

Westerholm's e-Mail News

Thursday, April 1, 2004

Dear Family & Friends,

Hello everyone from Montepuez, Mozambique! It has been a time of patience building since our arrival here. When we arrived three weeks ago our whole team moved into the two houses we had rented during our survey to Montepuez, expecting that within several days we would all be able to find other rental houses and move in quickly. We ran into many delays in setting up housing. About a week after we arrived all of our teammates moved into their apartments. Chad and I have found an apartment but we are waiting for the current tenant to move out. Since then Chad and I have been living with various teammates. It has been difficult to be here for almost a month without being able to unpack and settle in. Please pray for us to have patience and wait on the Lord and His timing.

I think our team as a whole is experiencing the waves of culture shock as well. Montepuez is so different from Nampula! We have been thrown into a very different lifestyle here and we have so much to learn and adapt to. There are many things we like about Montepuez. It is a small and peaceful town and for this we are very grateful. However, theft is a big problem in this area and we are prime targets. There have been several things stolen from our teammates yards and porches and one apartment that was broken into already. The thefts have awakened fears about safety and tensions between shrewdness and trust as we build relationships with the Makua people.

Thievery and lying are part of the common way of life here. At face value these traits repulse us on a deeper level these traits humble us bringing our own sinfulness before us. Although it unpleasant to begin building relationships in a culture where lying and stealing seem to be the norm, God did not bring us here to bring His healing to healthy, perfect people but to the sick and sinful, to people like ourselves. May God transform us to love others like He does.

We have begun language lessons in Makua Imetto (ee-met-toe). God has blessed our team with a wonderful language helper named Carlos. Chad, Rusty and Kyle met Carlos two years ago when they were surveying the Cabo Delgado area. Carlos acted as their guide in their travels throughout this area. Carlos is fluent in Makua Imetto, Portuguese and a great English speaker as well. For the past two weeks Chad and I have been focusing on pronunciation. We are going through each of the letters of the Makua alphabet and learning the various sound combinations associated with each.

We are so glad to start our language study by focusing on phonetics particularly because there are many letters that are pronounced differently in Makua than in English. For example a "k" is like a "g", the "p" is like a "b", the "c" is a "ch" and there are four different "t" sounds! We spent our entire class yesterday focusing on the four "t's": "t", "th", "tt" and "tth". The "tt" and "tth" are particularly challenging because you have to put your tongue on the roof of your mouth and kind of stretch your jaws to make the correct sound. After class yesterday both of our mouths were really sore from making these unfamiliar sounds!

Since our last newsletter there have been two exciting new additions to our family: Scotty, an English bulldog, and Sandy, a Jack Russell Terrier. Scotty and Sandy were the pets of a missionary family in Nampula who are about to leave for a twelve month furlough in the States.

They were looking for good homes for their dogs and we were happy to provide a home for Scotty and Sandy! The dogs have been very patient remaining tied up outside or locked on the veranda, but I think they will be very excited to get moved in to their own place with an enclosed yard to run and play in. Scotty and Sandy have been a joy, an encouragement and great protection for us already. We are excited that they joined our family!

Thank you all for your support, encouragement and prayers! We love you all!

Chad & Amy

Prayer Points:

- We will be able to move in and get settled into our apartment soon.
- Our containers will arrive quickly and that customs, shipment, and the unloading process will go smoothly.

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- Our team as we seek the Lord about what village(s) to settle and work in.
- God will give us patience and success in language study.
- God will fill us with love and grace for the Makua people.