

Westerholm e-Mail News

Tuesday, May 30, 2006

Friends and Family,

This morning we awoke to cold air and were amazed when we saw the temperature inside the house was 68 degrees Fahrenheit! "Winter" is upon us. We began the month with a four day trip to Nampula in order to buy groceries and to pick up some luggage that was unable to fit on the plane on our flight from South Africa. Unfortunately, there is still another trunk that has not made it up, so we will have to wait until some other time to get that trunk. While in Nampula we worshipped with the Intxotxa church that we worked with when we lived there. It was good to see some familiar faces and talk with old friends.

We also were able to attend a two day ethnomusicology seminar in Pemba (2 hours away from Montepuez). "Ethnomusicology" is just a fancy way of saying the study of ethnic music. The seminar was attended by several missionaries from different organizations and was designed to help facilitate the development of culturally appropriate music in the church. The timing was great because only a few days earlier, our friend Germindo was telling us that he was interested in printing a new hymnal that will have 100 songs in Metto. The current song book only has 40 songs and needs revising. Hopefully, in the next year or so we can work on organizing and printing this songbook. Hymnals are important in any culture, but it is especially so because songs play such a major role in an oral based society like the Metto.

I have also started studying the Gospel of Mark with one of the church members in Montepuez, named Felizberto. Felizberto actually lives in Bandari, a village about a two hour walk from here, but he walks into town every Sunday to worship with the church here. There are several believers in his village, but they don't come to town to worship. Hopefully, with some encouragement they will start worshipping together and our study of Mark will help him have confidence to teach what he has learned. We have been using the Metto translation of Mark, which has been really helpful, because even though Felizberto speaks Portuguese, it is not his first language.

We have also been visiting a small church in a village named Nanjua. It is about 45 minutes from Montepuez and has about seven members who have been meeting together for about two years. I have been teaching from a chapter of Jonah each week for the past two weeks. The teaching has gone pretty well, although the translators often take quite a few liberties with my lessons. I know enough Metto now that I know when they are going off on a tangent...which happens quite often! When I asked someone after the first lesson what they learned they told me that Jonah was the Messiah (although they did get the rest of the story right). I have been able to read a Metto story book based on Jonah which has probably helped clear up some potential understandings. In teaching we really have to assume that the church knows nothing, because for almost all of them it is the first time they have heard these stories.

We have also been taking some believers from a village called Nanhupo with us when we go to Nanjua. There are a handful of Christians in Nanhupo, but they have not been meeting together on Sundays or have had any sort of discipling. Nanhupo is an example of a village where evangelism has taken place with little or no follow up. So there are a handful of believers in Nanhupo without any Biblical knowledge or training. What is unusual about Nanhupo is that the village is only half Metto; the other half is Makonde. Likewise, the Christians there are diverse and represent three different languages. In the coming months we hope to visit Nanhupo and Nanjua frequently and develop relationships with people there and practice Metto.

This week we are blessed to have Dr. Rackley, a Marriage and Family Therapist visit our team. He will be working with each of our families and the team as a whole to help us work together better as a team. When he leaves next week, two families on our team, the Smiths and Rolands will also be leaving for about four months to head back to the States for furlough. This means that it will be only us and the Howells in town for the next few months. We hope to use this time to really dig into language learning. Maggie is doing well and is showing the first signs of teething. She has been giggling a lot and cooing. She is such a joy and a blessing.

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Praise God For:

1. Opening the doors for us to work in Nanjua.
2. The things we learned at the ethnomusicology seminar.
3. Eight baptisms in Chipembe, where the Howells are working.
4. Keeping us healthy this month.
5. Protecting us when a thief tried to enter into our yard a few nights ago.

Please Pray For:

1. The church in Nanjua as we study Jonah.
2. Our team's visit with Dr. Rackley.
3. Chad's Bible study with Felizberto.
4. Perseverance in language study.
5. Germino, a local evangelist, who is going through a discouraging time.

Donations to this ministry can be written to Cordova Community Church with the memo "Mozambique" and sent to:

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