

May 23, 2023

The LONGS To Madagascar



Bonjour and Salama Ireo from the Big Red Island of Madagascar!

Last year when Vala and I were on furlough, traveling around the US, and reporting to as many of our supporters as time would allow, we told several of the life-change stories that would not have been possible if our churches and supporters did not give so generously so we could be here. Then I showed you a picture of several kiddos. Those kids chase me almost every day when I run. If you remember, it actually started my very first day on the island 5 years ago next week. They were joking around with me...actually they were making fun of me, and then I did something to make them laugh. From that time on, I could not wait until I could communicate with them and tell them the stories from the Bible.

Then, as you know, the Lord took us in a different direction and we partnered with another missionary and started a church across town. However, I told you we wanted to start reaching those kids when we returned to Madagascar. Since our return, we have been preparing to start our second church and, as you may remember from our last update, we found a location where we will start meeting, but it needed a lot of work. Well, it took a little longer than we anticipated, but the building is finally at a place where we can begin meeting!

So, a few days ago we stopped and set up a time to meet with all of my running kids after they got out of school. Then, on Wednesday, Vala and I, along with Sarah, Kezia, and Larissa went up to the meeting spot and we all sat down in between the road and a rice patty and began to tell the kids a few stories. Afterwards, we invited them to our first kids club this Saturday. They are all very excited to come. We will also start our first English outreach in this area next week as well. These two outreaches will allow us to begin to invite people to come to our first church meeting in mid-June. A lot is going on, so please continue to pray with us as we work to launch this next church.

Before I finish, let me give you a little update on our son, Gabe. In the last update I told you that he was going to Bangkok, Thailand to do a college internship with veteran missionaries Shane & Katie Salmon and Adam & Ayla Cottrell. Well, he had a great time and learned a lot. He is now back in the States getting ready to graduate. Thank you for praying for him. Please continue to pray that the Lord will guide him as he continues on his path to become a full-time missionary.

It is a busy and exciting time in Madagascar, so thank you for your prayers and remember we are also praying for you.

Phil and Vala Long in Madagascar

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