

Dec 3, 2007

Louisa Duke – coming home for the holidays!!

Hello everyone!

I'm sitting in Cape Town right now on vacation with my cousin, Ashley, and Aunt Patty. Ashley's family and my brother, John Richard, came to Zambia for their Thanksgiving break, and then we three girls came down to Cape Town for a few days before going home for Christmas. It was wonderful to have family in Zambia. We took them all around Namwianga, introduced them to all the people we love so much, got to spend some great time with the babies at the havens, and went on safari in Livingstone. It was a first time in Africa for Ashley's family, so it was neat to get to introduce them to a place Ashley and I love so much. We're also really enjoying Cape Town! I would highly recommend it to anyone. It's absolutely beautiful!!

Namwianga is hard to leave, even if it is just for Christmas. I left the HIV outreach program in the hands of my nurse friends, Stella and Tebia. It was hard to tell the patients bye for Christmas. I'm really growing to love caring for these precious people. I want to be there when any of them get sick or need encouragement, so it's tough to leave – but I'll be back, and I trust that God will take care of them. I praise God for the way He's working in the lives of these suffering people. I can see the way God is mending broken relationships that were a result of the impact of HIV. God is giving hope to these people and comforting them in their time of need. Please pray that He will continue to work in the hearts of the ones who haven't given their lives over to Him.

Prayer requests: I have a patient at Namwianga who has been struggling with TB for the past several months. A few weeks ago his baby died from TB of the abdomen. I took him to town to buy a coffin for his sweet child – who suffers no more. The day before I left my friend came by the house to tell me that his wife had just been diagnosed with breast cancer, and he had also been told that he had a suspicious spot on his lung – probable cancer. I cannot imagine what this man is going through. Please pray for his family in this difficult time. I'm thankful for his faith in God. He was recently baptized, and has started attending the church of Christ in Kalomo town. Also please pray for the children at the havens. We've had a lot of sick babies recently, and we had one sweet little one die, Tiana. She died when the Harding students were still at Namwianga, so we all piled into a few trucks and drove a couple of hours into the village to take her body for the funeral. What an impact it must have made for her family to see so many people who cared for their little girl. Pray for the Joel, Jackson, and Abigail, who all recently came home from the hospital. Pray that they will get stronger everyday. Please pray for our safe trip home tomorrow.

My flight lands in Little Rock on Wednesday around 5:30. I plan on being in the states until January 15, when meag and I will fly back together. I hope to see many of you during the holidays.

God bless,
Louisa