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Thursday, 3 December 2020

Dear Praying Friends,

Delays or Distractions? I'm not sure which of these words best describes the cause of my activity or lack of it since I last wrote.

MIND THE GAP

I finalised the draft of the paper at the end of September. It is now in the process of being published as a small booklet by the local group of SIL people. I have had many positive responses from people who have seen the draft at various stages, so I am hoping that it will be helpful to Christian people who engage in Indigenous ministry in Central Australia. I am also exploring the possibility of having it published as a paper in a journal with a wider readership.

NGAANYATJARRA HEALTH WORK

It could be regarded as good timing. Just as I finished working on "Mind the Gap", I received a request from Ngaanyatjarra Health to translate six documents into Ngaanyatjarra. These were all to do with Aged Care and contained a lot of Government jargon. These kept me busy for a couple of months since I only had a restricted time to spend on them each week due to my other regular commitments (mainly volunteer work at my church). After preparing a revised English version which could be translated into Ngaanyatjarra (known as a front translation), I sent this to the Ngaanyatjarra Health people for approval. Then I met several times with a Ngaanyatjarra speaker to produce a translation. I was pleased to be able to work with Bethwyn Newbery, the daughter of one of the main co-translators of the Ngaanyatjarra Shorter Bible. She told me that she honed her Ngaanyatjarra reading skills by reading the draft print-outs that we gave to her father during the translation process.

KUKATJA TRANSLATION

Due to the COVID-19 travel restrictions we haven't been able to consider either visiting Balgo in the East Kimberley or having Balgo people come down to Alice Springs. My prayer times with Nancy have been few and far between, mainly due to her having her phones stolen or lost and needing to get new ones. However, we have managed to meet the last two weeks.

Last week I contacted Maisie again about recording the Christmas story (Luke 2:1-20). She was quite keen to do this and I have now spent two mornings with her going over the reading. We were to meet again this morning, but that has been postponed until tomorrow. However, when I saw her this morning I was most encouraged when she told me that she had been practising and could now read more fluently. We are planning to record sometime next week.

Maisie has also told me that she would like to do more work with me. So there is a possibility that she could work with us to complete the final checking next year. It is not usual to work with someone who has been involved with earlier drafts when doing the final check. However, I have been advised that since by that time it will be at least two years since she last saw the manuscript, it is unlikely that she will remember it. Therefore it would be permissible for her to do the work.

HEALTH

My eye is now quite okay. Of course I still have glaucoma and need six-monthly checks.

With regard to my type II diabetes, I have been managing it with diet and exercise for over 12 years. However, the time has now come to start on a low dose of medication.

NGAANYATJARRA PEOPLE

Reports that I hear of the Ngaanyatjarra people are varied. A few seem to be following the Lord, but others may have slipped away. There are also reports that there are no Christian activities in some of the communities, while there are some in others.

JAN MOUNTNEY

Now that the WA border is open in the north and in the south, the Great Central Road is also open. However, access to the Ngaanyatjarra lands is still very limited. After a lot of frustrating negotiating and dealing with paper work, Jan was finally able to get a permit to go to Blackstone and should be there by the time you receive this. Her plan is to do the final sorting of most of her belongings there and dispose of her small van. She is hoping to make another visit to the lands in March-April next year.

NEED

There is need for a person or couple to take up the challenge of distributing Christian music and books in Indigenous languages in Central Australia. For those of you who receive this letter by email I will attach a flyer which you could pass on to anyone who may be interested.

HOLIDAYS

We are all learning to hold any travel plans very lightly as sudden outbreaks of COVID-19 can cause state borders to close and flights to be cancelled seemingly at a moment's notice. However, I am hoping to take holidays in Eastern Australia from mid-February to mid-March and spend part of that time in Canberra. To contact me during that time use this number: 0448 657 730.

PRAYER SUMMARY

PRAISE

1. That the "Mind the Gap" paper is being published as a booklet.
2. That I no longer have a problem with my eye.
3. That Maisie is preparing to read the Kukatja Christmas story for recording.

PRAY

1. That Maisie will be able to record successfully next week.
2. For God's protection for Maisie and her family.
3. That plans for the final check of the Kukatja translation will go ahead.
4. That the Lord will encourage Ngaanyatjarra Christians and that they will engage in fellowship.
5. That I will be able to discern the Lord's priorities in my daily life.

Thank you so much for your prayers for me. I pray that you may be blessed as you celebrate the coming of the Lord this Christmas season.

With love in the Lord,
Ameë Glass