

# Madagascar Matters



Baobab trees, Morondava

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**"Let us then approach God's throne with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."**

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**Hebrews 4:16**

## **YEAR 2015 - prayers & praise**

The year 2015 was one in which I was shocked and surprised, encouraged and disappointed, frustrated and fulfilled.

**Jan-** In Mandritsara we had a wonderful long rainy season followed by a good rice harvest.

**Feb-** We welcomed Dr Thomas and Esther Beck as new members of our Friends of Mandritsara team.

**Apr-** Our missionary team managed to negotiate some fairly bad roads to go on a Spiritual Team Retreat in Mahajanga.

**May-** A local mobile phone company finished and switched on a 3G pylon. We now have a better internet service that works well - when it works!!

**Jun-** I enjoyed a birthday treat in the form of a holiday with my mum, sister and a family friend. That was swiftly followed by 20th Anniversary celebrations of the Good News Hospital.

**Jul-** At the end of July a new law was set in place by which work permits are now required before our Malagasy

visas can be obtained or renewed. This came as a surprise, bringing extra work and stress for the team.

**Aug-** The school of nursing saw the graduation of their class of students, 4 of whom had graduated as the school's first lot of midwives.

We had a flying visit from a couple of Wycliffe personnel who seemed to be interested in considering a work in the local Tsimihety dialect. This is absolutely essential since the translation used here is in Official Malagasy, some of which is not understood by our Tsimihety friends.

**Sept-** We celebrated the 25th Anniversary of the Bible Baptist Church in Mandritsara together with the 20th Anniversary of Pastor Julien's appointment as pastor there.

**Oct-** I was delighted to welcome a team of 19 Northern Irish friends the majority of whom were from my sending church, Kells Presbyterian along with a very brave Mike Ewan from SIM-Ireland. We were also excited to welcome Sarah German, a physiotherapist from England as a new member to our

missionary team. Our prayer for more Malagasy doctors was also answered by the arrival of Dr Ionisoa from Tana. Please pray for her and for her husband as he continues to look for work in Mandritsara.

Unfortunately a few weeks before the arrival of the Irish team, the doctors and team leader of our missionary team advised me (insisted!) that I return home with the Irish team due to a few health issues. I've been to the GP, seen a cardiologist and am now on a waiting list for a further investigation. Since the cardiologist is not unduly concerned about my health, it has been agreed that I can wait out the majority of the waiting time in Mandritsara. I'm hoping to return to Madagascar mid-February.

**Nov-** Since my departure in October, the team have been thrilled by the arrival of a primary school teacher, Naomi Coleman who has come to teach the missionary children each afternoon. We are grateful to God for both Sarah and Naomi, who have committed to stay for 2 years

initially. People with their skills have been the subject of our prayers for a long time and we are thankful that God has answered. Please pray for them as they learn the Malagasy language and become familiar with aspects of the culture.

**Dec-** Dr Tamsin Booth sadly came to the end of her 8 months with us. Leaving with her was the Judkins family, Peter, Claire-Lise, Keziah and Naomi. They are now on Home Assignment in the UK until June.

Here in N.I. I had a lovely visit from Dr Victoria Parsonson. She previously worked in Mandritsara for 3 years. It was great to catch up with her but a little odd to see her all wrapped up in winter woollies!

December also saw the realisation of a new church plant in Ambohimandroso, the village just outside the hospital. It is a wonderful 'problem' to have when a church congregation outgrows the number of seats available. That was one reason for the church in Mandritsara to decide to start a new church plant. Ambohimandroso is at a crossroads through which people going to Mandritsara from northern villages have to pass. Since it is also situated near the hospital it is ideally located for family of inpatients to attend. Please pray that this church would be used to attract people who would not normally attend church. Pray that those who come would hear the Gospel and respond to Christ by accepting Him as their Saviour.

#### **Please pray:**

- that our team would work well together and support one another
- for more Malagasy doctors
- for the new class of nursing students and their teachers
- for Mat Linley and all the responsibilities he has as our team leader
- that things would go smoothly for Sarah German as she prepares to open the Physiotherapy Department

#### **Give thanks:**

- for the arrival of Dr Ionisoa, Naomi Coleman and Sarah German
- for the new church plant in Ambohimandroso
- for the Irish team both for the fund-raising for and the building of the new out-patient toilets and changing room/restroom for the personnel. Give thanks too for the medical personnel on the team who helped, where and when it was possible in the hospital. Give thanks that the members of the team who visited villages were able to encourage the people they met.
- for the many short-term medical missionaries who have arrived recently to help
- that the Lord would continue to build His church among the Tsimihety people in Madagascar



Dr Victoria Parsonson

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Thank you once again for your continued support and prayers during the past year. Do please pray for us in 2016.

*Debbie*



Please have a look at the following website:

[www.mandritsara.org.uk](http://www.mandritsara.org.uk)

for details of how you can pray for us and help financially.

**Thank you!**