

Longwe Liklik

Mission News from the Sprau Family

January 2019

Dear supporters,

We hope you all have spent a blessed Christmas with those dear to you and have got well into the new year. It is high time for another newsletter from us: time has flown, but a lot has happened, too! In July we started our Graduate Certificate of International Health and Development at Tabor College in Adelaide, a course which is designed to prepare us with practical and spiritual resources for our tasks in PNG. We have been studying mainly by correspondence (online), but are currently participating in a two-week intensive at Tabor College in Adelaide in a class room setting. It is a time-consuming undertaking, but it has been very interesting and rewarding and seems to be the perfect preparation for our medical work in Ukarumpa. All the while, we have continued to work in our respective jobs, Anke as a physiotherapist in our local nursing home and Patrick as a General Practitioner in a health service for Indigenous People in Whyalla.



Since starting on our journey of sharing our story and finding congregations and individuals, who might like to partner with us and support our project, we have been on an emotional rollercoaster at times. Sometimes we seemed to be getting nowhere and felt we would never get to PNG. We were still waiting for contact with the clinic in PNG and for partnership development to take shape. However, often when we felt lost and were least expecting it, out of nowhere came a moral boost, be it an email from someone who had heard of our project or an invitation to a church to present our project. Friends had encouraging things to say and sometimes we would get support from people we had not even met yet! All this gave us hope and strength for what lies ahead and helped us remember that our timing and God's timing are often quite different. It was important to remember the message of a proverb, that has been accompanying us since we got married:

"In his heart a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps." Proverbs 16:9

Ask someone in PNG how far it still is to your destination and chances are the reply in Tok Pisin will be *'Longwe liklik'* – 'a little long way'. It just takes as long as it takes! We feel like that sometimes about our mission goals: as much as we would love to see things happen more quickly, they will happen in God's own timing.

The moment we took this to heart, we became a lot less stressed about the process and support started coming in from very unexpected avenues. We met with wonderfully supportive people (with fascinating stories of their own), had the opportunity to hold presentations at different churches in surrounding suburbs and also finally received our official invitation from the clinic in Ukarumpa, PNG. We are very grateful for the overwhelmingly warm welcome we have received and have really felt God's guidance throughout our ongoing journey.

Where to from here?

Receiving an invitation to the clinic in PNG was key to being able to apply for work permits and visas, but not surprisingly lots of paperwork needs to be completed now. Nonetheless we are very grateful and feel blessed to be in this position. We will also enrol Benjamin and Jeremy in the local school in Ukarumpa and have started the process of getting the necessary vaccinations (*ouch!*). The clinic in Ukarumpa has invited us for July 2019, provided we can gain full financial support in time and tick off all of the other administrative requirements. So, you can imagine that we are very excited about this development, which is a huge step forward for us!

In the meantime, fund raising remains a major focus of ours; so far we have been able to raise about 40% of the required funds. We are now specifically looking for supporters, who wish to contribute on a regular basis. The beauty of regular support, no matter how big or small the sum, is that it helps calculate and predict our financial situation for months to come. This type of support will help keep us in the field in the long run and will increase flexibility for us once in the mission field in PNG.

Prayer support and practical help remains invaluable, too. Many invitations we received to present our project were the result of supporters having shared our story with others, who then in turn invited us to introduce ourselves. So the opportunities to share in our journey are plentiful! If you are interested in becoming a supporter, know of someone who might be or know a congregation or group who might want to invite us to present our project, please do get in touch or, if you are ready to get involved financially, click the link below. Certainly do let us know if you have any questions on this, we are happy to answer them all.

And what are the boys up to?

Jeremy and Benjamin have recently finished yet another year of school, which they enjoyed. They have had a great soccer season this year and loved being part of a fantastic team. They have been having lots of fun at Breakdance, doing gymnastics (Benjamin), playing tennis (Jeremy) and checking out the local dirt tracks and skateparks. You can see they love being active and they surely have plenty of energy for it! They are excited about going to PNG, even though at times we get some deep questions about friendships lasting the distance and whether things will be just as we left them, once we return. Parenting challenges...



Praise & Prayer

Thank you to all our supporters for embarking faithfully on this journey with us! It is only through you that we will be able to use our skills to help those in need. If you like prayer points, you may find inspiration here:

Please praise for:

- Exciting opportunities to share our plans with others;
- Faithful supporters;
- Opportunities to learn from others on our journey;
- Good progress at Tabor College;
- Spiritual growth on our journey.

Please pray for:

- Paperwork being processed efficiently by the authorities;
- A growing partnership base;
- Energy and skill in the completion of our course at Tabor College;
- Peace of mind for our boys (and ourselves), that God will provide stability despite external change;
- Patience and faith for any further obstacles on our journey.

Until next time!

Yours in Christ,

Anke & Patrick Sprau



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Cheques can be made out to Wycliffe Australia, with a note 'for the ministry of A & P Sprau' and sent to Wycliffe Australia, 70 Graham Road, Kangaroo Ground VIC 3097.

Support through website: www.wycliffe.org.au/member/patrick-anke/