

Staff Focus - Flynn Family Serving in Arnhem Land

Josh and Ely Flynn, along with their four children, have been serving with MAF in Arnhem Land since 2023. Ely shares with us some of the joys and challenges she's encountered since moving to Arnhem Land.

What are some of the surprising things you've learned about navigating daily life in Arnhem Land in the last few years?

Arnhem Land is full of surprises. The landscape initially looks to be a very consistent palette of reddish-brown earth, azure blue waters and dusty green trees, with very little diversion. On closer inspection, and with a more trained eye, you can see the tiny flowers on the eucalypts, the bush fruits, the bright tropical flowers in different seasons, and the incredibly colourful birds, bugs and butterflies.

This need to look closely for the natural beauty has been a metaphor for me here. Initially, I thought everything was the same and I struggled to see the beauty. It was hard to find our feet and feel stable. But the longer I chose to stay, open my eyes wider and get curious, the more I could see the beauty God has put here for us to enjoy. The land is stunning, and harsh. The people here are so interesting, everyone has their own story to tell full of resilience and determination.

I've also realised that life on this earth is never going to provide us with a stable foundation, unless we build our lives on the rock of our Saviour, Lord Jesus. He is enough, when we are not enough. The process of relying more on God to be our firm foundation has brought our family closer together and given us a greater appreciation for His blessings in our daily lives. It has also shown me that God is in the details of the world, a master weaver who uses His creation to bring Himself glory. He chooses to include us in His plans. I have been surprised and humbled by how He has used us to encourage other people in their journeys, and blessed us so much through the process.

What are some of the challenges for you living in Arnhem Land?

The biggest challenge is how isolated we are. The road to the next major town is over 700km on a very rough, unsealed dirt track, which actually becomes impassable for a few months each year over the peak wet season. Flights are really expensive, comparable to a trip to Europe from Australia, just to fly 50 minutes to Darwin or Cairns. We miss our family and friends back home. There are lots of benefits of living in a small town, but also this can be really hard. There is less privacy and anonymity. I also miss having a regular supermarket to buy fresh salad and sourdough.

What are some of the joys of living in Arnhem Land?

This is a wonderful place for children to grow up. There is a great Christian College, beautiful community with great facilities, and many sports and recreation clubs. We love getting out to the beaches to watch the sunset, and going camping or sailing. The MAF team here are very close. We support each other and are very embedded in each other's lives. It's a real blessing to work closely to bring God's glory in this place.

WEEK 1 June 1-7 PRAYER POINTS - Pray for the MAF program in Arnhem Land

- Pray for the Flynn family, for rest and connection amidst a very busy season for us all.
- Please pray about the staff shortages across MAF worldwide. The shortages are very much felt in the Arnhem Land Program, especially in engineering. Everyone goes above and beyond their regular roles to support the program, to get the flights out and to help the people of this region, but the cost of this eventually is felt and people are tired.
- Please pray for God to touch people's hearts to join MAF here, for more funds to be available for resourcing and staff. He's always working and we know He promises to give us our daily bread.
- Praise God for the arrival of Michael and Naomi Lindsay with baby Florence. Pray that the rest of their belongings arrive in a timely manner. Pray that they can build meaningful relationships in the community.

Aircraft Refurbishment Project

"And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work." - 2 Corinthians 9:8 (NIV)

Right now, we have two planes available to serve in Arnhem Land and Timor-Leste, but they are in need of critical upgrades to make them mission-ready.

Part of this year's End of Financial Year campaign will go to helping transform Cessna Caravan P2-MAG into an Air Ambulance.

In Arnhem Land, another Cessna Caravan, P2-MAH, is being prepared to provide disaster response, domestic violence evacuation and education flights.

Please join with us in prayer for these much needed aircraft upgrades.

WEEK 2 June 8-14 PRAYER POINTS - Pray for the refurbishment of new planes

- Pray for our pilots in Timor-Leste as they partner with the government health department to provide this vital Air Ambulance service. Pray for safety and wisdom as they transport patients to and from hospital.
- Pray that we can raise our target of \$395,000 during this End of Financial Year campaign to refurbish the two planes.
- Pray that the planes will be a blessing to the two countries, providing much needed growth to the fleet already there and greater capacity to serve more people.
- Pray for the engineers who will be outfitting the planes with the new equipment. Pray for wisdom and understanding as they work to make the planes fit for service in challenging environments.
- Pray for our team in Arnhem Land as they serve the people in the homelands. Pray for safety in difficult weather conditions. Pray for wisdom in each decision regarding safety in flight.

