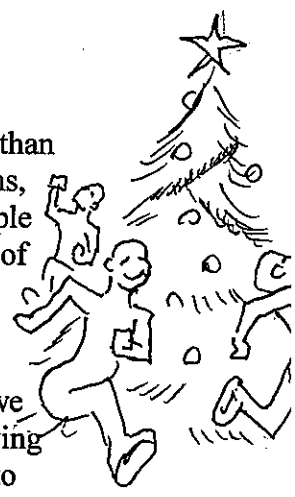


Dear Friends,

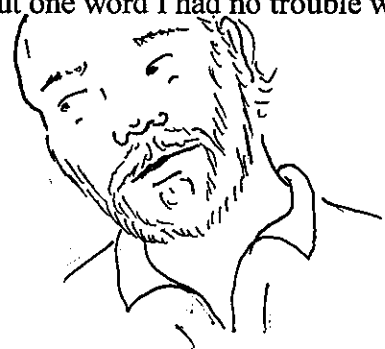
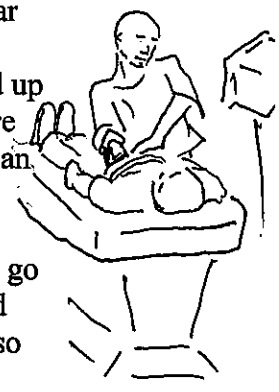
Recently a friend shared this quote in his newsletter that really ministered to me:

"He shall call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honor him." How diversified the range of trouble! How almost infinite it's extent! How universal and dire it's conditions! How despairing it's waves! Yet the range of prayer is as great as trouble, is as universal as sorrow, as infinite as grief. And prayer can relieve all these evils which come to the children of men. There is no tear which prayer cannot wipe away or dry up. There is no depression of spirits which it cannot relieve and elevate. There is no despair which it cannot dispel.
(The Possibilities of Prayer, E.M. Bounds)

The months of November and December are, in ordinary circumstances, more hectic than others. Preparations for the Christmas season often require much thinking ahead, plans, preparations. For us they usually include visas and plane reservations for several people from various locations to some pre-determined somewhere on top of the figuring out of what to buy for whom, etc. This year we added yet another side dish to the already proverbial full plate; a side dish that was to soon become the main course!



Last month we mentioned at the end of our letter that there were some health issues we were dealing with. It all started with a routine yearly physical that we had before leaving back to Africa in October. Just before we left our doctor informed us that he wanted to redo a urine test for Tim as he saw some microscopic blood in the first sample. Our time in the US by that point was short so we had time to resubmit but not to find out results. As you know, we flew from the US to Dakar to spend some time with our daughter, Andrea, before returning to Bamako and then heading to Guinea. While in Dakar our son Joel called and said that the doctor's office had contacted him to say that the blood was still there and that they recommended we see a urologist. We finished our visit in Dakar and returned to Bamako and sent out a message to missionaries here to ask if anyone knew of a good urologist in Bamako. We had just one response so the next day headed up the big hill not far from our house to find this man. We realized later that we were there after official consultation hours, however the doctor was willing to see us. He ordered an ultrasound done and that afternoon Tim headed to the lab. One of the great time consuming factors when you have medical issues here in West Africa is the inordinate amount of "go-come" you can experience when trying to go through any process. You go one place and find out they are closed. Come back tomorrow. So you go tomorrow and find out the technician "stepped out". Come back in 3 hours. Added to that, you are also responsible to go and pick up your results and take them back to the doctor. There's a reason that's not a great idea. Once we had results in hand (which we received too late to take in that same day) I made the mistake of opening them. My French is pretty basic to start with and my medical French is non-existent. But one word I had no trouble with: "tumeur".

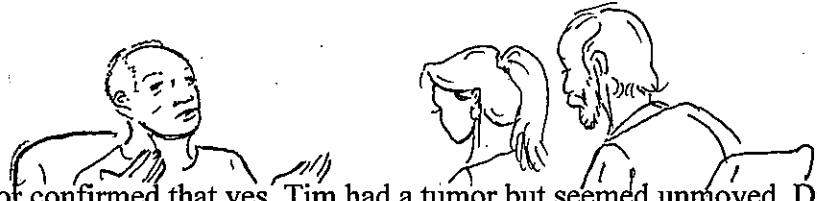


MICHIGAN
TO
GUINEA
(NONREFUNDABLE)

JOEL

KANSAS
TO
GUINEA
(NONREFUNDABLE)

JONATHAN



ASTRALIA
TO
GUINEA
(NONREFUNDABLE)

