

Dear Friends and family,

It's a gorgeous balmy evening here in Maintirano. As I write, I can hear a child crying, a dad breaking sticks for the evening fire, a motorcycle going by and the hum of the fan. We are grateful to be here. Many of our missionary friends are stuck in one place or the other desiring to be ministering in the country to which God called them. We are here (!) and trying to take advantage of the opportunities for ministry while we have relatively loose restrictions as far as Covid goes.

Here are some of them:

Our first Christmas and New Year's program in the new building will be remembered as one of the best yet. There were many first-time guests, some of whom we have seen returning to church week after week. One of our teen boys finished his discipleship lessons and was baptized. He gave a wonderful, clear testimony of his salvation that was heard by several unbelievers. For Valentine's day weekend, a Malagasy pastor and his wife came from the capital to teach on biblical marriage and home. It was a huge encouragement to our married couples! There were several first-time guests for that as well. One of them, **Rafinoana**, is the husband of a believer in our church. He came to all the sessions and has come to church ever since. His wife was rejoicing in this answer to prayer! *Please pray that he will trust Christ!* We've been running the monthly blood pressure clinic our co-workers started since they are in the capital for a language course. The last clinic was March 1-3<sup>rd</sup>. *Please pray that those who received gospel literature would understand and believe!*

Other than those special events, our weekly services, Bible studies and one-on-one discipleship times continue. Please pray specifically for two older gentlemen who are studying the Bible with us— **Damy** and **Gregory**, both unsaved men from cult backgrounds.

As we look to the future, there are a few ministry opportunities we are considering. The first is evangelism in one of our region's other districts. We are planning to make a trip in April to the district north of us to check the possibilities. Also, we would like our church to be involved in evangelism in some of the villages around Maintirano. We are praying that God would open the door to one.

Madagascar's borders are supposedly still closed. There are flights coming and going with permission. Please pray for Bobby in these next weeks as he flies our plane to the northwest of the island, gets a commercial flight from there to Kenya, completes his biannual with an instructor from AIM Air, and flies back. There will be a few PCR tests and quarantine as he comes and goes. Also pray for protection for Eliana and I while we are here without him.

It is surely discouraging when there are restrictions to ministry or when you cannot minister in the place you want to, but God has each of us in the right place and at the right time. His purposes in building His church are not thwarted. We are so grateful to be a part of His plan and for your partnership with us! May the Lord open our eyes to opportunities to share Him!

Trusting Always in Him,  
Bobby and Joanna

**BOBBY AND JOANNA BURDETT**  
MISSIONARIES TO MADAGASCAR

MAY 2022

Contact info: 2burdsgonemad@gmail.com ~ north-pointbaptist.org ~ bmfp.org

Dear Friends and Family,

**BIBLE INSTITUTE:** Thank you for praying for the first Bible Institute class! We had 14 students from 16-70 years old studying Bible Doctrines 1 together. It was our prayer that they not only gain Biblical knowledge but that they come to love God more through knowing Him more. After about 8 weeks of class, a student named Claire came forward after Sunday service and trusted Christ as her Savior! She truly struggled during the lessons and may not have passed but she gained something more eternal than a passing grade.

**OUT OF DARKNESS, INTO LIGHT:** That same Sunday, three other kids from SS prayed to receive Christ also. These are kids we have been working with since they were toddlers. One of them, Elodia, is a precious 9 year old who loves to sing and help sweep the church. We see so much potential in her and pray God would guard her as she grows up the only believer in her home to become a godly woman and servant of Christ.

After church, Celestine (a 12 yr old believer) came up to Bobby and said, "my mom and dad do witchcraft. You need to come talk to them about what you preached this morning." We tried to find her house that week but were unable to locate it and have not been able to go back since. Please pray that God would already be working on Celestine's parent's hearts to receive truth when we are able to visit them!

A young mother, Mitaka, has been attending our church since Christmas. I visited her to share the Gospel and see if she had any questions about what she had heard at church. She is shy and I left her home feeling like nothing got through. Afterward, she confided that she began coming to church because she has two spirits and thought that maybe going to church would help rid her of them. Her whole family is into witchcraft and ancestor worship. She wants out. It will be a battle for her soul. Pray for victory!

**FAITHFUL MEN:** We have requested prayer many times for faithful men for our church here in Madagascar. Lately there have been several men attend services on Sunday morning. They come by themselves. Most have attended other churches and are mixed up in their belief about salvation. Seven other Christian men, who have obvious God-given talents, are floundering because of their focus on the cares of this world. Six teen boys are faithful to church but have some huge family struggles that threaten to embitter them. They are also coming to the age where many choose to marry an unbeliever or to live with someone without getting legally married. Pray for boys and men to be saved! Pray for the believing teenage boys to purpose in their hearts to stay pure and live for Christ no matter what! Pray for these unsaved men to understand the true Gospel and believe it! Pray for the saved men to be totally surrendered to being the men God wants them to be!

Faithful is He who calls, who will also do it!

Trusting Always in HIM,  
Bobby, Joanna and Eliana Burdett



**\*\*Yearly plane inspection this week! Please pray it goes smoothly and affordably as we work with a new company!\*\***

Contact info: 2burdsgonemad@gmail.com ~ north-pointbaptist.org ~ bmfp.org

Dear Friends and Family,

God has been good! It is hard to believe that it is already November, ever since youth camp the beginning of September things have been going full throttle. Many things that were in progress came to completion in the past week.

**Baptism:** Yesterday we celebrated the 11th anniversary of the church plant here in Maintirano. Over the years, God has done many amazing things but one of my favorite things has always been baptism. Yesterday we rejoiced to see 8 people declare their faith in Christ through believers' baptism (2 children, 4 teens and 2 adults)! As a pastor I was blessed to see what God was doing to continue His work and grow His church.

