

The Journey of Hanna Joy

#22, December 2017

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*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it....And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.
John 1:1-5, 14. (NRSV)*

These are some of my favourite verses from the Bible, and while we hear them more at Christmas, they are the theme of my life and work. Jesus' incarnation, the Word becoming flesh and dwelling among us, is the ultimate act of Bible translation. My work is just a reflection of this.

As the Bible translation advisor to the Kope and Anigibi people, my work is to help them put God's written word into their own language, where it communicates with them most clearly. As Christians, we are all called to translate God's living word into our lives, so that through what we say and how we live, people come to know the Word of life, and come to live in the light. In this, we are all Bible translators.

It has been a full, challenging, and rewarding year for me. There have been times where the reminder that the light shines in the darkness, and is not overcome, has been critical to me. There have also been times when I have been overwhelmed at the God's grace in action in lives around me. In this newsletter I will give you a few snippets of some of the things that have been happening in recent months.

I pray that this Christmas you each make time to be still and to reflect on who this Word is, and how the Word shapes your lives. May your lives be full of grace and truth.

Blessings

Hanna



Literacy

Both a lot and not much has been happening in Kope literacy lately.

In July my colleague Robbie Petterson ran a well attended **teacher training** course for vernacular literacy teachers. While the newly trained teachers were enthusiastic to go home and start teaching in their village, the challenges of village life mean few literacy classes have actually been started. **Pray** for these beginning teachers, that they will have the backing of their communities to help build up local literacy programmes.

Meanwhile, Hollie (intern) and I have continued to collect locally written and illustrated stories to turn into **books** to be used in these schools. It has been encouraging to see people getting interested in writing stories in their own language, but has been challenging getting the books into the hands of those who will use them. As few schools are currently operating, most books are not being used.



Hollie sorting literacy books to give to schools.

With all of the stories we collect, we also record them for a smart phone **reading app**. This allows the story to be played, while at the same time the text is highlighted, helping to overcome the challenge of people not having fluent readers to listen to. The challenge is that few people have smart phones, or the memory is already full. It is our **hope** that in coming years, more phones will be available in the village, and this material will start to be spread and used.

Songbook

Over the last year we have been gradually collecting Kope worship songs for a songbook. The team decided they want to dedicate the first edition in March 2018, so I have been busy with edits and formatting decisions.

We have also recorded most of the songs, ready to put on phones, so that people can listen and learn them that way. We had a few good recording sessions, as well as some disappointments when people did not receive messages and went hunting instead of being available. One lovely moment in the process was when they were practising some 'gospel in culture' songs, and asked the old, blind, bent man from the next village to come and lead the music with his drum. He was a joy filled man, who brought delight to everyone around him. As he sat on the floor playing and smiling, all the younger people (which was anyone under 70) leaned in to learn all they could.



Pray for the stages of formatting, editing and copyright approvals that Hollie and I need to work on,, and that the books and recordings will touch peoples hearts. This book is only the first edition, as we know there are songs we have not yet had written down, so pray that the release of the book will prompt people to contribute to the next edition.

Translation

I am really pleased with the progress the Kope translation team has made in their drafting skills. While checking their work recently, there were noticeably fewer things needing adjusting than a year ago. While I am in Ukarumpa over Christmas, the team intends to keep meeting once a week, hopefully getting through Luke 12-13 before I return in mid February. Please **pray** for them to consistently make time to meet and to work together.



Working together on checking Luke. Photo: Hollie Butler

As part of our ongoing **training** in translation skills, I have been taking the Kope translation team through some language discovery materials that helps translators look at the structure and features of their own language. This helps them stop defaulting to English patterns that they see in the Bibles they translate from, improves their translation work, and gives them an increased pride in their language and its worth.



Working with the Anigibi team in Waitari

Anigibi

Hollie and I have continued to support the Anigibi tribe in their literacy and translation efforts. In August we spent two days working in Waitari village, resulting in a few more chapters of Luke adapted from Kope, and nine new storybook for the literacy school. This was a 150% increase in the number of storybook available in the Anigibi language! These stories, and a number of their worship songs, are waiting to be recorded so that they can be put into a reading app.

Pastor Elah and Gaubere

Ps Elah Orama has been part of the Kope translation team since I moved to Ubuo in 2015, and his wife Gaubere has been one of my most helpful language teachers. In 2018 they will be attending Bible college for a year.

While I will miss them both greatly, I am pleased their hard work and gifts have been recognised in their selection for this training programme. Please pray for them as they spend this time at school, for Ubuo congregation as they wait on a replacement pastor for the year, and for our translation team as we work without them.



Pastor Elah and Gaubere at the Jesus Film dedication in 2015. Photos: Amy Evers

Financial matters

Thank you! Thank you to each and every one of you who has given a gift towards my work in the last year. I have been humbled by your generosity and God's provision through you.

Your generosity has been such that when I was told my Ukarumpa house needed a new roof, I was able to say 'yes' without worrying. It has also been such that in the new year I intend to order a 9000L **water tank** plus fittings to install in our village for community use. There are few tanks in the village and it is a 45 min round trip to get drinking water from the bush well.

Your generosity also means it is possible for me to start addressing another of my ongoing challenges; water transport. Yes, I am looking into buying **my own dinghy** and outboard! This plan is still in the research stages, but having my own boat will allow much greater flexibility in my work with the Kope and Anigibi. Rivers are the only connection between the villages of these tribes, and boats are the primary form of transport.



My plans are a little larger...and more stable... than this local canoe.

Health

Thank you for your prayers! After six months of a headache that would not go away, I now have only a day or two in a week with a headache, and then it is usually very mild.



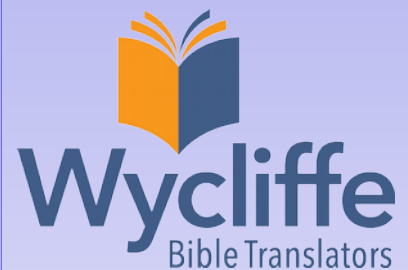
Holidays with family, including bushwalking through WA's beautiful wildflowers, was definitely good for my health!

Please keep praying for good health for me, as village life can be stressful, mosquitoes can be pesky, and health can be unpredictable. On the whole though, I am doing well, and am thankful for that.

*The light shines
in the darkness,
and the darkness*

*has not
overcome it.*

John 1:5 (NIV)



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