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Westerholm Family News

Ministry in Mozambique

January has been a mix of emotions for our family. Last week my niece, Jenna, who had been fighting cancer for three years passed away. We are grieved by her absence even while we know that she is with the Lord. I will be heading to Seattle to attend the memorial service this weekend. While we grieve we also await expectantly for our second child to be born. (We are praying the baby does not arrive during the three days I am gone to Seattle!). On the other side of the world, birth and death continue the same as here. Several villages close to Montepuez have been suffering from cholera. The rainy season brings disease due to lots of rain and little food as people await the new crops. I also received an email last week from my teammate Alan, who wrote me that one of my Mozambican friends had just had a baby boy. It is customary in Makua culture to ask a friend to name your child, and my friend wanted me to name his newborn son. I gave the baby the name Timóteo (Portuguese for Timothy) since I knew he would be growing up in a Christian home just as Timothy had. Though great cultural differences exist between here and Africa, I am reminded that many of life's greatest joys and deepest hurts are common to all peoples of the world.

While in the States I am finishing my master's degree. After nine years, I think it is about time to wrap it up! It has been really refreshing to be back in class again and have opportunity to step back from ministry and think anew about how I am working. I am even in class with two guys who will be missionaries in southern Tanzania working with the Makonde people. The Makondes are a people-group which neighbor the Makuas. Many Makondes live in the Montepuez area, and I have specifically prayed for God to raise up missionaries to work with the Makondes, so this was a great joy for me.

I realize that in my newsletters I often mention many places, so I think it would be helpful to give a summary of those churches over the next months starting this month with Nanhupo (pronounced: *non-yoo-poo*). Nanhupo is 40km from Montepuez on the paved road (about a 25 minute drive). Unlike the surrounding Makua villages, Nanhupo is half Makonde. The village is

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Church members in Nanhupo in front of their new church building

Please Pray For:

- ◆ The Westerholm family as they mourn the loss of Jenna
- ◆ The safe arrival of our second child
- ◆ Our fundraising to go well
- ◆ The church in Nanhupo to continue to grow in their faith and spread the gospel
- ◆ The villages in Montepuez district suffering from cholera



A baptism in Nanhupo several months ago

larger than most with about 6,500 people. Everyone in the village farms for a living, though some are tree loggers, or cut and sell bamboo in Montepuez. The school goes up to the eighth grade; beyond that one must study in Montepuez. Several years ago, a Makonde man named Cosme (*koz-may*) and his wife went to Montepuez to take their sick child to the hospital. The church in Montepuez offered them a place to stay, and as a result Cosme and his wife became Christians. However, when they returned to Nanhupo they didn't continue to worship. Another Christian man, named Tomás (Portuguese for Thomas, *to-mazh*) moved from Montepuez to Nanhupo but he also quit worshipping.

In May of 2006, Amy and I began to work with the church in Nanhupo, but we would pass Nanhupo on the way. We began to take Christians from Nanhupo with us, though the number grew each week. I encouraged them to meet on their own in Nanhupo, and I began to bring a brother named Ataide (*a-ty-day*) from the church in Montepuez to help them out. Since I could not be in two places at once and I was still learning language, I limited my involvement with the church at first. In June of 2007 I began a Bible study through the gospel of Mark on Friday afternoons. As a result a young man named Julio (*ju-lee-oo*) became a Christian and the other believers were strengthened in their faith. We discovered that Cosme had a major drinking problem, but as a result of the Bible study he decided to quit drinking. In 2008 I began to visit the church frequently and I also began the Train & Multiply program with Cosme, Ataide, and Julio. Each of these men and their wives are growing in their faith and have really impressed me in their desire to know the word of God. They are now looking to help start churches in the neighboring villages. The church in Nanhupo has grown to about ten members. There would be a few more, except three members moved and two others died. I am excited to see the life changes that have taken place and the way the church leaders are beginning to talk about beginning new churches. I am praying that they will be able to continue their work while I am here in the States.

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

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