



Paul, Tania and Lana Baker

Kiwoko Hospital,
Luwero Diocese, Uganda

Christmas 2017



CMSI Link Letter

Dear Friends...

Craft days

In November, Tania and Stella started a ladies craft morning as a fun time of fellowship for Kiwoko staff. They meet once a month on a Saturday morning at the Training Centre.

On the first week Stella taught a group of 20 ladies how to make beautiful necklaces, bracelets and earrings. Stella works in the Hospital's Finance office but she also has a small business making jewellery and dresses. So abundant with talent, she was the perfect person to spearhead this initiative. Tania is helping for the first few months but this will then be Stella's group to continue.

The purpose of the group is threefold. During our time at Kiwoko Tania has been given many beautiful craft supplies to use with either the HIV craft project or the Fashion School. However, a lot of these supplies are either unsustainable (we can't continually provide them) or aren't 'african' enough to be sold in the markets here. So, we wanted to find a way to use them in a 'one-off' setting that would still be of benefit to the people we work alongside.



On the jewellery making day we paired up many beads and jewellery supplies that people had donated along with locally made paper beads to create gorgeous pieces for the staff to keep for themselves or to give as gifts.

The second reason was to provide a fun gathering for the local staff at the weekend. Kiwoko is a village with very little to do outside of working hours. The hospital struggles to keep well-trained Ugandan doctors and nurses here when the excitement of big cities like Kampala beckons. Holding fun days gives the staff things to do at the weekend and makes life here that bit more enjoyable.

And thirdly, of course, it lets us get together as Christians, share our God-given talents and encourage each other in life and art.

Waiting

There seems to be a lot of talk about *waiting* in these days coming up to Christmas. It's a hot topic in the 'blogosphere' and very relevant in this impatient age of *getting everything right now*.

Uganda is a place of persistent lateness. As mostly punctual people, we will never get used to it. If a meeting is scheduled to start at 9am, there is no point in going before 10am. You will be waiting alone. Even after seven years here, we struggle with this lateness... the constant waiting.

As a family, we are in a period of waiting. Our lives will completely change in March when we leave Kiwoko. We are still busy here but we're also waiting to get on with the next step in our journey. We don't know what the future holds – will we get jobs? Will we be able to keep up with the fast pace of life back home? What state will our house be in?

I guess we're waiting to see what the future holds. To be honest, moving home is a more terrifying prospect than when we first made the move to Uganda. We knew we had somewhere to live in Kiwoko, we had financial support, lots of prayer support, a very real and obvious purpose at Kiwoko Hospital. Heading back home brings much more uncertainty.

One thing we know is that God brought us to Kiwoko. Our calling was very clear, direct and was followed by several forms of confirmation. There have been difficult times here in Kiwoko when we have had to think back to our calling to be reminded that God put us here. He brought us here and we need to believe that He has a plan for our future. He will lead us on to the next chapter even though there is so much uncertainty.

Scripture is full of periods of waiting. The Old Testament finishes with prophecies of a Messiah but it was 400 years before Christ was born. It's easy for us to flick a page from Malachi to Matthew but the people had to wait generations without a word from God. No voice, no prophet, nothing. It must have been agony.

But then, when the time was right, the 400-year wait was over. Jesus was born in a chaotic manger. God in human flesh! The Son of God had become the Son of Man. Emmanuel – God with us!

As we struggle with our own sense of silence and strain to see God at work in our lives, Christmas urges us on by reminding us that God will come through on his promises.

Thanks for praying with us throughout 2017. May you hear God's voice and experience His presence this Christmas.

Paul, Tania & Lana

Prayer Points

- ◆ Pray for Christmas in Kiwoko. We will stay in the hospital for Christmas and share time and fellowship with the staff who are also staying around.
- ◆ Pray for Emma, Lana's teacher, as she goes home for a few weeks over Christmas.
- ◆ Pray for our final few months in Uganda as we finish handing over our duties.
- ◆ Pray for Lana as she says goodbye to her friends in Kiwoko.
- ◆ Pray for us as a family that we will trust God and obey His leading.
- ◆ Pray for Kiwoko Hospital. Changes are coming almost daily and a new Hospital Director is due to arrive in January.

For more news and views from the Bakers, check out their blog on the CMSI website.
You can also support the Bakers financially via the website or by contacting the CMSI offices.

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