**Tractor:** It's here! After purchasing the tractor, we postponed the shipping due to our furlough, governmental unrest in Madagascar, aircraft engine rebuild and finally being under confinement. Last January we finally felt like we had the go ahead to move forward with shipping. Apparently shipping during a global pandemic has its challenges! I ended up loading and unloading the tractor in 4 different cities. We used containers, box trucks, ships, and just driving it down the road for part of the process, but it's finally here. I am looking forward to putting it to a lot of use.

**Flying:** The airplane has been a huge blessing these past six months with all the travel on the island I have been doing. I figured out that every hour I fly saves me about 18 hours of driving. In the past two months, it has saved me about 270 hours of driving time.

**Family:** Today marks a decade that we have been celebrating Joanna's 31st birthday here in Madagascar. I am so grateful for the family that God has given me to join in the ministry here! God has been good. Eliana, being the only white baby in the town, has her daily challenges but she is growing and adjusting day by day. She is truly a joy and a blessing!

Trusting Always in HIM,  
Bobby, Joanna and Eliana Burdett



Dear Friends and Family,

This morning I preached on Joshua and the battle of Jericho and, with that, the struggle of feeling like you are going around in circles in silence as you wait for God's time to work. For us, December through the first of the year was a doozy (that is Greek for "it really stunk"). End of November through December, Joanna, Dani (our single missionary partner) and I were all separately diagnosed with typhoid. While I was being treated for typhoid and Joanna was fighting a staph infection and recovering from typhoid, we both came down with Covid (Joanna a few days before me). On Christmas eve Eliana got sick. The day after New Year's some kids put Eliana on my motorcycle and it fell over with her on it pinning her to the ground. Thankfully, it fell in a way that her worst injury was a sprained ankle. That same night, I tore something in my knee playing soccer with the teens. So yeah, Christmas and New Year was no fun.

All that down time recovering from typhoid, covid, staph infections, knee injuries and bad attitudes (a side effect of covid:), gave us time to think, pray, evaluate, and ask God for wisdom. I don't want to spend my time here being just busy about ministry, but doing what God wants in his timing, whether that is walking circles around Jericho in silence or charging the city with a battle cry.

**"The boys":** One to two afternoons a week I have a group of teenage boys that I work with. None of these boys have a good father influence, if there is a father present at all. Though there is spiritual training that happens in an informal way, most of it is teaching welding, mechanics, mowing grass, bicycle repair, construction - guy stuff. I am praying that this time spent with these boys along with the formal teaching in the church will help provide an influence to shape these young men into future leaders in the church. On top of that it also provides them with a small income to help with living. To put it into perspective, when I talked with two of them on Friday, they admitted they had not eaten since Wednesday lunch. For a long time, they have only been eating twice a day. I was humbled.

**Bible Institute:** For a while I have been putting it off because I had "too much going on." But with the evaluating of priorities that happened over the holidays I decided to go ahead and start with our Bible institute. It is a four-year program that has four courses per year. Lord willing, we will start our first course on Feb 6 and each course should run for 10 weeks with three hours of teaching per Sunday. Please pray for stamina and wisdom both me and the students as we take this on.

**Furlough:** We are overdue for furlough, but we felt we needed to push it back till the church is ready to hold its own for a few months. So, **we are praying about taking a furlough starting in September through early January.** After all the struggles we had getting things going again after our last furlough we feel shorter furloughs, more often, is going to be the route to go. However, in this world, things are constantly changing. Thank you for your prayers in all of this as we seek God's strength, grace, and guidance each day!



Trusting Always in HIM,  
Bobby, Joanna and Eliana Burdett



Dear Friends and Family,

Is it already only three months till Christmas? Since our last prayer letter, it has been crazy but fruitful! I have driven the entire stretch of the island twice in just over a month (over 40 hours one way). Made numerous flights and have often wondered what city I was in when I woke up in the morning. Youth camp was a blessing with six of our teens making professions of faith (Praise the Lord!). I am currently going through baptism class with six teens. Our youth group has been much more faithful in attending church, bible studies, and doing personal devotions and bible memory passages. All of these are very encouraging to us.

**Members:** As of last prayer letter, two men, that use to be highly involved in church ministry, were under church discipline. Since that time, both have returned in repentance to the church and we are encouraging them to grow (by God's grace) in a fruitful walk with the Lord.

Though church attendance through summer vacation is always low, I, as the pastor, have been grateful for those who continue to faithfully attend. Preparation for our Christmas program will begin soon and there always seems to be a surge in church attendance for that through the end of the year.

**Tractor:** Even with all the hassles Covid has placed on shipping, the tractor has made it to Madagascar! Two weeks ago, I had to make an unpanned trip to the east side of the island to unpack the container for inspection and tax evaluation. I will say that though I did not revel in the inconvenience of an unplanned 16-hour trip, I was quite pleased with the tractor and equipment once I saw it in the light of day. I am supposed to leave tomorrow to fly to the capital to receive half of the shipment that has cleared customs. Once the rest of it clears customs and makes it to the capital, we will work on getting it hauled out to Maintirano. I am having to slow myself from compiling too great a list of work I want to get done as soon as it arrives. A special thanks to all of you who have donated over the years to this project!

**Outreach:** I was able to make it to Besalampy which was a much more rigorous trip than I envisioned. After arriving we traveled for two hours (by canoe and by foot) to make it to the fishing village. I was able to teach for an hour and a half to two hours, leave them with study materials to last a few weeks then start on the three-hour trip home (boat/walk/fly). With everything that has been going on I have not been able to make it back yet, we are hoping this month I can do a follow up visit. Currently we are working our monthly Blood pressure/ evangelism outreach. Please pray that this ministry will yield fruit and fruit that would remain!

**Prayer request:** Tractor - to quickly clear customs and safe shipping across the island. Teens - growth and faithfulness. Outreaches - fruit that would remain. Us personally - Rest! We have been quite exhausted from all the travel and fought several different sicknesses in the past month.

