



Update: September 2021

Dear Friends,

We trust this finds you well.

Our flights to Nepal are booked for October 19th, and with just over a month to go, life feels like a bit of a rollercoaster! The experience is mostly good with lots of opportunities to spend time with family and friends, but also feels quite pressured after the limitations of the pandemic lockdowns. We welcomed another baby into the family as our beautiful sixth grandchild Ada was born last weekend. Phillipa's Mum had a spell in hospital last week, but thankfully she is now settled back home with plenty of care and carers. Dan has just passed his motorcycle test and is fully licensed to ride, which he will need to do for work, although riding at 70mph on the A46 dual carriageway was probably not quite the preparation he needs! Next weekend we celebrate our 40th wedding anniversary and as we give thanks to God for his faithfulness and for each other, we have promised ourselves tickets for the Everest sightseeing flight sometime soon(ish).

And so we pray daily for help with another transition between countries and cultures and trust in God's grace and perfect timing.

Covid is still prevalent in Nepal, and probably will be for a long time to come. However, vaccines are slowly being distributed and confidence to get back to some kind of normality is rising. In Lamjung District the schools are open with many running a part-time programme for the students, so they are not all there at the same time; some year-groups have morning sessions and others study in the afternoons. Teachers are working full time. In addition to missed teaching and learning there are concerns for children who may not return to school. Much of the progress made by the government and other agencies to increase school attendance is in danger of being lost. The KISC EQUIP team (that Phillipa will be joining) are working with the teachers to encourage them and offer quality guidance as they get back to classroom teaching.

At present it seems arrivals in Nepal need to self-isolate for 10 days. As we have been vaccinated we understand that we can isolate in our own accommodation rather than having to spend that time in a hotel. As we will be living in Lamjung we are exploring how it will work for us to do our

isolation there. It would be good to be able to spend time settling in rather than staring at walls in a hotel. But we will have to be back in Kathmandu fairly soon for orientation and visa issues, so that is the drawback of going to Lamjung at that early stage. So we pray that it will become clear what we should do as we get nearer to the time for our departure.

In November in Besisahar, Dan and the INF palliative care team are planning to deliver the training for district hospital and health-post staff that is linked to the Palliative Care Toolkit Translation programme. This was postponed from March 2020, due to the beginning of Covid. It will be a good way to get going again, as we approach the start of the new palliative care 'aid-matched' project described in our last update. This project, which is known as '*Sunita*' (a girl's name meaning 'Justice'), builds on the Toolkit work so it is really important that we progress things as far and as quickly as we can. We are however aware that Covid might have changed how things work and will have particularly affected service priorities, so there will need to be lots of flexibility in how we proceed. It is exciting and daunting to be at this stage, but we are grateful that we can now return to Nepal and 'get going!'

For your prayers:

Thanks for answered prayers for family.

Thanks for flights booked and progress with preparations.

Pray for good health over the next few weeks

Pray for safety in travel and smooth covid-safe logistics.

Pray for our farewells with family and friends.

Thanks so much!

With our love,

Dan and Phillipa



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Some help with the new words!

Lamjung: hilly district in Western Nepal.

Besisahar: Town, district centre in Lamjung, where we'll be living.

INF: International Nepal Fellowship, hosting the Pall. Care project.

KISC EQUIP: Teacher training team, working out of KISC (International school where P used to work).