

Howell's e-Mail News

Tuesday, August 3, 2004

Dear Friends and Family,

Greetings from Nampula! First of all, we want to say how much we appreciate the many emails of support and encouragement we have received. The last month has been filled with unexpected challenges and we have consistently been given strength and peace through it all.

We have been in Nampula for over a month now, and were able to find a furnished apartment to move into fairly quickly and easily. Our apartment is one of several in this building, and we have enjoyed living so closely to our Mozambican neighbors closer than we have been able to previously. It has definitely been a new cultural experience for everybody (the kids in the building think we are fascinating, and we are adjusting to the noise level!).

What has been most difficult lately has been conversations our team has had about our vision and ministry. Shortly before we had to leave Montepuez, the Holton's brought before the team their desire to work among the Yao people near the city of Lichinga in the neighboring province of Niassa. They have felt like the calling they have for ministry could not fit well with the situation in Montepuez and wanted the team

As for our time of limbo here in Nampula, as a team we will continue to pray over and work on our vision and goals for life and ministry among the Makua-Metto in and around Montepuez. We will also continue to form and cultivate relationships with government and religious leaders here in Nampula and also in Pemba. Also, while we are fluent in Portuguese, we are interested in hiring a tutor for a little while to help us polish our abilities with some of the more complicated verb tenses. In addition, another missionary with GNFA works at a ministry outreach and training center here in Nampula, and we have been brainstorming with him about ways that we could help out a few days a week over the next few months. That would give us an outlet for ministry (which would help keep our sanity) and would be a good way to improve our Portuguese. As a team we are also looking into finding a Makua-Metto language teacher so we can continue our language learning, but we are not sure what to expect because the dialect is so different here in Nampula.

Abby just keeps growing and is getting into everything. She is looking more like a little girl and less like a baby every day, and her jabbering is becoming more and more intelligible (with Mam and Ball being the most discernable!). She just had her first birthday, and we are amazed at how fast the time has gone by. We had a party for her today, which of course was lots of fun, but also makes us miss our families more.

Please continue to pray for the government situation: that God would open up the right doors for us to move back to Montepuez and represent his kingdom there. Pray for our team as we go through the sending of two families to another province and as we go through changes as a group. Pray that God would show us ways that we could be a blessing to what he is doing in Nampula over the next few months.

Thank you for loving and supporting us.

Grace and Peace,
Alan, Rachel and Abby