

Back in the Bush 2012—Mission Letter #4

2/06/2012

Greetings to all,

I write this letter as I sit at my computer back home in Pa. thanking God for a very productive but hectic past two weeks. Deb, Heather and I left Liberia Friday evening and arrived safely home late Saturday afternoon. Sandy is staying in Liberia another two weeks helping at Lutheran Training Institute. Our long trip home was draining but thankfully uneventful. Reaching home that first hot shower is always soooo great!

The TSP has cleaned out last year's waiting list by accepting 187 new students for the 2012/2013 school year while adding 237 to a waiting list for next year. Having all the info for the 2012/13 school year, we now start putting it all together. Student profiles should be ready to distribute by May. This will be our 13th year and we again praise God and look to Him for another successful year.

With the birth of God's Precious Children (GPC) and its quest to better education in Bong County, Liberia I started looking at potential school building projects. We have visited several sites and favor 2 projects I feel challenged to do. One would be the finishing of the Bishop Main Lutheran School in Zeanzue and the second would be 5 additional classrooms at Bethany Lutheran School in Suakoko. The TSP is helping a number of students in both these schools. We are in the process of securing quotes on both projects. I am reasonably sure GPC has sufficient building funds to do one of these projects. My prayer is that donations continue coming into the GPC construction fund and we would be able to proceed with both projects. I have video of Bethany and will produce a DVD in the near future to help bring awareness to the need.

Another issue I dealt with was the sagging roof trusses on St. Luke's Lutheran Church adjacent to Phebe Hospital. For a number of years, as funds permitted, the congregation would struggle forward trying to complete their new building. January 2011 while worshipping at St. Luke's I noticed the roof trusses were sagging. After returning home I spoke with one of my good missionary friends, Carl Dierksheide, and got his advice on how to correct the problem. This year I shared our ideas with the building committee at St Luke's and they now have a plan to correct the problem.

Pan James is a widow raising an extended family of 11 children who we visited January 2011. Those who have seen our video "Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow" will remember the deplorable source of drinking water the family was using. Well this year we paid another visit to Pan and her family this time carrying a Sawyer Water Purification Filter. After training Pan and her older children how to use and maintain the filter system I filtered a cup of water so they could taste it. It was so neat to watch each family member pass the cup around after tasting and break into a big grin of approval. What a precious moment.

Heather and Sandy were a real blessing to Deb and myself helping us accomplish all we did in just 2 weeks. With so many obligations and so many people tugging at your shirt sleeve for attention it is frustrating knowing you only have a short time there. How to deal with all this busyness, all the appeals, all the requests in a Christ like manner has been a challenge to me more than once. It is funny how God speaks to us through other people laying a burden on our hearts. He knows what we need to hear just when we need

to hear it. I was talking with a driver for Phebe Hospital and I asked him how he liked his job. He said he loved his job and he thought his boss man was a good person. His boss always would take the time to talk to somebody and even if he could not do anything about the problem; just the fact that he took the time to listen made that person feel better.

Remembering many of the stories about Jesus connecting with people, because He took the time to be with people, to see them, to listen to them, to look into their eyes, to touch them; I, in need, rest in the hands of the Master Potter continuing His shaping and molding of our lives. Thank you Lord!

Deb and I want to thank you so much for all your prayers during our time in Liberia. They were very much felt. If you will, please continue to lift us up as God's Precious Children continues to grow in the name of Jesus. God bless.

In the Master Potter's hands
gary & deb

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