



In this letter

England

Two courses

Grief

Destination

Things to pray for

Please pray/thank:

1. we have had a good time in the UK;
2. Comfort;
3. that we will know our destination soon.

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Newsletter May 2014

Dear friends,

Although we have send a newsletter very recently, we have some news we would like to share with you.

England

We visited England last April. We have stayed at the farm of friends in Bridgnorth. That in itself was a great joy. We saw newborn lambs, we walked in the area, climbed trees, read books, met friends and built huts. We had a very good time on our holiday, but there was also some work to do...

Two courses

In the first week of our visit we have attended the European Based Orientation (EBO) course from [AIM](#). We have learned many practical things about working in Africa. Some of these are: personal safety, how to stay (physically and spiritually) fit, and how to cope with cultural differences. The programme was very good, but intensive. The adults started at 09:00 and finished around 21:00, the children finished an hour earlier. In between the different modules we had enough time to talk with other mission workers, and for the children to play outside in the beautiful weather. We have enjoyed the EBO very much and returned to the farm with renewed enthusiasm.

The last week of our stay in England, Jurgen, Vanya, Issa and Abbey attended a day-course at Redcliffe College in Gloucester. We learned a lot about the consequences when children grow up in several cultures and how to guide them through. The children learned what they can do to cope with the changes in their lives.

Both courses encouraged us and we feel confirmed in several steps we have already taken.

Grief

However, not all things are always the way we would like it. After a great period in England we got word that, after a long sickbed, Jurgen's brother died. He leaves a wife and two adult boys behind. We are thankful that it did not happen while we were in England, because now we have had the opportunity to grieve with the rest of the family.

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Destination

Last February we have received an option to work among the **Bara-people** from Madagascar. The Bara people are a marginalised group and they mostly live apart from other people groups. They are scattered across the grasslands of south-central Madagascar and live mainly of their cattle and their rice fields. They are predominantly animistic, which means that everything they do revolves around ancestor worship and spirits. This is oft-times accompanied with fears. The people frequently consult so called witch-doctors or medicine-men, who prosper on the fears of their 'patients'. Diseases and other misfortunes are quickly explained as being a punishment or as inflicted by an upset spirit.

Things to pray for

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We are very enthusiastic about this project but had to wait a long time before we heard something from the field-leaders. During our stay in England we found out that their main concern was about the fact that they do not have a teacher for our children in place. We have responded right away with the message that this is no problem for us since the children are home educated by Katja. We have not received an answer yet now that the personnel director is in Africa, lacking a good internet connection. Thus we are still anxiously waiting and hoping that we can tell you a bit more soon. In the meanwhile we start to get accustomed to the idea that arranging things in Africa can take a long time.

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All in all we have had an intensive time. We were blessed with all the new things we have learned and at the same time we needed to handle loss. It was also a time in which we have experienced your involvement and prayers, for which we are thankful.

Many blessings,

Jurgen, Katja, Vanya, Issa, Abbey & Dani Hofmann

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