

A U G U S T 2 0 1 3

the FLOREEN *family*

STRENGTHENING THE CHURCH IN MALAWI, AFRICA



✕ The Big Picture ✕

Our sending church, Grace Community, asks all their missionaries to send in a report every quarter. It is a simple way to keep them up-to-date on any changes we're experiencing on the other side of the world. In this newsletter, we've decided to send you a modified version of our latest report. We hope that after you've read it, you'll feel like you're "all caught up."

FAMILY

How is your family?

Fine thanks, how's yours? (In Malawi, conversations often start this way...)

Are there any health concerns?

No serious concerns, just allergies from excessive smoke in the air. People always make fires to cook food, but this time of year, they also make fires to keep warm, clear the maize fields, and drive out mice to eat.

How are your current living conditions?

Good. We are in the midst of replastering and repainting many parts of our house - first time in 4 years, so we can't complain!



Abi turns 3 this month...

Country

Are there any political changes within the country that may affect you or your ministry?

Thankfully, things are pretty peaceful these days.

Are there any changes in the economy that may affect you or your ministry?

The local currency has started to devalue again. Also, a very bad maize harvest this year is leading many to believe there will be some degree of famine this year. If so, the hunger will be felt most in the months leading up to the harvest next April.



Ministry

What is your primary ministry involvement?

Matt is the Associate Pastor at International Bible Fellowship Church. Rachel is a stay-at-home-mom who oversees nursery, teaches a Bible study, does counseling, et. al. Abigail likes to play "church" with her friends and stuffed animals.

How often do you preach or teach?

Matt has been preaching about once a month while Brian Biedebach, our regular preaching pastor, was on furlough. Before that, Matt taught a Sunday morning Bible study, the Tuesday night youth group, and occasionally something else. Rachel teaches the Women's Bible study. That may change a bit in the coming months.

Please describe your accountability among the leaders of your church.
The church elders usually meet every other week for accountability and to discuss church matters. We've been on hiatus for a couple months while the other elders have been out of the country, but will resume soon.



Plans/Goals

What are your short-term plans?

Continuing with discipleship, establishing new elders and deacons over the next few months, and continuing to look for church property.



What are your long-term plans?

Better integrating permanent residents in ministry roles, especially teaching.

Do you have plans for further education or training? When?

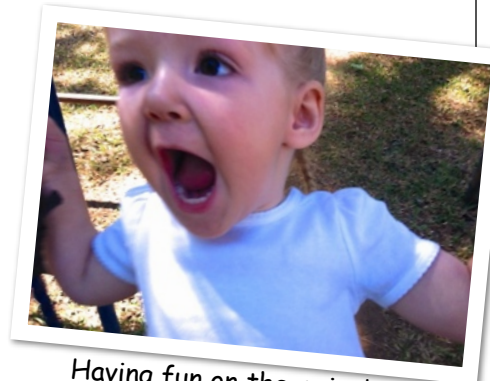
Matt is slowly working on his Masters in Biblical Counseling, and hopes to finish in 2014.



Furlough

Have you made plans for your next furlough? If so, when, where, and what are you planning?

Tentatively: a 3 month furlough in June-August of 2014 to coincide with Matt's MABC classes and the next GMI conference. We'd most likely stay in California for the whole time.



Having fun on the swing!

Vacation/Holidays



Have you taken a vacation recently? When? Where?

We've spent an occasional night away over the last few months, but are overdue for a real vacation. Now that the Biedebacks are back, we plan to spend 4 days on safari in Zambia next week.



Any memorable experiences you would like to share?

We've recently discovered a sailing club about 40 minutes away. We can go canoeing (when the hippo isn't around), or rent a sailboat for about \$1.50/hour. It's a nice place to take other families from the church too!

Prayer and Praise

May we join you in a specific prayer or praise? Individuals? Ministries?

- Praise the Lord for the safe return of the Biedeback family! They arrived on Friday, July 26th after their 7 month furlough, and we're excited to have them back! And Matt's excited to go back to his "normal" job (if you can call it "normal"). =)
- Pray for Rachel as she enters the "uncomfortable" stage of pregnancy. Lord willing, we plan to deliver in Malawi in the beginning of November.
- Praise God for providing us with a more reliable vehicle! (We'll be posting on the blog about this soon.)
- Pray for our church during these months of major transition. We have said goodbye to many dear families who have moved to new jobs in different cities and countries, and the church is feeling their loss. Please pray that others in the church would step into roles of leadership and teaching to fill the gaps as these families leave. Pray specifically for Sunday School and Children's Church teachers, musicians, elders and deacons.

Baby Bump!



Maula Prison

•Pray for the prison ministry at Maula Prison here in Lilongwe. Charles Msukwa, a member of our church, has helped get many people involved in the prison - from preaching at our weekly church services, to helping bring maize during food shortages, to organizing school supplies for those inmates interested in completing their education. Pray for the leadership of our church as they shepherd Charles and this ministry.

•Pray for land for our church to purchase legally.

We're thankful to have a sending church who cares about these things!

We hope this has given you a better idea of what's going on in our lives. If you want to know more, you can [catch up on our blog](#) or [send us an email](#) anytime,. And while you're at it, get us "caught up" on what's going on in your life!

Thank you for your friendship, prayers, and support! Matt, Rachel, and Abigail