

Friendly greetings from the Robertses in Panajachel!

We are grateful to report that we are all well and kicking strongly. Hard times are on many people world-wide, which thought causes us to really count our many blessings daily. I will attempt now to recount as many of them, to encourage you all towards thankfulness on our behalf, as well as for the good things in your own lives.

Protection

In spite of an increase in the crime and violence level even here in our small community, we feel at peace because of Who our God is. It is our conviction that He has only good plans for us, whatever that looks like on this level. So, we trust in His unfailing love and extravagant mercy.

Providence

The coffee shop is busier than ever! It seems we cannot keep ahead roasting coffee nor making cakes. The plates keep spinning! Sometimes Michael has to climb over dirty dishes stacked on the floor behind the counter, not having had a moment in between serving all the eager visitors to load the dishwasher! He still moves pretty fast in that narrow space and manages to make everyone feel special by his attention to small details. Kasia and Lungi are quickly learning the trade during their shifts on Fridays, while being a great help to their dad. The only other help he gets is from an occasional volunteer who earns the right to venture behind the counter when things get really ugly!

Progeny

We all still enjoy working and learning close to “home”. Kasia is finishing 9th grade in the next few months, and Lungi 7th grade. They both show excellent responsibility in carrying their school loads and an willingness to learn most of the time. Whenever they are free from school work, they are quite the industrious pair. In addition to knitting hats and other articles, they love to design and make intricate miniature sets for their self-made “Borrowers” figures. It is interesting to see how they spend their earnings: Kasia is always eager to go check out new arrivals at the “paca” stores (used American clothes) and puts together an amazing wardrobe this way. Lungi buys dog food and treats to spoil any and every dog she sees on the street. She dreams and talks constantly of the day when she can have her own dog(s). One of the many pleasures I have in these girls, is listening to them sing together. Lungi started harmonizing a few months ago, which makes their songs even sweeter on the ear! And the best of all is when they sing while doing the dishes (my personal favorite!)

Last year we started (and actually continued) a “vespers” tradition before bedtime: reading and praying together. One of us reads out loud, while the rest knit or crochet (well, we haven’t gotten Michael hooked up with a needle yet). We finished a great SAfrican story by Laurens vd Post, A Story Like the Wind. Currently we’re reading through The Hobbit, which was Lungi’s choice - she is such an enthusiastic Tolkien fan! We also read the New Testament and have great discussions on the teachings of Jesus Christ. We pray for our friends often, so send us your requests and we will help carry your burdens.

Projects

Our house building project is still moving along at a steady pace. We actually have one room and bathroom completed, including a roof. It’s already looking so beautiful and we are re-inspired every time we go see the progress (about once a week these days.) Things are looking up - we believe we could move in before the end of the year.

Prospects

About eight months ago a dear friend called with an amazing offer which got us seriously thinking about a long overdue visit to South Africa: he donated his accumulated air miles which are enough for two tickets all the way to Cape Town! We were blown away, of course! He also urged us to start earning the rest of the miles needed and we have been doing just that. It is an exciting new adventure! We know there’s a right time for everything under the sun, and we are all just super excited about the possibilities. To have hope is such a huge blessing!

(So, how’d you like my alliteration? Prrrretty good, eh! Profound. Profuse. Yeah!)

Before you sign off today, check out the new photos on our website. Warm hugs from our house to yours!

