

Danny & Becca DeLoach

HITTING

the target

FEBRUARY 2011

AIMING

to see God's Word hit its target in the hearts of the people of Papua New Guinea

Dear Friends,

In this prayer letter you will hear exciting news, sad news and news about areas of uncertainty we are facing. In all these things we rejoice that God is good; He is in control, and our lives are in His hands. Thank you for 'rejoicing with us as we rejoice and mourning with us as we mourn' (Romans 12:15). You are an essential part of this mission team. We are deeply grateful for your prayers, encouragement and gifts that keep this ministry moving forward.

Rejoicing

Family News

We praise God for some exciting things He has been doing in our family and in our ministry. On the family side of things, we have some thrilling news. (Have you guessed it by now?...). Anna and Joshua will have a new baby brother or sister by the end of May!!! We are so grateful to the Lord for answering our prayers and expanding our family.

Scripture Use Training

In the closing months of 2010 we also witnessed significant impact in our ministry of promoting mother-tongue Scripture use among the churches of Papua New Guinea (PNG). First, in early September Danny lead a team

"I... got good ideas on how to do such a workshop in the village, and also on the topics that need to be covered; I feel more competent now to actually work on promoting [mother-tongue] scriptures in our language area!"

Quote from a participant in the Scripture Use workshop.

of Scripture Use trainers in a workshop to teach both expatriate and Papua New Guinean translators how to promote Scripture Use in their language groups.

Church Engagement

Not long after that event, Danny flew out to the far flung islands region of PNG to participate in the first-ever regional Church Engagement and Scripture Use conference. Church leaders from all the major denominations in the area attended. As a result of the conference one of the most influential denominations, which previously had not been significantly involved in Bible translation, made a very public and enthusiastic commitment to the future promotion and use of mother-tongue Scriptures! At the end of the meetings, all participants made concrete plans to foster vernacular Scriptures in their churches.

Vernacular In Ministry

The islands region of PNG is host to many Bible schools and seminaries. While Danny was in the area he took the opportunity to visit a few of these schools to promote the Vernacular In Ministry (VIM) course. The

"This conference was like a clinic. We came with all kinds of sores. Or it is like we were a car running without oil. When this conference started, I was not moved deeply in my heart, but at the end of this conference, I am moved deeply in my heart. My denomination has a dream to reach [our region] for Jesus. We've been wondering how to do that. Now I see that using mother-tongue Scriptures is a key strategy."

Quote from a pastor who attended the Church Engagement conference.

most surprising and encouraging response came from a school whose denomination has not historically embraced mother-tongue Scriptures. The leaders of this school were extremely hospitable and practically implored us to come teach VIM material to their students! The upshot of this visit was to realize that church training schools around PNG are highly interested in the VIM content. Our challenge now is to find enough personnel to fill the needs.

This banner from the Church Engagement Conference translates as, "Mother-tongue Bible Conference: God's Word in the local language is sweet!"





Participants in the Scripture Use Training Course

Mourning

While our path over the last few months has included some mountain tops, it has also led us through a few valleys. Some were more expected than others, but none were easy. First, the Lord took Becca's paternal grandfather, Edmund Federwitz, home on September 13th. Not long after that, on September 24th, it was time for Him to receive Danny's maternal grandmother, Grace Kinsey, into her heavenly home. We know that our grandparents are celebrating in the joyful presence of the Lord, but we will greatly miss their love and examples of faith we so cherished here on earth.

As we were still processing the home going of our grandparents, we received devastating news on November 11th that Danny's younger brother, Robin DeLoach, had died in a car accident. There is not room in the few sentences of this prayer letter to fully describe how this has affected us. Can you imagine tenderness, humility and kindness personified? That was Robin. I (Danny) still get tearful as I write about this. Yet, even as we mourn, we have felt God's sustaining presence. We have discovered new depths of pain, but we have also found new depths of God's mercy.

Waiting

In our last prayer letter we shared about the opportunity to pursue a study program at Fuller Theological Seminary. Many of you prayed with us and wrote to us, confirming this direction. Our leaders here in PNG have also continued to strongly endorse this pursuit. Over the past months Danny has worked hard to submit all the required papers and studied

intensely for the Entrance Exam. That is all completed now. No matter what the final outcome, the insights and understanding we gained through the reading have already contributed significantly to our work here.

Now, we just have to wait to hear from the Fuller acceptance committee. The official notification date is March 20, although they hope to have news before then. We feel a peace about the issue, knowing that the Lord will guide us as He faithfully has to this point. We want to highlight that this potential study program at Fuller is not a 'pulling away' from our ministry in PNG. It would require significant time on campus at Fuller (at least a year). However, it would also involve substantial time back in PNG doing research. Our goal in the program is to gain insight that will directly benefit the work of Bible translation and Scripture use in Papua New Guinea.

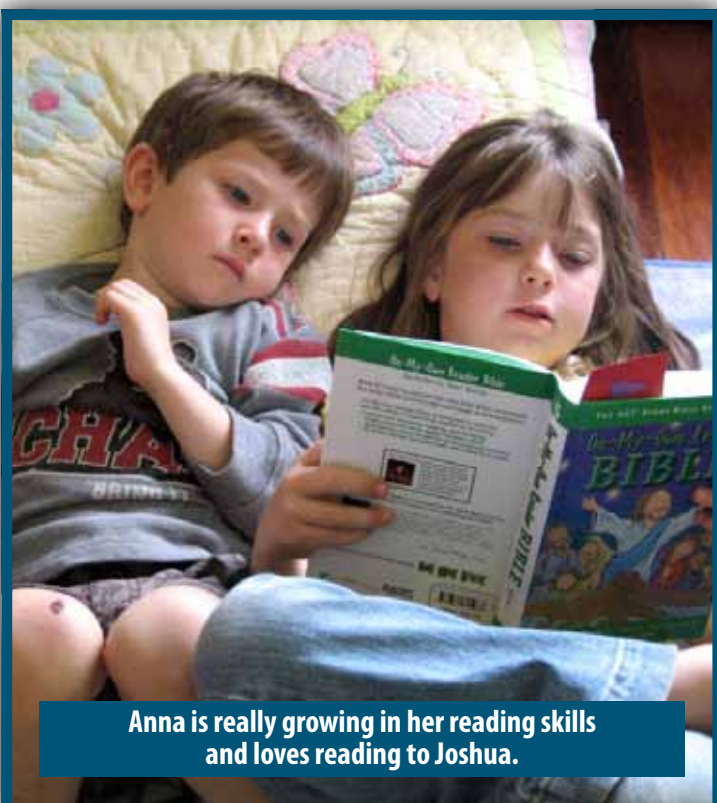
Our time of waiting to hear from Fuller will not be idle. We will spend much of February out in the village with the Wantoat people. Our primary goals there will be to conduct literacy and Scripture Use courses in a remote area of the language group, where we have not previously visited. It will also be a time to touch base with our friends and "village family" before leaving on a potential furlough. Then, in March and the first part of April will be our biennial "Branch Conference" where all our colleagues in PNG will meet to discuss some very significant issues facing our work here.

Please Praise God with us:

- For the new life growing in Becca's womb.
- For the many significant ministry and training opportunities we've had in recent months.
- That the application process for Fuller is finished and that reading for the Entrance Exam was very beneficial to our work here.

Please Pray with us:

- That the many church leaders who have recently made commitments to the use of mother-tongue Scriptures would find concrete ways to implement their plans.
- For our family (especially Danny's immediate family) as we grieve the loss of people we love so much.
- For God's direction in the Fuller application process.



Anna is really growing in her reading skills and loves reading to Joshua.

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