Trusting Always in Him,  
Bobby, Joanna, and Eliana Burdett



Dear Friends and Family,

After a 10-month process, the airplane's engine overhaul, inspection and airworthiness certificate renewal is done! Our team has been without the use of the airplane for almost two years. To get to the capital for supplies and to do paperwork during that time we flew with Missionary Aviation Fellowship, went by 4x4 over the dirt road or just did without. We are so grateful to have the plane up and running again!



God worked through the generosity of many of you to finance the overhaul. We thank you so much! God also gave us favor with customs officials and inspectors that made the process smoother and quicker than before. Once the plane was done, we were wondering how we would get to our home region because the capital's region was under lockdown for covid-19. There was no inter-regional travel by road or air except for medivacs. We tried for a few days to get in to see the president of the CCO (Covid Command Operation) to ask for special permission to go home. On the day we were actually able to submit our request to him, we were granted permission and flew home three days later! We know it was God's hand working because there are others whose requests have still not been granted after months. We are so grateful to be home!

Coming home after three months in the capital was like coming home after furlough. Our coworker was at the airstrip with a guy from church to meet us and help unload luggage. His wife had a fresh loaf of bread waiting at the house for us and our other coworker, showed up with a basket of food for lunch. Even Eliana's MK cousins had welcome home notes colored for her. Many of the believers stopped by to say hi during our required 14-day house quarantine. We are so grateful for our missionary coworkers and the Malagasy believers who were faithful to keep things going while we were away.



Now that the 14 days are over, we are able to get back into the rhythm of ministry and life here in Maintirano. As in all the world, ministry looks a little different right now. Cases of corona virus are rising in Madagascar, but our region does not have it yet. Our restrictions are social distancing (this is an African Island!), mask wearing and no formal gatherings of over 50 people. Right now we are meeting for Sunday worship at the property where the church is being built. The kids and adults gather under different mango trees to keep our numbers correct and we wash our hands at the gate and wear masks the whole time. Bible studies and smaller worship times are held at the hangar. We are just grateful to be able to worship together again and look forward to the day we can meet in our completed church building without any restrictions!

Trusting Always in HIM,

Bobby, Joanna and Eliana Burdett

Dear Friends and Family,

“Where’s my ‘bonne annee’?” We will hear this question quite a few times in the next month. Traditionally, in Madagascar, you give gifts for new year and not for Christmas. The kids get candy or a new outfit or shoes, women a new cloth or market basket and the men will get new shoes or other clothing. We’ve adopted the tradition and give our workers a gift and sometimes bake for our neighbors and church family. It is the *only* time of year when we will give a ‘tip’ to the officers who pull us over to check papers!

Speaking of gifts, you all have been so generous in your giving toward the **airplane overhaul**. We praise the Lord for His provision through you! The engine is still in the US and we hope to have it back in country sometime this month.

Last October, the government decided to switch departments for handling all foreigner’s **visas**. To complete this switch, we have all had to apply for a 30-day visa then transition to a long-stay visa with the new department. This means a ton of logistic work that takes away from normal ministry. Please pray that each dossier will be processed as smoothly as possible for us to be able to continue doing what God has called us to do here!

For nine years our congregation has been renting houses to meet in. When the contract ran out on the last rental, it seemed the Lord was leading us to begin **building a permanent structure of our own**. It’s been exciting to watch the believers show up every week to make gravel, mix cement, and haul rocks for the foundation. We hope to begin on columns soon then build metal trusses for the roofing. God has provided through several of you for this project as well. May the Lord bless you for your generosity!

As I write, there are New Year festivities going on all around our house. This year was our first holiday season as parents and we had fun with our 8-month old Eliana. We celebrated Christmas and New Year’s Eve with our church family here with over 100 in attendance Christmas day. Bobby encouraged us from Psalm 103, “bless the Lord, oh my soul, and forget not all His benefits.” We do not know what God has in our path for 2020, but we remember His blessings from 2019 and are thankful He holds the future.

Trusting Always in HIM—Bobby, Joanna and Eliana Burdett



**Thank you to everyone who gave us extra for Christmas!!!**

**BOBBY AND JOANNA BURDETT**

September, 2019

Missionaries to Madagascar

Dear friends and family,

We are here. Well, actually, we have been here for about six weeks now. The challenges we have experienced on arrival have exceeded our expectations and our patience. Yet through it all God has been faithful and given daily grace.

In our last letter I mentioned how we were going to have to upgrade some of the airplane avionics in order to comply with new regulations. We are very grateful for those who have been contributing to that project! It has been a huge blessing to hear from all the individuals, churches with special offerings, children in VBS and others that have given to this project.

God seems to think we need our faith stretched a bit more. When I got back I was informed by the government that since the airplane sat while we were in the States, the engine would be required to be overhauled. I fought this ruling for weeks until I felt going any further would jeopardize my testimony with the local authorities. We were scheduled to do the 12 year overhaul of the engine in 2021 and had been saving for such but do not have all the money as of now. Since there is no repair station in Madagascar that can do this type of work, we have to ship it back for repairs. Right now, at my best estimate, we are about \$15,000 short of the cost of shipping, repairs, and taxes. We are moving forward in faith that God will provide. A shop in the States owned by a Christian is giving us a discount, but it's still quite expensive. Lord willing, the engine will go out tonight then be in the States for about two months before being shipped back and reinstalled on the airplane. Until the plane is repaired, we are limited to land travel and chartering private flights.

Joanna, Eliana and I are back in Maintirano at this point, and it is good to be back with the church. We have been working hard at reconnecting with the people in the church, planning the next few months, and seeking God's direction for the next location of the church once our lease runs out this month. Right now we hope to build a pavilion to meet under before rainy season. I have been doing my best to handle what I can from Maintirano and have been very grateful for the other missionaries in the capital that help in what ways they can with logistical support while we can't travel back and forth.

