

Brian and Jackie Chilvers

Christ is risen, He is risen indeed!

April 2022



www.bmsworldmission.org/bjchilvers

At the time of writing this we have just celebrated Easter and are preparing to leave Chad for the UK in just two days. We have a very full home assignment schedule and are looking forward to meeting lots of you who regularly pray for us and support us, but we haven't yet met in person. Of course, we are also excited about seeing our families and friends. At the same time, it's hard to leave some of the projects we are involved in, though we know everything is in good hands, and we will miss colleagues and new friends here.

Whilst continuing to support his colleagues in Urgences (Emergency department), Brian has been involved in setting up a vision testing clinic. The hospital was lucky enough to receive a supply of glasses and vision testing equipment from a charity, and Brian has trained one of the Chadian nurses to perform vision tests. The system used is accessible for anyone, even those who cannot read. There is a small contribution towards the cost of the glasses which will mean we can replace those given out. However, the cost is far lower than could be found at the limited services in town. The first clinic was for the hospital staff, many of whom required glasses which they now wear to work! This week the clinic goes 'live', it is likely that word will travel fast as many people have told us they would like to have an eye test.



Easter was unusual for us this year – Good Friday was a normal working day, and we decided not to attend the international service in the evening in town due to the heavy traffic which is usual during this period of Ramadan. Instead we organised our own Maundy Thursday Family Communion Service for our Guinebor 2 family on the compound – this was a good opportunity for fellowship together, and a find bit of space from the business of the day to think about Christ's betrayal and his death on the cross. It was also wonderful to be reminded that Jesus gave the command to his disciples 'Do this in remembrance of me' – and they really did, and that continues, even today as we still remember Jesus by taking the same simple supper today.

Easter Sunday we attended our Chadian Church, which turned out to be mainly a children's service! It had been a tough few days especially for Jackie with a severely malnourished baby dying over the weekend. In these situations it is hard not to feel helpless or hopeless sometimes. So our hearts were really touched to hear the children and young people singing and reciting bible verses – it was marvellous to see that these children are hearing about a hope in Christ and to see that some have already found this.



Jackie and her colleague Mel have been planning a response to a large need identified in our health needs assessment – malaria was the biggest concern identified by the community around Guinebor 2 hospital, and our admissions and attendances certainly reflect that need. We organised small 'focus groups' to understand the worries more. One thing we did not particularly expect to find was such a lack of hope, with people saying malaria is left to Allah's will. Subsequently we met with a district medical officer to talk about the programme that will be put in place in Chad, and we are planning to use a theatre group to visit the villages and give the messages about the things that are likely to be offered by the government programme, how to recognise potential malaria, and how to get a diagnostic test. The organisational side of things on the performance days will be done by a Chadian national, its challenging to not be there, but also really positive that we don't need to be there in person for things to happen!

One day we were with some national Christians. Jackie noticed a lady who had been sitting on a mat was now laying on the floor, seeming very distressed and uncomfortable. The lady was moved somewhere more private, and we accompanied some other people to support her because we were in 'nurse mode' and we were worried that she was ill and wondered if we could help. It quickly became apparent that there was no physical disorder. The lady did not present with any behaviours that we have seen before in mental or emotional health contexts. The only explanation was that

this was a spiritual problem. With the others we sang loudly and prayed fervently that the lady would be filled only with the peace and love of Christ. At times it seemed to pass, only to start again, but with continued prayers eventually the lady became calm. We left feeling a bit overwhelmed, because this was was unexpectedly outside our nursing comfort zone, but afterwards a Chadian said how encouraged he was that we had been giving some support, as some people don't realise that prayers in the moment like that can really work. We were later told that there was a history of witchcraft in earlier generations of the family, which further reinforced that we had witnessed a real spiritual battle – which the Chadians were more easily able to recognise and understand what was happening than us, who so often tend to find a reason or solution which makes more 'sense'.

In our last newsletter we talked about a lady who was unwell and we supported by bringing her to Guinebor 2 hospital. We are thankful that she is now much recovered and doing well.

Please pray a for safe and smooth journey to the UK, and later on the roads when we are travelling to the many diferent churches and places that are planned.

Please pray the projects we are leaving here continue well until we return.

Thank you for your continued prayers and support, we hope to see as many of you as possible over the coming weeks!

If you would like to support Brian and Jackie Chilvers by prayer and committed regular giving, visit bmsworldmission.org/partners or call 01235 517617 for a 24:7 Partners leaflet.



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