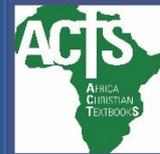




# Garland Update



Mission Africa and ACTS

December 2020

Prayer Letter No. 101

## Happy Christmas & God's blessings for the New Year 2021

We are so grateful for all your prayers and support during this strange Covid year. As we look back, we are glad to report many answers to prayer on the family front and on the ministry front. May you experience the grace and joy of Christmas. As we turn to God we will find that he comes afresh to meet us:

O come, Thou Dayspring, from on high,  
And cheer us by Thy drawing nigh;  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
And death's dark shadows put to flight.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

### News of the Garland family

No family photo this year tells its own story, but are grateful to have our children and grandchildren not far away. And we deeply appreciate your prayerful interest in our children over many years. We are thankful to be able to give this a brief update on their lives.

**Peter** – has been doing locum work and also Covid hub work but since the beginning of November is a GP partner (three days a week) with Church View Medical Practice, Shankill Road, Belfast. However, he is still working one or two days a week in online mission work - assisting, training and networking across many countries. Karen continues her work as the Child Protection

Coordinator, part of the International Office Staff of Frontiers. One of her colleagues said, *“Behind every act of abuse, our enemy stands there. The Child Protection Team are facing the enemy every time they confront and expose abuse. Pray for them.”* Karen’s legal training is being put to good use but to further enhance her skills she is also working on her “Masters in International Safeguarding”. Their three children have adapted so well and are enjoying their schools and the family are members of City Church, Belfast.

**Debbie** is now a (half-time) Community Midwife in North Belfast having left the Labour Ward of the Royal Maternity Hospital. She shares our sadness at the change to our abortion laws. Her radiographer husband Ian Marshall is now working for Sectra as they provide imaging data services across the NHS. Their three children are now in primary or nursery schools and the family are members of Greenisland Baptist Church.

**Anna** is working (half-time) as a physiotherapist in the Royal Victoria Hospital. Her husband Sam McBride continues to “speak truth to power” as the Political Editor of the Newsletter. Their two children are in primary and nursery schools and the family are members of Windsor Baptist Church, Belfast.

## Scholarship Needed



We are still in need of financial support for Sid’s former student, Mrs Roseline Vandí. Roseline is the wife of our ACTS Managing Director (pictured together on their 2019 visit to Belfast)/ She is a lecturer in counselling and practical theology in the Theological College of Northern Nigeria. One of her dreams has been to be able to study counselling and particularly to focus on trauma counselling growing out of her experience of helping many women in her own denomination. An estimated 20,000 Church of the Brethren members have been murdered, many (like the Chibok girls) have been kidnapped and as many as 700,000 members have been displaced from their homes, farms and churches. Roseline has been under pressure from TCNN to pursue further studies. She has now made a good start to her PhD studies with St Paul’s University, Limuru, Kenya. TCNN is unable to give her any support or salary which means she has to find the funds to pay for course fees, travel and living costs. We estimate that she will need £5,000 for each of the next three years - cheaper than the equivalent level of study in the UK, but not cheap.

Please consider what you can do and get in touch for more advice on how to send your assistance.

## Health challenges

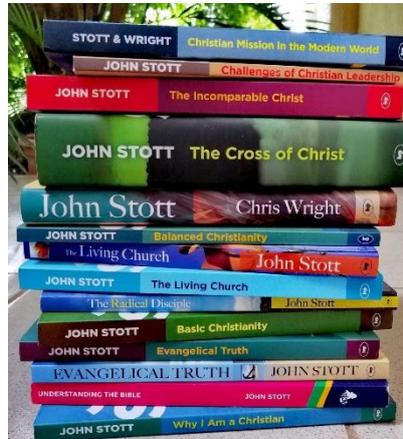
We (like the whole world) have been concerned about Covid-19, especially having family members on the frontline.

Peter had a positive test and he and the family had to isolate for two weeks before making a full recovery. We are thankful for God's hand of protection. Jean has recovered from her broken shoulder. She has a weakness in her left arm and suffers a lot of muscle pain. She is being monitored for a blood abnormality which weakens her defences. Sid's mother has now passed her 96<sup>th</sup> birthday and continues to enjoy a measure of independence in her own home. She misses getting out to church services but enjoys reading. We are grateful for her carers and also for the district nurses dressing a recent leg injury (due to a recent fall). Sid is thankful for good health and that daily exercises have been helping his back.

## Sid still working for Mission Africa and ACTS

Working from home has continued without much interruption for Sid but he has learned new skills by taking part in Zoom meetings, preparing videos (though some in-person deputation), sharing prayer news for Mission Africa and ACTS eNews, responding to requests from Nigeria, ordering books, Bibles and Study Bibles and arranging for shipping. Sid orders books to join containers from Revival Movement (NI) but took full

charge of a 40 foot container from the USA. He has constant writing projects in hand alongside mentoring former students – never a dull moment!



## The joy of companions on our missionary journey

We meet up every day (almost) for coffee and prayer with our neighbours (retired Wycliffe missionaries, Derek and Heather Johnston). We enjoy the rich teaching ministry of our Stranmillis EPC pastors Gareth Burke and John Roger and the Sunday evening Hymntime with Jonathan Rea (via Facebook). Along the way, we were sad to hear of the death of a friend, Iris Ogonna, our long-time Mission Africa colleague from Glasgow who married a godly Nigerian pastor Rev Rufus Ogonna. Sid has been involved in managing her Memorial website, <https://iris-ogonna.muchloved.com/>

## Bibles and Bible storybooks for refugee IDP children

More than 2 million people (half of them children) are refugees (IDPs) internally displaced because of the brutality of Islamist terrorists. With support so far and the cooperation of Christian Focus, Biblica and others, thousands of children's Bible

storybooks are now on their way to Nigeria. But we'd value your help to do more, esp., to provide Bibles for those who have probably never held a Bible in their hands.

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**“You help us by your prayers”** (2 Cor 1:11)

## Reasons for praise – for:

God's protection over our lives and the lives of our colleagues

Books, Bibles and children's Bible story books on their way

## Requesting prayer – for:

1. Luka Vandi and the ACTS staff, warehouse and 16 bookshops to be protected as they serve and travel in dangerous days.

2. Guidance in upgrading ACTS computers & online marketing

3. For every book that is sold or given away to be used by the Holy Spirit to strengthen the churches and correct false teaching

4. Funds to enable ACTS to purchase Bibles for the IDP refugee children

5. Scholarship assistance for Roseline Luka Vandi.