On a good note, it looks like we have found a house. Though it is going to take a fair amount of work to make it livable, it is enjoyable work. After over a year of living with friends and family we are really looking forward to having our own place again! There is much more that could be added to this right now, but suffice it to say, we are leaning on daily grace. God is good. You guys have been so generous already so I hate to say this but, If you would like to contribute specifically to the airplane repairs, you can send it to BMFP and mark it "airplane repairs" Thank you so much for your prayers and support, your encouraging notes and e-mails!

*Trusting always in Him, Bobby, Joanna and Eliana Burdett*



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# BOBBY AND JOANNA BURDETT

Missionaries to Madagascar

April 2019

Dear friends and family,

Thank you so much for your prayers and support, God has answered. We are excited to announce the safe arrival of our daughter Eliana Hope Burdett!

Born early resurrection Sunday morning, we were delighted to meet our healthy little girl. The name Eliana mean “ God has answered.” As many people have been praying for this precious life for many years we feel she is God’s answer to those prayers. More than that, being born on Resurrection Sunday, a day we remember the hope we have in Christ, we wanted to chose a name that reminded us of both our personal Hope and our eternal hope. So together her name reminds us, “because God has answered, we have hope.” Mommy and baby are doing well. We have been blessed to have some down time and to have lots of help from both sets of grandparents as well as other relatives that are close by. Right now it looks like our schedule of traveling will resume toward the end of May. Truly we are blessed! Thank you for your prayers!



P.S. People have been asking about our baby registry. We are limited in what we can take back in our luggage, and therefore gift cards are best. We are registered on Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/baby-reg/joanna-burdett-robert-burdett-may-2019-newnan/2AIUZBTYZZN00>

#### Our Contact Info:

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Dear friends and family,

The weeks since our last prayer letter have flow by and the Lord has seen fit to cram much into those weeks!

Joanna and baby are doing well so far. It's hard to believe in the next five weeks we could be meeting this new one, though he/she has been making its presence known through a daily acrobatic routine! As we have been preparing for the birth, our meetings have been getting progressively closer to home. We just finished up 10 days visiting churches in FL, and though the time with friends and supporters was very encouraging to us, it was beginning to be apparent than long distance travel at this late in the pregnancy is no longer a good option. We hope to finish out these last few weeks before the birth by visiting some of our more local supporters.

Back in February, I had an unexpected surprise. I received a note from Madagascar indicating I had to return to Madagascar for some mandatory training to maintain my ability to work on the airplane when we go back. Though taking a 10-day trip across the world was really the last thing I wanted to do, we felt it was necessary for the good of the ministry. The Lord was good in providing through one family all of the funds needed to cover the trip. On top of that, I was able to meet with co-workers and discuss what was happening in the ministry, fix the team vehicle, and bring back with me aircraft parts that required overhauling before we return. All of these things help to make a smoother transition back to Madagascar Lord willing, in July.

We praise the Lord that His timing is perfect even when it takes a turn we did not envision! Thank you again for all your prayers and support! Please continue to pray with us as we wait the (hopefully soon) arrival of this little one and continue visiting supporting churches. Also please continue to pray for the church in Madagascar as the work continues under the leadership of the Bowens and Dani.

Trusting Always in Him, Bobby and Joanna Burdett

P.S. People have been asking about our baby registry. We are limited in what we can take back in our luggage, and therefore gift cards are best. We are registered on Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/baby-reg/joanna-burdett-robort-burdett-may-2019-newnan/2AIUZBTYZN00>

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**BOBBY AND JOANNA BURDETT**

**JAN 2019**

**Missionaries to Madagascar**

Dear friends and family,

Christmas celebrations in America and Madagascar are so different! For one, the seasons are opposite. While here, we have enjoyed family gatherings, Christmas music on the radio, shopping and making treats we don't usually have the ingredients for. We know that next year we will be back in Madagascar focusing more on organizing the church Christmas activities and looking forward to skype calls with family.

One new thing for us this Christmas was understanding personally the anticipation Joseph and Mary felt in awaiting the arrival of their first baby. We too are anticipating the arrival of a baby! Lord-willing, the beginning of May we will meet our new sidekick. Speaking of kicks, I (Joanna) now know what Elizabeth felt when she said "at the sound of your salutation the babe leapt in my womb for joy!" We are so grateful to God for this answer to prayer!

We have started our journey across the states reconnecting with many of our supporting churches. Though traveling with me being pregnant has presented a growing challenge (literally), we have been enjoying the adaptations.

While we have soaked up this season, our hearts have been in constant prayer for our co-workers and believers in Madagascar. Some in the church have turned from truth and their sin has affected the whole body. The few who are faithful have been discouraged, understandably. Please pray with us for conviction of the Holy Spirit, repentance, reconciliation and restored unity! Please pray for our teammates who are counseling people and dealing with the conflicts! We choose to trust that the Lord is still building HIS church. He will complete the work that He began. We are privileged to be a part of His plan! We are forever grateful for your partnership and support in it!

Trusting Always in Him, Bobby and Joanna Burdett

**PS. If you have not contacted us about coming to report to your church, please feel free to. Though our schedule is filling, we still have a few dates available.**

**Email [burdett@flight4212.org](mailto:burdett@flight4212.org) or call 678-850-5956**

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Dear friends and family,

It is a quiet fall morning in Newnan, Georgia. It's hard to believe just weeks ago we were in the whirlwind of ministry in Madagascar. So much has happened that we want to share, but this time we would like to share it in person! We praise the Lord that he has worked it out for us to come for awhile and temporarily transition to the ministry we call "furlough"!



