

April/May
2026

KEEPING UP WITH KENYA

Monthly Newsletter

dardenmissions.com

WHAT IS GOD TEACHING US?

Rachel

The past two months have been hard for me. I have been feeling discouraged, disengaged, and overwhelmed in every area of life. This has unfortunately affected my time in the Word, even though I know I should have taken all those emotions to the Lord. I recently started a short 10-day study in the book of Philippians so I can be reminded of finding joy in Christ and not in my circumstances. I have also been reminded that Christ suffered during His time on earth and He knows how I feel when I suffer.



“For it has been granted to you on Christ’s behalf not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him,” Philippians 1:29

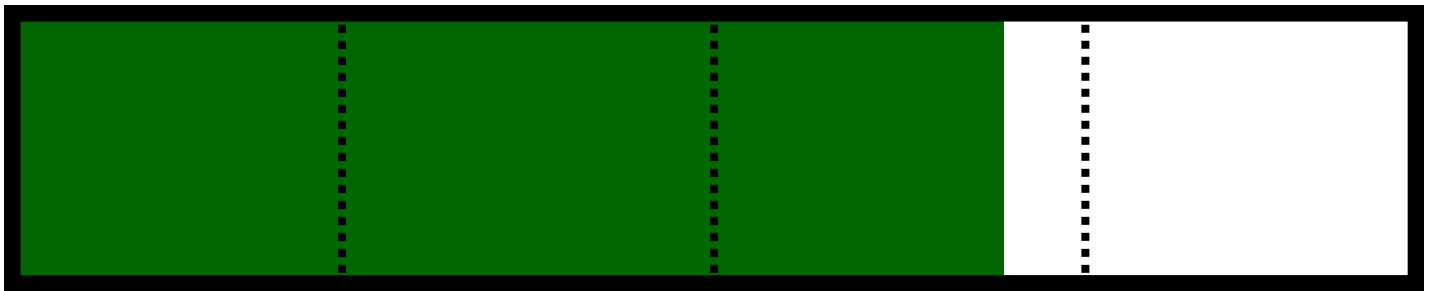
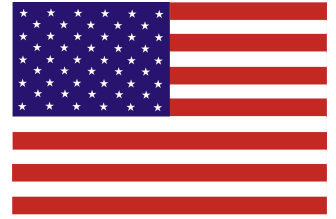
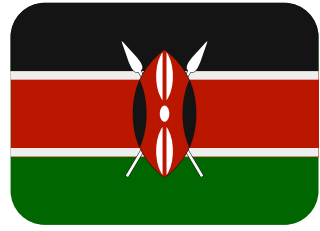
Caleb

God has been teaching me to trust in Him more deeply. With our sudden move back to the United States, I have needed to seek work quickly to help cover medical expenses and the cost of living. While the job I found was not the position I had hoped for, God faithfully provided work driving a box truck through a close friend. Though the pay is not as much as I would like, God has continued to provide enough for us each step of the way. As we now face some upcoming medical bills related to my own health, I am continuing to learn what it means to trust the Lord daily for provision and care.

“do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:6-7

Darden Re-entry Support Raising Progress

We have \$21,000 remaining to reach our re-entry support goal. As we continue getting settled, we are definitely feeling this deficit. At the same time, we are trusting God to continue providing, and we are deeply grateful that 67% of our goal has already been met through His faithfulness and the generosity of so many. Would you prayerfully consider making a one-time gift toward this need? Your support would be a tremendous encouragement and help during this season of transition.



Start \$16,000 \$32,000 \$48,000 \$65,000

Tax-deductible donations can be made with the following steps:

1. Go to www.nics.org/donate.
2. Choose the amount you'd like to donate and select "One Time."
3. For the "Designation" box, choose "School Projects."
4. A comment box will pop up that says "Staff Name or Project Number." Type in "Caleb and Rachel Darden-Project #004425".
5. Complete the billing and payment information. You can use either a debit/credit card or a checking account.
6. Check "I'm not a robot."
7. Select "Review." If any information is incomplete or missing, it will not go to the next page. Make sure to go back to the top of the form and correct any incomplete/missing data.
8. Review the donation and choose "Donate."

Donations can also be made via Venmo: @cdarden0

PERSONAL UPDATE

It has been a busy two months, and we are so thankful for all the time we've been able to spend with people. At the same time, it has been eye-opening to experience just how different the pace of life is in Kenya compared to America.

Allan and M'Lynn were in Charlotte for a short time, and it was such a gift to spend time with them—especially for Rachel, since she didn't get the chance to say “see you later” in Kenya. Their encouragement, companionship, and shared understanding were such a blessing to us. We are excited to see how God continues to work through them in Kenya as they serve Him there.

Caleb has started his job, and we are very grateful for the extra income while Rachel is not working yet. His Bluey lunchbox was a big hit with his co-workers! Rachel will begin working some part-time hours in June, and we are continuing to pray through what balance looks like moving forward. What is the right amount of work? How much additional income do we need? What skills is she currently able to use well, and which ones are still difficult right now? These are questions we are continuing to seek the Lord about in this season.



Rachel has continued to make progress with her back injury and officially graduated from physical therapy at the end of April. She is still faithfully doing her PT exercises at the gym. One difficult lesson she is learning is that healing is not always linear. That has honestly been hard. Doing all the “right” things and then experiencing setbacks can feel discouraging. But she is trying to focus on how far she has come overall instead of becoming overwhelmed by small setbacks along the way.



We have also officially moved into our house! It needed a LOT of work before we could move in, and we are incredibly grateful for the many friends and family members who helped us get everything done. Now we are slowly working through boxes and combining all of our American belongings that have been in storage for our entire marriage.

We also had the opportunity to spend a few days at the beach for our anniversary. After six months that often felt chaotic, it was refreshing to step away for a little while and simply enjoy time together. It gave us space to deepen our connection and prepare to continue tackling the long to-do list waiting for us at home. It is hard to believe we have already been married for three years, but it also feels crazy that it has only been three years. We are so thankful for our marriage and for the way God brought us together.



We got to celebrate Caleb’s brother’s high school graduation. We are so thankful that we got to be in the States to celebrate this accomplishment with him!



PRAYER REQUESTS

Rachel

- Steadfastness as she continues her healing journey
- Balance and clarity when she begins working
- To feel God's closeness when life feels chaotic
- Healthy processing during debriefing conference

Caleb

- Two different carpal tunnel surgeries happening in June: no complications and quick recovery
- continued job search
- funds to continue his PhD work

Kenya

- Pray for the country as riots are happening over fuel prices
- Pray for Mercy Nairobi and Mercy House as they continue to make decisions to best serve the people of Nairobi and share the gospel

Dardens

- Finding balance between social life and time together
- Motivation and energy to keep working on projects around the house
- We are attending a debriefing conference in June to help us process our time overseas
- support raising