



At the Well

Tim and Lisa Beckendorf, LBT missionaries in Botswana



Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

John 4:13, 14 (NIV)

Rhythms

There is drumming again in the village. It has been going on every night and into the early morning for days and days. The beat is familiar, it is steady and driving but at times almost arhythmic with the drummers playing off each other in heavy syncopation and each one emphasizing a different beat. We hear it whenever the traditional doctor is called upon to summon the ancestors for healing. A musician who doesn't know the cultural entailments might hear the beats and find beauty in its complexity. For my good friend Splash, the beat is pure evil and he doesn't want to hear it. The drums are a steady reminder of the many people who don't yet know the Great Physician.

Illness knows no season so it is not predictable when the drums will be brought out. But there are seasons that are predictable and some require some real looking to find beauty.

As you've read in previous prayer letters, the burning season is one that is predictable. The devastation is wide, the consequences are serious, the health threat is tangible. One person who used to live up by us moved away last year to South Africa and was back recently. The first comment on looking around was, "How depressing!" It truly can be depressing, but on the positive side, we see absolutely gorgeous sun rises and sun sets as it rises and descends through the smoke. The colors are deep shades of red and orange. It is really indescribable and beautiful. The blooms on the trees this year take on a delicate color as they are highlighted against the smoky gray sky, which is also stunning in beauty.

While the fires are going on, many women are out on the floodplains cutting grass for building materials. It is the hottest time of the year and the women work all day out in the sun. I am always in awe of their strength and perseverance as they carry out a seasonal chore.



Three ladies hauling bundles of cut grass to shore.

Things Come Together, Things Fall Apart

We have been planning for and eagerly anticipating the dedication of the Khwedam Bible. Splash has taken on the responsibility of planning the event and had spent a lot of time visiting each village, sitting with the chiefs and the people explaining the opportunities for their involvement and setting the date. He had written and delivered official letters of invitation to government officials and businesses. Well, due to an unforeseen situation, the person who was going to represent the government here was not able to. Consequently, the Khwe community has chosen to delay the dedication until a suitable representative can attend. We found out that the representative couldn't attend about 2 weeks before the date of the dedication, so Splash had to quickly shift gears and alert all the communities about the situation and the delay. Now we are waiting patiently for official word on a date so that we can let everyone know how to plan.

Please pray that the extra time we have before the dedication will be used well for planning and there will be good community involvement.

A Day in the Life . . .

In our lives we have a fairly steady rhythm of work that occasionally is disrupted by another beat that takes the foreground. Last week we had a good rain early in the evening while we were eating supper. I could hear something that wasn't normal through the din of the rain pounding on our metal roof (we wear earplugs in the house when it rains and use hand signals a lot). Andrew and I decided that it was a car horn, so out the door we went in rain gear and with flashlights. Sure enough, the horn on my truck was blaring and while Andrew held the flashlight, I retrieved end wrenches from the interior and disconnected the battery. Instead of doing the work I had planned, I spent the next morning hunting down and repairing the electrical fault that was responsible for the previous evening's entertainment.

Events, such as a water pipe fitting cracking apart allowing for water to spray everywhere, our water distiller pump (on which we rely for drinking water) displaying a reluctance to pump, or a mouse making its home in our solar inverter (on which we rely for electricity) and noshing on tasty wires, all give my brain an opportunity to exercise pathways that would otherwise become rusty.

The last time I worked online with the Themne translators in Sierra Leone I was having issues with our connection dropping rather regularly. It was usually for just a second or two, but it was enough that I would have to ask whomever was speaking to repeat themselves. I was becoming rather frustrated and shared that with Andrew during a break in the session for lunch. He suggested that we try relocating our Starlink on our roof just to see if our signal improved. While the translators in Sierra Leone were eating their lunch I was up on the roof trying out new locations. We finally found the spot where we had no obstructions and bolted it down there. Low and behold, I had no more dropped connections and the subsequent checking sessions were so much more enjoyable.

I am truly thankful for the ability and means to fix things and for two young men, Aaron and Andrew who are willing to help out.



Tim up on our roof adjusting the Starlink.

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Your servants in Christ,

Tim, Lisa, Aaron, and Andrew Beckendorf