*What does that mean for us?* It means taking time to rest and process what God has done in and through us these past three and a half years. It means making memories with family and meeting new nieces and nephews who were born while we were gone. It means planning and strategizing with team members for the next leg of the ministry in Madagascar. It means raising what is lacking in our financial support. It also means reconnecting with you, which means hours of traveling from church to church, state to state, home to home. From Quebec to Texas, from Florida to Indiana we have hundreds of prayer and financial supporters that have held us up through the years and we are excited to share with you what God has done and is doing. We would really like to meet with as many of you as possible during this time. If you have not contacted us yet, please do and let us know some dates that will work for you. You can reach us at our 2burds-gonemad@gmail.com email address or at Bobby's cell: 678 850-5956. Lord-willing, we will be in the US until July, 2019.

*Who is holding down the fort in Madagascar?* Our team mates, Branden and Laura Bowen and Danielli da Costa are in charge of the church ministry while we are away. It is a challenge to lead a new-to-you ministry anyway, but even more so in a language and culture you are still learning to navigate. Please pray for them! We know the Lord is with them and working through them for His glory.

Bobby and Joanna

Just for fun! Here are some pictures from teen camp just before we left.



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Bobby was able to finish the guard house at the property and we helped a family move in as caretaker. Doriche and his wife, Elizabeth were two of the ones who trusted Christ last Christmas. They are growing in the Lord and want to get baptized this year. We are so grateful to have someone finally living on the property looking after things.

Also for those who have generously been giving to the tractor project. Thank you so much! I believe we have enough to ship the tractor at this point, however because of the unstable government, corruption in the current port authority, and our fast approaching furlough, we decided it would be best to wait to ship till after furlough. All the money is in a special fund waiting for what we feel will be a wiser time to ship.

Dear Friends and Family,

Since we last wrote you all we have had some amazing answers to prayer and experienced some of the hardest moments of this term. “In the daytime there are stars in the heavens,” says the song, “but they only shine at night.” Sometimes in our darkest hour, we are most able to see God’s presence and His hand working.

Two sisters and a brother have been coming faithfully to church as a result of a church member witnessing to them after one of the sisters had a stillborn baby. Since then all three of them, at separate times, have professed faith in Christ! They seem to be hungry to learn anything they can and are excited to go to teen camp this year. Pray for them to be solid in their faith and fully committed to Jesus.

We praise the Lord that our visas and work permits were granted for another year! It was great timing as all the departments of government have shut down now due to the problems with the current regime and election process going on. Our co-worker’s container has shipped from the US and we ask you to pray with us that the right offices will be re-opened when it comes into port so we can get it safely in country.

Bobby and I have been married for 13 years now! We have always prayed that God would give us children if it was His will. Many of you have joined us in that prayer. The answer always seemed to be ‘no’ until this past April when we were surprised to find we were expecting! Stunned, amazed, giggly, and thankful are just a few of the adjectives that described us. Most of all we felt blessed. However, shortly after nine weeks along, I miscarried. Then we were silenced, achy, pondering all these things in our hearts. God gave us nine weeks of joy, of dreaming, of being in awe at His creation in us. Through all the tears we shed (and even now as I type), the overwhelming sense was still of thankfulness and being blessed. The word for “blessed” in Malagasy is “Sambatra.” That’s how we will remember our little guy or girl.

From Bobby: I echo everything Joanna has said and would like to add this - “battle.” For at least the past several weeks that is what I have felt we were fighting. From dealing with Ramadan going on, to rebellious believers, to government offices shut down at a time we need paperwork, it’s been a constant battle. I am reminded that this battle is spiritual, it is for the hearts of men and God’s glory, it will be this way till Christ comes, and it is exhausting. God is working through this battle. *We are looking forward to Lord willing, coming back for furlough this fall—October 16th. First off, we need to rest but we are looking forward to visiting many of you guys. If you have a specific date that you would like us to come please let me know as our time will be full.* Thank you for supporting us; for joining us in this battle for God’s glory.

Choosing to trust always in Him, Bobby and Joanna Burdett

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### Praises:

- \*Four people trusted Christ as a result of the Christmas services!
- \*Our new teammates arrived in country and began language school!
- \*The official government markers were place for our property boundary!
- \*Successful start to teaching English and Bible in a primary school nearby!
- \*Successful start to health teachings at the local clinic!

### Prayer requests:

- \*New believer's growth—Miora, Dorice, Elizabet, Niny, Aristan and Doria
- \*Pray for the Lord to strengthen marriages as we focus on teaching couples in marriage counseling classes.
- \*Pray for the minister to sign our land title and give us a good lease agreement.
- \*Pray for our non-profit renewal, work permits and visa renewals to come through in time.
- \*Pray for our teammates, the Bowens, to adjust well to Madagascar and be given ability in the language.

A huge thank you to those who have helped with the tractor purchase and shipping! We are finalizing the details and hope to ship it mid-March.

Dear Friends and Family,

We hope you are settling in to the new year and recovering from the holidays well. Our January was full and we are just now getting back to routine. One week after New Years, we flew to the capital to welcome our new teammates! We had a crazy week with getting them a car, changing their visas, some of us being sick and just trying to show them where everything was in their new environment. God answered so many prayers and they are now settled into language school in the town of Antsirabe. We look forward to when they can move out here to the coast to join the work here, but this time of adjustment and language learning is vital. We are grateful for the home, church and teacher God provided for them during this time.

Our teammate, Richard Jertberg, whose wife the Lord took home to be with Him last year, was able to make a short visit as well in January. He plans to return to Madagascar toward the end of this year, Lord-willing. It is exciting to think that in 2019 we could have three families and one single missionary working together here! Please pray for unity of heart and mind and for God to give us clear vision and direction for His work!

After our singing service, Christmas Eve, the Lord led Bobby to preach a clear Gospel message and invite those who wanted to trust Christ as Savior. Three adults, Dorice, Elizabet and Miora trusted Christ that night and Niny, a teen, joined them a week later! Two other young teens, Aristan and Doria, trusted Christ with one of our youth leaders while we were away in the capital! Please pray for them all to grow in their faith as they begin new believer's discipleship.

