



AID SUDAN OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

This month, we wanted to present our newsletter in a format that allows you to see the impact that Christ is having on individual lives. At Aid Sudan, God is working in a mighty way to develop a southern Sudanese radio station and to build water wells, schools and medical clinics in villages across southern Sudan.

But our God is not so big that He doesn't work personally person by person. We hope you are touched and awed at God's work at Aid Sudan through the stories of Marcia (a mission team member), Maker (Moses Project Missionary), Kerry (Aid Sudan's Sudan Country Director) and Sarah (Aid Sudan's newest team member).

My God bless you this holiday season!

The team at Aid Sudan



Marcia's Story ***An Adventure in Missions***

Marcia Turner hasn't seen her childhood home of Sudan in 44 years. But as a 2008 Aid Sudan mission team member to Nasir, she returned to a land that her family was forced to forsake when she was only sixteen.

The daughter of missionaries, Marcia was born in Egypt but quickly found her home in Sudan at 6 weeks old. Her father, Dr. Gordon, relocated his wife and children (Marcia has 3 sisters and 3 brothers) to the small villages of southern Sudan. At first they went to Wang Lel in the Bahr el Ghazal region and then eventually were stationed in the village of Nasir. As you can imagine, life was different for a child in Sudan but it was all Marcia knew and all she loved. Largely isolated from the rest of the world, they lived in mud huts, sewed their own clothes for boarding school and relied on a local generator for the basic way of life.

For food, her family tended a garden, fished in the river and purchased foreign products from merchants when they could. Africa was full of adventure and Marcia saw many animals – hyenas, hippos, giraffes and leopards - in her backyard that Americans can only find at a zoo. At night, she could sometimes hear the roar of lions and elephants crashing through the trees from the safety of her porch.

In 1964, murmurings of war between the North and the South began to surface and the North began to demand that all missionaries leave the country. It wasn't safe and one

day, Dr. Gordon brought news to his family that the local officials insisted they leave immediately. Marcia's parents and two younger siblings fled Nasir for Alexandria, Egypt, where Marcia and her four siblings were attending boarding school. The Gordon family finished out the school year and then returned to the United States. After they left, Marcia heard reports of indiscriminate killing and the crucifixions of Christians. Knowing that the buildings in Nasir could not withstand warfare, she assumed that her childhood home had been destroyed.

Though she didn't think she would ever return to Sudan, Marcia didn't know her adventure and story would land her back in the village she grew up in and the country she had to abandon. This month, Marcia returned to the village of Nasir and was recognized by the people the minute her feet touched the ground. Only the foundation was left from her family's first house while their second house was in good condition and serves as a base for Doctors Without Borders' staff.

The people remembered her father who had treated them, or in some cases, delivered them as children and wanted to serve and honor his daughter. During a special Sunday night service, elder after elder shared testimonies about how grateful they were for the service of her family. Each team member on the trip was touched at the impact that one family had on the village of Nasir and the gratitude for Marcia's family and the service to them so long ago.

As Marcia returns home, she brings back with her photos of a village very much alive and rebuilt and a gift for her father from the grateful people of Nasir, Sudan. Marcia now lives in Houston, Texas and has 2 sons and four grandchildren.

Maker's Story

The Moses Project in Action

Maker Manyang has seen and experienced tragedy as you and I never have. He witnessed the death of family and friends. He wanted for food on more than several occasions. He walked from Sudan to Ethiopia in search of refuge. He was displaced to America and her own set of foreign challenges. He has been separated from wife and daughter for years at a time. He is a survivor from the civil war in Sudan. And now, Maker has returned home to Sudan to be reunited with wife and daughter and serve his people as a Moses Project missionary by sharing the hope found in Jesus Christ.



When war broke out in Sudan, Maker's village was attacked and he was displaced from his home. What followed can only be described as living in a state of terror. It was difficult to find food. There was little water. Each day brought multiple bombings from the government in Khartoum and many were killed. The government was always looking for Maker and his friends, so they were constantly on the move. However, living in a war zone steered Maker to the church and a relationship with Jesus Christ. He knew that someone or something created him and that the "someone" had to be the God of the Universe. This revelation began a different kind of journey – one with hope. At the refugee camp in Kakuma where he eventually settled, Maker led his people in prayer

and the study of God's Word.

When he was granted asylum to the United States, Maker settled first in Atlanta with other Sudanese Lost Boys. With his feet firmly planted in God's plan, Maker took on a leadership role in the Sudanese church, leading Bible studies and heading up the youth ministry. During this time, Maker returned to Sudan to a great celebration and an even bigger blessing – a beautiful wife! After the wedding, Maker had to return to the United States, leaving his new bride behind and trusting God for the next step.

In Houston, Maker learned about Aid Sudan's Moses Project and felt certain God wanted him to answer this call. After signing up for the Moses Project, Maker was trained in community development initiatives and Chronological Bible Storying. The program includes rotations on the ground in Sudan, but Maker was unable to return to Sudan for the first two rotations as he was not yet a United States citizen. Aid Sudan mission teams visited his wife and daughter, delivering gifts, taking pictures and filming video for Maker to see. Still, he trusted that God had His own timing and the day would come when he would return with help to his own village and hold his 2-year-old daughter, Akur, for the first time.

