



Tracey and John's Journal from Juba...and Monrovia

The Feils serving with MAF South Sudan

Status June 2025: Letter from Liberia

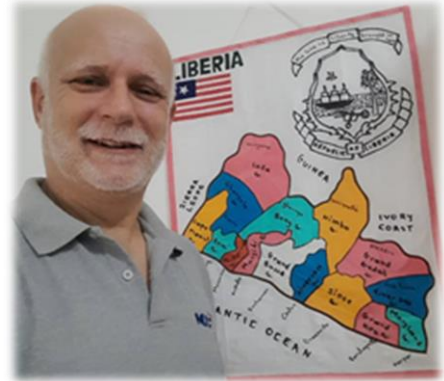


Issue 21

Letter from Liberia

John has been busy with Africa region projects, including exploring more efficient and sustainable ways of working for the Kenya, Uganda and South Sudan programs, as well as visits to support Ops in both Guinea (coming up in September) and Liberia, where he spent February and has just returned for a further 6 weeks:

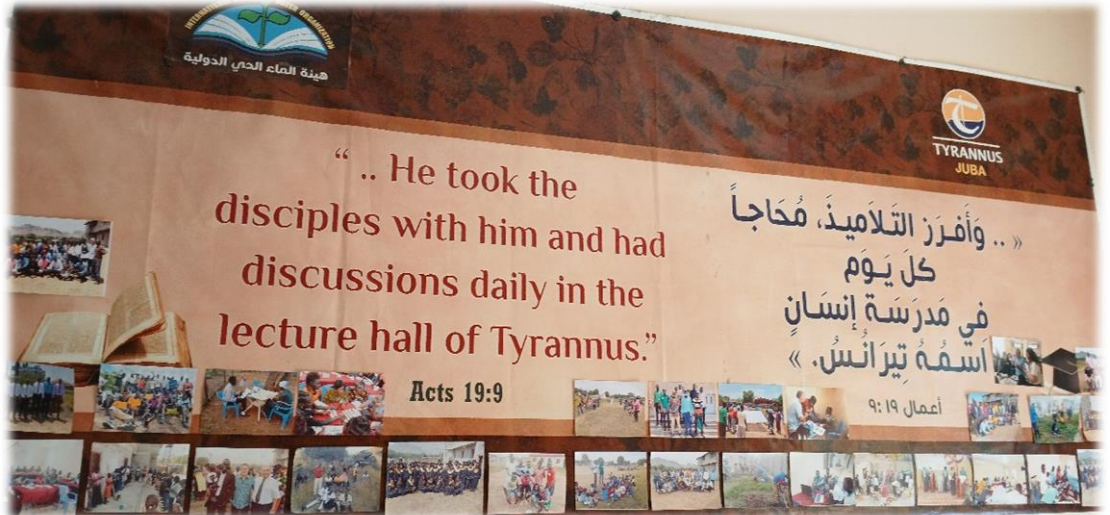
It feels like I never left! Another 2 days travel from East to West, greeted by fresh rain, sea breeze and a warm welcome from the friendly MAF Liberia team. Again, I noticed the 'God is With Us Filling Station' during the taxi ride from the airport and offered a short prayer of thanks for His presence and to be topped up for the inevitable challenges ahead. Back in February, coming out of a challenging time, there was a sense of new beginnings and a willingness from new ops staff to step up and embrace the mission. Johnson Junior (JJ), then only 2 weeks into his MAF service and with limited aviation experience, was quickly climbing the learning curve, pushing on, making it work. I arrived this time to be greeted by a smiling JJ (photo below), completely at ease with the processes, confidently coordinating and mentoring two new Ops team members. Samuel, previously a compound guard, is now dispatching aircraft, and James, previously a data entry clerk, taking bookings and communicating with customers. Both successfully completed probation thanks to JJ showing them the ropes. It's such a joy to see the team grow.



Three international MAF Liberia staff leave for home assignment today - Amos (Pilot and Ops Manager) returns home to Kenya; Nary (Deputy Country Director) and wife, Bako (Finance Manager) return to their home in Madagascar; all are supported by the new MAF resourcing hub for expatriate African missionaries based at MAF Kenya, such an exciting development.

Last February, we did airstrip inspections and pilot 'C' strip (tricky runways) training in preparation for dental outreach work in Tapeta. Trinity Dental Care Clinic, a ministry of SIM, successful completed this important outreach in May, their mission, not only to provide dental care but also to offer hope and support to communities in need. This week we take frequent flyers 'Partners in Health' down the coast from Monrovia to Harper. Although severely restricted by USAID cuts, they continue to partner with the Liberia Ministry of Health providing Monkey Pox incident management, TB care and various vaccination programmes.

It's rainy season. Pilot Ed just about managed to land back in Monrovia today before the big afternoon rain started. It's been heavy for a few hours now (I'm really hoping I didn't leave my bedroom window open). When the sun is shining, it sets in the most golden of golden hours behind the warm ocean with its vigorous surf and soft sand: a perfect place to sit and unwind after a day at the airport, with a packet of spicy plantain chips as a pre-dinner snack!