This will be the third year that we have taken advantage of Valentine's day to teach on Biblical marriage in a more focused way. February 16th and 17th we plan to host a mini marriage conference ending with a dinner and games. We have seen God work to make the homes in our church stronger through these times and we pray that He will bring true change and conviction this year as well.

Our Malagasy non-profit is up for renewal this year. Our team's ability to be in the country rests on this. All the papers have been submitted and we are waiting for approval. It just adds that little extra kick of stress until we have the signature and stamp for another two years. However, we totally trust that God has begun this work and is building His church in this place to the praise of His glory!

Thank you all so much for caring for us, for praying for this work and for partnering with us to get it done! We couldn't do it without you!

Trusting Always in HIM, Bobby and Joanna Burdett



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Dear friends and family,

For the past two and a half years, very little has gone according as we planned. However through each turn of events the thing that stays true is God. He is always working, always strengthening, continually redeeming.



May, June, July and August were incredibly intense months, and as September approached we were finding ourselves more than spent. Lovingly, the Lord worked it out for us to take a week of vacation on the island of Reunion just off the east coast of Madagascar.

Upon returning from Reunion it was back at it as the yearly airplane inspection, the church's 7 year anniversary, the baptism of 8 new believers and our quarterly transport of medicines to the 5 districts of our region was on the docket. The church anniversary, though tiring to prepare for, was quite a blessing to us as it was combined with 8 people completing believers baptism!

In the next couple weeks, Christmas prep will be in full swing. We are also preparing to receive our new coworkers Brandon and Laura Bowen in January at which time they plan to start language school. Dani Costa continues to be a blessing helping with the children, women and outreach ministries.

Back in October, through the help of several supporting churches we were able to buy a tractor to help with the upkeep of the property, projects, runway etc. Now we are working towards getting it shipped over here. If you would like to help with the shipping and import cost please let us know.

Through all of this we keep having to remind ourselves to slow down and not overdo it. The needs are always overwhelming; God is not overwhelmed. In our minds two and a half years ago when we cut short our furlough to take over for Richard and Charity it was "for a time" till our coworkers could come back. God in his wisdom had other plans, and through each of those plans He is still good. Though we were scheduled to be back on furlough last May, it is looking like next Oct/Nov is going to be the soonest that we can make it back. Thank you for your understanding, please pray for our endurance and joy!

Thankful to be here,  
Amazed at His grace,  
Bobby and Joanna Burdett



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*“Be like the chameleon,” the Malagasy proverb says, “who looks to the future as he observes the past.”*

**When we observe the past** three months we see they were packed with activities, opportunities for growth (read stretching beyond limits and comfort zones), laughter, tears and the never ending grace of God. Our co-worker, Danielli, moved here to Maintirano and lived with us the month of June while looking for a house. God provided her a home down the street from us and she has already begun working in our Sunday School program and youth ministry. We are so grateful to have her on the team!

During the month of July, our home was a flurry of activity as we hosted Pastor Steve Pittman (supporting church pastor) Branden Bowen (our co-worker still on deputation) and Joey Lyon (long-time friend) plus Richard Jertberg and all the kids! Pastor Steve taught a seminar for our congregation on the doctrine of the church. Branden and Joey helped with various projects at the hangar/house and did some strategic planning for future projects. Richard and the kid’s trip to visit the church and their home here overlapped with Pastor Steve’s team but it was obvious to all of us that God had planned it that way. We enjoyed having others with whom to share our burden for a bit and to laugh with us at the craziness of this life. It was a very emotional time too as Richard interacted with us and the church without Charity by his side. God’s grace was always sufficient to the daily need. Thank you to those of you who were praying specifically for us during that time!



Jose in the black t-shirt,  
Lito in the plaid and  
Avotra behind them,  
upper right

Five days after everyone left, we packed up the truck and went to the highlands for youth camp. We only had room for 10 people and of those who signed up five were unsaved. Our prayer was that we would return home with a truck full of believers. The last day of camp, four of those teens trusted Christ as their Savior! You have been praying for Jose, Lito, and Melica for a while. Avotra, who has only recently started attending our church, also trusted Christ. Immediately, we saw the enemy was unhappy as our trip home on the dirt road was the longest and most difficult we have ever encountered. Thank you to those who prayed for our safety! Please keep praying for the Holy Spirit to work in Nehemiah, the fifth teen, that we might see him come to Christ soon!



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**As we look to the future**, we continue to trust that God's grace will be sufficient and we ask Him to order our steps. This week, our church is holding its first VBS. Several from our teacher training have volunteered to help with lessons, craft time and games. Please pray that we would work together well as a team and that God's Word would change the lives of the children who attend!

After VBS, we want to REST! There are quite a few things to do before the end of the year—vaccination flights, airplane inspection, church anniversary Sunday, baptism lessons, non-profit status renewal, Christmas program preparations etc. Before starting all of that, though, we are looking forward to some down time...longer quiet times with the Lord, time with just each other, time to be still. Pray that this time of rest will renew us and prepare us for what God has for us around the corner!

We love you all and are ever so grateful for your partnership!

Bobby and Joanna Burdett



**\*\*\*\*Special note:** At the end of our last furlough, our plan was to return to the US this fall to visit those of you who we were not able to see last time. Because we cannot leave the church right now for the length of time we would need, Lord-willing, we would like to go on furlough in fall of 2018.

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Dear friends and family,

This has been the hardest and slowest-in-coming prayer letter we have had to write since arriving in Madagascar. Back in 2015, we cut short our furlough to return and take over the ministry for Richard and Charity Jertberg as Charity was diagnosed with breast cancer and needed to return to the States for treatment. Since that time it's been a roller coaster of struggles and triumphs. We watched the Lord answer prayers in miraculous ways and faced trials far harder than we expected.



