

“Let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.” —1 John 3:18

Dear friends, family and acquaintances,

In my previous newsletter, I shared about my – rather radical – decision to volunteer with Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF). I want to dedicate my life to a world where love and connection take center stage – not just by talking about it, but by living it out in word and deed. I truly believe it’s possible: that love can become the very foundation of how we live together.

We live in a time that often feels broken and unfair. Division and conflict seem to dominate, both individually and collectively. On top of that, we’re frequently confronted with dystopian perspectives across nearly every aspect of life. It can seem inevitable. And yet, call me an optimist or a dreamer – if we don’t believe that radical change is possible, it surely never will be. When we continue to trust in the goodness that lives within every human being, something begins to shift. Real change doesn’t start with power, but with courage – with a single heart choosing trust over fear.

Kingdom

Jesus also spoke about a shift in consciousness – a true change of paradigm. He spoke of the Kingdom of Heaven – not as a distant place after this life, but as a reality that can begin here and now.



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He said, “The Kingdom of God is within you.” (Luke 17:21). By this, He meant a new way of living: a world where love, forgiveness, and justice are at the center; where people see one another as brothers and sisters; and where God’s love becomes visible through acts of goodness. The Kingdom, is not a realm of power, but of service. Every time someone chooses to give instead of take, to bring peace instead of judgment, a glimpse of that Kingdom breaks through into this world.

Sometimes I get to experience a taste of that Kingdom myself. I see it in the way doors keep opening in this new season with MAF – in conversations with people who are moved when I share about this work, in unexpected gestures of support, like a flea market where almost all proceeds suddenly go to my support fund, or when people reach out with new ideas to help me.

To me, these are miracles – expressions of selfless intentions rooted in doing good. It feels as if the intentions behind my choice are being reflected back to me. It’s not about me, but through me God’s Spirit can work. When I step aside and stop trying to carry everything on my own, what once seemed impossible, becomes possible.

Realizing a dream

The story of MAF itself began with a belief in the impossible. In 1945, a few pilots dreamed of using their experience to do good. They believed that airplanes could be used to reach people living in isolation. Eighty years later, MAF has grown into a global organization with over 1,400 staff, more than 120 aircraft, and tens of thousands of flights each year. MAF connects those in need with those who can help – quite literally building bridges through the sky.

Jesus showed that most limitations do not exist outside of us, but within the way we perceive the world. He invited people to see with eyes of trust rather than fear – and that is where the miracle begins: in the ability to rise beyond perceived limitations and to discover that love always finds a way.

It has become clear that I will be serving in Guinea, West Africa. I will help strengthen connections that bring life in the role of Operations Manager. More on that later. Preparations are well underway, and we are making good progress, yet a significant amount of funding is still needed before I can be sent out. Please join me in prayer, sharing, and giving to make this mission possible. Every contribution, large or small, helps make this mission soar.

With gratitude and trust,
Erik Jan Beerlage



About MAF Guinea

MAF in Guinea was established at the end of 2021, and the first flight took place in April 2022. Since January 2023, MAF has been flying regularly to nine domestic destinations. The team consists of three international and seven local staff members, operating one C208 Grand Caravan with a range of 1,700 km.

Together, the team proudly serves its partners in Guinea – bringing help, hope, and healing. Both local and international aid organizations, as well as churches and mission initiatives across the country, rely on MAF's services to reach people in remote and isolated areas. MAF flies in course materials and teachers to support making education available for kids in isolated villages where good education would otherwise remain unavailable.

Praise and prayer points

- I am grateful for the rich experience I had during the Bible school in Spain, and also for the course 'Accountable Manager in Aviation' I am following with fellow aspiring MAF managers.
- I am thankful for the many blessings I have received – both in financial support and heartfelt encouragement.
- Please pray for the fundraising efforts, for fruitful collaboration within the TFT, and for the practical preparations for the mission in Guinea.

The next steps

In the coming months, I am preparing for the mission by following various trainings and by raising awareness for this beautiful work. I am not doing this alone, but together with a Home Support Team (In Dutch: TFT). I am grateful for the TFT members who are already committed to support me. They will introduce themselves in the next newsletter. Fundraising is now a key focus. Living in a developing country is costly, so structural financial support is needed to make this overseas assignment possible. The TFT and I will organize different events and are open to ideas that come our way.



This newsletter is intended to keep you informed about Erik's journey and experiences. The newsletter is distributed by the Home Support Team in cooperation with MAF Netherlands. If you would like to subscribe to receive the newsletter or support Erik as a donor, you can sign up via the website www.maf.nl/beerlage. Changes (address, email, donation amount, etc.) can be submitted to adresemaf.nl or to MAF Netherlands, P.O. Box 7, 7390 AA Twello. Please mention that it concerns Erik.