

# CHRISTIANS IN ACTION MISSIONS INTERNATIONAL

Dear Friends & Family,

Greetings from Sierra Leone. With one of the oddest dry seasons we've seen in Sierra Leone.. we have had rain! The weather has been hot (and dry) but with spotty rains recently so the dry spell may be short-lived this year.

December and January



Christmas was odd without our children..the first time *ever*. Joseph Mansaray, Alfred's younger brother, decided to spend Christmas with us, so that made it a bit easier for us. We were also able to talk via cell phone with Kara and Kevan who were together in Indiana Christmas Day.

In January a large number of visitors arrived from the US and the UK. Jimmy Lavin rushed in and kept us all hopping with cement work and plumbing work at the school. We were *exhausted!* We started up the Hydraform Block production as well, which helps to fund Emmaus. Peter Cunnane joined us a week after Jimmy arrived and we were able to sort out some of the issues that came up since we arrived in October. It wasn't easy... some things were difficult to deal with but overall it was beneficial for everyone.



Paul Szkiler spent some one on one time with us and gave us some good advice. We in turn were able to share our concerns. What's the best advice Paul gave us? **When you are frustrated by a day's events (or person), before you go to sleep that night PRAY for that person and the situation and leave it in God's hands so that you can sleep well and wake up in a positive mood...Similar to the biblical precept of not going to bed angry.** As our first several months included some major frustrations, this was appropriate counsel.

February



The founder of ACTB, Paul, has delegated **Julian Kenny** as our direct overseer, so Julian (an accountant with Truestone) is now our 'go to' man in England. He, his wife Jennie & their oldest daughter Georgia were down for a week and stayed at our house once. They much preferred Rogberay's nightly cricket song to the non stop traffic in Freetown!

**Ben Cavaghan**, a volunteer from England, joined us. Ben is a trained finish carpenter, builder and a musician. He's been great to have around and fits in quite well with our unique personalities! The first time he took his harmonica outside the dogs howled with pleasure! Ben has been a blessing as he helped finish the tiling job we started with the trainees and has applied his skills to a variety of other work at hand...particularly anything with wood! He came out hoping that he can be an instrumental part of the building of an orphanage for children with disabilities (mentioned in our last letter). That project is still in the planning stages so for now he has the job of planning, designing and training others how to build the furniture for the school. He is also encouraging the establishment of a Sunday evening Bible Study, but the timing hasn't been quite right yet.



The "Rogberay School of Excellence" finishing work is being done, as are starting to plan landscaping. Our February, so Elmer has been filling Miriam Sesay of Educaid (google it) is has been instrumental in preparation for its opening. We've along well.



is to open this September. The some secondary projects and we are foreman has been absent since in, which keeps him extremely busy. going to be running the school and implementing the last stages of got a ways to go yet, but it's coming

We are four months into block production and have started to get into the swing of it. If the dry season is too short it will hamper our ability to make the blocks, which need dry days to cure, so we are hopeful that the season will be 'just right' and that the customers who had expressed interest in our blocks before will be responsive to 'call backs'. Emmaus is a non-profit and so all funds go back in to operate the site.



The trainees have expressed their appreciation for the way we treat them and encourage them, which has been a witness, especially as we've had to deal with an attempted theft of cement, which resulted in a two week suspension for quite a few men and the firing of one. To do the right thing *and* the culturally appropriate thing is not always an easy mix. We thank God that at this point it looks like it was handled correctly.

Elmer had the opportunity to nail home the importance of truth (as expressed in God's Word) and a chance to apply the gospel in context to four Muslims. When summarizing the situation and his hopes for the future after the case was 'cut', the Muslim Chief of Rogberay, referred to Elmer as a 'godly man'. That is the kind of witness we can only hope will lead to more times when the hope that Christ offers can be shared.

### March



Rory Campbell has now joined our team. He hails equally from Brazil and Britain and will be working with ACTB's agricultural project, which is still in the planning stages. Meanwhile he is assisting Elmer and Ben as they work on the school site. We also had Bridget Cholewa from Illinois staying with us for a bit. She's a pre-med student with a desire to see what is happening medically in Salone. She has been visiting different areas with clinics and will be spending a bit more time with us before she returns home.



Amanda Dixon and her colleague Malcolm came to work on plans for the orphanage. They stayed over one night and we had a wonderful time of prayer, which resulted in some emotional healing and a great deal of encouragement. The visit really encouraged Ben who came specifically to help with this project.



### April

We celebrated Easter at home with our volunteers. Without the commercial buildup it was a somewhat quiet event but we are eternally grateful for Christ's sacrifice and triumph! We are almost through April now and determined to get this out before the end of the week! We are starting projects related to the orphanage that we are assisting with, so our cup of work runneth over!

**Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men.**

**Col 3:23**

This is our prayer in all that we do, daily, hourly and every minute. We want to glorify the Lord, who gave us the opportunity to represent Christians from abroad who have an interest in the welfare of the Sierra Leoneans, both spiritually and materially. We want to be God's light in this community and in the lives we touch.

*What can you do to help?*

We cherish your prayers regarding **\*\*keeping quiet times for Bible study\*\*** **starting a Sunday afternoon group Bible study** **\*\*getting transportation (supposed to be here by now)** **\*\*maintaining our financial support** **\*\*relationships with our families** **\*\* doing better at Regular Communication\*\***

With gratefulness to God for all He has done and supplied,

*Elmer and Joann*

*Send support to Christians in Action, PO Box 728, Woodlake, CA 93286 Note: M387*