



# Christine and David Torrance

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**Location:** Tanzania



**What we do:** Teaching at Kondoa Bible College and coming alongside local Christians in discipleship and ministry.

Dear friends and family,

Thanks for your patience! We are writing to you from David's parents' home in Scotland, having returned on 1 June after some unexpected challenges related to our placement.

The 5 weeks between realising we might have to leave and actually packing up what we thought would be our home was a whirlwind of shock and grief as well as long to-do lists and beautiful goodbyes. With multiple hospital admissions for John's breathing issues and Christine having pneumonia since we returned, it's taken us a while to get settled.

We're definitely still processing the emotional whiplash of a complete '180' in life plans, and our experience. We love Kondoa, and it would be hard to overstate our disappointment that circumstances outside of our control forced us to make the extremely difficult decision to leave. We've had some constructive and helpful conversations with CMS about these challenges, and we were delighted by the international mission team's response to our report. They are working hard to build procedures that enable future partners – backed by generous supporters like you – to fulfil the vision we felt called into.

That said, we still saw God, because God is God. Sometimes challenges are part of the plan, even if we do not know it at the time. And at the very least it is clear that God has been working around the edges, even in a difficult situation. We still firmly believe that God invited us out, *and* called us back home, under his timing. The truth is that we all make plans under a mere illusion of control (see James 4:13–15!).

## Storytime: What we got to see God doing in Kondoa!

- ▶ Departing Kondoa was difficult. But we left having been irreversibly blessed to glimpse God's kingdom among friends, neighbours and strangers we never would have met otherwise. It was hard in many ways, but also beautifully simple. We went on safari, grew peanuts and corn, handwashed laundry and fried chapati. John got unlimited watermelon from his doting "Bibi" Lilian.



*Christine and David at their farewell dinner for neighbours in Kondoa*

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- ▶ We reached out in love in our daily mess, and others reached out to us in theirs, and in the interplay we saw glimpses of the way God's economy operates. Here are some bite-size memories:
- ▶ Another Christian Christine's age challenged her that physical healing of all kinds is possible: this entirely shaped her time in Kondo. She laid hands on friends and strangers alike to rebuke demons, illnesses and especially blindness, with heightened confidence and love.
- ▶ Chatting with a Muslim man who was mentally unwell; the laughter from bystanders juxtaposed with the awed stillness in his stream of speech as soon as we began praying.
- ▶ Praying for demons to flee a young Maasai man, and speaking truth to the woman living with him. God proved his love and omniscience through unambiguously specific words over their lives.
- ▶ Being neighbourly with the prisoners working in the plot next door: sharing greetings and laundry soap, and basins of rice and vegetables. A "church over the wall" service led by precious fellow believers, baptising across barbed wire three incarcerated men who wanted more of God.
- ▶ Reporting a child safeguarding issue in an unrelated region, which had previously been shrouded in silence due to locals' fear of the alleged perpetrator.
- ▶ A fellow believer supernaturally freed from alcoholism visibly leaving that burden behind.
- ▶ Christine's joy discipling a young woman on the fringes of faith, as her own neighbour had loved and invested in her when she was that age.
- ▶ David watching his students teaching huge theological topics like the Incarnation with confidence – student presentations were a regular part of his rhythm of teaching.
- ▶ Getting to know and do life with our neighbour, who immediately became Christine's closest friend in Kondo: a kindred spirit with a blazing evangelist's heart and open arms. Normal life together saw me through the darker moments – dinners with the kids playing raucously, running multiple loads through the washing, being dressed suitably in her own clothing for our goodbye party, praying, crying, hurting, dreaming.
- ▶ David baptising 45 people, mostly Maasai, during only two trips to village churches.
- ▶ The fun and fire of the international Bible study in Iringa – so many native languages, cultures and backgrounds devoted to one God. On the final evening, the group prayed us into Kondo and prophesied that we would see blind eyes open. This resonated deeply, and within a fortnight of this prophecy being fulfilled in a Muslim neighbour (to the complete shock of her doctors), we were booking tickets to return home.



*An explorer at heart, John gets outdoors every day in Scotland; Laughter ensues when attempting a photoshoot on the porch; Sunday morning with a neighbouring church family*

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## What we're up to now

We got a chance to say our goodbyes to CMS friends and colleagues in person at the People in Mission conference in July, as we officially finish on 10 September. David is applying for other international-facing jobs, Christine is seeking freelance proofreading and personal organising work, and John is starting pre-school. These are further adjustments for our family, but we're excited to see what God has next.

As we close our chapter together, we want to thank each of you for your prayerful support, encouraging emails and sacrificial financial giving. We wouldn't have been able to go on this adventure – nor return bursting with testimony! – without your partnership. We have friends still labouring in other parts of the world on their own incredible journeys. If you'd like to carry on giving to other CMS mission partners, please contact [churchrelations@churchmissionsociety.org](mailto:churchrelations@churchmissionsociety.org).



David and John outside at the PIM conference

## Prayer points

- ◆ God's beautiful presence with those friends continuing to minister in Kondoa
- ◆ Rich intimacy with the Lord as we reflect on the blessings of our time in Tanzania
- ◆ Godly grief as we mourn, and his direction as we look to him for what's next
- ◆ For the Holy Spirit to accompany John to pre-school and that he enjoys it

May God delight you with both ordinary and supernatural adventures with him, and fill you up to overflowing with his Holy Spirit. May you be confident of his love for you and those around you. As re-phrased from Psalm 20, *May we shout for joy over your victory.*

Truly, he is worthy of it all.

Every blessing,

David and Christine Torrance



## Going further with Church Mission Society

**CMS people in mission are following Jesus to the edges in 40+ countries** across Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Latin America and Europe. Mission partners like Christine and David commit to working alongside local people, listening, learning, building relationships and becoming a part of communities. Be part of this unfolding story at [churchmissionsociety.org](http://churchmissionsociety.org)

Please note that opinions expressed in link letters are those of mission partners, not necessarily of Church Mission Society.

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