With the two of us trying to keep up a ministry planned for four people, it quickly became obvious that things needed to change or we would soon burn out. We started focusing on preparing the saved men and women in our church to take on more of a leadership role thus helping to ease our burden and prepare them for the time when they will lead on their own. Planning was difficult as we were hoping and praying for Charity's healing and the Jertberg's return, yet never certain what the next day, month or year would hold.

In the beginning of March of this year, Charity's cancer took a turn for the worse and it became evident it would not be long. The church was shocked and grief stricken. However, as is their tradition, they asked us to return to the States for a few weeks to help Richard and Charity in their place. Arrangements were made and the five men I had been training stepped up to lead the church in our month of absence.

We return to the States not knowing if we would be observing a miraculous recovery or helping the family grieve a loss of mother, wife, friend, and servant of God. On April 4th, at 2 in the afternoon, just three weeks after giving birth to a healthy daughter, Kezia Joy, Charity stepped into the presence of her Lord and Savior. The loss has been profound, and yet the peace beyond understanding. We thank the Lord for the two weeks we had with the family before Charity's passing and for being able to be with the family during her death and burial. Most of all, we are thankful that one day we will be with her in the resurrection, and forever.

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Dear friends and family,

I know it is February, but here in Madagascar, when you greet someone for the first time in the new year (even if it is February) you wish them a happy new year! So, HAPPY NEW YEAR!

There is much that has happened since our last prayer letter. It would be hard to sum it up on this page. I will include more pictures and a second page to communicate what words cannot in a short space.

Josia is 9. She trusted Christ as her Savior on December 11th, the only one of the SS kids to do so at this point.

Pierrot and Clarisse trusted Christ in 2015 and followed the Lord in believer's baptism last December. They are attending our Home & Family class and the teacher training for SS teachers.



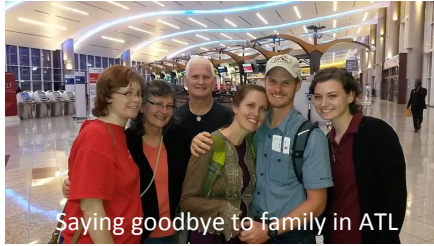
Because the lease is not finalized on the property we bought, we needed to rent a building to meet in during rainy season. God showed us this house and it has worked well. Over 120 people came on Christmas morning! Seventy plus were children who participated in a short skit with songs and memory verses.



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### ***Where do we go from here?***

Since returning to Madagascar shortly after her funeral we have had good and bad days. We are regrouping, praying, healing, seeking the Lord for what He wants. Lately, a large part of the ministry is helping the church to process grief, and teaching them how to sorrow as “those who have hope!” It’s true our ministry team is changing, being re-shaped, but our God and His call has not changed.

We are not sure what the future holds, but we know we have been called to Madagascar, and His work must go on. There has been a renewed emphasis on redeeming the time. There has been a new realization that this is a work for all of the Church, not just the pastor/missionary. And it has become abundantly evident that we need His grace daily. We were please to find the men holding up well in leading the ministry, though I believe it gave them a renewed perspective on studying and preparing.

We look forward to the arrival of our single missionary partner Dani da Costa who has recently finished Malagasy language school. She will be an invaluable asset to the women’s and children’s ministry here. Also we are praying toward the completion of deputation for our new teammates Branden and Laura Bowen, who just welcomed their second child, and are currently at 73% of their needed support! We are hoping they can arrive by January of 2018 or sooner!

Thank you so much for your faithful prayers, support and encouragement through this time of earthly loss and heavenly gain.

Trusting always in Him,  
Bobby and Joanna Burdett



Our Brazilian co-worker, Danielli, came to Maintirano during her two week break from language studies. She shared her testimony with the church and we all enjoyed getting to know her better. *Pray for her as she finishes classes and moves out here in April!*



Several years ago, a supporting church donated money for mosquito nets. Malaria is a big problem in our region. Between Christmas and New Year's, we flew the last of those mosquito nets to three of the districts where the health department said they were needed most. By flying in vaccines and the nets, we have made important contacts with local health workers and airport personnel. *Our prayer is that one day each of these places—Antsalova, Ambatomainty, Morafenobe and Besalampy—will have a solid gospel-preaching church.*



As I write this, a common brown lemur is perched on my shoulder, proof that you never know what a day will bring. We don't know what God will do this year, but this is what we are asking for:

that many will come to know Him, specifically Jose, Lito, Roger, Christophe, Mika, Felicia, Lily, Hiaritiana, and the 40+ Sunday school kids too...

that our co-workers, Danielli, the Bowens and the Jertbergs, would be able to join us...

that God would grow His church in this place to be firm in faith and sincere in their love for Him and each other...

That God would work in and through us for His glory...

That we would not grow weary in well-doing.

We love you all and are very grateful for your partnership with us!

Trusting Always in HIM,



**Upcoming Events:**

Church Anniversary  
Baptism service  
Airplane inspection  
Christmas Program  
Mosquito net outreach

**Praises:**

Dani arrived safely  
Good time in US  
Church did well in our absence  
Good 1st team meeting

**Prayer Requests:**

Jertbergs – cancer treatment, pregnancy and return to Madagascar  
Dani's language studies  
Bowen's deputation travels and support  
Land lease  
Salvation of Roger, Jose, Lito, Christophe, Anjara and SS kids  
A couple in our church to get legally married.  
Protection for property and travel

Dear friends and family,

We are back in Madagascar! Our month in the US was profitable and fun. We were able to renew all our licenses and certificates, get much needed airplane parts and other supplies and visit with most of our family. God allowed us to meet as a whole team for the first time—the Jertbergs, the Bowens, and us along with our pastors— to talk over plans for future ministry. *Please pray that God will continue to unify our hearts and minds as a team.*

The only one missing that day was Danielli da Costa, our new Brazilian co-worker. She arrived here Oct 13th and we took her to language school in a town 3 hours south of the capital. Her second Sunday in country she quoted the verse for the week from memory in Malagasy! *Pray that she will stay that motivated and that God would give her ability in Malagasy.* We praise the Lord for bringing Dani onto our team and look forward to when she can join us on the coast next year.