KATIE

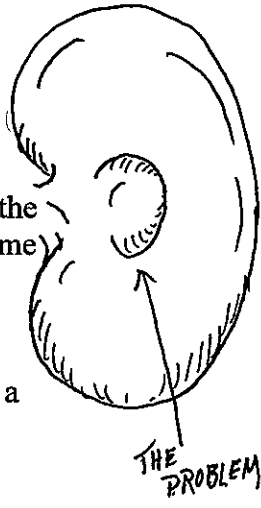
SENEGAL
TO
GUINEA
(NONREFUNDABLE)

ANDREA

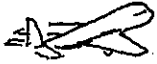
The next day the doctor confirmed that yes, Tim had a tumor but seemed unmoved. Did we want him to remove it there or did we want to return to the US? As we asked more questions, he decided to do a more in depth scan, what I believe was a PET scan as well as some blood and urine work. So we started the process over again with "go-come". I think of everything, this was the most frustrating, the amount of time everything was taking. We had already planned and purchased tickets for our Christmas in Siguiri this year and we had no idea if this would still happen, and if not, where in the world would we go? My heart just broke to think of several of the kids alone during that time, yet we know above all we needed to get answers to what needed to be done to keep Tim alive and healthy. With thanks to a good friend at our church in Kansas, Tim Krause, we were able to locate a urologist in Kansas. However, we had two choices if we went with him: wait until after Christmas, or schedule a first meeting for December 21st. We asked about waiting and he didn't see any reason we couldn't. So we decided to wait.



I have always loved how God lets you know when maybe this isn't the best choice! If you're lucky, those hints are subtle. But sometimes He lovingly bashes you over the head so that there is no doubt where He's leading. We had advice and strongly worded suggestions coming at us from all directions after this and finally decided that we needed to head home and get this taken care of. That very day we made flight reservations and headed home. Meanwhile we were put in contact with a doctor from our church in Kansas, Joe Cates, who agreed to take Tim in and do surgery very quickly for us. We flew back to the US on November 22nd and Tim was in surgery by November 29th! Everything went really well, his kidney was removed along with the cancerous tumor inside. By day one he was already sitting up in a chair and by day two he was walking the halls! We were amazed at how quickly things progressed. Several days later he was home and has continued to improve literally daily.



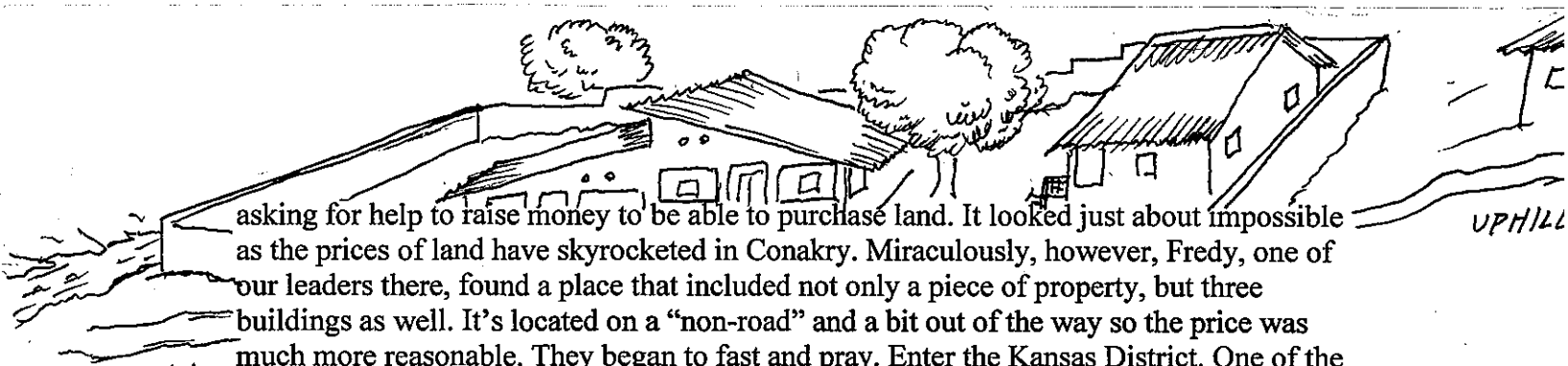
THE PROBLEM



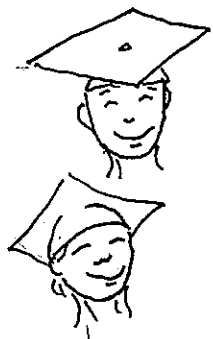
We still questioned whether or not we'd be able to continue our plans to celebrate Christmas in Africa with all the children. If not we had some major planning to do and a lot of ticket changes to make. However, Tim was given clearance to go back with Jonathan who is coming at the latest date. I was unable to change my ticket because of the cost (almost double the price of the ticket by this time!) so I flew back to Bamako with our son Joel on December 7th. Andrea arrives on the 16th, Katie on the 18th, and Tim and Jonathan on the 19th!! We're all pretty amazed that this all still happened. We were ready for either way, but feel blessed that God allowed us to continue as planned.

