

PUTMAN NEWS

January 2024



Oh tidings of comfort and joy! Greetings friends, and karibu (welcome) to 2024. We had Zoe's mum visit for nearly six weeks over the Christmas break and we thank God that he kept us all well and enabled us to have some great adventures which will give us long lasting memories including a safari trip, camping and days by the pool.

Zoe's favourite Christmas event was carol singing (or 'carolling' if you're American!) at Kijabe Hospital just outside the campus gates. It was extremely humbling and a real privilege to be able to actually take a choir into private rooms and sing by people's bedsides on Christmas Eve. We saw lots of poorly people, but also a brand new baby born that day! God is very present, and music is a powerful means by which heaven can touch earth for moments in time.



On the subject of music, Titchie Swot is putting on a musical and Zoe is helping audition and cast for it right now, along with three other staff members. The title of the show is 'O Chicken of Little Faith' and features a girl (Faith) who meets life size chickens in a dream where all of her fears are exaggerated and she has to call on the word of God for peace and comfort! The 5th and 6th graders are very excited to start rehearsing! Zoe has also joined a short-term choir (10 weeks until performance of Hallelujah Chorus) made up of RVA staff, local hospital staff, students and staff from Moffatt Bible College and AIC church members. It's a great opportunity to meet locals serving God in different ways and make new friends! They rehearse Saturday mornings 8-9am.

Our inside worker, Cecilia continued to work in our home over the break which allowed us more time to spend getting to know her. She is a gift from God to us, and we had another humbling and privileged experience in visiting her in her own home up the hill in Kijabe. It was very special to be served a wonderful Kikuyu meal and get to meet her daughter, Josephine, and Josephine's daughter, Anna (9). Josephine shared how our family are an answer to prayer for them and how they have had a very difficult few years. She shared a bible verse and prayed extensively for us. God blesses us in ways we could not dream of, and this was one of them. It was a real 'pinch yourself' moment. We also attended a service to watch Anna graduate from Sunday school to Star Cadets where they recited lengthy bible verses by heart and sang songs about the Christian life. (pic)



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Psalm 139 v 3-6 (New Living Translation) You see me when I travel, and when I rest at home, you know everything I say, even before I say it, Lord. You go before me and you follow me, you place your hand of blessing on my head. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too great for me to understand!



Term two is whizzing by, and we are working at full speed keeping up with all the activities here at RVA. Zoe's most recent Kindergartener has settled well and the children are enjoying a new mud kitchen that Zoe designed and had made by a local carpenter here in Kijabe.

John is coaching U15 girls football this term which takes place for 90 minutes each day after school. It is a big time commitment and a sharp learning curve but a fantastic opportunity to build strong relationships and model how to be a Christian in a sports team. He has been leading short devotionals for the squad from the book of Philippians about being humble, wanting to be your best but wanting even better for your team mates, serving one another and rejoicing in all circumstances. We currently only have 3 fixtures and one tournament so we're trying to find some more matches.

John has also been assisting with the UCAS university application process for students hoping to return to or study in the UK. Next year he will be taking the lead on this so it has been really useful to spend time this year shadowing the current UK education co-ordinator.

We continue to be gifted many opportunities regularly to support and encourage students here in their life and faith, including giving chapel talks (assemblies) which we will both do in early February, helping with homework during dorm cover, and mentoring young worship leaders. At the start of January we invited anyone interested in being part of the worship teams to come along to a workshop where we talked about what worship leading is, and had a go at doing some songs together. Since then more than 30 people have been placed into teams to lead morning chapels, weekend events and Sunday morning services. It's a great privilege to walk alongside these children as they grow and develop in so many ways. This year's theme at RVA is discipleship and God is certainly honouring that.



How can you pray?

Praise Him for continued good health, fruitful ministry and for our daughters settling well.

Please continue to pray for our friends and family in the UK. It is hard not seeing them and we're sure they feel it too.

Pray for the Hallelujah Chorus choir – a fantastic opportunity for bringing the whole community together, building friendships with people outside the RVA fence, and presenting the gospel at three performances in March.

Please pray for Cecelia, Josephine and Anna – particularly for Josephine to find a job in her chosen profession of social work, which she has not been able to do since her previous employer folded during the Covid pandemic.

Please pray for the U15 girls football team to gel, give their all, and to be Christlike football players and team members.

Please pray for the young musicians at RVA to continue developing in their musical skill as well as maturing in their faith and learning how to use their gifts to serve and lead others in worship.

Please pray for the 7 students who have applied to UK universities – for peace through the offers/interview process and wisdom about the future.

Pray for those students we are mentoring and spending time with during dorm cover. Many of the students at RVA are missionary kids or third-culture kids – this means that whilst they are often very good at the initial interaction and the beginning stages of a relationship they sometimes hold back from forming deep relationships because they have become used to people leaving them behind or having to moving on themselves. Pray that we would be a blessing to them and they would know we're here to help and serve them.