

Campbell Ramblings

Keith & Elspeth Campbell

Equipping translation work in Papua New Guinea

Wycliffe
Bible Translators



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Life has come in stages this home assignment year, including our schedule of visits with partners. After a division due to COVID, then a grandchild, then Christmas, we finally got around to spending time with some of our south-east Queensland church partners. In this, and other areas of life, we are learning to patiently wait on the Lord for His timing.



A nice long chat...

With our Townsville home in the midst of renovations, we took a break to head south again for a Campbell family gathering, and visits with several church communities. Keith's parents celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary in March, presenting another opportunity to have four generations of 'the clan' together once more in Maclean, NSW for a celebration lunch.

After fellowshipping with the Maclean church the next day, we returned to Queensland to speak to church services at Caloundra, Wavell Heights, Monto, Miles (where the minister, Glen Perkins, also shared a clear gospel message on ANZAC Day) and, finally, Christlife Toowoomba. It sounds a fairly hectic schedule, but we do enjoy meeting new people, sharing our enthusiasm for mission in PNG, and praying together for gospel ministry.

Having reached the end of our formal mission speaking engagements – after a quick return trip to Biloela the other weekend – we can share the following 'full season stats' for our more analytical readers...

Churches visited	28
Coffee / meal catch-ups	117
Kilometres travelled	33,000
Days on the road	190



Interview at Caloundra PC



Lunch with Monto PC



Outback bound



Mission table at Christlife PC



ANZAC Day in Miles

Refreshing times...

In-between speaking engagements, we managed to catch up with several long-term friends from our Townsville years. Some of the faces below may be well known amongst our readers. There were many more... but we often get caught up in the great conversations, reminiscing, and times of prayer, forgetting to take a selfie.



Prayer points

Personal

- Praise God for safety and good health during our travels.
- Keith's medical tests were a bit of a mixed bag (details page 4). Pray for the issues to be effectively controlled with supplements and diet so that they do not hinder our ministry.
- Continue to pray for our efforts to have our Townsville house readied for sale. The timing suits our general '10 year plan' for future ministry... but we know that all of this is completely in God's hands.

R&R (rest and reconnect)...

Thankfully, returning to Townsville at this time of year is a very pleasant experience! The 'winter' late afternoons provide opportunities to enjoy the beautiful coastline at temperatures in the low 20s, and we can actually put the windows down in the car for a fresh breeze rather than air-conditioning. Hearing the news of chilly mornings below 5 degrees in southern Queensland, and early snow falls further south, make us glad to be 'Northerners'.



Magnetic Island, looking back to Townsville



Usually, we meet upstairs... but one member had a busted ankle

A big part of our enjoyment of home stems from our church family. Tuesday night sees us at Bible study, where this term has involved looking at how we share the gospel as a church, and through personal evangelism. The discussions have been quite challenging, but also encouraging, as we share about friends we are wanting to have gospel conversations with, and pray together for God to provide opportunities, soften hearts, and to give us boldness in proclaiming His glorious salvation.

The main focus...

To close its biennial conference, SIL-PNG celebrated vernacular translation materials completed during 2020-2021. Despite the interruptions from lock downs and travel restrictions, the efforts of teams from 37 different language groups were blessed with God's word in their heart language...

- 4 full New Testaments dedicated
- 1 NT revised
- 8 Scripture portions published
- 13 audio Scripture portions distributed
- 4 oral Bibles translated
- 7 Jesus film videos dubbed

... and added blessings

Our vision statement in PNG is 'God's Word, in Every Language, in Every Life', and at the heart of the ministry is the desire to see Scripture impact people's lives. Through the lengthy process of translation, people engage deeply with the Lord of all the earth... their Lord.

Yamap translator... 'We are learning many things in our workshops. And we see that God is working in our lives through his work in our language. I used to not be concerned with God, but now I am following God in a much deeper way. When the trade language Bible is read in our services, children do not listen well. But when the Scriptures are read in our language, everyone listens carefully.'

