



The McClerkin Messenger

December 2017

There's no place like home. A couple weeks ago, we were invited by an old boy scout buddy of mine to speak at his church in my hometown of Huntingdon, Tennessee.

Huntingdon is one of those small towns where everyone knows everyone. One of my favorite memories there is of the town square, with the courthouse sitting right in the middle of it. There you would find old men sitting around doing everything from carving wood to selling produce. On Saturday mornings, my father would go there to sell fresh produce we'd raised ourselves. He would usually let me tag along and roam the shops while he was busy.



Receiving an Eagle Scout Award in 19__

Of course, there was also Friday night football. After the game, we'd drive up and down the drag and eventually end up at The Shack to eat. The next night would be spent either

roller skating or at the drive-in. What a life!

God gave me a wonderful childhood. He blessed me by putting me in a community where one's character counted no matter who you were or where you'd come from. It's always a pleasure to go back and reminisce with the many family members and childhood friends who still live there.

Our Anniversary & How It All Started

On November 26th, Latoya and I celebrated our 6th Wedding Anniversary. For those of you who may have wondered how we came to know each other, here's the quick scoop: Latoya and I met in South Africa while I was supervising a building project in the neighboring country of Mozambique. When I

would return from Mozambique to the headquarters in South Africa for a break, I would often see Latoya on the mission compound. One day I inquired about her to the headquarters caretaker. He explained that he knew her well and would introduce us. After a few weeks, he did.

Latoya and I hit it off immediately. After speaking with leadership, we began dating. Nine months later, with the blessing of our families and of leadership, we jumped the broom. (For all of you who are wondering, NO, I didn't have to give cows, goats, or chickens to marry her. ☺)

I'm so thankful for the gift God has given me in Latoya. Her life, passion, talents, and relationship with the Lord are a blessing to me personally and to our ministry. We're praising God for the years He's given us and trusting Him to continue guiding and keeping us in the years to come.

Christmas Plans & Prayers



This Christmas will be a quiet one for us. We'll have two weeks off from speaking and traveling, so we're planning to get some much-needed rest and to enjoy being together as a family.

As much as we're looking forward to the holiday here in the U.S., we're sure going to miss being part of the festivities in South Sudan. We'll miss seeing the "Christmas bull" which is always purchased with care and met with celebration at the gate.

We'll miss the mounting excitement of the boys and villagers as the big day draws near. And we'll especially miss the Christmas

service when more than a thousand Toposas travel to



the compound to hear God's Word. As our thoughts often turn to them, we find ourselves praying on their behalf. *Would you join us in praying that Christ would be lifted high and would draw more tribesmen to Himself this Christmas? Pray also that Toposa Believers will be strengthened in their faith as they meditate on God's goodness this Christmas.*

From our family to yours,

*Merry
Christmas*

Ethan & Colton's Corner



Ethan is embracing his new role as big brother. In fact, it seems like he considers himself a bodyguard of sorts. If you want to get a peep at Colton in the car, for instance, Ethan will tell you quickly, "Close the door! It's too much wind on him!" When Colton cries and we can't find the pacifier, Ethan rushes to help – sticking his finger in the baby's mouth as a substitute. Although he (usually) means well, he's definitely still learning what is and is not helpful. ☺

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"For to us a Child is born, to us a Son is given..."

Of the increase of His government and of peace there will be no end."

Isaiah 9:6a, 7a