One major project for this year has been obtaining a lease from the government for the land we bought rights to last year. We are purchasing this land for several reasons. A portion of it will be sectioned off for a church and the rest we would like to use for a training center, Bible Institute and housing. The training center will fulfill requirements for our non-profit, under which our visas come, and will also double as classrooms for Bible training. Our church family has already been meeting at this location since April under a palm thatched roof. We cannot proceed with building something more permanent (read rain-proof) until the lease is approved. Rainy season starts the end of December! Pray that the lease will be approved soon!

This Sunday is our six year anniversary of starting the work in Maintirano. We are grateful for the evidence of the Lord working both through the souls that have been saved, and the maturity beginning in the lives of the believers. Please pray that as we face these plans, challenges and decisions, we will keep in the forefront Who is in control and be sensitive to His leading! If you have questions or would like to know more about any prayer request, just email us. We love hearing from you!

We give thanks to God for you!

Bobby and Joanna Burdett

September 14, 2016

Hello from Georgia!

Bobby and I are in the US for a month. We were feeling the need for a break and had already planned a week of rest on a nearby island of Madagascar. We are here instead because our driver's licenses are expired and cannot be renewed online, Bobby needed to renew his pilot's biannual review before February, I am renewing my midwifery certificate this year and needed classes not available in Madagascar and certain airplane parts we need for the inspection in November are easier/cheaper to carry back in a suitcase than ship back and forth. Hopefully somewhere in between getting all those things done, we will still get the rest we need!

Before taking this trip, we asked counsel of our home church pastor, our co-workers, our mission field administrator and the gentleman who would take care of the church in our absence. All felt that this would be a good time to get these things taken care of and take a rest. Mr. Justin is in charge of the church right now and has four other men helping him to lead all the services.

**Prayer requests:** That the believers will be faithful and one of heart and mind while we are gone. . . That God would work in a mighty way through the men leading the church. . . that God would continue to unite our team as we meet with the Jertbergs and the Bowens. . . that we could be and encouragement to our family and churches while we are here as well as rest/refresh ourselves.

**We praise God for** providing for this trip way before we knew we would be taking it. . . for the support of our Pastor and co-workers.. . for time with family and friends. . for Mr. Justin and the men helping him without whom we would not be able to leave.

With love and gratefulness for you,  
Bobby and Joanna Burdett



Dropping off Dad & Mom for their flight



Dear friends and family,

When we moved to our hard-to-get-to coastal town I thought we would surely not be visited by many if anyone at all. It's a long a trip, expensive and rugged. This year we have been blessed to have hosted quite a few visitors who braved all that to taste some of the craziness we call life in Madagascar.

My parents have been saving to come here since we did and were able to make the trip this past April/May. They helped us with several projects and house repairs, but mostly we just enjoyed being together, eating lots of seafood and even did some snorkeling! Now they can put faces to the names of people we are always telling them about and they know even better how to pray for us.

Just after they left, someone stole the rest of the plastic that was our church roof. The men of the church got together coconut branches to make a thatched roof. We are still meeting in this temporary shelter until the land paperwork can be completed. At that time, we will begin construction of the permanent church building.

Our next guests were Branden and Laura Bowen along with their sending pastor, Steve Pittman. The Bowens were on deputation with plans to go to Ghana, West Africa. Through varying circumstances, the Lord redirected their steps. After visiting Madagascar, the Bowens decided, with the blessing of their pastor and mission agency, to change fields. Lord-willing, after finishing deputation and some French language studies they will join our team! *We praise the Lord for this answer to prayer!*

Next we enjoyed hosting our good friends, missionaries in the capital city of Madagascar. We are all the time crashing at their house when we go in for supplies and paperwork. It was nice to have them on our side of the island to return the favor.

Our house is quiet now. The routine is returning slowly. Our guests brought us things we needed and many things we wanted, but most of all they gifted us *laughter and perspective*. Those things we will treasure even long after we have eaten all this pepperoni they brought!

Somewhere in all that hosting, we started a Sunday School teacher training and a baptism/new believers class. Five men are attending teacher training classes each Saturday. *Please pray for the Lord to protect these men and grow them into the leaders our church needs!* There are two couples and one lady who are wanting to be baptized this year and many others already baptized who are coming to learn basic doctrine. Bobby is going through the book of Proverbs on Tuesdays with any of the men who want to come. There are also two ladies' Bible studies in which we are studying the life of Christ in the book of Luke. The Sunday school children are practicing to present a short skit illustrating the Wordless Book. *Pray that the hearts of those unsaved parents who come to watch will be stirred. Pray for energy and wisdom in all these activities. Pray for us that as we give and give, our own spiritual lives will not run dry. Thank you for interceding for us!*

Trusting always in HIM,  
Bobby and Joanna Burdett



### Praises:

- ~the blessing of visits from friends and family
- ~The Bowens to join our team
- ~5 men in teacher training
- ~5 to be baptized this year
- ~Protection, Health and Wisdom from the Lord

### Prayer Requests:

- ~Land Title Paperwork
- ~Timing, health and logistics for the Jertberg's return to Madagascar
- ~Salvation of: Mima's mom, Roger, Nasta, Rose and her husband, Josia, Lito, Jose
- ~the SS kid's skit
- ~Justin, our right-hand man's health

Let them give glory unto the Lord; and declare his praise in the islands.  
Isaiah 42:12

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