

Brian and Jackie Chilvers

There and Back Again...

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www.bmsworldmission.org/bjchilvers

We almost used this (Hobbit-related) title for our last newsletter when returning to the UK but though it was how we felt, knew it was really a bit negative! So we are very pleased to be able to use it to say that we are indeed back again – back in Chad, having arrived in the early hours of Sunday morning (yesterday), along with our colleague Claire.

It was difficult and disappointing to have had to return to the UK just a few weeks after we arrived, but we were able to benefit from the time in unexpected ways – Brian was able to undertake a well-recognised course in Tropical Disease Nursing, so he spent a very intensive few weeks in Liverpool, and feels he has a much better understanding of health needs and challenges for people living in Chad and how to approach them in a more contextualised manner. Meanwhile Jackie spent a little more time with family, keeping up with some things she had started at Guinebor and really benefited from a 'Velvet Ashes' online seminar about transition (we've had a lot of that!). Also we both received our second dose of Covid vaccine, exactly in the right time frame, just as we finished our quarantine.

We also enjoyed getting to know BMS colleagues Mark and Andrea Hotchkin who spent many years at Guinebor and were able to benefit from all their experience, discussing everything from tropical disease to shopping in the market and surviving the hot season. (Mark and Andrea arrived back in Chad just a few days ahead of us, and are preparing for their return to Bardai, northern Chad where they work with a government hospital.)

We received so many lovely messages, encouragements, gifts and assurances of your prayers when we arrived back. It definitely helped sustain us in the times we felt a bit bewildered or despondent and we were really grateful.

We were also grateful to the team at BMS and Guinebor colleagues who continued to work hard on assessing the situation, planning for our safe return, and sorting out so many practicalities, often at short notice.

Due to travel regulations and the need to obtain new visas we spent just over two weeks in France before our return to Chad. We were able to stay at the Les Cèdres school which turned out to be such a blessing. Having left so suddenly in December, under such sad circumstances we felt blessed to be able to see many of the residents, students and staff we knew before, as well as some new ones. We were able to be present at the end of term service, which marked the leaving of some of our old classmates.

We were able to get out and about and also visited our French church at Gif-Sur-Yvette, where we received a warm welcome and enjoyed spending time with BMS colleagues & friends Christine, Rosemary and Philip.



So, despite all the setbacks, and initial upset, worry and disappointment we can see that God has continued to bless us with experiences and situations that will help strengthen us as we now re-set and begin to learn about life and work in Chad.

Whilst we are so happy to be back, the constant transitions we have made are not easy, so we would ask you to pray for us as we adapt to life and work here.

Two families who also were evacuated to the UK are now on home assignment and we pray that this goes well for them and that their return to Chad would be smooth with less travel restrictions.

One thing that our experience to date has reminded us of is that we cannot and are not doing this alone or in our own strength. Each day we must look to the 'Lord, the maker of heaven and earth' for our help and remember that he will 'continue to watch over our coming and going' (Psalm 121).

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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