



# 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)

March 22, 2022

Dear Pastors and Prayer Partners,



Salama Ireo from the Big Red Island of Madagascar!

Friends, a lot has happened since the beginning of the year, and we are excited to tell you about it! First of all, as you know, we are preparing to bring Deacon back to the US for college and report to several of our supporting churches. **When we return to Madagascar, we will begin a church plant** from the first church that we helped to start in another part of town. This means we need to train up national Malagasy workers and leaders to take our place in the ministry. Several people have stepped up and they are excited to take the ministry from us. They are going to do a great job! Please pray for them as we make this transition. Also, in February, because it is the middle of summer, **we were able to baptize nine new believers**. I want you to know that following the Lord in baptism here can be a heavy decision for some. Some families look at baptism as turning your back on the family religion, which in some ways means turning you back on your family.

We had a couple people who were dealing with this pressure as they made the decision to be baptized. One of the young men who was baptized started coming to church as a result of an English class that we taught - even though he actually never attended the class. One Saturday after the class, I handed out flyers informing people of the new youth class we were starting the next day at church. So, that Sunday, the head teacher at the school where we do the English classes walked into the church. I thought he was coming to church for the first time, but no. He had a teenage boy with him. The head teacher said, "This is my nephew, Nomena. He needs this." Then, he turned around and left. Well, Nomena has hardly missed a service since that day. After he came that first Sunday, his younger brother and sister, and now even his parents have started to come. **A few months ago, Nomena accepted Christ and we were able to baptize him, along with the other eight believers**. The head teacher and the rest of his family came to see Nomena get baptized. Like I said, it's been an awesome, and busy first part of the year.

I also want to let you know about something that I believe many of you had a hand in. If you remember, I told you almost a year ago about the school where we meet for church asking if we could help with some building and remodeling projects. We asked you to pray about helping us with this project because it helps our relationship with them. Don't worry, I am not telling you this because I am about to ask you for more money. I just wanted to share a story with you about how this relationship with the school is helping a very bright young lady get an education. A few weeks ago, one of the high school-aged young ladies was over at our house for discipleship with Sarah. As we were all talking, Vala and I learned that she did not start back to school in September because her parents could not, or would not, pay for it. It was kind of funny because I told her she is too smart to be sitting at home vegetating instead of going to school. She said in English, "Yes, I know!" So, we got together with our teammates and my partner, Dan went with the young lady and talked to the head teacher about going to school there. Even though she is way behind, they let her start immediately and are going to do what they can to get her caught up. I don't know if they will always do this, but so far, they are not charging her or us anything. We have tried to do what we can to help partner with this school, but I can't help to think that one of the reasons they were willing to do this is because of the projects that you all prayed for and helped with. Thank you again for your help!

As I finish up, let me just ask you to **continue to pray for us in the next several weeks as we finish training our national partners and make our way back to the States for furlough**. We look forward to seeing many of you and telling you the stories of what God had done here on the Big Red Island. Thank you for praying for us, and remember, we are also praying for you.

Phil & Vala Long

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