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Hi Folks,

This is probably the hardest newsletter we have written in fact it is our 3rd attempt at doing it. We had one sort of prepared for Christmas past, then we had another almost completed at Easter and now here we are close to summer and we have done it. Reintegration has been way more difficult than we anticipated. We are really sorry our communication has been so poor but below is a summary of the last few months and an update on our plans.

The Big Transition.

Returning to Scotland has been a strange affair and not the easiest part of the whole missionary experience. We really miss the children, the children's centre workers, our missionary colleagues and our Honduran friends, but all of that we expected and were pretty well prepared for it. However, Scottish society has changed so much that it sometimes feels like we tried to come home but arrived in another new land. The level of technological change is immense and we have struggled to figure it out, smart phones, smart TVs, smart cars, even smart water, but clearly we are just not very smart people. Using credit cards and debit cards and loyalty cards, is ever more complicated and it is so embarrassing having to ask for help to buy petrol (twice) because we couldn't work the machines. The introduction of credit scores, when did that happen? Because we have had no debt over the last 13 years we apparently have no credit score so have had difficulty getting new credit cards, even being refused a £5 a month phone contract. I was brought up to have little or no debt but apparently that is now a bad thing? Finally and most distressingly we have a real confusion. Everything we had read told us that Scotland had become a much more tolerant society but it is not our experience. It seems to us that there is way more anger, way more hatred for anyone who disagrees with anyone else. People have more labels than ever, "leavers or remainers", "pro or anti-independence" "Corbanites or Mayists or Trumpists" "Glasgow Rangers or... well any other team really" and of course all the "isms"...but while these sort of differences have always been there, it seemed to us that they were expressed with good humour and with that unique Scottish banter. It feels like that has gone and people are held in contempt, ridiculed even persecuted. We are so sad that the push for tolerance, which we would have supported, has resulted in the complete opposite and there is a vast and unpleasant increase in intolerance fired by anger and hatred. It has been so hard to find our place in all that.

On a lighter note, we are grateful to become reacquainted with, Black Pudding, Flat Sausage, Haggis and of course Indian Cuisine, at least they have remained the same.

On other fronts, we sold our house to Simon & Jackie and we have downsized to a smaller house in the same area. It required some work and Simon & Jackie did a lot of it before we got home and we continued where they left off but we are almost there and hopefully we will be finished soon.

Getting time with our grandchildren has been great we really enjoy seeing them more frequently and enjoy having them for sleepovers at our new house as well as us looking after them in their own house.

Liz's mum (91) is really happy to have Liz home (I think she's happy I'm here too).

Samuel moved back in with us for a while but moved into his first flat just after New Year. Samuel has left his college course as he was just not happy and is deciding where to go next. He is currently working in Tesco.

We have so appreciated our friends. We have appreciated that you have given us space and time to make our transitions. We feel we are coming out the other side of things and our tears are less, our repetitive responses of, "...in Honduras..." are getting less. We still miss the children every day and enjoy our skype calls to them. We miss the tropical heat and long dry spells. We are getting used to the cold and wet but are enjoying the long light nights. As we emerge from this time of transition we hope we will be able to start to come out and see many of you over the summer months.

Ambassadors.

Liz and I have agreed to continue to work for The Cornerstone Foundation (the parent organization of the Children's Centre, Hospital & School), as "Ambassadors". This will involve us touring to raise the profile, volunteers and funds. We have completed 2 of these already, reports attached. We hope to visit a number of places in UK during 2018.

3rd Trip

We have just booked our flights to go to Honduras again in October and we are so looking forward to seeing the children again.

1st US Trip

We completed our first trip in November last year spending a week in Minneapolis, a few days in each of Pennsylvania and Maine. We spoke 21 times in 13 days, in schools, colleges, hospitals, houses, and churches. We have added a number of people to the circulation of the cornerstone newsletter, have a number of people applied to go to Loma de Luz as short term and longer term volunteers and raised a few thousand dollars. Not a bad 3 week's work.

Support & Employment

Since returning to Scotland a number of our supporters have needed to end their sponsorships. People have retired, others have their own children in Universities with all these additional costs, some have seen household finances reduced and others have decided to transfer their support to other missionaries. Please let us be clear, we are so so grateful for all the years of support they and all of you have given to us over these last 14 years. However, we would like to maintain as high a level of support for the Children's Centre as we can for as long as we can, so if you are able we would ask that you continue to support the work in Honduras. Although we are no longer living there, we have agreed to take on the role of "Grandparents" to the children and we hope to show them that they can have long term relationships, something few of them have ever experienced. A number of the children will be leaving school over the next few years and we would like to try to support some them to go to college or start a new career. We also plan to visit the children every 6 months to ensure that relationship is maintained. Iain has started part time employment to support ourselves while we are here in UK, but we would ask you to consider continuing to support this work knowing that your support will assist Liz and I in our grandparent role, support the children's ongoing education and generally go directly to meet the costs of the Children's Centre.

2nd US Trip

Very different to the first trip. We went back to Honduras for the first time since we left and we were very nervous of this trip not knowing if the children would still love us? How would we feel about changes that have been made? What a waste of worry time. Of course the kids were great and made us so welcome. The changes are for the better. We were there during Easter holidays so got loads of time with the kids and we have left looking forward to our next trip. Our visit to USA did not work out quite so well as the first trip and we only managed 3 speaking engagements in 3 weeks. But that allowed us time to visit with friends, and one of the children studying in USA. It was great to see them all some after many years. It was great to be reacquainted.

And Finally,

This has been a great adventure we have all been on for almost 14 years. We hope you have enjoyed the ride so far. Please continue with us as we move into a new chapter as we keep on together supporting and assisting the children to become men and women who can, through love and care and education and good health care become strong leaders in their communities