Stepping back in time a bit farther, the reason we were in the US in October was to travel and speak, raise some funds, and touch base with our supporters. It was a really incredible time. There were many highlights, but the one I want to share with you includes some more incredible God moments for the work in Guinea. As we have reported in the past, our church in Conakry has suffered from its inception with having nowhere reliable in which to worship. The places they have found in the past have always been owned by Muslim landlords who eventually kick them out when worship takes place. This has included not only rented buildings but also rented homes. The congregation has been discouraged and many have left. The church has been on its knees for some time now asking God to provide a place. We finally set up a project and began

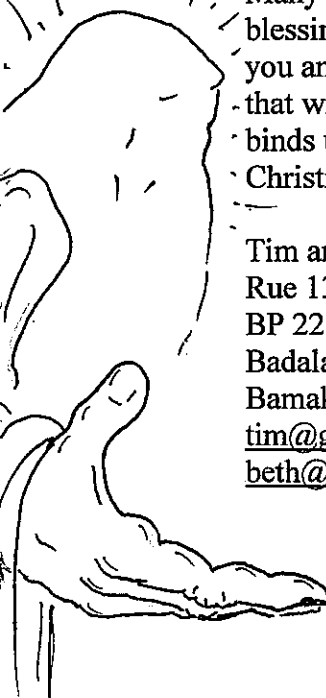
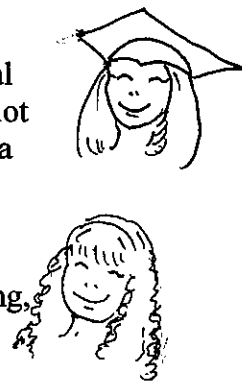




asking for help to raise money to be able to purchase land. It looked just about impossible as the prices of land have skyrocketed in Conakry. Miraculously, however, Fredy, one of our leaders there, found a place that included not only a piece of property, but three buildings as well. It's located on a "non-road" and a bit out of the way so the price was much more reasonable. They began to fast and pray. Enter the Kansas District. One of the teams that came through heard about this need and brought it back to the District who presented it as a need among the congregations. It was the highlight at the Professional Church Worker's Conference this year and congregations were asked to bring an offering. Several other donors were approached as well, and by the end of our visit we were able to bring back word that enough money had been collected to purchase the property. Glory to God! We sent word to the church. Fredy was almost in tears when we shared the news. By the time we had the funds the landlord was already ready to sell to another buyer, convinced that we would not come through. I'm sure Fredy and the others conveyed to him what a mighty God they have! We're so thankful for this. Offerings continue to come in and we will also be able to provide funding to get the property in shape. Best of all, the congregation can now come together as often as they like for worship and teaching. There is a building they can use for administration and one to house the pastor as well. God is so very good.



This is going to be a really big year for us coming up. Three of our children will be having a graduation of some kind: Joel will graduate from Ferris with a degree in pharmacy; Jonathan will graduate from Pitt State (Kansas) with a degree in International Business; and Andrea will graduate high school from Dakar Academy. There will be a lot of transition as the two boys move to wherever they are to be working next year, Andrea says good bye to a permanent residence in Africa, and Katie returns from a year in Australia. Tim and I will be coming back to the US in July for our furlough. These next months coming up with include a lot of preparation for all this as well as an eyeglass team that is coming in March to minister in Conakry, a retreat, an administration meeting, and some more general travel for Tim. It's almost daunting to think about but trusting that God will lead and provide us all we need!



Many of you kept track of all that was happening these past few weeks and were a blessing to us through cards, scripture notes, and words of comfort. We're so thankful for you and for our fellowship with you! As we come into this Christmas time we remember that without our Father's gift of His Son to this Earth, we would not have the Spirit that binds us together as brothers and sisters in Christ. May God pour His Spirit on you this Christmas season as you share the Good News of our fellowship with our Creator!!

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In Christmas Joy!

Tim + beth

Tim and Beth Heiney

