

January 2014

Dear Friends,

Greetings from an ever turbulent Egypt! Scenes like those below have become a weekly occurrence; the car burning happening at the end of our road when a car tried to drive through a 'peaceful' protest which was blocking his way. The brotherhood continue to resist the interim government, insisting on calling the summer revolution a 'coup', and it seems they are fast trying to bring about destruction and chaos as their means to topple them. On the other hand the government's hard crack down on the brotherhood and their labeling them as 'terrorists' is only serving to inflame tempers and escalate the violence. All of this is a disaster for a country still trying to build up its failing economy and attract tourism as a means of doing this. We try to carry on our lives as normally as possible, but need vigilance and wisdom. Today I'm recovering from a bag snatching incident which has left me with some nasty cuts and bruises, but thankfully without any major harm. Please continue to pray for Egypt and the Middle East, for peace and for God to reveal his truth to the people here.



For us, we've set this month to pray about our future, but are almost sure that we'll be heading back to the UK in the summer for a few years. This is rather scary after nearly 25 years in Egypt and will take a huge amount of adjustment. We've been looking at a house in Barry which is only 10 mins drive from my mum's OAP home and also has a special needs school 10 mins walk away. I may come back for a short visit over Easter if we're able to secure this home. That would be a big help in trying to enroll the kids in the local schools too. Never having bought a home in the UK or applied for a mortgage, I feel a bit lost so if anyone has any advice to offer it would be very welcome.

In the mean time we're all having a rather exciting year. Hany continues to travel back and fore, being busy with his work in Upper Egypt. Thankfully the trains are back working after a 6 month strike so he can travel a little more comfortably now. We are also thankful that his town has seen no troubles in the past months and the hospital has been able to continue to function as normal.

Our school has seen a change in management which hasn't been easy in some ways, but we're all adjusting and getting on with the many challenges that teachers face daily. I was grateful for the purchase of an assessment pack which has enabled me to do full assessments on our kids with SEN and I'm in the process of writing up extensive reports and recommendations for each of them. There's the possibility of a wonderful UK teacher taking over my job next year which would be great. I still enjoy having Thursdays off which gives me some down time, but I'm also helping edit some educational papers a Dutch friend has been writing for local schools.

Sara is working well as Suzy's teaching assistant. She's also doing some babysitting and maths tutoring which is giving her great experience as well as an income which will help with university fees. She's still planning on doing a maths degree with the OU next year in the UK and is getting both excited and nervous about that.

Suzy has finally got into a nice routine at school and has read her first book. She hates getting up in the mornings and causes me a lot of stress getting her dressed and out of the house, but once at school enjoys herself and her learning experience. Her favourite thing at school is the playground swing.

David is having a very full and challenging year working as the assistant for the music pastor. He's got to do all kinds of interesting things like setting up for Nelson Mandela's memorial service which was held at our church. He even had his photo taken with Gamel Abd El Nasser's son. (1st president of Egypt). He and Sara are leading some new youth life groups which seem to be going well.

Sara, David and I enjoyed taking part in our big Christmas pageant event this year. Sara played Mary, I was in the choir and David was a donkey seller, selling a donkey to Joseph to get to Bethlehem. Everyone said he was the highlight of the show. I'm not so sure of that, as he even tried to rip Joseph off!



There are many here very disillusioned with their faith and looking for alternatives. We are encouraged that a young man who attended our life group xmas party was so touched by what he saw from the group that he is now seeking God in a different way. He works as a driver for a life group member who was active in seeking the release of Ugandan girl, also in our group who had been imprisoned for a theft she did not commit. He was amazed to see how the group was 'church' for this girl.

Continue to pray for us and for Egypt, a country and people God loves very much.

Much love, Hany & Mary, Sara, Suzy and David. xx

