

Ennis & Becky Pepper

Serving This Side

P. O. Box 22210, Glenashley 4022, Durban, South Africa

June/July 2013 Prayer Letter

Dear Pastor,

April and May were particularly busy months. On top of our normal routine Becky developed appendicitis in mid April and spent a few days in the hospital having her appendix out. Thankfully there were no complications and her recovery afterward, 6 weeks, went smoothly. She is an amazing lady and once again showed just how strong she is.

Side Note: The hospital Becky was admitted to caters mostly for indigenous tastes, curries and putus, but the food was good and not too spicy. Great hospital too! We are thankful everyday for good medical services.

Unfortunately, following Becky's recovery from appendicitis we both got a case of the flu. The good part is, neither of us was completely knocked out of our routine but the nose blowing and coughing were quite bad. We gauge the severity of flu by how many boxes of kleenex we use. We're at 16 boxes now – for four weeks – and still counting. Even though we weren't bedridden the coughing and blowing made it difficult to talk or pray with people one at a time or even a few at a time. Coughing the Gospel isn't exactly the best way to share it.

For now, the worst is behind us and we are happy to be back to normal, mostly. Next year, Flu injections for sure!

Building Report

In my enthusiasm I visualized getting into the building by Easter this year or shortly thereafter. Hate to admit it but I was wrong.

The annual builders' holiday makes it impossible to start work soon after Christmas. The holiday begins around mid December, lasts till mid January and everyone associated with the building industry takes this holiday. That means factories and building suppliers only start back to work mid January – give or take a day or two – so builders don't effectively get started till the end of January. This holiday slowed things down for us.

But that's not all.

In our case things were slowed down a little more with our design changes. At the end of last year we decided to make changes to the original plan which increased the capacity of our building. The only thing holding that up – so we thought – were working drawings, which we asked the architects to organize. Sounds straight forward but architects also take the builders' holiday so our drawings weren't fully ready at the end of January restart date.

Then on top of that the law was changed in two ways that slowed the process down. Ultimately, I'm sure the changes were for the better but in our case we wish they had waited one more year.

First change: All design changes had to be completely perused and approved by the city council before they could be implemented. In times past changes could be implemented on the fly as long as engineers were happy with structural issues. Once the work was completed a final set of "as built" plans could be submitted. With the new law, all of that changed. The only portions of the project we were allowed to work on were those already approved.

This created a dilemma. We knew how slow the city council works and we also knew how much it costs to start and stop a building project. We also knew we would easily catch up to the changes before they were approved, so the only decision we could make was to not start building till every detail was approved.

Second Change: The building plan submission process went from one, one page form last year to three forms of multiple pages this year. Now, several professionals must give feedback on the plans before they are submitted. Time consuming and expensive.

What that means is, we are still moving forward but at a different pace to what we originally anticipated.

Please pray for this process. We are gently pushing as much as we can from our side. Our builder is ready to go and we anticipate getting things going shortly.

I would have sent this report sooner but was hoping developments would happen a little quicker. Once again, I was wrong. :)

Lastly, please know that we genuinely appreciate your faithful support.

Serving this side,
Ennis & Becky