



McGrath's News

*“Break open Your words, let the light shine out, let ordinary people see the meaning.”
Psalm 119:130—The Message*

Volume 2009, Issue 7

Manila, Philippines

September 2009

Dear Friends:

This is our first quarterly prayer letter. As we mentioned before, we will be sending out quarterly letters to everyone on our mailing list, while sending out monthly letters to those with email access. So there is a lot of catching up to do for some, while others of you will know most of this information.

*This I recall to my mind, therefore I have hope. Through the LCRD's mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. “The LCRD is my portion,” says my soul, “Therefore I hope in Him!”
Lamentations 3:21-24*

This is the passage our pastor used for part of his text on Sunday morning, and truly this is our statement of praise and adoration. You have seen the videos on TV and the pictures in the newspapers of the devastation that we experienced here in Manila in particular. With significant loss of life and overwhelming loss of material things, it has caused many to realize that possessions, as someone said is just “stuff”! Many are coming to a realization that there are far more important things than stuff; and that eternal spiritual matters are the number one priority! Being right with the Lord is something that flood waters can never touch!!



This was what we saw when we finally got home on Saturday, September 26th. Water pouring out both doors! However, we soon came to realize that our lower floor being covered with water was very minor, compared to some of our staff and members losing all of their possessions – some dealing with water over 2 metres high!! Again the pictures you have seen will testify to what some have had to deal with. And not only water – but some now have oil saturated mud in and on their things, which makes cleaning impossible! Oil in the crankcase is one thing but oil and mud in the interior spells doom!

But in the midst of this God's grace was evident! The wife of one of our employees stepped out of their home on Saturday to get something and notice a crack had formed in her neighbour's home. She began to pound and pound on the door, not able to arouse anyone. She kept on pounding until finally someone came to the door. The family had been upstairs with the TV on watching all of the damage the flood was doing. She quickly urged them to leave their home! No sooner had they all left the house, when a mudslide came down and took their home completely away. Several other homes nearby were lost as well, taking the people with them! The Lord's timing for this family was perfect! Pray for a favourable follow-up with this family!

Now the clean-up continues. For some, the water has not abated and they are still not back in their homes (as of October 5th). For others the disposing of lost stuff piles up outside their homes. The army has moved through some parts of the city, cleaning up the debris piled on the city streets.



Personally, we have been helping our house helper, whose place was completely flooded and they lost everything. Also one of the guards at our compound had water shoulder height in his home, and they too lost it all. So we have been able to provide food, clothing and a new stove to assist them with beginning to rebuild. Our hairdresser also lost everything, so we are seeking to arrange help for her as well. We feel these are our focal points amongst the thousands who have been displaced.

But in the midst of all of this, the work of Bible Translation continues. During the typhoon, south of us, a Bible Dedication went ahead as planned and another language group received the Word in their heart language! It was a very exciting time and also it marked a significant milestone. It was the first dedication of Scriptures translated by national translators. Translators Association of the Philippines (TAP) is our partner organization which is the umbrella group under which Filipino translators serve. What great achievement! Praise the Lord for this next phase in the work of Bible translation here in the Philippines.

Eric's role as Director of Personnel/Member Care is taking on new dimensions with greater responsibilities as the Asia Area develops. As the shaping of things take place, it seems that his role will see him assume responsibilities for personnel for the Philippines. Along with this comes a very steep learning curve, of course. Language classes finish October 16th.

Sharon is spending time in the library integrating books into the Manila library, which have been received from outlying centres that are in transition. Eventually she will be handling the journals and reprints, giving oversight to their continued availability to library patrons.



Oh and one more "little" note – we have an addition to the family! Chewbacca (or Chewie as our grandchildren call him!) is now a full-fledged family member. He has had the privilege of surviving two floods with us as well! ☺ He is a 6 month old shih tzu.

Once again we want to thank you for your faithful partnership with us.

Although the past couple of months have been personally difficult, your prayers on our behalf, and the knowledge that God has called us to serve here in the Philippines, has kept us focussed on the task before us. Sometimes in support roles it is easy to lose sight of the integral part you play. Our founder Cameron Townsend's daughter, Grace, spoke at our chapel recently. She handed each of us a piece of puzzle and reminded us that like any puzzle every piece is very important to the completion of the task! You are as much a piece of the puzzle as we are through your partnership!

In Christ's love,
Eric & Sharon

September Support Status Report:
% of Total Ministry Budget Met - 83%
Balance required: - \$701/mth

Contact Information:

By regular mail – Box 2270 CPO, 1099 Manila, Philippines - 519-489-0317(H); 927-398-2975(C)

By email at: eric-sharon_mcgrath@wycliffe.ca

By contacting the Wycliffe office: Wycliffe Bible Translators, 4316 10th Street NE., Calgary, AB T2E 6K3
800-463-1143

By contacting The USA Wycliffe office: Wycliffe Bible Translators, P.O. Box 628200, Orlando, FL 32862
800-WYCLIFFE

Mark support sent to the office "for the ministry or work of Eric & Sharon McGrath"