

Just us... serving and loving people

Dear Friends and Family,

So we move.

Often times we look back on our lives and journey as missionaries and find ourselves marveling at where, how, why we've gone where we've gone and done what we've done. Nearly two years of marriage, almost 5 years since we first moved to Southern Africa, and a whirlwind of change in between.

Botswana, Thailand, Angola. India, Mozambique...

And never alone.

All of you... all who read this, pray for us, support us, write to us, encourage us... you keep us company in all of it.

We don't take lightly that you trust us so much.

It's a solemn and grave responsibility.

And we rest in the joy that your trust gives us. Your gracious, encouraging, patient, deep trust in us.

That we follow the lead of the Master. That we keep our eyes on the Redeemer. That we place our feet in the footprints of the Creator. That we love... we love the Savior.

That we obey the words of Jesus Christ.

Thanks.

It's been a while since we've sent a proper "newsletter". We hope you've all been able to keep up with us on our weekly blog www.jonandlayne.com.

In our last newsletter we wrote of our plans to go to Angola for three months to serve and love people alongside missionaries from Operation Mobilization (OM). We went in February to Menongue, Angola to see if it was a place and a partnership the Lord would lead us to stay in. We loved it. God really does get all the credit for our time there. The people of Menongue were incredibly welcoming and warm. We were welcomed into the lives and homes of some sweet, sweet people. We spoke and ministered alongside some great Angolan men and women of God. We loved and were loved by people who have pain in ways we will never know.

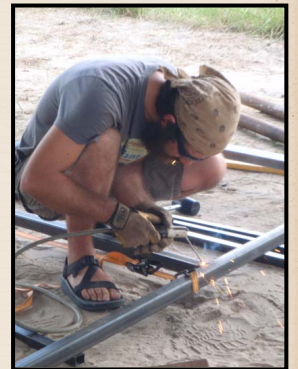
We lived on a very self-sufficient property with other missionaries, and Jon was able to learn how to work with metal (welding, grinding, bending) and even build a chicken pen.

Layne started a craft group/Bible study with some young girls, and Jon led a Bible study with some men he worked with on the OM property. We both got the chance to minister in a youth group a few times, and Jon even got to be a guest speaker at a local church denomination Easter conference. All of this in Portuguese! We both grew in our Portuguese language speaking in so many ways while we were in Angola.

After about 1 and a half months in Angola Layne got very sick. She woke up in the middle of the night with knife-like pain in her upper abdomen and curled up in agony on the floor for about 8 hours until it passed. She felt fine for about a week until the same thing, at the same hour happened again. One week later... it happened again. After much prayer and seeking God's wisdom, we decided to cut our time with OM short and leave after only two of the three months we planned to stay. Angolan medical care, like every other part of Angola infrastructure, was decimated during the Angolan Civil War and is still far behind the care found in Angola's neighboring countries. We decided we would go to Namibia to seek medical care.

In praying about our long-term stay in Angola we realized that God was closing this Angolan chapter in our lives. God has moved on our hearts to go back to Maputo, Mozambique and partner in ministry with Jorge and Alice Pratas under MDI. Layne has written about our heart for Mozambique below, and you can read more about it there.

For the last month we have been in Namibia visiting doctors and having tests done to try to find out what was the cause of Layne's sickness in Angola. After a month and much prayer, we are still without a diagnosis. However, Layne has not felt the symptoms of her sickness for three weeks now and we feel a peace to move on back to Mozambique. It's been almost 4 months since we've been there and we are anxious to return.



from layne's journal:

When it was all gone...

When I didn't have my physical comforts, a comfortable bed, a flushing toilet, a place to put my clothes, a couch, an oven, etc.

When I didn't have my sense of security, a proper lock, a fence around the property, a door on the restroom, etc.

When I didn't have my health, a doctor, a diagnosis, proper medicine, etc.

When I didn't have my ministry, an outlet for my passions, a way to feel useful, etc.

When it was all gone, was He enough?

