



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

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Dear Pastors and Prayer Partners,

Salama et bonjour à tous! One of the things that I love about starting a new year is evaluating the previous year and setting goals for the one to come. Last year, we had 3 main goals for our family: finish deputation by the end of spring, help our oldest son, Phillip complete school and get settled into the next stage of life, and transition to language school. Praise the Lord, with your help, we were able to accomplish all of these goals. This coming year we have some big goals as well. First, we would like to complete our language study here in France by July, move to Madagascar and obtain our visas, then begin the second part of our language study learning the Malagasy language, so that by the end of the year we can effectively communicate in both French and Malagasy without help from others. These goals are both vital and time consuming. I guess if I have another goal it will be to finish losing my deputation weight. Yes, that is right, you all fed us well and I am working it off now.

We want to share some things with you that are coming up in the next few weeks. I always want our letters and video updates to be positive, but part of partnering with our churches is sharing each other's burdens, so I want you to know that I (Phil) am returning to the U.S. by myself for a week. Our son Phillip is graduating from boot camp. We are extremely proud of him and, as a dad who served in the Marine Corps, it has been great to walk with him through this process. The second reason for the return is where we could really use your prayers. Many of you who have heard my testimony know that I lost my momma when I was 10 years old. My dad remarried a little while later, but it did not last long, and she lived with us for about 3 months and then left. Eventually, because of heavy drinking, she died as well. However, during my junior year of high school the Lord brought a woman into my dad's life and they were married during my senior year. It was hard for me to call anyone else Momma, but, thanks to the Missions program at my home church, I had a missionary pen pal in England and she always called her mom "Mum." So, from the time Susan and my dad were married, she has always been my "Mum." Anyway, last month, my boys and I were having a guy's day out when my dad called to tell me that Mum had not been feeling well and the doctors had found some cancer. He asked me to be praying it would be something they could remove. A few weeks later, after Dad had taken Mum to St. Louis for some tests, it was determined that it could not be removed. She has stage 4 cancer in 3 different locations. They will do Chemotherapy, but as of right now it looks like Chemotherapy may extend her life a few months but not cure her. So the trip home for Phillip was going to be a quick there and back, but I have decided to take an extra day to see Mum in Springfield before returning to language school. If you would please pray for healing as my Mum and Dad walk this journey together. Sorry to end on a down note, but Vala and I know that we have a great support system in you all and that we can count on your prayers. As always, thank you for your prayers and remember we are also praying for you.

Phil & Vala Long

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Praises & Prayer Requests

- (Praise) Continuing to learn more of the French language every day!
- Safe travel to the States and back
- Phillip as he begins "A School"
- Susan Long (Phil's mum) - healing