

To our dear friends, supporters and family:

I considered starting this letter with an apology about how long it has been since I have written, but then changed my mind because no one wants to hear that. So I shall get on with the letter. 😊

Mozambique is starting that crucial change in seasons where dry, dusty, ground starts getting some rain and transforming from a scene out of Mordor (from Lord of the Rings) to a land welling up with greenery and life. This of course means that I will be pulling out my lawn mower soon and trading in my sand garden for a beautiful lawn. I do love rainy season.

The coming of the rains also has other repercussions on daily life here at our home in Montepuez. For one, our kids find many new creative ways to play in/with the puddle/lake that forms during rains in the middle of our yard. The rains do bring life and greenery everywhere, but it also means many of our friends and people in our community live with the realities of the grass roof over their heads. This usually means that on rainy nights they will not sleep much because of their leaky roof and in the storms they may lose patches of their roof due to the strong winds. Many times, though, people will put more grass on their roof or simply buy black plastic and patch it up a bit.



Luke (the penguin), Andrew (the conductor) and Joshua (Elmo) pose to show off their costumes this year.

As we round the corner into the American holiday season we also start getting a little nostalgic and look a little longer at the family pictures on our walls as we start considering playing Christmas music before Thanksgiving. There are few reminders here in Montepuez that the holidays are around the corner. For one, the heat gets turned up and the guys all try to go around in shorts as much as we can (Martha still has to wear skirts). Second, for some reason, no one else knows about Thanksgiving here. I guess the pilgrims didn't stop here on the way to the new land across the sea. What do we do for thanksgiving? Well it might look similar to what you will be doing. Our team and other missionaries in the area will gather at our house for a great potluck meal, including turkey and many other goodies from these marvelous ladies that have learned to cook everything from scratch like grandma. Afterwards we will try to avoid the heat and probably set up as many sports and games for the kids that involve water in some way. As for football we will have to simply check the scores later online and imagine we saw those games too. (If anyone wants to record football games and send them to us on DVD we would consider you a great supporter of this mission effort 😊).

Our family has settled into our routines since we returned from our trip in the USA. Martha continues to teach Luke, Andrew and Abby Howell four days a week. Joshua joins in some and Micah gets to play and

sleep in the mornings. I have been wearing several hats these days. We are currently building some places for meetings and we are also gearing up to build a small house and school room for teachers that will be coming from the States to help teach our children. With my other hat I have been working with several churches on evangelism and choosing new places to share the gospel. The church at Upajo is trying to start a new church in Nikanda where they had some contacts. The believers at Mookoni are going to start meeting in their own village instead of walking 8kms to another church. This group has already targeted another village for evangelism called Nojika. We would love your prayers as these new believers start sowing the seed of the gospel in new areas.



A small pavilion we are building to host the many meetings and seminars we have around Montepuez.

As in most ministry situations there is a great ebb and flow of highs and lows. While we might be excited about some new preaching points we are saddened that another church is losing members and about to stop meeting. A particular low for us recently has been the leadership of the resident Mozambican missionary. In recent months he has been very divisive and controlling. In our provincial conference a week ago, where all churches were represented, a letter was read aloud to the group asking this man to leave and go home to his own province. For a people who are not direct in confrontation at all- this was a bombshell and we ask you to pray that this man either leave or reconcile with all parties that he has wronged.

On a lighter note, our family was able to go visit my (Jeremy's) parents (Bruce and Beth Smith) in Malawi



for a week. Of course because of the roads and distance, four of those days were spent on the road leaving us with four days of relaxation with the folks. This was a neat time for our boys to bond with their grandparents in their new surroundings. Mom and dad loved holding baby Micah and playing Mastermind with Luke and Andrew. Joshua wowed them with sayings like "Muito Bem, Muito Bom, Alleluia, Amen!!!" He can say much more but when he gets excited and wants to show off, this is HIS line.

Our trip also took us right through Lichinga where Kyle and Ginger Holton work among the Yao people. We stayed with them on the way there and back and enjoyed catching up and letting our kids go wild on their farm. The only downside to the trip was the constant overheating of our car pulling the loaded down trailer across the many mountains of Malawi and Lichinga. I guess our car is turning seven this year and in Mozambique cars have the same life span as dogs. So in America, where cars live out normal life spans, our car



would be what... 45 years old? Something like that 😊. So, I guess we can expect these sorts of aches and pains out of our vehicle once in a while. Boy, they age quickly here!

As we close out this little update we want to say thank you for the many ways you lift us up. We continue to ask you to pray for us and for our health as we work here. Malaria season is upon us with the rains. Pray also for the churches to follow into the Jesus way of living and transformation. Pray for our team as we interact with leaders and make plans together for the coming year.

May your day today be blessed. May your ears be filled with great holiday music. And may your bellies be prepped for the coming onslaught of great eating. May your families find a way to see each other during the holiday months!

Gods blessings to you from Montepuez, Mozambique!

Jeremy, Martha, Luke, Andrew, Joshua and Micah Smith