



Mark and Laura Woodward, December 2010

Dear praying friends,

The last few months have definitely been a time of transition for us, as we've adjusted to new life and work situations. After 9 months of filling out visa forms and waiting, Mark's US visa finally arrived in mid-October, so on October 28th we arrived in Oregon, USA, to begin the next phase of our work with Wycliffe Bible Translators!



Decorating our bedroom, relaxing in the Oregon countryside and American pancakes...

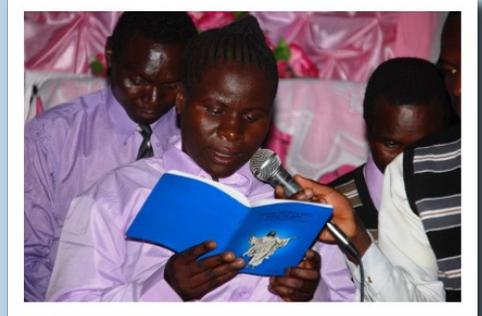
In a sense this stage of our work is one of preparation, as we think and pray about potentially moving to Tanzania in the next couple of years.

Laura is currently on an adult Psychology degree program at a Christian university in nearby Salem, Oregon, which is something that she is really enjoying and will give her an excellent foundation as she hopes to serve our colleagues overseas in the future. Her hope is that she can have a role in listening and serving people as they adapt to cross-cultural change and stress, and as they go through any other difficulties practically, emotionally or spiritually. Over the coming years Laura is looking forward to gaining more experience in this area and putting what she is learning into practice.

So far she has really enjoyed the first two modules, and just received her grade for the first one - 100%...!

Bible translation in Tanzania

Over the past couple of months it has been really exciting for us to see several books of the Bible being published in Tanzanian languages. In August the books of Mark, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Ruth and Jonah were published in the Malila language of Mbeya Region in the southwest of Tanzania, and just last month the books of Acts, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, James and Revelation were dedicated in the Burunge language of Dodoma Region.



Please pray for these communities, that they would engage with the Scriptures and that God would use them to change lives.

Please also pray for others who are still waiting to have any of the Bible, including groups in Katavi Region where we hope to work in the future.



As part of his work, Mark is starting to develop a website for our Uganda-Tanzania branch to publish language resources for language communities and the academic community. So far this is going slowly as long-distance communication is proving a challenge, but we're hoping that as Mark's studies allow him more time this will start to progress.

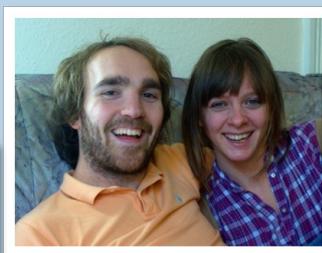
At the moment, most of Mark's time is spent working on an MA programme (it's from the UK so we'll go with British English spelling this time...) in Bible and Mission from Redcliffe College in Gloucester, UK. He has been busy writing essays for the past few months, and by the end of December should be half-way through the essay-writing part of the course.

He will soon have to start thinking seriously about a dissertation topic, which he hopes can involve researching how and to what extent the Bible in local languages is used in Tanzania, compared to the Swahili Bible. This is something that hasn't been investigated a huge amount up until now, but could potentially give valuable input into decisions as to how translation projects should be planned in future. The focus of our work is always that lives are changed, rather than products simply being produced, so Mark would really like to research how people engage with Bible portions in their local language so that translation projects can ultimately be tailored to better meet people's needs and desires.

September and October were busy but enjoyable months for us as we were based in Melksham in the UK. We spent some of the time visiting friends, family and supporters, knowing that we wouldn't see many of them again for a while. We were really grateful to have this unexpected time in the UK while we were waiting for Mark's visa to be issued, and looking back we can definitely see God's hand in allowing us this extra time with people who we wouldn't otherwise have seen much of. We were very thankful for the provision of accommodation from a lady at one of our supporting churches, and for the chance to get to know people at the church better, including several of the teenagers in the youth group.



Mark's Gran and Grandad, us, brother Phil and his wife Helen, and our friends Matt and Liz



Left: Mark's Gran and Grampy, and Laura with Auntie Barbara



Then at the end of October we packed away all our possessions into four suitcases and a couple of (quite heavy...) carry-on bags, and stepped on to the plane that would take us to Oregon. Having now been in the US for just over a month we feel like we are settling in well, although I'm sure there will still be challenges ahead! We are living with Laura's family for now which we are thankful for, as it makes it possible for us to afford the courses that we're taking.

We've been extremely grateful for some unexpected financial gifts over the past couple of months, which have helped to pay for flights and other extra costs. While we're in the US we are hoping people will join our support team, both to pray and to support us financially, as we're currently below our required level of income. Please join us in praying for this need, and if you or anyone you know would like to know more, please get in touch with us or take a look at <http://everytongue.co.uk/support>

We're always very happy to share with anyone who wants to listen about what God is doing around the world through Bible translation, so please let us know if you or anyone else would like us to do that. We'd love to have opportunities to do this in the US, or even further afield via video, online or whatever... please just ask!

Thanks so much for being a part of the work that we're involved in with Wycliffe Bible Translators. We hope you're as excited as we are at playing a small part in God reaching out to people of all nations in their own language!

 Cut along here to remember to pray for us!

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Thank God for:

Mark's visa and initial US residency being granted with no problems!

A good couple of months in Melksham and spending time with friends and family there

Our adjustment to life in the US

The fact that we're both really enjoying the studies we're doing

Pray for:

Provision of all our financial needs

Opportunities to share about what we're doing and to encourage others to join our support team

Our studies and work to continue to go well

Ongoing translation work in Tanzania, and the pastors and communities we'll hopefully be working with in Katavi