

Dirks Update, July 2013

Good afternoon Liz,

I am so sorry that I have not given an update since we have come to Botswana. It does not mean I did not think about the lovely ladies of Mennonite Women Canada, I just haven't mastered the magical brain powers of thinking it onto an email.

Nathan and I both cannot believe that it has been 6 months since we left Canada for our new home of Botswana. We have been busy and it has taken a lot of time to adjust and get into the flow (the slow flow) of Botswana. Also there are so many possibilities and relationships that we are slowly sorting through and are excited about.

We lived in the village for the first month and we are happy to say they quickly became our family that we still visit and connect with. Their daughter lived with us for a month in February as she was doing her practicals for nursing.

The wonderful house that we are able to live in during our time here was in rough shape and it took blood, sweat and tears to fix it up. We love it and it really helped us feel like this was our home. You have to love those hidden blessings.

We had Nathan's parents come for a visit and it was a very busy few weeks as they took us to meet all their relationships that they created and in some cases still maintain. It was wonderful to see, and an inspiration to see what this connection means to all sides. God is wonderful and uses so many people to reveal God's Kingdom.

We have had roadblocks and the threat of being kicked out of the country was very real -- with the rejection of our Resident Permits and us being illegals in Botswana for 2 months. The government certainly gave us a hard time and there was a lot of paper work and stress to get through. However, I am happy to report that God is great and we have been approved to stay. We received the unofficial word May 16 or 17 that it was seen and approved.

There were some very awesome things to come out of this stressful time. It allowed Nathan and me to focus on God, to actually live by faith which we often believe; we have never had it tested in this way before. We are very thankful.

Another awesome thing is seeing the AIC (African Independent Churches),

the 2 churches that we are most connected with, band together and support us and pray for us and really owning the situation and working whatever angle they could. It was wonderful and it has brought us even closer to them. We are very, very blessed.

We are working with Spiritual Healing Church as well as with St. Michael's Church. We are working with the youth in both. Currently we are having meetings with their youth leaders, including female leaders, and having received word of our resident permits, we are able to go ahead with our plans.

For the female leaders we are going to start meeting together from both churches at least once a week and build a relationship together to understand and grow together in Jesus. We have had meetings and the women are on board with creating a soccer team together where we can get together do something physical on top of our times together to talk. The hope being that this group of women will be able to mentor younger girls through sport and create trusting relationships to speak into their lives to empower them against HIV/AIDS, alcohol, drugs and the pressures they face everyday.

A lot of cool possibilities are here but I will save that for other updates, which will be more regular as to avoid these long ones.

I hope everything is well with you and the women of Mennonite Women Canada.

Please let me know what I can do to be of use, or anything that you would like to see or hear about from Botswana.

Thank you so much for your support  
God Bless  
Taryn Dirks