Translation consultant... 'Once when I was doing a consultant check for a project, one of the men who was answering my questions asked me to stop the check. He asked me to pray for him because the portion of God's Word that we were checking was talking about him!'

To help people engage with Scripture, workshops bring village community members together to examine aspects of their life and traditional belief systems in the light of God's word. This format allows the powerful word to speak into their lives, transforming hearts and minds.

One of the students shared a great testimony of when some of the Patep men (including himself) were attacked by a neighbouring language group while they were out in the bush where they used to search for gold. He and other course participants tried to stop those who wanted to retaliate and fight back. When we asked what he would have done some years back (before the course), he said, 'I would have been the first to fight'. He started to weep when he reflected on what God has done in his life during the past few years through the understanding of the Scriptures. (It is unusual for PNG men to publicly cry).



Children listening to audible Scriptures on a mobile phone
Praise God!



PNG consultant training translators



Open air Patep church service

Poked and prodded ...

Keith had his 2020 diverticulitis issue confirmed after seeing a specialist, with no significant issues as yet, and also learned that he has a sliding hiatus hernia. We'll spare you the digital images. For several years, this has given Keith occasional acid reflux, particularly when lying down to sleep. Thankfully, both issues can be primarily controlled with diet and natural remedies.

The other issue of joint pain is less clear cut, with x-rays, an MRI and blood test all showing no physical cause. The likely suspect appears to be an immune system over-reaction following a viral infection. At present, this also is proving manageable with basic supplements in the form of fish oil capsules.

We are thankful that these health concerns could be addressed in time, with some reassuring outcomes, and that they should not pose any hindrance for another term of service in PNG.

The path ahead...

What is a hindrance at present, is the delay in obtaining a PNG work permit for Keith. There is light at the end of the tunnel, with an Australian colleague obtaining theirs earlier this month, but we have no solid indication of when to expect a result. The reason for the unusual delay is not clear.

For now, we are making use of the additional time by packing up and selling our house, and serving the local churches. If we are ready to go, yet still waiting for paperwork, there are certainly temporary service options with Wycliffe Australia, or perhaps ministering to the rural churches we have visited who are without full-time pastors and in need of encouragement.

There has been an encouraging development in one matter which we have had people praying for... our required financial support, which had increased since our last term of service (see December and March newsletters). The initial increase created a pledged support shortfall of around \$1,600 per month – an issue which looked like requiring us to put more time into raising support. Wycliffe Australia had granted us approval to return to PNG on schedule, under the proviso that we return within 12 months to work on our partnership support requirement.

Praise God... generosity from partners has reduced this deficit to less than \$470 per month. We are continuing to pray that God will provide the additional support, and that finances will not be a factor in limiting the time spent serving in PNG during 2023.

Prayer points

Ministry

- Pray for the impact of God's word in PNG. It truly changes lives in so many ways. Specifically pray for the generation of children growing up with Scripture so readily accessible.
- Praise God that He keeps dealing with each and every obstacle to ministry – COVID, health, finances. Why are we surprised when He proves His goodness?
- Pray that Keith's work permit will be forthcoming, and that we use our wait time wisely, and for God's glory.

Home Assignment plans – June to ????

- **June** – finish off the house repairs ready for sale
- **July** – praying that we have paperwork in hand and are packing up to depart for PNG
- **If not...** we could head to Kangaroo Ground, VIC to help out at Wycliffe Australia, or accept invitations to preach at numerous rural Qld churches

How to partner with the Campbell's....

At the Wycliffe Australia website wycliffe.org.au/member/keith-elspeth you will see links to receive our updates and send messages, and a link to our campbellramblings.org website to access blogs and newsletters.

Support Keith & Elspeth Campbell in the Bible Translation Movement

Once Only	\$ 35	\$ 75	\$ 100	My Gift (Select an amount or enter your own) \$ 100.00
Monthly	\$ 250	\$ 500	\$ 1,000	

* indicates a required field

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