

Dear Friends,

Heiney Update, 12/16/07

Just wanted to let you all know that we are back safely from our visit to Bamako. The flight over was fine and the visit with Tim and Heidi and kids and Andrea was really good. We had good times of prayer, Tim Heiney did some teaching, we ate together often, and were able to get caught up on each other. Heidi and Andrea showed me around a bit and we shopped (mandatory!) and Tim Norton and Andrea schlepped us around to look at some of the housing in the area as well as the town itself. We visited two schooling options in Bamako as well, one a small Christian school run by a woman who used to be at the missionary school in Bouake, Ivory Coast. The other was the American International school. Both were quite impressive, each in their own ways. So, the trip was incredibly successful for what we hoped to do and what we accomplished.

The trip home wasn't quite so fun. We had a late night flight from Bamako, stopping in Dakar and 4 hours later, flying to Conakry. Our Bamako flight was about an hour late, so we arrived in Dakar at 1 AM. Check in for the next flight was at 5:20, so hardly enough time to go out, find a taxi, find a hotel and then get back in time for check-in. So we headed to the transit area and planned to just sleep at the next gate. We've slept longer than that on the floor of the Paris airport, so it didn't seem odd to us! However, on arriving we found that we could not transit to our next flight. We had to go out of the airport and come back in and check in at 5:20! We tried to explain that we had no luggage and nowhere to go in Dakar but it was a done deal. So we goofed around at the entry point for a while, took extra time filling out our entry sheets, hoping to waste as much time as possible. Finally we went through and headed to the baggage area. We found ourselves a nice spot on one of the conveyor belts and parked it. We spent the next 4 hours catching a few winks on the conveyor belt and watching about 8 more flights come in. At about 5:15 AM we lugged our tired and achy selves out to the customs area, went out one door of the airport, down a few feet and into the other door of the airport and checked in. We finally dragged into our house at 10:30 Friday morning, a full 15 hours after we left the guesthouse in Bamako. Poor Tim. There was a council meeting in the Forest Region Saturday morning, so he came home Friday, unpacked one bag and packed a new one, grabbed a few winks and headed out to find a taxi. He traveled through the night Friday night to get to the meeting on Saturday! I wonder how much he contributed!!

Of course now comes the hard part. We spent a lot of time with our team talking about the ministry in Guinea, the directions in which we want to go, and what would be best for that. Of course there would be changes for us, especially Tim, were we to relocate there, so that all has to be hashed out yet. We'll need some time to think and pray about all we saw and talked about, so appreciate your continuing to pray with us as we try and figure out what the future looks like for us, for our field, our family, the work, etc. There is so much to consider.

May we also take this time to wish you all a very Merry and Christ-centered Christmas. We thank you all for your prayers and support. May 2008 be a year filled with mission vision and passion for the lost souls that Christ longs to see in His Kingdom!!

In service with you,

Tim, Beth, Joel, Jonathan,
Katie and Andrea Heiney ><

Dear Friends,

Heiney News, 12/18/07

I always like to acknowledge when God has made it obvious that He has been busy at work behind the scenes, which, I believe, happens more often than we realize. Sometimes it is not so obvious but sometimes it tends to slap you in the face. We had a good face slap last evening.

It came during a conversation with our son, Jonathan, late last night. We had heard from Joel that he'd taken a trip to Chicago with some friends of his, so were, of course, anxious to hear that he had gotten back safe and sound. We finally talked with Jonathan while he was in Grand Rapids, just an hour from home. We asked how his trip had gone, and he asked if we had heard about his horrible week. It seems that earlier this week Jonathan was in town near the school when a car on the road swerved to avoid hitting another car and ran right into Jonathan...not Jonathan's car, JONATHAN! They say (he doesn't remember anything) that he was thrown about 20 feet over a small embankment and knocked unconscious. The ambulance came and sat with him for some time to make sure he was OK. The paramedic there told him it was "a miracle" that both his knees didn't snap from the way he was hit. For a while he couldn't remember the last couple of weeks of his life but it eventually came back.

Later that week Jonathan said he was cleaning off his car, his hand slipped and he put his fist right through the rear tail light, slitting his wrist pretty badly. I guess that is also healing.

As if that wasn't enough, during his time in Chicago he was robbed at gunpoint. The thief demanded his wallet, took about \$120 and ran.

OK, I'm sweating just writing all this. I do p-p-p-praise G-G-God for his protection this past week!!!! I guess it's always helpful when you can hear about stuff like that AFTER it happens and know that your child is fine. But I'll tell you, my mother heart was pounding pretty hard. Shoot, and you guys worry about us over here!!! I guess God is at work in ALL parts of the world! Thank you, Lord!!

Love,

The Heineys all

"God isn't looking for people of great faith, but for individuals ready to follow Him" -- Hudson Taylor

Reaching the goal: The country with the most rapid Christian expansion ever is China where there are 10,000 new Christian converts every day.