
September/October Update

1 message

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Hello family and friends!

Where has the time gone!? How are we already halfway through October?!

Maybe it is because I feel as though I have a ticking clock constantly reminding me of the time that is passing and that soon it will be "the end" of me living here in Zambia full time. Or maybe it is because term 3 is always so incredibly busy so there is no space to realize that time is moving so incredibly fast. Either way, I feel like I am in an hour glass with the sand running out and there is no way to slow it down.

As I shared with you all in my last email, my life in December is about to experience a pretty big change. While I will still be working for TES, I will be relocating to Canada with visits to Zambia through out the year.

This change is coming with a lot of emotions. The closer it gets, the bigger the feelings. Not all the feelings are sad though as I have many things I am looking forward to. One excitement is to be done with long distance dating with my oh so patient boyfriend <3. He deserves a lot of praise for how patient he is and how he has supported me daily for the past 3 years. Face Timing with terrible internet connection and a 9 hour time difference are reasons alone to give him praise.

I am also excited to be apart of daily rhythms that my friends and family have continued to do without me for the past 8.5 years. Thanksgivings, anniversaries, birthdays, graduations, regular Sunday lunches, girls night etc. All these regular, almost mundane activities, you really grow to miss when you are halfway across the world.

I am also excited for this new role! My current position is very day to day and often I need to be reminded by my boss of the bigger picture. While there are daily challenges that need attention, God is doing so much at TES. Taking a step back and viewing this work from a new angle will be a joy to experience.

But this change is being compounded with the fact that we are about to say goodbye to our very first grad class. I am sure you are all tired of hearing me mention this over and over again, but I cannot express enough the gravity of this accomplishment for not only the students, but for our school and community at large. Most of these students are the first to graduate grade 12 in their families. The feat they are about to accomplish is huge.

The excitement is tangible and is always being discussed. But the sadness of saying goodbye to these students is also so strong. I went into the grade 12 class the other day and saw the countdown on their board for how long until their final exams start. 13 days. As I read that, the emotions crept up my throat and I told the students I needed to walk out before the emotions spilled over. My first teaching class, the ones I have seen every day and every school season for the past 8.5 years will not be there next year. I know we cannot stay in the same place forever (look at me! Even I need to change) but this place without these students almost feels impossible. But. Change is good. Change is needed. It is time for us to let them go and know that God is going to bring them to their next adventure.

These past two months have been full! Below is a list of prayer requests that I would appreciate you coming alongside me in.

1. About two weeks ago, one of our staff members passed away. He had been struggling with an unknown sickness for a month or so and eventually he passed away. He was only 30. Health care here in Zambia is severely lacking, especially in the rural areas. No one quite knows what happened and we probably will never know. Prayers for his family as he had young children and a wife.

2. Graduation for our grade 12s is on November 28. We will have North Americans, student's families, past staff and more attending this event (including my mom!). 300 people will be coming out to celebrate this milestone. We are so excited to have them. But this is also a lot of work that I am responsible to plan and coordinate. I am feeling a little nervous of where I will be at mentally as at that point I will be weeks from leaving Zambia and I know I will be feeling all the feels. I am thankful my mom will be here to help ground me and be a support. I covet your prayers for me during that time.

3. Exam classes- Our grade 7, 9 and 12 students are heading into exams. This is always a big deal with lots of nerves. This is especially big for our grade 12 students as the results you get strongly depict what school you can get into post secondary. The stress and pressure is huge. Through out Zambia, suicide rates sky rocket due to the incredibly high pressure students are being put under. Pray for our students as they face these daunting tests.

As always, here are some photos of life here:



My partner in crime and dear friend



The whole staff went to visit the family of our staff member who passed away. It was a sacred moment to step away from work, walk the paths our students walk and go into the home of someone who is deeply grieving. This was such a powerful example to me of how Zambians come together for one another.



The traditional outfit for women to wear to a funeral (Chitenge on the bottom and a head covering) I was told I look like a real African woman now haha.



I always love the creativity you see in the shops. Independence Day is October 24.



One of my favourite things, slow mornings drinking coffee on my porch



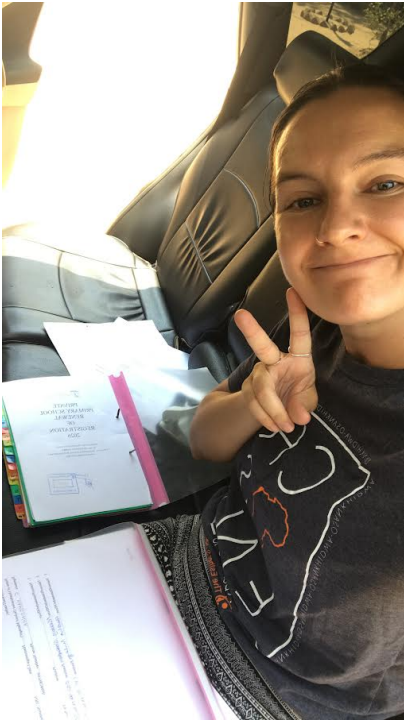
After 8.5 years of wearing skirts and dresses to work every day, "casual Friday" has been implemented and women can now wear trousers on Fridays. This is a big deal. We were only a little bit excited!



Joel <3 Thank you for your steady, daily support



"Teacher's Day" with our amazing teaching staff. A well deserved day off.



Behind the scenes of some of the unglamorous work. Spent 6 hours in the back of a car, in the 35 degree heat, rearranging files for our school registration. What a joy it was ;p Thankful for coworkers who remain positive and encouraging even in the unfortunate moments (Terry not pictured as he was out buying more paper ;p)

As always, you all have been incredibly supportive. Thank you for coming alongside this journey! It isn't done yet and I feel as though God is really just getting started.

Blessings,

Leslie

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