After much waiting and prayer, Maker celebrated his American citizenship in June and not long after that, he was granted a passport. This month, Maker Manyang returned to Sudan as a missionary to his own people, held his daughter for the first time and kissed his wife. Right now, he is in his home area of southern Sudan sharing the hope of Jesus Christ as one who knows the power of redemption, answered prayer and the mighty compassion of God in all circumstances.

Kerry's Story

Life at the Uganda Office

Director of Aid Sudan's Uganda office, Kerry Henderson lives with his wife, Neltia, and three boys in Kampala, Uganda. As you can imagine, life in Uganda is unpredictable and far from the "typical" days in America. Kerry builds relationships in Uganda and Sudan, travels frequently to Sudan for ministry work and handles all logistics for mission teams coming into Sudan. Oh, and he knows how to fly a plane.



During the month of October, Kerry represented Aid Sudan at the Cush Consultation meeting in Yei, Sudan. The powerful four days brought together representatives from approximately 60 different mission organizations and churches. Each day, they worshiped, prayed and looked for ways to work together in southern Sudan. Additionally, the meeting welcomed many Sudanese pastors who spoke of the need and challenges in their respective areas. When the group dispersed, Kerry felt encouraged by new friends working alongside Aid Sudan in southern Sudan.

About fifteen minutes into the flight to Kampala, the pilot noticed that the fuel gauges read empty even though the fuel had been checked before they left. Soon after they noticed this problem, the electronics and radios started to shut down and it was certain the plane was having an electrical failure. Kerry always wondered how God would use

his ability to fly and it seemed that now he didn't have to wonder anymore. He took the controls of the airplane and flew it while the pilot went through the emergency checklist to make sure they could conserve as much power as possible. Fortunately, they were able to safely land the plane at Paguba, an airstrip in the middle of Murchison Falls Game Park. The mechanic on-site confirmed that the alternator had gone out and the battery was dead.

Having to stay overnight, Kerry found out the next morning that he would have to be rerouted to Arua before going home to Kampala. He was ready to go home but knew that God had a plan in all this seemingly bad luck. While waiting for a flight in Arua, he met a Ugandan girl named Gladys at the local store. Gladys had been saved a year ago, but she was struggling to survive with her daughter after the death of her husband. Additionally, she had been witnessing to Muslims who were telling her things that confused her. Needless to say, she was questioning God. Using his training in Islam, Kerry was able to share with her from the Word, speak to the confusion she was feeling from Muslims and encourage her in God's love, even when she didn't understand why things were happening. The chance meeting ended with prayer and Gladys' thankful tears.

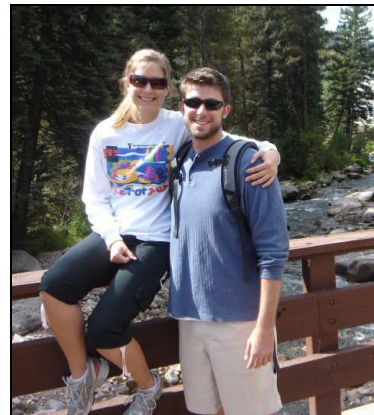
The reason for the stop became clear with God using Kerry's previous training in flying and Islam to accomplish His goals in ministering and comforting one of his children.

Sarah's Story

Landing at Aid Sudan

Sometimes God puts a desire in our heart, and we don't know how or when that desire will be fulfilled. He leads us on a journey that is hard to recognize at times, but all the while God is working to get us exactly where He needs us. Such is the case for Sarah Thompson, Aid Sudan's Director of Development and Administration. Newly married, Sarah is the most recent addition to the Aid Sudan team in Houston and immediately dove in by maintaining the office while everyone was on the ground in Sudan.

For much of her life, Sarah felt a calling to ministry though she didn't always know what kind. At first, she thought that calling would be fulfilled through medicine and pursued this field of study at Texas A&M. About halfway through college, she accepted the fact that she was not supposed to be a doctor, changed her major to English and set her mind on graduate school. Through the Lord's guidance, she attended the George Bush School of Government and Public Service and received a master's degree in international affairs. Her God-instilled desire and education started to align and she began to sense that she would eventually do humanitarian work ... but not just yet. As her now husband, Austin, lived in Houston, Sarah focused her career search in the short-term to intelligence and homeland security in the Houston area and accepted a position with NASA post-graduation.



Working at NASA was an awesome learning experience, but her calling became stronger and she felt the Lord had something more suited for her desires in store. But as most of us are when we are following and trusting God, she wasn't sure when that would happen. Sarah began to search for an open door in international, humanitarian-type work that centered on the hope of Jesus Christ. One of the missions pastors at her home church, Frank Blackwood, the founder of Aid Sudan, encouraged her to meet with Executive Director Peter Swann and eventually, this connection led to many conversations regarding the positions Aid Sudan was looking to fill.

God's path became clearer for Sarah as her interest in Aid Sudan and the Sudanese people was cultivated more and more each day. Finally, a job that seemed like a perfect fit! After lunch one day with Peter, Sarah and Austin felt God at work while Austin fought the desire to jump up from the table and yell, "We're in!"

In October, Sarah quit her job at NASA. Austin and Sarah got married. And she began working at Aid Sudan just before the November teams left for work in Sudan. Though her landing at Aid Sudan might not have seemed like the most direct or clear path, it certainly is the exact position and timing that God had in mind.