



# Phil & Vala Long

*Taking Life to the forgotten people of Madagascar*

## Mad 4 Life Ministries

*"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." John 10:10*

[www.Mad4Life.org](http://www.Mad4Life.org)



November 9, 2019

Dear Pastors and Prayer Partners,

Bonjour and Salama Ireo from the Big Red Island of Madagascar! There is a Malagasy word that describes the last two months of our lives here in Madagascar. The word is "afahafa." It's one of the few words that you can sound out phonetically and actually come close to the correct pronunciation. It means strange, weird or bizarre. As you know, when we returned home from the States, we immediately began working on getting our car and driver's license and then jumped back into language study with a one week detour to help out with camp. **Camp went great!** There were around 75 campers ages 12 -19 years old; kids from all different walks of life. Some were from the city here in Tana and others from more of a bush setting. I absolutely loved seeing the smiles on their faces. They all had such a great time and **there were 9 who accepted Jesus as their Savior.** Due to my inexperience with the language, the part I played was that of a helper, and it was a blessing to be able to have a part in this ministry! Because of your financial support, we were able to make sure that camp was affordable for everyone who attended, so thank you for your willingness to give so that people in Madagascar can hear the gospel!

Obviously that's not what has been "afahafa." What was "afahafa," or strange, was shortly after camp we received an email from the company who helps us with our visas informing us that **the government is changing the way they do visas.** No problem - that happens in every country. The problem is that instead of having you do your visa the new way when your old visa expires, **the new government policy states that all NGO visas will be null and void after December 31,** and we will need to have your new visa by then. Previously, NGO visas were free, but **the new visas will be over 300 Euros for every family member 12 years and older.** Now, there is a possible up side to this. Up until now, we were not able to get missionary visas, which is why we came to Madagascar under an NGO, however it looks like with these new rules we may actually be able to get missionary visas with the potential of long-term stay visas, which would be huge for us! **Please be praying for guidance and wisdom on this matter.**

The other big "afahafa" was just last week, not one, but **ALL the gas stations ran out of gas and diesel fuel.** Truth be told, it's not "afahafa" for one station to run out of one or the other - that happens all the time. A rumor about a fuel shortage turned into **a run on the gas stations** with lines half a mile long, not counting the station lots full of motorcycles and scooters. This, along with some small, violent demonstrations, has the Malagasy people, who are generally pretty laid back, on edge. As a fairly new guy, I am not exactly sure what is going on in our country, but to me its a little "afahafa." For now, we will continue moving forward with the new visas, the language and getting ready for our next level of ministry here on our Big Red Island. Thank you all so much for praying for camp last month and continued prayers for visas and the Malagasy people and remember, we are also praying for you.

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