My time in Angola felt like a time of ripping away everything safe and secure, everything comfortable, everything I took for granted. Looking back at the past three months of life, it is almost as if the Lord had to strip me bare of all frills to remind me that *He* is what it is all about, and *He* is enough... and now He has overwhelmed me with blessings once again.

from jon's journal

He knows the plans He has... prosperous, good plans (Jeremiah 29:11). It's funny, when God said that to Jeremiah He was saying it to a people, not just one person. He was telling a people, a nation, that He had good plans for it. But right before he told them that, He told them they had to be patient for 70 years before they would see those plans... 70 years (Jeremiah 29:10).

In the meantime God told this nation that it was to plant, to wait, to be patient, to have children, to harvest crops *where they were at that moment* and before these "plans" God had come to pass. God's plans were for 70 years later. Entire generations would die without seeing God's "plans to prosper and not harm" come to pass.

God's plans were for 70 years later. Entire generations would die without seeing God's "plans to prosper and not harm" come to pass. *Remember Jon... remember.* God's plans are bigger than you.

God's plans are bigger than my lifespan. I can live and die and *never* see these "plans to prosper and not harm". I could be "living by faith when I die." I may "not receive the things promised, only welcome them from a distance" (Hebrews 11:13). Could I do that? Could I live and die and never see the things promised? Could I trust a God who asks me to die in His service and not see the things promised?

God's plans are so much bigger than I. God's promises are for so many more than I. I hope that I can one day be counted... maybe not one "of whom the world was not worthy" (Hebrews 11:38) but maybe one to whom my Savior can one day say, "Well done. Come rest." I hope so.



next (from Layne):

May 26th we will be pulling in to Maputo, Mozambique... *home*. For the first time in our marriage we are ready to plant some roots and get settled, and we could not be more ecstatic. On June 1st we will be moving in to our very own home (my heart nearly squeals as I write that). The Lord has provided us with a pretty amazing opportunity to rent a house, not an apartment, for much cheaper than we were able to find anything else. It is bigger than we would choose for ourselves; however, we believe the Lord has plans we may be unaware of, and we are excited to see them unfold.

We are antsy to get back into ministry, as we have felt almost as if we were put on hold because of my health. While in Maputo we will be involved in a couple of areas. As many of you are familiar with, it is our plan to continue with the ministry that captured our hearts a few months ago: The painful, heart wrenching, beautiful, and humbling ministry to the sick and dying in Maputo General Hospital's Oncology ward. We are anxious to see our old friends and develop sweet new relationships.

We will also be working alongside and partnering with our dear friend and fellow missionary, Jorge Pratas, who has developed a local sports ministry in Maputo, Movimento Desportivo Internacional (MDI). MDI is a branch of a Portuguese ministry, founded by Arménio Anjos, a friend we met in Portugal whom we love and trust immensely. MDI is a ministry under an American organization called International Sports Ministry (ISM). ISM is a small family-like organization, supporting 6 other missionary couples on the field. We have officially joined ISM and MDI, who are partnering with Voices of the World, supporting and keeping us on the field.

Jon will probably be more involved in the sports aspect of the ministry, as boys tend to be more involved in sports, though I will join in where appropriate. We are excited to get involved and disciple youth in a very real and tangible way. Soccer is a way of life for young African boys; if you show up at a field with a ball, you can gather a crowd within minutes. What a perfect way to present Christ and freedom He longs to offer. There is currently an ongoing club at a local boys' orphanage, something that particularly tugs at our heart.

If you wish to support us please email us or Vicki Heller (who is in charge of our finances) at spartacusheller@gmail.com or vickiheller@yahoo.com and we would be happy to get you more information regarding how you can become involved in the team that is sending us. If you have any questions at all about the ministry we are involved in please do not hesitate to contact us. You can always see our latest news at our website www.jonandlayne.com. You can subscribe there to our blog and receive an email whenever we update it.

Jonathan and Layne Heller

Missionaries sent by Voices Of The World Missions

Missionaries commissioned by Trinity Christian Fellowship and Quiet Time Ministries