needed to continually refocus our attention on the ministry God has given us.

There are many little distractions, such as writing this letter with a flyswatter beside me so I can shoo flies off my daughter. However, Joshua and I are feeling three main attacks of the Enemy.

The first area of strong attack is in our financial support. We came to Kenya on a short-term budget. Our support has increased some lately, but our 2008 budget is substantially larger. We have found it hard to balance the time needed for our ministry and life here with our need to raise support. There is the extra challenge of trying to communicate with churches and individuals from this side of the ocean. As we have thought and prayed about it, we have realized that we must give this concern to God and allow God to provide in His way in His time, allowing God to speak to the hearts of those He will use. God has asked us to be here now and has given us ministry to do here.

The second area of stronger attack is the political situation due to the conflict over the December presidential elections. We find ourselves wondering what will happen tomorrow, the next day, the next week or next month. [You can view regular updates about Kenya's civil unrest on CMF's website: [www.cmfi.org](http://www.cmfi.org)] We have to discipline ourselves to stay focused on the day at hand and

the work we have to do in it. God is strengthening us through this and showing us how this is the day the Lord has made. This is the day in which we are to live and work, rejoice and be glad, hope and trust, and most of all love. I tend to look at the past and the future as much or more than 'today', so this has been a time of great spiritual exercise and discipline for me. Additionally, the trip to Kenya that Joshua's parents had planned had to be canceled. We and our children have been greatly discouraged by this.

The third area of great attack is in the lack of communication access. This has been a particular struggle for Joshua. We rarely have a phone or internet signal and we only have access to whatever news our Maasai neighbors relay to us. It has been very difficult for him not to be extremely frustrated when we have long intervals without phone service or when a walking tour of all the "phone booths" finds nothing. (Specific areas scattered throughout the community have a signal more often than others.)

We are sharing this with you, our supporter and partner, because we have a request for you. Would you join us in a day of prayer and listening on Friday, March 7th? During the prayer-service I mentioned above, I heard a new song. It proclaimed, "Tell Jesus, Tell Jesus, Tell Jesus, because He is able." As we lift up these concerns to God and listen to what God has to say to us, we ask that you, also, lift them up and ask God whether He has anything to say to you. "Tell Jesus, Tell Jesus, Tell Jesus, because He is able." We are not able, but God is, and the most amazing thing of all is that God is able through us. We know that God is able in and through us, and that is why we pray.

Thank you for your out-pouring of prayers on behalf of us and of your Kenyan brothers and sisters. And thank you for joining with us on March 7th for a mighty shout of prayer. May God open doors no one can shut. May God grant us the peace that no attack can shake.

God has promised to bring the work within us, within the Maasai and within you to completion. What a God we serve!

In Christ,  
Ruth, for the Barrons