

PILLINGERS' UPDATE, April–May 2009

Serving People in Word and Deed

Dear friends,

We hope you all had a lovely Easter as we reflected on what is at the heart of our faith—our Lord's resurrection! It is because He has gone before us in all ways, that we can follow Him confidently. Stephen and Jen were at home for the Easter weekend, and we enjoyed being together (though Steve ended up in bed most of the time – see below.....).



Steve's news: Steve started working in March on the **Chumburung Bible** (Ghana) with translators *Keir and Gillian Hansford*. They have a large collection of pictures and maps, many needing further development before they are ready for text-insertion (i.e., putting in the Chumburung names for the towns, etc.).

However, four weeks ago, just before Easter, he got up and his lower back "locked" in pain. Steve has a history of back problems; and this, sadly, has been one of the most serious episodes he's had. He's been unable to sit or stand for more than a few moments during these weeks, but with gentle exercise and chiropractic treatment he's slowly improving. At the moment we don't know when he'll be able to return to work. He's had an MRI scan today (Monday 11th May), and a more definite prognosis should be possible soon.

We'd be glad of your prayers, especially that this prolonged interruption will not set the Chumburung typesetting too far

back. PTL, the Hansfords have been able to get on with a thorough final proofreading of the whole Bible during this period, which will save a lot of time later.

One piece of good news is that while in bed with the laptop on his knees, Steve has been able to do the last few jobs necessary to finish the **Konkomba Bible**! It will soon be sent off for bulk printing, and should be with the Konkomba people in Ghana in about nine months' time. *Please praise God with us.*

Johanna's news: The very week Steve went down I started with a new (small) assignment with Wycliffe. Wycliffe's policy is that it's members each have a group of supporters to give friendship, prayer and/or financial support. Building such a team is called Partnership Development, and I am now a PD consultant. Last year I did four training days with Myles Wilson, a man who is called to train missionaries to involve supporters, including finding the necessary funds to carry out their God-given work. It can be very daunting to have to raise an entire monthly income, or to find that after many years of service you have a shortfall of, say, £500 to £1,000 p.m!

So I met twice with colleagues in situations like these. In the one case, returning to the field after many years of service is only possible after the necessary funds have been found; in the other case there was a re-assignment to Britain after decades overseas. In both cases we explored ways to connect with new supporters, while still trusting *God* to provide for them.

But then I had a bad spell of vertigo, from which I am recovering, after a relapse. Altogether it has been a stressful time for both Steve and me. We are very grateful for your prayers. People in our local church have helped with meals a few times, plus taking Steve to his medical appointments, giving me a much-needed break.

Family news: Jen is preparing for her exams in the next two weeks (second year of Anthropology, Goldsmiths Col-



lege, London). She is working very hard and we are grateful that although she has been tired, she is holding out! She will be going to Rwanda for 3 months over the summer, from 13th June till 13th September. Some things still need to be worked out, but she is likely to spend most of her time with an organisation affiliated to Tear Fund. She will work voluntarily, part-time, using her artistic, photographic and computer skills, and hopes to start informal research for her final dissertation next year on the subject of conflict resolution.

Stephen continues his work in a call centre with Siemens in Sheffield. A valuable experience before he moves on to full-time Christian ministry, when the time is right. He is exploring various possibilities.

Please pray! We'd be very grateful if you could spare a moment to pray for us. For ongoing improvement for Steve's back. For complete recovery for me, and wisdom as I hope to meet occasionally with colleagues in my small role as Partnership Development consultant. Please pray for strength for me, too, as I'm now needing to spend time helping Steve. And for our children, as they seek to find God's way for them.

But we are so grateful that in spite of everything, we have seen the Konkomba Bible come to completion, the Chumburung Bible will get done (even if Steve has to work in bed with the laptop on his lap!), and Johanna may meet with more colleagues as well as carry on with small supportive tasks in the background for various friends in Africa such as prayer, seeking funds or just friendly e-mails!

Thank you, and may you know His peace and joy!

Johanna, also for Steve.

Steve & Johanna: 20 Fleetwood Way, Thame, OX9 3DF, UK.
Phone (H): 01844-218984. Steve (W): 01494-682305.
Emails: steve_pillinger@wycliffe.org / johanna_pillinger@wycliffe.org.

Wycliffe Bible Translators: The Wycliffe Centre, Horsleys Green, High Wycombe, HP14 3XL, UK.
Phone: 01494-682268. Email: Askus_UK@wycliffe.org.
Website: www.wycliffe.org.uk.
Steve's work phone: 01494 682305.

Wycliffe Bible Translators, P.O. Box 548, Kempton Park, 1620 **South Africa**.