

Hello all,

Happy New Year! I pray that it is a year in which you can see God at work in all things; the good and the hard, the everyday and the extraordinary, as God is with us through it all. Some days it is hard to see God at work, when we are surrounded by suffering or confusion, but my prayer is that even then you will trust that God is good, and that you are loved.

On Monday (Jan 20) I head back to Gulf Province. As usual, I will spend a few days at Kapuna Hospital getting myself organised before I drive my boat three hours across the rivers of the Gulf delta to my village, Ubuo, on Thursday (Jan 23). Please pray for safe and uneventful travel to Kapuna, and onwards to Ubuo.

When I left Ubuo in October, we had 87% of Luke advisor checked. While I have been in Ukarumpa, I have had some contact with the Kope translation team. They have done some village checking, but not much drafting. My hope is that we can finish the first draft and advisor check of the remaining 180 verses, but this is a big goal and there will be other things that we also need to work on. Pray that we can work together well and make good progress... and that I will have patience if we do not make it to the end of Luke.

Last village trip I had two big stressors; the rotten state of my village house, and personal conflict between members of the translation team. Much work was done on the house, and much work was done on relationships. After I left, it sounded like the new tin roof would go on soon, and that the team was working together well. Recent radio conversations with some of the team showed me that all is not well. The roof is still not on, so I will once again be living with leaks, and probably with the roof being changed while I am in the house. Relationships once again broke down before Christmas and have not yet been restored. While I am not looking forward to returning to rotten thatch, I am even less looking forward to more hard conversations and another reconciliation process. I know this is important discipling time, but I need patience and wisdom to do it in a way that recognises both my own and local cultural biases, is grounded in God's word, and gives glory to God. Pray for me and the team as we work this through, as well as for the tin roof to go on uneventfully.

I will be in Ubuo, with some visits to neighbouring Kope and Anigibi villages, until Feb 16, when I will return to Kapuna with Alyssa. Alyssa is a member of the Scripture Use department in Ukarumpa, and she will fly down to Gulf on Feb 11 to work alongside me in helping to understand how currently available Scripture is being used, and what the local churches see as their needs and their strengths. This will then help me reflect on what we as an organisation might be able to contribute to strengthening both Scripture use and the local church. We will do some of this work in and near Ubuo Feb 11-16. Once we reach Kapuna we will join with Robbie and Debbie Petterson (colleagues returning from NZ) to continue building this understanding, along with an understanding of the state and needs of local literacy programmes, in villages and languages across a wider area of Gulf. Pray for us as we travel together and visit many villages. Pray that we would have safe travel, good health, good relationships, conversations that are informative, and ears and hearts that can hear both local voices and what God is doing in this place and time.

On Mar 10 Alyssa and I will return to Ukarumpa, and Robbie and Debbie will continue to work in Gulf for some more weeks before returning to NZ.

While in Ukarumpa I have been working on many different things. One of them was literacy materials, and with the help of friends, we printed and compiled 2780 Kope language books for the local literacy schools. I will be distributing these to schools, as well as having some available for sale to individuals, while I am in Ubuo. Pray that these books will be well used, and build up local literacy

levels. The literacy teachers are volunteers, and it can be difficult for them to hold classes consistently, so pray that their communities will support them in this work.

Another thing I have been working on is planning for the translation/literacy/training centre we are planning to build in Ubuo in October this year. Building plans, including all the solar panels, battery, inverter etc, are nearly finalised. I have also been working on the paperwork to establish a project account, where I can encourage people to give to this project. I had hoped I could include that information in this email, but the process has not quite reached that stage. I'll let you know when I can! Pray for the CAM (Construction and Maintenance Department, in Ukarumpa) guys as they work out all the details, for the people processing project funding paperwork, and for me as I juggle many unfamiliar details.

Thank you for praying for me. During this trip to Gulf I will be away for seven weeks, with a long list of things I am hoping to achieve, and a lot of travel involved. Prayers for health, safety, good relationships, and successful times of work are greatly appreciated. Thank you for sharing this journey with me.

Blessings
Hanna

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