

Robert and Kyla Cuthbert - May 2020 Update



First of all thanks so much for your prayers and support to us as a family. We really appreciate it and have been thinking and praying for you all during this difficult time. Life has changed so dramatically for everyone since we were home just a few months ago and it's hard to believe it at times. We have been able to keep in touch with friends and family at home and it has been nice to be part of Edenderry Sunday morning services over the past while too. Living overseas we're used to just communicating via skype, zoom or whatever and now that church and other meetings are online we can be more connected than usual which is nice. We really appreciate so many of you who keep in touch and are an encouragement to us in many ways. We're very blessed and thankful to be part of such a great church family.

A state of emergency was pronounced here in Senegal more than 2 months ago now and this brought with it various restrictions. Schools were all closed as well as many public places such as parks, restaurants and places of worship etc. Restrictions were imposed on travel within the country as well as the borders and the airport being closed. We were recommended to pretty much stay at home and stock up on supplies which we did. Robert was the only one to go out if we needed anything and we did this for several weeks. We are very blessed that in our small neighbourhood the kids can get out, ride bikes and play so we generally do this in the mornings when nobody else is around. The kid's school went online and so most mornings (and some afternoons) over the past couple of months have been taken up with this. We have

heard of people doing online courses, baking more or starting new hobbies during the lockdown but to be honest, with all 4 kids at home all the time as well as school and everything else, we have found life pretty hectic. Senegal is so dusty and we used to have a lady come every week to sweep, mop and help clean the house but since she can no longer come, Kyla has been trying to keep on top of this and just simple things like shopping and cooking take longer here than they do at home. So we haven't had much free time but it has been nice to have more time together as a family.

For many people here, life goes on as usual. They need to work to live and feed their families so have to go about their business and don't have the luxury of being able to isolate. It's compulsory now to wear a mask out and about and there are hand sanitizers in most shops but in many ways most people just can't maintain the same level of lock down or isolation as may be possible back home. The government seem to have done a good job dealing with things and numbers of official cases and deaths are relatively low. However testing is limited so it's hard to say what the true impact has been. The state of emergency runs until the 2nd of June and we will hopefully know in the next week or so if that will be extended or not. Most people anticipate that it will be lifted in order to help people travel and work more easily, although some restrictions will remain in place.

We finished online school last week so the kids are now enjoying their holidays and we're thankful not to have to spend all morning trying to get them to work!! We had a busy summer planned which will now not be the case and will miss the CE team that were going to come out, but we know that God has a reason for all of this and hope that maybe this will be possible next summer. I guess one thing we have learnt or been reminded of is that God is sovereign and in control. So often we feel like things depend on us and we need to do this or that and be busy all the time. And yet, during this time when many church/outreach activities can't take place, we know that God is still at work and He is still building His church. It is too easy to focus on outward activities and programs and often neglect the work that God wants to do in our own hearts. To do that work He needs our attention and that takes time which we often fill with other things. So our challenge is to just walk humbly with our God, seek His face and spend time with Him. We pray that as we do, we would hear His voice and come to know Him in a deeper way.

Across Africa virtually all our Ambassadors programs have stopped. In many countries we have simply been trying to support families of those involved in our teams and academies who are particularly struggling or in need. We are very thankful for generous gifts which have helped buy food, water, soap, clothes and other items for those who have needed it most. We do trust that in this time of crisis, many will turn to Jesus and find their hope and salvation in Him.

Please also pray for the people of Senegal at this time. We have just come to the end of Ramadan during which many Muslims fast from before sunrise to sunset. Living in a Muslim country, we are conscious of the fact that so many face an eternity without Christ. It is estimated that less than 0.5% of the population are evangelical Christians so please pray that God would give us an increasing burden to pray for and reach out to those around us. It takes time to really get to know people but we are thankful for the relationships we have built and the friends we have made. During the past few months with life more uncertain and more people staying at home, we have actually been able to meet more of our neighbours on our daily walks around the neighbourhood and we feel much more part of the community now. Please pray that we would have wisdom, discernment and courage to share our faith with those around us.

Thanks again for your prayers and support. We feel very privileged to be able to do what we

do and are thankful for your support in enabling us to live here and share His love with many who may otherwise not really think or be challenged about the good news of Jesus.

God bless,

Robert, Kyla, Jacob, Manuela, Daniel and Micah







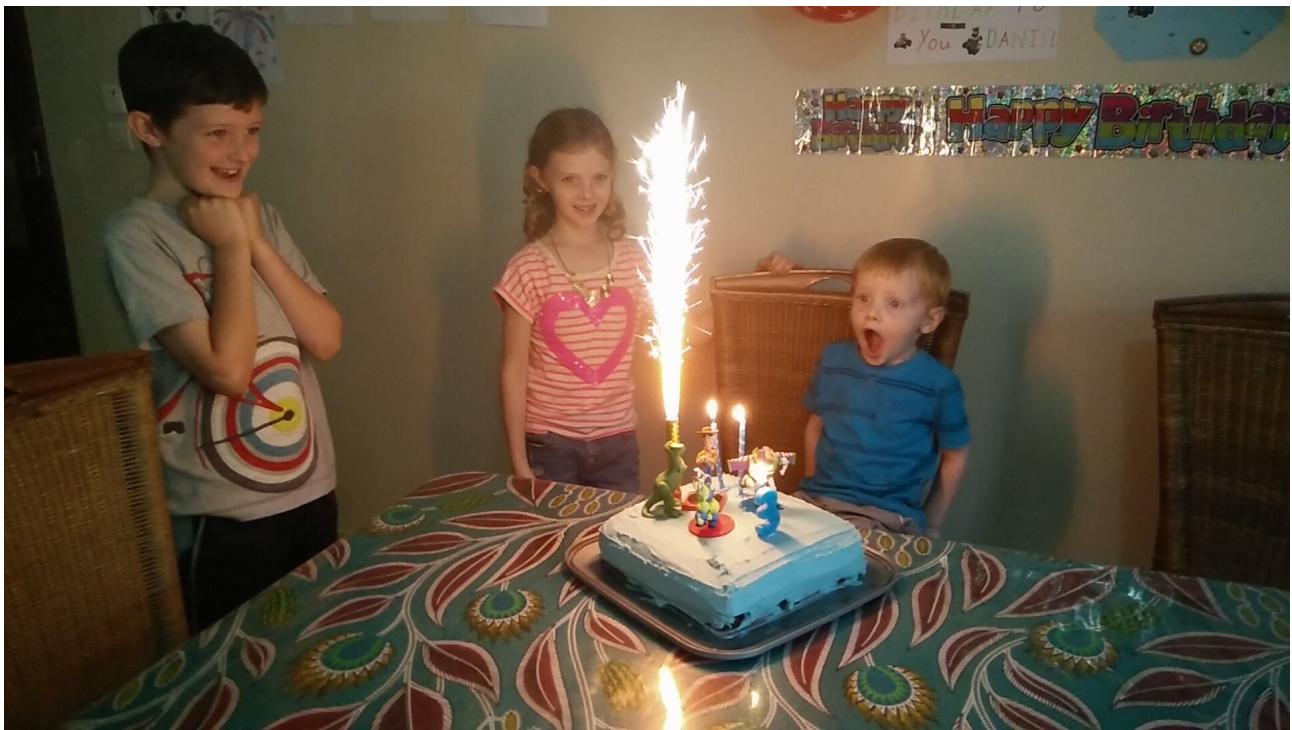




























Photos from update on Edenderry CE website:

<https://www.edenderryce.org/news-and-updates-from-ce/2020/ambassadors-an-update-from-senegal-may-2020>