Tyrannus Mission School: Healing Hearts, Transforming Nations

Christina and Hany, our wonderful Egyptian neighbours, spend 6 months every year hosting and leading a discipleship workshop for 31 men from Sudan, alongside many different areas of South Sudan as part of the Tyrannus Mission School. Every year they now include the peace and reconciliation workshop as part of their program. As it is hosted in Juba, I was able to join and lead a few of the sessions.

At the moment, whilst there is stability in Juba, there is increased violence and hostility around this nation that has now suffered seventy years of conflict. In recent months, aerial bombardments on communities seen as opposing the government have commenced. Some of the participants are from those areas and represented at least five different ethnic groups. As my fellow South Sudanese facilitator said, 'All of us are sustaining severe wounds in our lives and hearts as we see what is happening in our nation...we need this teaching (Healing Hearts, transforming Nations) now more than ever before.'

In one of the workshop sessions, we are reminded that the church is God's agent for change and we can be salt and light in our communities. Each person has the capacity through the empowering of the Holy Spirit, to be the 'hope of this nation.' As we pass a candle around reminding each other of this truth, it is our hope that these 31 Christ-centred men can show what it means to live differently in their communities. I also led the 'standing in the gap' workshop towards the end of the training. As part of the royal priesthood (1 Peter 2:9), we can each stand in the gap and confess the sins of our group, seeking to live differently and reconcile relationships. These men, from cultures where men don't cry, were deeply affected by the hearing the wrong done to their people confessed, and were brave enough to emotionally and sincerely confess where their own people had done wrong to others. **Please pray for this group now in the last month of training and preparing to return to live more fully for Christ in their communities.**



FISTULA OUTREACHES

"I give all the thanks to God. I thank God and the doctors. I thank the people who brought me to the doctors."

Mum Tensa bravely shares her story to encourage others

**Medical Missions:
Bringing Help,
Hope and Healing**

Tensa's story is one of both sadness and hope. Fistula is a taboo in South Sudan, with women who suffer often shunned by family and community but MAF are helping to transport patients from around the country to Juba for transformative surgery – not only healing their bodies but enabling them to live fully as part of family and community again. Thanks to my friend and colleague, Jenny Davies, for listening to and sharing Tensa's story with us.

Tensa, a thirty-year old mother, developed a fistula birthing her eighth child, in her rural community in October last year. Too far from hospital she had no choice but to deliver at home.

'I stayed for three days in labour. The baby wanted to come out, but it was too big. I sat down and when I tried to get up, I found that my legs were paralysed. I couldn't stand by myself. We couldn't get transport to the hospital. My legs were paralysed so I could not walk. I had to be carried. We finally got a car I was put in the car and taken to hospital but when we got there the baby was already dead in my stomach.'

After more surgery, Tensa realised she had leakage. *'The urine started flowing uncontrollably ...I thought, "My body is finished."*

The missionary doctors realised that Tensa needed the care of specialist fistula surgeon Dr Andrew Browning who visits Juba three times a year. They referred Tensa to the ELCMSS' Reconciliation Hospital in Juba and made arrangements for her to fly there with MAF. It wasn't easy for Tensa to travel so far and leave her children behind.

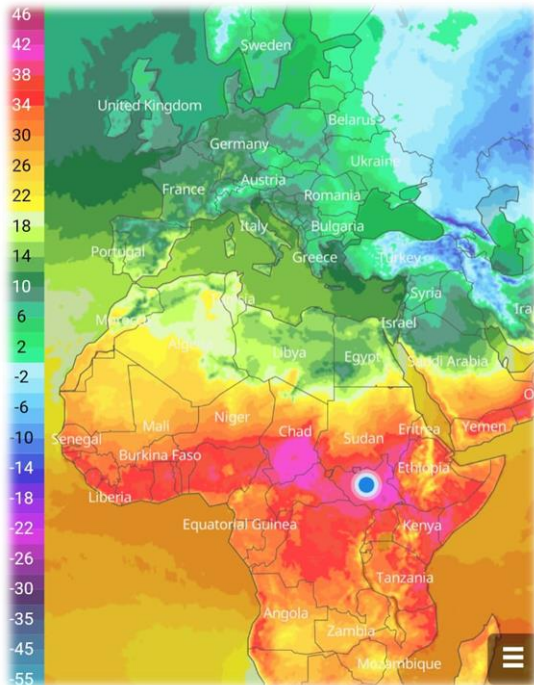
'I left my children in the Nuba Mountains [over 1000km away]. I came to Juba with other women who were the ones I was staying with in the hospital in Nuba,' she says.

Despite the challenges, Tensa has a smile on her face as she was helped to disembark by the MAF team at Juba International Airport as one of 43 patients for fistula surgery. Following an initial delay to surgery because Tensa developed Typhoid, her operation, carried out by Dr Andrew and his expert team of South Sudanese surgeons, was successful and Tensa is 'very happy. One of my legs is better, but the other is still numb although it has improved from before when my foot would just drop, and I had to be carried like a small child. Now, I can move around with my walker.'

