

PARTNER PLAN

Joel Hafvenstein - Nepal September 2019

United Mission to Nepal
PO Box 126
KATHMANDU
Nepal

Dear friends in Scotland,

Thank you for continuing to support us in prayer! Our top prayer requests this time:

- 1. For Fiona to get the right balance of doing and resting, and for ongoing healing of migraines and headaches.**
- 2. For Joel to be able to manage his workload well, and for the ability to switch off from work when not in the office.**
- 3. For United Mission to Nepal, as it goes through restructuring and planning for the next five years, and continues to negotiate with the government about its land and buildings.**

Fiona writes:

It is now 8 months since we moved to our new home. Just two weeks ago we put the first things up on the walls. But it very much feels like home. We love being out of the city and the worst of the air pollution. It is good to be close to the boys' school so that they do not have to ride the bus and we can play a fuller part in that community. We love the green space that we can be out in, and getting our milk warm from the neighbour's cow. I love being able to chat to our Nepali neighbours as I'm out with the boys, or they are at work in the fields. It isn't quite a village that we are in, but it feels like one. On clear days we have stunning mountain views from our windows, and on the clearest days we can see a breathtaking 200 mile stretch of the Himalayas from our roof.

The only downside of our new home is the length of Joel's commute. His cycle ride in the morning is about 40 minutes, but about an hour home – up hill. Joel was particularly hard pushed at work from autumn last year through to June this year when one big commitment ended. Things have eased up since then but the job continues to be very demanding and throw up unexpected challenges. He had a long stretch free from eye infections, but has again been suffering from one this last month.



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In January, after our move, Isaac started at KISC along with Caleb and has very much enjoyed school. Over the summer both boys have really enjoyed working on their swimming skills. After the monsoon finishes we will again work on bicycle skills. Learning to ride a bike is not so easy on mud/stone roads!

With prayer, therapy, and medication my headaches/migraines have continued to improve, slowly. Last summer I would usually have two migraines a week, both usually lasting three days. Now I am still getting two migraines a week, but they usually only last one day. With both boys in the same school now and therefore on the same schedule I am better able to rest when I need to. But I am also slowly trying to build up to being more active again. UMN's pastoral couple was on extended medical leave for a long time so I have begun being available in the office to listen to and pray with members of the leadership team and other expat staff. It is good to be a little more present in the office and have the chance to walk alongside people more closely. Sometimes having more activity is actually helping headaches recede; sometimes it exacerbates a headache or migraine. It is a difficult balance to achieve.

2018 was a year of very little national travel for Joel because of needs in Kathmandu. This coincided with the time of my worst health. This year he is again visiting more of the project areas—including Dhading, where Church of Scotland funding has supported so much post-earthquake rebuilding, and the mission hospitals in Tansen and Okhaldhunga—and I am grateful that my health is better than last year for the times of solo parenting.

We are tremendously excited about Fiona's parents visiting in Sep/Oct for four weeks, and then about returning to Scotland for deputation in January 2020.



Joel visits a rural school being rebuilt with Church of Scotland support

Joel and Fiona
Caleb and Isaac