

OAKLEY UPDATE

As most of you know Becky and I were appointed as IMB missionaries this past July. (IMB stand for International Mission Board for those of you that might not speak “Southern Baptist”) We will be going to the Kingdom of Swaziland in Southern Africa. Our appointment came after a year long application process that involved much prayer, many interviews, medical exams, and mounds of paperwork. After appointment but before going overseas the IMB provides all of its missionaries with eight weeks of orientation and preparation at its “International Learning Center” (ILC) just outside Richmond, Virginia. That training is called “Field Personnel Orientation” (FPO). The mission board loves those three letter acronyms. We have just completed our fourth week of that training. So to put it in “Southern Baptist” language we are with the IMB attending FPO at the ILC ☺

The time here in Virginia has been very nice. The learning center is a wonderful place. Many Southern Baptists probably do not even know it exists, but it is a place that should make us all proud. It is a beautiful campus surrounded by a little winding river and gently rolling farmland in rural Virginia. It’s primary purpose is to provide training and support for over 5000 IMB missionaries serving all over the world. All new missionaries go through training here and all missionaries on their state-side assignments also come here for additional training and updates.

As I mentioned our time here has been very nice. Samantha and Trey go to a wonderful school that is a part of the campus here. All of the teachers and staff have served as missionaries. They do a great job of relating to the students and preparing them for life in another culture. Both Samantha and Trey have learned so much. When we pick them up each day they are both full of stories about all they have learned that day. They certainly miss their friends from home, but they have made many special friends here as well. They have also gotten lots of shots ...so have Becky and I ☺.

Becky and I generally have classes from 8:00 – 3:00. Some days they go a little longer. Some days we have some built in down time to reflect and focus on what we have learned. The major focus here is on personal discipleship, acknowledging that if we as missionaries first and foremost need to be walking with Lord daily, intimately studying His Word, and passionately seeking Him in prayer so that God through His Holy Spirit can accomplish His work through us as we go to our various places of service. There are about 250 missionaries here preparing to go to the field. We are the second largest FPO class ever. We are all broken down into teams. Becky and I had the honor of being chosen to serve as the group leaders for a team of 19 missionaries all going to Central, Eastern, and Southern Africa. We worship together daily, hold each other accountable, and have a lot of fun together. We have begun many relationships that no doubt will continue for the rest of our lives.

Our time here will end October 2nd and we will return to Canton for a few days. We will leave for the field on October 16th. Note: If anyone would like for us to speak in your

church or small group while we are in Canton we would be honored. Just let us know and we will see if we can work it out. We will arrive in Swaziland on October 18th.

Right now it looks like we will be living in the town on Nhlangano in the southern part of the country for our first year of service. Our primary assignment during this time is to learn the language (SiSwati) and culture. Before we settle down in Swaziland, however, we will travel to Zambia for 30 days of training and orientation on the field. This will be a very exciting time. We will begin with several days at the Baptist seminary in Lusaka, Zambia. Then, we will travel to an African bush camp where we will spend a week or so. We will ultimately spend 3 to 4 days with a Zambian family then return to a retreat center for a time of reflection. Then ... finally, right after Thanksgiving we will be able to settle down in Swaziland. Our ultimate assignment is in the eastern part of the country in the town of Big Bend where we will share the good news of Christ and try to plant healthy new churches.

Thank you for your interest in us and in our ministry. Many people ask how can we help you? First and foremost you can pray. We challenge you to be regular even daily prayer partners with us. While we will be present on the field you can be a partner with us in everything we do by praying.

- 1) Pray for the people of Swaziland. We know God is already at work there. Pray that He will draw people to Himself and prepare us for all of the divine appointments He has in store.
- 2) Pray that God will raise up male leaders in the Swazi churches. Currently of the 21 Baptist churches in Swaziland 9 are without pastors.
- 3) Pray for King Mswati III, the leader of Swaziland. While Swaziland is proclaimed to be Christian nation, the lifestyles of the people do not reflect this. If King Mswati became a true born again believer and disciple of Christ, he could lead his people in an amazing spiritual awakening and revival.
- 4) Pray for us as a family as we go through all of the transitions that are still ahead.
- 5) Pray for health and safe travel.
- 6) Pray that God would raise up volunteer teams to come to Swaziland to minister in the name of Jesus. Consider coming yourself. We can't wait to have visitors.
- 7) Pray for us in any other way as you are lead by the Spirit and know we are praying for you as well.

Again thanks for your interest in our lives. Feel free to write or drop us an email anytime. Those touches with family and friends are priceless to us even here in Virginia. Of course you have our email trumanandbecky@yahoo.com. You can also send us "good ole" regular mail at...

ILC
16492 MLC Lane
Rockville, VA. 23146

Note: We collected many email addresses before coming to FPO, but our list is far from complete. If you know of someone who would like to receive our updates please feel free to forward this to them and/or send us their email addresses. Certainly no one was left off the list intentionally, we were just at the mercy of time and computer resources.

A couple of other links you can follow to keep up with the Swazi Team are www.prayswaziland.org and www.swazimissions.org . If you would like to receive regular team prayer updates you can email our team prayer advocate Barbara Myers at swazibam@africaonline.co.sz Just ask to be added to her list.

We look forward to hearing from you as you share in this adventure with us.

In Christ,
Truman, Becky, Samantha, and Trey Oakley