After her ordeal, Tensa counsels other women living with a fistula to be brave and seek help. *'The people who are sick like me should not be afraid. Let them come. Don't fear, saying "I don't have food," or "I don't have money." The hospital staff give us food, and we eat, and we drink. They should not fear because they will be treated, and they will go back home happy. The doctors are good. Nobody will die here. You will be fixed, then you can go back to your children. Do not be afraid at all. This is my advice to people who are sick and afraid. Let them not be afraid.'*

In an amazing final development, one of the staff members at the hospital was determined to trace Tensa's siblings who she had lost touch with eight years ago when she moved North to her husband's family. Miraculously, she had a joyful reunion and family support as she went through surgery here in Juba!





Life is a pair of ducks: the Good and Hard of overseas cross-cultural life

The paradox (pair of ducks, get it!?) of mission/cross cultural life is that it is both good **and** hard simultaneously. The 'yay' duck represents all the good exciting things we experience, whilst the 'yuck' duck - covered in bruises and bandages - represents all the hard stuff we experience. Most importantly, these two ducks always swim together! This is a healthy illustration to use with children in processing emotions, experience and thoughts, especially around transitions. At JCA, in February, we closed by government order for three weeks due to the intense heatwave (mid 40s, see temperature map) and quickly had to adapt to tutor group learning and home visits. A week after reopening, due to increased fragility in Juba, families relocated to Nairobi with only a few hours' notice. The yay and yuck ducks have been important to help us talk about what we notice through all these challenges. As families leave and change happens at school, again, we are embracing the yays and yucks of life, giving space to process the loss/hurt in a safe and open way. At JCA, teachers are continuing to train in understanding and strategies to support our children, often known as 'Third Culture Kids,' live the good and hard life, whilst holding onto the truth that God is our rock, the same today, yesterday and forever.



Returning to the UK

At the end of September, we will mark five years with MAF in Juba. Early last year, we felt that 2025 would be our last year living here, and we are now **beginning to make plans to transition back to the UK in November.**



This is both **Good**

(family, seasons, cheese) and **Hard**



(goodbyes, fruit, friends, planes) and we'll be relying on our own yay and yuck duck to help process the transition over this busy season ahead! We appreciate your prayers as we find our way through the months ahead, trusting Jesus as we walk by faith.



IN and BEYOND the classroom

Working at JCA has been a delight. As a teacher not only do you serve God **IN** the classroom, but you also enable help, hope and healing **BEYOND** it!

Teaching mission children **IN** school is such a privilege. These children deserve a quality education, like all children do. I love equipping them with the skills and mind-set to learn, as well as the knowledge and skills to be good writers, readers, scientists, historians etc. We've also delighted in our creativity as artists, musicians and problem solvers. Through all that we do, and who we are as a team at JCA, we weave the truths about God, and live out his love day by day for these children, watching them grow in faith. It is an awesome way to serve.

Yet, we also have impact way **BEYOND** the classroom. Our parents are involved in evangelism, church planting, discipleship, feeding programs, teaching English to Sudanese refugees, flying our MAF planes, educating vulnerable children, facilitating peace and reconciliation, tending to the wounds of our neighbours and so much more! These families rely on our school being able to provide quality education so that they can continue to work here. As one parent said, 'We couldn't do this [work] without having this school.'

From September, our school will have to **reduce capacity significantly due to lack of a qualified, full-time international teacher**. With parent and mission community support, we are hoping to fill some gaps but it is far from ideal and families may need to home-school or relocate if we cannot find at least one teacher for the future. **Would you prayerfully consider reaching out to Christian teachers in your networks who may consider joining us to teach these amazing kids?** Life here can be a challenge, but is such a rewarding place to teach! Find out more by [following this link](#) or email me directly. I'd love to chat with you.



Pride comes before a fall, so they say, and I was, if I'm honest, wrongly proud that I had never had to use medical facilities here in Juba, unlike everyone else I know! Early one Monday morning, I fell over walking to school. Following help from my friendly nurse neighbours and x rays at the clinic, I was treated for a severe sprain and torn muscles. A couple of weeks on crutches and now I am independently mobile again. Whilst I was resting, my English class took daily trips to my home for their lessons, which included practising spelling with ankle writing, one of my recommend physio exercises! (above)

Below: sports day fun!

Bottom left: New pre-schoolers come to stay and play!



Finally, our return to the UK means that, in early 2026, we will be available to visit your churches and meet with you to share more about MAF's incredible work!

With love and gratitude,

John Tracey



KEEP IN TOUCH

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If you would like to support the work of MAF in South Sudan, we would **love** to have you on our team. This work is only possible because of the financial gifts and prayers of people like you.

[You can sign up to partner with us by clicking here.](#)

[Thank you!](#)