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Dear Friends

Welcome to this update on our school in Malek Alel.

Have you seen the video we made this year about our girls and the school in Malek, and the dedication of the new chapel? The link is on our website: <http://www.undertreeschools.org/index.html>
If you want to stretch your linguistic muscles, you can watch it in German as well!

<http://www.schulen-unter-baeumen.ch/index.html>

Those who have seen it say that though only 11 minutes long it gives a good feel for what life is like at the school. Perhaps you have friends who might like to see it too?

We are already through three of the four terms of the school year (the school's fifth year of teaching). The rainy season is coming to an end and we are breathing a sigh of relief that the bad weather has not caused damage to our buildings this year (though it has damaged a roof of a neighbouring building – fortunately not occupied). So we were able to send off the normal level of funding for their running costs for the three months to December – just under £12,000.

It is wonderful that the donations you send us mean that we can pay this amount regularly towards wages, food, school expenses and maintenance.



We are very grateful for the continuity of leadership of our Headteacher Bak. With him we are looking into ways to improve teacher training and work on the levels of English at the school. What would be ideal if a (retired?) teacher could spend a few weeks at the school to look into boosting English and offer some general teachers' training. Do get in touch with Karin if you'd like to find out more. Joseph is most of his time in South Sudan, so he's there to pave the way and be at hand anytime.

Joseph has just been home for a week, a quick visit to see us and celebrate our girls' birthday. He continues to work in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Juba. It's great news to hear that compared with three months ago there are more signs of optimism that things are getting better in the country. South Sudan is very dependent on the smooth flow of oil exports, and after a year or more



when the taps were turned off, they have been back on continuously since the summer this year. This is also a sign that the relationship of South Sudan with its neighbour to the north, Sudan has been improving. This month saw the second state visit of President Beshir of Sudan to Juba since South Sudan became a country. So it is very encouraging that after years of war and suspicion this is now possible.

Joseph also points to the efforts being made by the Juba Government to ensure proper controls on its finances. The Government is making its plans for the economic and social development of the country, and all the modest funds available to the Government from oil and from aid from the rest of the world must be directed properly to the most crucial needs of the South Sudanese people. Joseph has been very pleased that he is being able to contribute strategically to the shaping of the new government. So as the ground work is being laid, in the not too distant future we should know which country he will be assigned to as an ambassador.

We also want to let you know that we have gift certificates. For example, £ 10 pays for a week's supplement of one teacher's salary or £ 10 gives a week's salary for one of our cooks. £ 20 pays for a week's supply of teaching materials and £ 30 for a week's food for the children. The certificates have a photo of our children, and leave space for you to write your message. They are signed by one of our trustees. You can see a sample on our website and ordered them with this form:

<http://www.undertreeschools.org/single-donation--gift-certificates.html>

For those of you who receive a paper copy of the newsletter, they can be ordered on the donation form.

Also, we have new photo cards, 5 cards cost £ 3 incl. p & p, contact Karin.

Can you let us know if your address has changed, or if you are able to receive our newsletter by email instead of a paper copy. Many thanks!

This letter comes with our sincere thanks for your continued prayer support and for your many other ways of supporting our school and community in Malek.

With our warm wishes and God's blessings

Karin and Joseph Ayok-Loewenberg



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