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News from Rob and Eshinee Veith

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Discovering partnership

It used to be called “deputation.” And later it was just “raising support.” I must admit that I went into this stage of our ministry thinking “partnership development” was just a euphemism for asking for money. But lately, I’ve come to an entirely different understanding.

It’s not really about money. Of course, we need money. We won’t be going to Namibia without a substantial amount of financial support. In fact, we need about \$5400 a month pledged from individuals and churches, not to mention startup costs. There are days when I feel like I’m pitching a business I know will fail... like, “This is how much it will cost to run this thing... and no, you’re never going to see a financial return on your investment.”

But if all we received from our partners was money, we could go to Namibia, but we could not succeed there.

Though prayer is essential for success, partnership is not really just about prayer. One book I read said that you need a minimum of nine people praying at least one hour per week per missionary in the field. I have no idea where these figures come from. But I’m sure that if there aren’t people praying for our work, it will not succeed. Which is not to say that we wouldn’t complete our designated projects overseas; there are a multitude of non-religious NGO’s (non-governmental organizations) that do their work effectively apart from prayer. But we believe the work we are involved in to be the Lord’s work and “unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it” (Psalms 127). Besides that, the power that is released through prayer is something that we would be silly not to

Continued as PD, next page.

A great day: Mount Cross

The weekend of November 6, we were given a pretty amazing opportunity. Mount Cross in Camarillo, CA invited us to help with all three services as well as speak at luncheons on Friday and Sunday.

We weren’t sure at first what it would mean to help with the service. We had talked about sitting in with the worship team, but our schedule didn’t allow us to make it to practice. There was also talk about some kind of Bible translation-related illustration worked into the sermon. Eshinee and Pastor John Soyster emailed a few ideas back and forth in the weeks leading up to the service and, together, they “grew” a sermon from their long distance communiques. The text came from Revelation, chapter 7: “...before me was a great multitude...from every nation, tribe, people, and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb.... And they cried out in a loud voice: ‘Salva-

tion belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.’” Pastor John pointed out that the multitude cried out in “a” loud voice—united in one great voice. Eshinee emphasized the diversity of the multitude—“every nation, tribe, people and language.” The differences we have in this world world may exist in heaven, but, if they do, they will no longer be barriers. We will be one. And every new tribe, people, nation, or language which is brought into the Kingdom of God enriches it by providing a new insight into God’s character.

On Friday, Eshinee gave an hour long lunchtime talk on Bible translation. Eshinee is getting more and more comfortable behind the podium all the time. Which is not to say she didn’t get nervous (as she wrote in her blog later that day, “Which is not to say that I didn’t sweat right through my shirt”), but her legs didn’t quiver and her hands didn’t shake.

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Pray for us

- for *Health* and *Safety* as we travel around the U.S., speaking with churches and individuals
- for *Opportunities* to share our ministry and the *Ability* to clearly articulate the vision the Lord has given us
- for *Peace* in our spirit as we adjust to our new lives of interdependency with the Church family

If you would be interested in receiving a sort-of-weekly prayer email, contact Rob at REVeith@LBT.org.

On the move: news from the road

I'm writing this in a bagel shop in Camarillo, CA. Eshinee has been sending letters to pastors in Washington, where we expect to be for the month of December. We seek out the places where we can get free WiFi (wireless Internet access) and good espresso (even though I grew up in Southern California, my years in the Northwest have left me with a latte addiction).

Every Sunday, we're sharing our ministry with a church somewhere. Our travels have taken us all over the west coast at this point. September was Northern California. October was Oregon and Washington. November was Southern California. Our weekdays are spent lining up other speaking engagements, meeting with pastors, and speaking at other events.

At this point, we've talked about our ministry with Lutheran Bible Translators and recruited prayer and financial partners at eight churches in Washington, Oregon, and California. We've done one youth event, two mission conferences, and two lunchtime lectures (Eshinee did one and I did the other—see the Mount Cross story elsewhere in this issue). Eshinee also appeared in a fashion show as part of a women's breakfast, where she also had an opportunity to share about LBT. And we introduced a showing of the Luther movie with a tie-in about Luther's commitment to vernacular Bible translation, something near to our hearts. We also meet with pastors and missions committees whenever we can.

In January, we'll be driving back across the country to South Carolina where Eshinee will be taking additional Seminary classes. I plan to make a trip to Namibia in the Spring.

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PD

from previous page

crave for our daily lives. In fact, already we have seen the fruit of prayer reflected in our safety on the road and the efficacy of our speaking in churches.

So, we can't leave for the field without money and we can't succeed out there without prayer, but partnership is something beyond that yet again.

We've forged deeper relationships with several people these last few months who seem as excited about what we're doing as we are. They've become fast friends and have encouraged us powerfully. Steve and Kati put us up for the month of September, fed us, prayed for us, and introduced us to many mission-minded friends. Karen and Mike gave us a place to stay in Ventura and took an evening to pray with us (and prayed for us while we visited Southern California churches). Roberta introduced herself

when we visited her church and proceeded to help us gain opportunities to spend time with the St James confirmation class and women's group. The whole congregation of Peace Lutheran church in Camarillo, CA welcomed us as family, despite the fact that we were strangers, and made us feel like royalty. The staff of Yak's Coffee in Redding, CA were excited to hear about our ministry and provided us with our office-away-from-the-office (as well as some very tasty sandwiches and lattes).

One of the exciting things about partnership development for us, both of us being introverted loners at heart, is feeling like we're on a team of friends. We may be the ones heading for Africa, but we're doing it with our partners—our friends in ministry who make it happen.

MOUNT CROSS

from previous page

And people laughed at the funny things and "hmmm"ed at the intriguing bits.

Rob developed an hour long talk on translating the Bible into new cultures using ethnomusicology and vernacular media. He stressed about it while driving from Seattle and wound up talking from some very rough notes he'd made on the day before. The small crowd that stayed after church for the luncheon seemed to get it, even as Rob demonstrated good and bad logogenic song composition by

reading from the day's liturgy and showed the challenges of contextualized video creation by simulating (poorly, much to Eshinee's amusement) the dance of Thai light opera.

The whole weekend was a special time for us. It felt like the congregation had given us an incredible amount of time to present our calling, ministry, and vision. They listened intently, asked good questions and made good suggestions. We are pleased to have partners like the congregation of Mount Cross church.