Staff Movements

“Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, “He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.” - Psalm 91:1-2 (NIV)

Over the next few months, our programs in many countries will be experiencing lots of changes. The middle of the year is a prime time when staff return to their home countries permanently, or for holiday and home assignment, or relocate to other programs.

Moving countries is a massive undertaking. There are new languages to learn, new social rules and norms to navigate, new environments to get used to and new cultures to come to understand. In some cases, our programs are left with a skeleton crew to continue with the daily service until staff return or new staff become proficient in their new roles and living in a new country. This can be a difficult time when need continues to be high, yet our capacity to meet the need is diminished.

Thankfully, we have a mighty God who knows everyone’s needs and does not become tired or weary and whose capacity remains at full strength.

Times of transition and change can be incredibly stressful and burdensome, and the ripple effects are felt far and wide.

Please lift up our staff serving in different countries around the world.

WEEK 3 June 15-22 PRAYER POINTS - Pray for our Staff movements

- Pray for the Paas family who have been serving in PNG for almost seven years. They are relocating to Cairns. Pray for this time of farewells and transition to a new country and new roles within MAF.
- Pray for the new family soon to be arriving in Arnhem Land. We are so excited as they will be taking on a vital role. Pray for final preparations and as they farewell their families and friends and move across the world.
- Pray for the Arnhem Land program as they get ready to welcome new staff.
- Pray for the Venter family who are finishing up their time in PNG after many years of service and will return to South Africa.
- Pray for the Munyards who are moving to PNG. Praise God their visa came through recently and they can now move forward with their travel and settling into the MAF PNG program.
- Pray for the MAF Papua program as they will be experiencing a shortage of staff, with many returning to their home countries during the long summer holidays, for rest and for settling children into higher education.
- Pray for staff who remain in country across our programs, as they also go through times of adjustment when staff leave, or when new staff join.
- Pray for patience, wisdom and understanding for all our staff during times of movement and change.

Chad

"The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; for he founded it on the seas and established it on the waters. Who may ascend the mountain of the Lord? Who may stand in his holy place? The one who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not trust in an idol or swear by a false god." - Psalm 24: 1-4 (NIV)

Earlier this year, MAF Chad celebrated 60 years of service.

Chad is a country of vast distances, little to no infrastructure outside of cities, soaring temperatures, and harsh deserts. Chad is predominantly a Muslim nation and those who profess to be Christians are often persecuted for their faith.

By providing safe, fast transport, MAF is supporting Chadian church-planting.

Ministry partner Justin Robaye relies on MAF, as his role in supporting missionaries and church-planting around the country involves a lot of travel. Three days by road to reach Goz Beida in eastern Chad is replaced by a three-hour flight with MAF.

Born into a non-believing family, by God's grace Justin now brings light through God's Word to those who sit in darkness. He calls it his great joy to bring salvation to the nations through the knowledge of Scripture.

MAF flights allow Justin to reach the most remote places that are hard to access with the Gospel. But time-saving is not the only factor Justin considers when making travel plans.

"We are spared from road bandits and robbers of all kinds," he said. "MAF flights are fast and secure. They make our work easier and allow us to accomplish our mission more quickly."

Justin serves people groups that have long sat in darkness, which Justin says contributes to violence and poverty. And whereas people are thirsty for the Word, at the same time they fear persecution.

WEEK 4 June 23-30 PRAYER POINTS - Pray for Chad

- Pray for the growth of Justin's ministry. Pray also that he can receive the necessary support to expand his ministry.
- Praise God for 60 years of service in Chad. Pray that we can continue to serve and be a witness to those who do not know Christ.
- Pray for our MAF team in Chad as they are faced with the daily struggle of living in a harsh environment with soaring temperatures.
- Pray for people to come and serve with MAF in Chad. There are a number of vacancies needing to be filled. Those who serve in Chad need to have specific language capabilities.
- Pray for the Christians in Chad who face persecution from their neighbours. Pray for safety and strength and for a deepening of their faith, even in the midst of struggle.