

Baptist Missionary Society

March 2011 update from Alan & Anne Penn our Link Missionaries working in Kathmandu, Nepal

Dear all

Sorry that this is a group letter again but I am fighting a losing battle keeping up with correspondence. As most of you know Alan had stents put in his heart over 6 weeks ago now and the effect was amazing. Within 24 hours he looked better than he had for months and was home within 2 days.... Unfortunately post operatively when he had just returned to work he developed a blood clot (a DVT) in his left leg which necessitated a further 10 days in hospital. Again h has had excellent care and thanks to easy internet access even here in Nepal has been able to keep up with some work.

We have both managed to have our first full week at work since 26th January which has been great! Alan has to rest his leg for most of the time so has it up on a coffee table both at home (see attached photo) and at work but also has to move around for a few minutes every hour. We have always enjoyed the 30 minute walk to and from work but are now having to use a taxi or a UMN vehicle. We leave work a little early to avoid the worst of the traffic so it is nice to have a rest when we get home instead of getting our meal straight away.



The DVT does not seem to be improving quickly, apparently it will slowly be absorbed but as long as Alan is careful it is not causing him any pain.

We celebrated UMN's 57th birthday on 5th March so the Kathmandu staff had tea and birthday cake in the UMN garden the day before and then last Monday when all of our staff from various locations throughout Nepal were in town for a planning and learning week we had another cake decorated with UMN's new logo to share with all of them at morning tea. These meetings are held at one of the large churches in our area. The photo shows Mark our Executive Director cutting the cake. The new logo was designed by a short term volunteer from Newbury in Berkshire sent by BMS World Mission. His usual job is designing DVD covers among other things. He is exploring whether he should apply for full time mission work so please pray for him. He returns to the UK at the end of this month



The other photo is of one of our neighbours. She greets us every evening as we return from work with a call of 'Hi! How are you?' and a beaming smile. We are also welcomed home by another neighbour's 2 dogs expecting us to give them a biscuit each.

At the Learning Review teams were sharing some of their work. I spent a few hours there on 2 days and heard about the Education team's new reading book which is beautifully produced in full colour and tells how to make a kitchen garden to supplement the usual diet of rice and lentils. The health team were telling of an approach that encourages families in poor villages where many children are malnourished to meet together to discuss why some children thrive more than others. Are they fed more often, are the families growing vegetables, are babies breast fed for longer rather than moved on to rice water, is all water boiled before use, etc., etc. It has been shown that this method means that changes are sustained rather than stopped when the visiting experts depart.

We are at the moment looking for a primary teacher to come for 6 months or longer to teach a small group of children whose parents work in the hospital in Tansen. The teacher who was coming in early June has had to withdraw for family reasons and it will be difficult to retain our doctors without a school for their children. If you know of anyone who would be free to take up this challenge do let me know. There is furnished accommodation available but no salary or air fares!

UMN's Agreement with the Government has passed through all the stages at last and all we need now is a signature from the Minister of Home Affairs. Alas we have no minister! We now have a Prime Minister as part of a coalition government but no agreement on who should take the potentially lucrative posts. Until the agreement is signed we cannot apply for visas (another long process) and our visa extension expires on April 15th. Please pray for the whole political situation.

Thank you all for your concern and prayers over the past weeks. We really are fine although we have had our frustrating moments.

Love to you all Anne and Alan

