

Jane and Steve Williams

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Prayer Letter March 2009

We wanted to try and give you a flavour of all the different things in which we have been involved, in the past 20 months so, rather than use this letter to talk about one particular show, we will try to give you an idea of the range of activities we have participated in.

Jane has been signed up as 'talent'. This is a TV word that means "someone who does something onscreen" it doesn't necessarily reflect ability! Nevertheless she really preened when she was asked to provide the 'British English' voice on a SAT-7 promotional video, and the producer announced that 'his talent' (Jane!) was ready to start recording. There was no living with her for a couple of weeks!

There was the end of year review of annual leave and record-keeping, where she had to make sure that everyone had taken the right amount of leave and was trying to carry forward the right amount to 2009. This process went better than last year – at least there were no minus figures to carry forward (people who have taken too much leave!) Although there were one or two 'strategic' losses of annual leave cards, in general the system Jane put in place earlier in the year seemed to be working. Largely. This is combined with the end of year social insurance and tax returns and the 13th month – a common thing in the Middle East – as everyone gets an extra month's salary at Christmas!

Steve has had a much bigger range of things to do than was first envisaged, although he is mainly working just with Arabic staff. He is project-managing the construction of the SAT-7 KIDS website, via a contractor in Lebanon. The website will be in three languages, (Arabic, French and English) and is going much more slowly than planned.

In the last three months the SAT-7 ARABIC channel has had an overhaul, with some shows being cancelled, some new ones being commissioned and some being refreshed. The Executive Director for Arabic channels put out a call for proposals, and hundreds came flooding in. They all had



to be reviewed and pilots commissioned, contracts written and budgets set, and Steve got involved in helping the Executive Director manage this process.

Steve is also responsible for managing a complicated process of matching potential donors to a catalogue of equipment needs. This requires a lot of attention to detail, working with European, Middle Eastern, American and British people and making sure that the whole process goes smoothly.

We are both settling into the small church in the buffer zone. Jane has been playing her guitar and leading worship – she hasn't played for many years so is a bit rusty, but it seems to be appreciated. On Christmas Eve we attended a service in Turkish / English in the north. The Turkish congregation in Nicosia has links to our home church in Aberdeen, and it was great to meet up with them. This is a very sensitive issue for Greek Cypriots, as the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus is firstly a 'quasi' state only recognised by Turkey, and so technically not a legal country at all, and it is also a country where Islam predominates. The established churches are allowed – that is the ones that were there at the time of the invasion in 1974 – but there is not really freedom of religion as we would understand it. Most of the people attending this church (that is the one we attended at Christmas) are what the Greek Cypriots would call "settlers" – people from Turkey who have been brought in to boost the population in the north. Many Greek Cypriots think that the settlers are also brought in to increase the "Islamification" of the north. However some are Christian by heritage. The Church in the north had been praying for more Christians to come; their prayers

were answered when a large contingent of Christians came as international students to study in northern Nicosia. They are mainly from Nigeria, so the congregation is an interesting mix.

By the time you read this letter we expect to be hosting an Alpha course in our house for the international students who come to the Republic of Cyprus to study. Jane will be cooking and Steve will be serving food!

We were able to celebrate our 25th wedding anniversary in Jordan in November. We visited the river Jordan and as true Baptists we considered immersion – but it looked too muddy. Steve managed a toe. We also visited Petra, which is an amazing place.



We are back in the UK doing our world tour of Scotland in March, starting in Ayrshire, moving to the Irvine area, then Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire then Wick and Orkney. We do not have time to see every church linked to us on this six week trip, but we will be able to visit the ones we have not yet met – we look forward to getting to know you!



Looking back over the past few months we really thank God for:

- ◆ The rain – although it is only a fraction of what we need.
- ◆ The friends we have made in our new church.
- ◆ We really enjoy our apartment and being able to have people to come and eat with us and stay with us.
- ◆ Supportive colleagues at SAT-7, especially the Executive Director of the Persian Service, Sara, and the Executive Director of the Arabic Service, Rita.
- ◆ Opportunities to travel and see new people and new things, especially our 25th wedding anniversary holiday in Jordan.

If you pray, please remember in the coming months:

- ◆ Our trip to Scotland which will be very busy!
- ◆ Jane needs constant inspiration and wisdom to know what makes people of so many different cultures tick! How to smooth over friction and conflict, and how to best communicate with people in ways that work.
- ◆ Energy for Steve as he juggles a varied workload.

Remember to sign up for regular updates from our online journal <http://www.bmsworldmission.org/5185>

If you click on the link in this page you will get an e-mail telling you when there is a new entry.

Steve and Jane

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