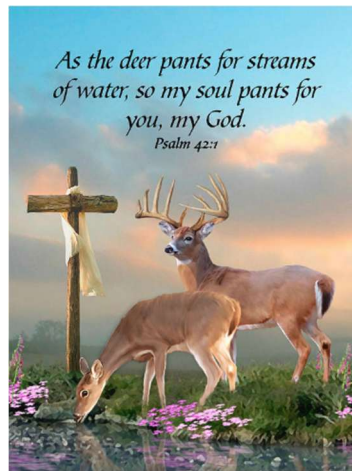


Home Assignment



Thank you everyone for taking the time to read my newsletters and the lovely, kind messages with which many of you have responded. I really appreciate each and every one of them. As I write this at the end of June it's hard to believe that I have been back in the UK for nearly four months during this season of home assignment, which has been a combination of speaking at churches, prayer groups and conferences, studies, health check-ups, time with family and friends and rest.

I think it was clear that in my last newsletter that my well-intentioned plans were to have some kind of healthy balance during this time. Not sure if that is ever possible in life, but March was not as quiet as I had maybe hoped it would be as a transition time into the deputation and study season. However, I have had some time with family and friends with a rest in between and I've really been blessed with being back in my home base here in Inverness. In addition I've had two very lovely trips to see family in my beloved Isle of Skye and I'm very thankful for that.

Deputation

I find that, not just the talks themselves, but all the travel, staying in different places and all the details such as meals and general logistics can be quite stressful. There are tiring aspects of deputation and travel but simultaneously I've been so incredibly thankful for the opportunities to share about God and mission. I'm also so thankful for all the wonderful hospitality that I have experienced, not just in this deputation season but over many, many years, and all the meals and different forms of assistance that I've been given. I'm deeply thankful to each one of you who has been involved in these aspects.

Dundee

Also as I take the time to reflect now over the last four months, I can see the Lord's hand in so many of these opportunities. I was invited to speak at St Peters Church in Dundee and stay with friends Andy and Catherine Pearson, who I have known for many, many years. I first met Catherine when she was a camper at the at one of the hill walking camps where I was a leader and it's been wonderful to continue our friendship since then. That included 10 years ago when I was living in London and studying for the Masters in Global Health, and Andy was our very gifted pastor there.





Maybe even more, especially for those who know my love of children, it was so wonderful to get to know and love their three children Colin, Ellie-Rose and Juliet. In London I would endeavour to get to church early, knowing that Catherine and Andy would be at church and therefore I could have some special time with their children. It really did help, during my year of studying to know and love children in amongst it, so it was wonderful to see them now as teenagers thriving and enjoying their time in Dundee. The

pictures are of myself with the Pearson children now and then – they've certainly grown a bit!



London – Cole Abbey/LCPC (London City Presbyterian Church)

I was also invited to speak in London at LCPC. As I mentioned, I was part of that church 10 years ago and it was wonderful to see many friends there, some of whom I knew from my first time in London, which was over 30 years ago - 1995 to 97 - when I had just returned from serving in India. God opened up an amazing, opportunity for postgraduate studies in paediatrics at Great Ormond Street Hospital and I continued to work there in the oncology and HIV units. It was wonderful to be back there again, now under the present pastor Reverend Andy Longwe. The picture is of some artwork in Great Ormond Street.



London – Global Health Conference

As part of my London trip I was privileged to attend a Global Health Conference at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital. It was an amazing opportunity to be part of a two day conference with speakers from all over the world, some of them joining online. For instance there was a British doctor working with people with leprosy in Indonesia, medical professors and speakers on topics such as global health and conflict which, as we all know is a very real and difficult and challenging area in our world today. There were also talks and discussion on Global Mental Health issues and communicable diseases with speakers on HIV and many other problem areas. It was very intense in terms of the volume of information on all the various subjects but it was wonderful and a great opportunity.

Glasgow – WfM Annual Get Together



I was also privileged to be invited to share at the WfM Annual Get Together in Glasgow. It was wonderful to see lots of familiar faces and meet some new people as well, and to have the opportunity not just to share but also to give thanks to the WfM community who have loved, cared for, supported, encouraged and prayed for me for decades now.

Small Group Meetings

I've also really enjoyed speaking at some small smaller prayer groups hosted in people's homes with a variety of numbers present, each one a blessing and a privilege. Sometimes in home settings it's

easier for people to get to know me more and be more free to ask questions, and I think that's really special and hopefully helpful as well.

Deputation - Thanks

So again my deepest and heartfelt thanks, to everyone involved in this deputation season, which has now come to a close. Thank you for all the invitations for which I was humbled and thankful. Thank you to everyone who blessed me with hospitality and meals thank you to everyone who came along to listen and participate and for every one of your encouraging words and prayers.

Pioneers UK

It was wonderful to visit the Pioneers team in Bawtry, Doncaster where I was asked to share with the team in the office, but also other team members who joined us online. It was good to reconnect with familiar faces and also meet some new team members. Meetings are ongoing and going well between Pioneers and my home church about the possibility of new opportunities for service.



