

We have been in Burkina Faso for just over a year now (yep time flies). This newsletter is our way of celebrating the anniversary with you. We have been serving the Lord and his calling and although we have been worked on and in through and through, shaken and stirred we can see the Lords provision and blessings day by day and a growing tendency to depend on Him.

Time for a quick... overview of the last few months :



We moved house last May, leaving behind our “blue house” surrounded by donkeys and mosques, we are now living on the mission station, in what is possibly the oldest house in the whole town of Fada. It was made from the traditional mud brick back in the 40's by the first SIM missionaries to arrive. We have had to do a little work on the place, replacing ceilings eaten by termites and threatening to cave in under the weight of bat dung! The place is now quite livable and big enough for a bedroom each and a large lounge for youth meetings and other events. We are very happy with the new house, surrounded by trees, but sometimes regret our old neighborhood.

June saw the end of school year for all our youth and the opening of the “concours de la fonction public”. Many will sit these exams and few will be chosen. After the exams the young folk quickly departed for their respective villages or working in their family businesses. The rainy season had well begun and most people were out in the fields ploughing and planting. Church activities and attendance was down to “the remaining few”. We promised to start the youth group up “à la rentrée”!



July saw us reviewing the year of work and planing for September : Review included coming to terms with a year that had been hard in many respects, climate, culture and disappointment



with the local Christian organizations essentially. But also praising God for his blessings and for the people we have seen come to know Jesus and grow in Jesus: Maémouna, Souleymann and some members of the youth group amongst others. Planning included projecting possibly two youth groups one for the church one for the un-churched, bible school teaching, practical skills discipling (hydro & electrical), HIV-AIDS counseling and Anaëlle's schooling. July was also our turn to catch Malaria and fight it off with the appropriate drugs, but this obviously slowed us down for a while. Malaria is still a big problem here for those who can't access the proper medication in time.



August came and went. This was our “get away and recuperate” as a family time. We managed two weeks in Ghana. A long, 2 day, drive down to the Atlantic was rewarded by palm trees and a “clean” beach. We spent time relaxing, visiting and meeting Christians from the local Anglican and methodist churches. We marveled at shop names and Car signs : “Trust in the Lord – Beauty Salon”, “Gods Grace Corner Shop”, “The Lord leads me on” ... Ghana is culturally very Christian but after several conversations we were a little saddened to see that faith was often rather superficial. Some however proved to be on fire for the Lord, so to speak. Does anyone sense a

call to go to Ghana? They speak English and also have Cadbury chocolate there... We returned to Burkina encouraged and relaxed.

September and back to work. I guess that sounds familiar to most! It was coming to the end of rainy season. Mangoes have gone and the invasion of toads has started. They seem to be everywhere, in the back of most cupboards and often in shoes, dozens along most outside walls and a metropolis in the marshy area towards the barrage. We will try and cook up some toads legs in garlic soon to compare with the “Rainette”, after all we did move out from France.

Mark started teaching at the Niendouga Bible school almost immediately. He is serving up a New Testament Survey Class [Galatians through Thessalonians] every Tuesday and Thursday morning, a 10 km moped trip from home. His 15 students are just about proficient in French. This has put Mark right back into his Bible. Just a thought : If you are having trouble reading the bible start a local bible study group!



Mark is overseeing a young German short-termer who is in Fada doing sports ministry. He is also standing in as station manager with Marcus (a swiss missionary) when things crop up. There are also numerous DIY, GMTDI (GetMarkToDolt) jobs and repairs to tackle.

The preparation for the church youth group is also going forward, as is the ground work for the un-churched Alpha group. (Thank-you Saint Marcs' for the materials) Both groups should start off in October just after classes start at school. Carine will be helping with these too.

Carine is looking forward to HIV-AIDS counseling to start soon, African time. She took a training session with the local “Direction Départementale de la Santé Publique”. She is also administrating the Fada Guest House as the Ottoson family, who usually do this & station management, will be off for September and most of October. Carine has been working hard practicing inventive cooking [One thousand ways to cook rice tomatoes and courgettes that never taste the same], regularly accompanying a young girl for optical treatment in Ouagadougou and managing the house worker, Potaaga.



Anaëlle loves school and is working hard. After school she transmutes into a bilingual bookworm, computer wizz or rowdy, giggly 8 yr old. Her interests are Famous 5, Art, Tree climbing/den making and teasing Joshua. She is also helpful around the house and quite capable. Hélène a young French girl from Alsace arrived to take on Anaëlle's home schooling. She is very sweet and a real blessing. Hélène is also getting into teaching Sunday school and helping out at the local Christian primary school.

Joshua is now two [5th September] and everywhere : climbing, running, shouting, smiling and never lacking energy. He knows how to spur on a donkey, chase a chicken, stomp a spider and cuddle his Mum. He also enjoys hijacking his sisters "things" and running circles around the table. Never a dull moment!

Both Carine and Mark have lost a grand-parent since we have been in Africa. For Carine it was Vital Anselme last May and for Mark, Mary Lewis at the beginning of the month. We were/ are both a little upset to be away from the greater family at times like these.



Gilbert & Martine, Carine's parents, will be visiting in November. John & Wendy, Mark's parents, may be in Burkina sometime after that. Family times to look forward too.

Two year term: Yes we are now into our second year. We have a real sense of purpose in Burkina as this school year starts and can foresee being quite worn out by the end of it as we do have a lot on.

We value your prayers for any of the above news, but also for health and protection. May the Lord use us as we are here serving him. May His church grow in Burkina and through-out the world!

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