

September 2008 Prayer Newsletter
—CALL TO PRAYER—Andrea Herman

*“Clap your hands, all you nations; shout to God with cries of joy.
How awesome is the Lord Most High, the great King over all the earth!” Psalm 47:1-2*

September has been a month full of reasons to rejoice. A few days before the beginning of Ramadan, (the Muslim month of fasting), I invited my language helper and her whole family to my house to watch the Jesus Film (again). Some who came had seen the film the first time, but others were first-timers. At first I was a little disappointed that more adults didn't come (there were 19 kids and 4 adults). But God reminded me that I do not know what He knows. At the same point in the film, where last time my language helper announced Jesus' resurrection to her family, we had another declaration following all the questions of "Where is Jesus?" by the children who had not yet seen the film. The children who saw the film 5 months ago told them, "He arose!", as if it was the only possible answer.

I don't claim to understand the ways the Lord works, but I praise Him that He does, even when I don't understand how or what He is doing. It's very exciting for me to watch the kids see and understand the story, as well as explain it to their cousins, friends and neighbors. My language helper even remarked how well the kids are really understanding the film. Pray that God's word and the story of Jesus would sink deep into their hearts.

There is a man (H.S.) who is seeking God, who is even helping to translate literature, whom my colleague has been in contact with for some time. I have been trying to get to know his wife and mother. During my last visit, his mother was having a difficult time even walking because of some kind of foot illness, that appears to be eating the flesh around the back side of her toes, leaving her at great risk for infection and in terrible pain. I asked if I could pray for her and she happily accepted. Please pray for healing for H.S.'s mom and that she would soon know her Healer.

As of mid-September, myself, my friend M.K., her 3 year old daughter and 6 week old son moved up to a village in Mali, not far from the Guinea border. The first week was the most beneficial language learning time I've had since arriving in West Africa. It is the kind of situation I've been wanting for a long time. It is very much an immersion experience as we are all living together, eating together and even sleeping in the same room. The one great disadvantage is that there is no opportunity for a "day off" for my brain to rest, which adversely affects my ability to absorb additional information. So, since the first week, I've been much less able to learn as quickly because my brain is a bit overloaded. The extra stress of becoming an "insta-parent" (including discipline issues, and being woken up several times a night by the kids) has also reduced my ability to take advantage of this immersion experience as much as I would like.

There has also been joy in the midst of exhaustion. MK is not yet a believer. However, she has been teaching her daughter how to pray to thank God for our food before we eat together each day. She will say a few words, and her daughter will repeat after her. Her daughter has even prayed on her own once or twice. Though a small step by Western standards, it is a huge leap considering where she has come from. It is a great reason to rejoice, because MK is intentionally teaching her daughter how to talk to God. Please pray for good, restful sleep (for all of us), MK's continued instruction of her daughter, and my ability to absorb all the language possible until I bring MK and her kids back to Guinea in mid-October.

I have had one prayer request since before I even accepted my call to serve in Guinea (2006) and I believe I have shared it in my newsletters a number of times. That prayer request is for God to provide me with a female teammate so that we can work together to reach Maninka women. To be totally honest, in my desperation for a speedy answer, I have tried taking things into my own hands from time to time, by looking for a teammate myself. Well, as I mentioned earlier, the Lord works in mysterious ways. At a

time when praying for a teammate wasn't even a personal priority, the Lord worked out a whole series of miracles to call the best possible person for the job. Not only does she have previous experience in West Africa, but I know her very well because I lived with her family for 2 years, and have a great deal of respect for her and her husband. You're dying to know who it is, aren't you? Jack and Cathy Carlos have each accepted calls to serve with LCMS in ministry to the Maninka. I couldn't be more thrilled. Jack and Cathy are going to be practicing basic medical care and health education as an additional (and much needed) avenue to share about God, our Healer.

In addition to the exciting news of the Carlos' coming to join "Team Guinea", we also have other exciting news about our team! Currently, Tim and Beth Heiney are living in Conakry, Guinea. Beth serves as our Francophone Business Manager and Tim travels frequently to the forest region to work with the Kissi church there, as well as working with believers in Conakry. However, God has again led in an unforeseen direction. Heiney's will be moving to Bamako, Mali in January 2009 so that "Team Guinea" can be geographically closer (3.5 hours vs. 16 hours), and so Tim Heiney can join us in the Maninka work! There are not adequate words of praise to God for blessing us with these 2 major developments. I and the Nortons are so excited to be having both the Heineys and Carlos's join us in the Maninka work in the near future. Please join us in praising God for these blessings!

Please join me in thanking God for:

- Jesus' resurrection being proclaimed by Mrs. S's nieces and nephews during the Jesus film
- Safe travels across the border with MK and her kids and settling in quickly
- my right hand being more functional this month & good health in general
- the energy He has provided for this intense time of language learning
- MK teaching her daughter how to talk to God and to be thankful for what He has given us
- this unique language learning experience and learning A LOT
- new neighbors who have been more than welcoming
- the opportunity to pray for HS's mother
- the end of Ramadan (it is a particularly spiritually oppressive time)
- Pastor Samuel in Mali: his wisdom, and willingness to counsel young believers and seekers
- the Heiney's moving to Bamako and starting Maninka work in January!
- the Carlos' accepting their calls to serve the Maninka in Guinea!

Please join me in praying for:

- the believers back in Siguiiri, that they will continue to meet and encourage one another
- for seekers in our village in Mali: there are 14 people that are secretly meeting to study the Bible
- good balance in life and work, that I get adequate rest, especially out in the village
- MK & kids, to grow in knowledge and love of Jesus, that the Holy Spirit would bring them to faith
- Pastor Samuel, who is counseling MK, he'll be traveling to Guinea Oct 7 to counsel her husband
- MK's home situation back in Guinea, she has asked me to pray for her; she faces many challenges and temptations when she returns
- God's strength and energy, so I can demonstrate His love constantly to MK and others
- God's Holy Spirit to open MK's & Mrs. S's heart to believe the Truth and receive His love
- rest and rejuvenation for my Norwegian friend with whom I'm serving in Mali
- Heineys, as they pack up, move to Mali, unpack, and start language learning
- Carlos's, as they start fundraising Nov 1. (They need to raise their funds before they can move and start French language training, after which they will move to Guinea.)

If you are interested in supporting the Carlos's work financially, you may send a tax-deductible gift to: LCMS World Mission, 1333 S. Kirkwood Rd., St. Louis, MO 63122-7295. Make checks payable to LCMS World Mission. Mark checks "Support of Jack & Cathy Carlos."