Family and Friends



It was an incredible blessing in God's providence when my dear friend and sister in the Lord Rita Nkemba, the Founder of Dwelling places Ministry in Uganda, was in Inverness. We keep in touch through the blessing of technology and when she told me last year that she was going to be in the UK and in particular in Scotland, I endeavoured to plan around that I would be there. It was just such a delight and I know it was a real blessing and encouragement to her too to have various invitations and opportunities to share about the work and ministry of Dwelling Places and I would encourage you to keep supporting and

praying for that important ministry.

It was especially wonderful to have one on one time with Rita. We are blessed in our 25 year friendship to know each other's extended families as well. My mother used to call her African daughter and Rita's mother who is still alive and, God willing going to celebrate her 80th birthday in December, calls me her daughter as well. Rita and I are so different in numerous ways and yet we are blessed with this very special, unique friendship, so it was wonderful to have our time together.



And again in God's Providence I was able to have more time with her in London. I wasn't sure if I was going to have and some free time amongst various things that were planned but it was a great delight to be able to get together again. Even though Rita has been to London many times as she has two brothers and a sister who have lived in London for many years, she had not seen places like Buckingham Palace, Trafalgar Square and the Houses of Parliament. So on an overcast rainy day, Rita and I wandered round London.

It was especially a delight to take her to Great Ormond Street Hospital and to take the lift up to the top floor we used to tell the children in Uganda about. The Lion ward is the oncology ward and to be able to

meet some of the staff was very special. it was over 30 years ago since I worked there so none of the same staff are there but it was wonderful to show Rita the ward.

The LORD has taken me to the different ends of a spectrum, from working at a world renowned Centre of Excellence for paediatric Medical Care, Great Ormond Street in London and maybe caring for a little 5 year old with cancer or HIV, and then some years later to be in sub-Saharan Africa working with children on the streets, at times with HIV or cancer.



Bolivia

May I request that you also continue to pray for the country of Bolivia. Those of you who follow my newsletters know that the years that I spent there were a mixture of the challenges of political instability and the economic and fuel crises. Since the new president came in last October there has been much unrest and sadly the use of blockades is a common form of protest. As I write there have been blockades around all the major cities. So there are acute shortages of food and supplies and also of course medical care and attention.

It is a troubled country in many ways, so please pray for peace and pray that the blockades would be lifted. Pray also that there would be agreements made that will allow Bolivia to develop as a country. Pray also for my lovely friends and family in the Lord there in Bolivia, that God will protect, bless and encourage them. At the time of completing the newsletter I received an encouraging update from Bolivian friends to say that the situation has improved and the blockades have been lifted.

How am I?

This was a title that I put on a paragraph in my last newsletter and thank you for those who responded when I mentioned that it takes time for the normal to feel normal. That is a gradual process but I can certainly say that after these four months, life does feel more normal in many aspects. I feel more settled and I continue to enjoy breathing easily at sea level and speaking English and I am very thankful for all that and the sense that things are feeling more normal.

However, as I mentioned with a busy time of deputation and studies over the last few months, at times I have really felt very, very tired, in body, mind and spirit. And I have had people, speak into my life regarding that. And at some point I decided that July would be as quiet as I can make it. I will be at home and waking up in the same bed every morning, I will have a 'out of office reply' on my emails and I will check my phone only sometimes - family and friends all know that I am really endeavouring to have a very quiet July.

The Bield at Blackruthven - Retreat and Conference Centre



Also as I write this, I want to enthuse about a place where I stayed for a few days. It's a Christian Centre just outside Perth – Bield Retreat Centre: <https://www.bielfatblackruthven.org.uk>

A friend mentioned that they knew of somebody who had been there and had been blessed by a place of quietness and stillness. I looked into it and was surprised I had never heard of it before. Some of you who have followed my newsletters for many years may remember that when I came back from Africa, at, some point I went to another beautiful retreat place

called Pennhurst on the South Coast of England. That was obviously very far away but as I was planning to speak at a Mission Group other mission group in Crieff, I thought, this place seems nearby.

All I can say is that I would highly, highly, highly recommend it for anyone who wants and needs a place to rest, especially holistically, body, mind and spirit. It is quiet, has lovely rooms, and meals are all included. They have the most beautiful gardens, trees and fields and acres of just God's beautiful, natural creation. I would waken up to the most glorious bird songs, watch butterflies and be amused by little bees buzzing around. You can just have gentle quiet walks around the gardens or the grounds, or there are more walks through the woodlands and up through the fields. There are beehives and various farm animals around as well and it was a beautiful blessing to my spirit.



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Prayer

- Give thanks for wonderful provision of a place to call home here in Inverness and pray that all the necessary logistics issues would be managed
- Give thanks for time at home in Scotland to rest and catch up with family and friends
- Give thanks for the completed Deputation Meetings in various place, that they went well and those attending heard about God and Global Mission
- Pray for my home Smithton Church and Pioneers as we discuss a future assignment
- Pray for Bolivia, especially the Church, friends and ministries

Once again, thank you to all who have responded to the previous newsletters and please be assured that all your messages are very much appreciated. Also, a special thanks to all who partner in Ministry, financially and prayerfully, and for all your wonderful words of support and encouragement.

So, as I recognise I am transitioning between different seasons now after 4 months of deputation, I'm not sure when the next newsletter will come, but thank you, as always, for your kindnesses, your encouragements and your prayers.

Marsali

