

Our Dear Co-Workers in Christ,

June 10, 2020

There is an abundance of news today and it is all really exciting!!

The Bibles Arrived

This morning we got a phone call from the pier in Cagayan De Oro. The ship has arrived with our Talaandig New Testaments on it --- Debbie and I could barely contain our excitement!

Now we are still fairly locked down over here in Mindanao and borders are all closed, and it is very strict. Currently only one of us can leave the house and we need to have our exit pass with us in order to do it. So how are we going to distribute God's word? --- Well first up, let's all pray.

One of the believers from Lapoc (Loloy) works in the Mayor's office. Now the Mayor (Before the Covid outbreak) was going to come to the Talaandig Bible Launch Celebration as we know him. However, we all know what happened. The Bibles all got locked down in Manila and we all (including you 😊) all got locked down all around the world. Anyway, Loloy is meeting with the Mayor today to work out how we can distribute the Bibles in Lapoc. Somehow, I think that something will work out and that we will be given passes to get through the borders. The Mayor will also attend I think.

We were planning on having just the 1 celebration that was to take place in Lapoc but that would have involved travel from all the regions for all the believers and there were 2,300 believers who had listed their names as attendees. That is no longer going to be possible – so we are planning on having a launch in 3 or 4 different areas now so we can minimize travel. To me I am confident that God will work it out and somehow, I think we are going to be eating a LOT of roast pigs! 😊 Which is what you eat at celebrations over here. Please pray with us about the details of these celebrations for the Talaandig New Testament.

Another Translation

Some other BIG news - We have a second translation planned and this will Lord Willing, begin in another months' time. The Bible that just arrived at the pier is in the Talaandig language. It is a diglot – meaning that the Bibles have 2 languages in them. One column is in Talaandig and the other column is English. The Talaandig people learn English at school and then many these days are going to university in town. Uni students are using English more and more and church is conducted more and more in English out where the universities are situated. So the Bibles are diglot so they can read God's word in their Talaandig tongue or in English, beautiful to look at, really durable covers, gold edging on the Bible paper – they are just like what you would get when you buy a nice Bible in the west. We will send out some photos when we have taken delivery.

Now Ryan Duwang, has been on the translation team for many years working with Debbie and I and the rest of our team and he is a good translator. He is also a mother tongue "Higaonon" speaker. So we are sending him back to the Dulangan region to turn our translation from Talaandig to Higaonon. The languages are related so we are thinking that this may be able to be done well within 1-2 years as much will be handled with the computer. Pray for us (especially Ryan) as we do this project.

Ronnie (he is either Paul's right hand – or Paul is Ronnie's right hand 😊) is currently in Cauyunan preparing a place for Ryan and Sarah and their son Troy to live in. There is a house there that we are

renovating, and it should be pretty nice when we are finished. It will probably take a month or so to get it all fixed up. Please pray with us about this project too.

Deep Well Being Drilled

About 15 years back we had a deep well drilled in Lapoc. It was a 9 ¼ inch diameter hole that was drilled 300 feet (100 metres) deep and then a pump was lowered to the bottom of this hole. It has provided water for the Lapoc work since then. However, in the earthquakes here last year the well was destroyed. So currently we are having a 2nd 300-foot-deep hole being drilled, and they were at about 200 feet deep as of mid-March but then they all got locked down too and the drilling stopped. The drilling has just begun again today and they have hit water so please pray for that project too.

Website Evangelistic Material Progress

Debbie and I have been working on Evangelistic materials since late last year and have had even more extensive time on this since we were locked down in mid-March. We are doing these materials in 3 different languages – Talaandig, English and Cebuano. They are about ½ way completed now. The materials are fabulous, and we are really pleased with them. Our new co-workers, Jane and Ernesto Lopez, went home to the USA for 1 month to visit Jane's family as her dad had been unwell. Well they got locked down near Chicago and have been there ever since. They have a ticket to come home to Mindanao for July 5 so please pray with us about their return.

Anyway, while they have been locked down in Chicago, Debbie and I and one of our Higaonon co-workers Jerrum and our camera man Jan have been making Evangelistic videos. So far, we have about 35 done. We then send the videos and study guides to Ernesto and Jane and they have been developing a website and putting this material up on the web. We are not ready to launch this site -- but we almost are, so probably next month we will send you all a link and you will be able to use it.

It will be a great site to give a link to unsaved relatives and friends and they can watch these (user friendly) videos in the comfort of their own home and maybe come to understand about salvation. In addition to this we will be able to use the materials over here for training of new Bible teachers as well as for outreach and evangelism.

We just purchased another 4 computers and 3 more data projectors for this project for different ones of the churches. We still need more internet signals in the remote areas (pray) and we will be able to share Jesus with many, many more people through this digital method.

Coming Home To Australia

Tomorrow June 11, Debbie and I had tickets to Perth from over here as we were going home for my Mum's 80th birthday. Well our tickets have been cancelled and even if they weren't, we would have to be in quarantine for 14 days so would miss Mum's birthday anyway. So needless to say, we cannot go even though we wanted to be at my Mum's birthday so badly. 😞

We are now feeling that God wants us to complete this website project before we go home and also make sure the Bibles are distributed. So somehow, I think it will be around October before we can get home.

We are tired and have not had a Furlough (called Home Assignment or Sabbatical sometimes now) for many, many years. At times we have been able to be in Australia but each time we have continued on with our work such as translation etc. So we are feeling like we need to take a furlough and rest a bit and also get to visit all of our supporters and supporting churches and report about the work over here. So once (Lord Willing – if it actually does happen) we get to come to Australia and if the borders are open in Australia we are going to take a furlough and travel and see our dear co-workers who have stood so faithfully with us in the work here. We are missing everyone.

Little Boy Found in Victoria Australia

Almost every morning I work out on the treadmill in our home here for 1 hour. I get drenched with sweat and while working out I normally catch up on the news and sometimes talk to the Lord. Up until this AM there was a little autistic boy who does not speak and who is afraid of people who was lost in the Mt. Pleasant mountains. Some were fearing that he may have died as he has been lost for 2 nights and it gets really cold there in the night. Anyway, this morning I saw the Mum of this boy live on TV and she was talking about her son. She said, “I am not the praying type -- but I have been praying”. 10 minutes later as I worked out, the news announcer announced that the boy had been found. God answered that mother’s prayer. God tells us that all people know he is there as knowledge of him is built into our hearts -- this lady knew God was there, she prayed and God answered. Beautiful!!! Maybe she has just begun her journey.

Just Warming Up

The last time I met with a large group of Bible teachers at a Talaandig Bible teacher’s meeting we had, after I had finished sharing, I asked them what basketball players do before they played the game. They answered – “they warm up.” I had just been speaking with them of the amazing things we are seeing God do through us all here and I encouraged them – “Guys we are just warming up.”

Jesus may come back tomorrow or even today; we don’t know what he has in store for us. Maybe we are just warming up for many more things that are to come. Maybe he is about to rapture us to be with himself. But we can be sure of one thing about our God, he is always on time, he is kind and he is faithful. Let’s keep walking with him and trusting him each day --- and let’s try to get to the finishing line --- serving him until his return.

Much, much Love, Paul (for us both)

P.S. We call it “walking by faith” as we don’t know what is ahead of us. We walk and we trust.