



# Arthur and Nikki Magahy

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## Prayer Letter

### May 2009

I don't think it is ever possible to forget that we are living as 'outsiders' in Uganda – but it is sometimes surprising how we are reminded of this very obvious fact.

For example, this morning as Arthur was taking Hannah and Esther to school David (the guard in our compound) came to ask Nicky – in a very concerned voice – if they were alright. It seemed like an odd question – until David explained that the Ugandan schools are on holiday and that the only reason children would be going to school during the holidays was because they had failed their exams and needed to have extra lessons.

We had already noticed that the Ugandan schools had closed – term finished on Thursday of last week and the roads were comparatively empty on Friday morning. It had seemed a bit strange that the other schools were on holiday when Hannah and Esther had only just had their Easter holiday (the same two weeks as in UK) but the Ugandan schools now have a three week break, and the drive to KEST each morning will be all the easier because of it.

It is always interesting to discover how people mark significant times such as Christmas and Easter – and the impression we had was that Easter didn't really figure too much in people's thinking. There were, of course, a few exceptions – in church, for example. After spending six months in a smaller, but local, church we had decided that we needed to move to a larger (and less local) Baptist church in the centre of Kampala ([www.kbcuganda.org](http://www.kbcuganda.org)) where almost everything happens in English (with very occasional songs in either Kiswahili or Luganda).

Unfortunately our last Sunday in the smaller local church had been the week before Easter Sunday – so if an announcement was made in KBC, we missed it! The result was that we arrived at church, on time (another sign that



we are outsiders!) looking forward to singing some good Easter hymns – only to find that the service had started one hour earlier, and we were in time for the children's talk, the offering, and the sermon.

We were glad that we had made it to KPC (Kampala Pentecostal Church, [www.kpcministries.org](http://www.kpcministries.org)) on the Thursday before Easter for a praise rally, when we jumped, danced, praised, shouted, sang, worshipped and sweated(!) with about 4,000 other (mostly young) people. It was a good night.

Kampala Baptist Church is, perhaps, a bit more formal than we would normally choose and has more expatriates than we would normally choose but it will hopefully be a church that offers something to each of us. Pastor Andrew is a good pastor with plenty of experience and his sermon yesterday was one in which God spoke to us more clearly than he has in such a long time. Esther also has a friend from school who she hopes will help her integrate into Sunday school.

Anyway - back to Easter.

In the week after Easter, we had a few days away in Jinja (the big river that finishes in Egypt starts there). It was mostly a time for doing very little. We had a great time



quad-biking in the mud and dust along the banks of the big river, hence the bizarre dress code.

We also found that, after almost one year in Uganda, we had plenty of time to assess what we left behind in Guinea and what we see as the priorities for the next couple of years in Uganda.

I don't think there is any question that KEST has been the most satisfying, stimulating and challenging part of this first year. The time in the classroom, the chats with students and other members of staff, and the preparation for lectures has all been a real joy – even if, at times, it has made the brain ache a bit. It is good to be with students who are keen to learn and to be part of a staff who are keen to teach. Mind you, what is less obvious is who has learned the most: the students we have been teaching, or their teachers! In either case, it has been a good term and we are already looking forward to next term. Graduation, and the end of this term, will be on 29 May and the new term starts in the first week of August.

Once KEST has finished, we will be sharing in a seminar with the Baptist Union School of Ministry. This will be in June, in Kampala, and will be our first opportunity to meet with those pastors who are using School of Ministry materials to train others within their churches. As well as introducing some of the materials we have been writing we look forward to hearing, first hand, some of the encouragements and challenges of School of Ministry in the various regions of Uganda. Hopefully, next year, we will also get to see some of the training centres with our own eyes – but that rather depends on our teaching commitment at KEST.

Then, at the end of June, three days after Hannah and Esther finish school, we will be going back to UK for a “half-home assignment”. The normal practice is that home assignment happens every two years and lasts for about three-and-a-half months. Obviously this is difficult because of school (and KEST) dates which is why BMS has agreed to treat us as an exception. This means that we will be doing home assignment for two years visiting half of the churches each year. The downside is that we will not get to visit all of our Link Groups this summer; the upside is that Hannah and Esther get to be in school.

Which reminds me! Hannah and Esther are doing fine (you could say, “really well!”) in school. It was good of David to be concerned – but it really wasn't necessary.

It is good, too, of you to have read to the end of this e-mail. We continue to be grateful for your interest and support, and we would ask you to pray especially for:

- ◆ the last few weeks of teaching at KEST before exams and graduation
- ◆ the preparation for the School of Ministry seminar in June
- ◆ the preparation for the half-home assignment
- ◆ the settling into KBC – that it really will become a place where we can all feel at home
- ◆ and give thanks for the way in which both Hannah and Esther have settled in school

*Arthur, Nicky, Hannah and Esther*

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