

Living Letters

2 Corinthians 3

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Dear friends and family,

It has been a while since we sent out a newsletter, it feels as though so much has happened in the last few months. We have learned a lot and experienced a lot, like a child exploring the world. We are reminded that we are God's children. In our learning we fail again and again and yet He has mercy, grace, and forgiveness for us. His love is unending.

June was a very special month for us. We packed up what we needed and moved in with our village family. We really loved our time together. From the time we woke up to the time we went to sleep we were hearing Komba. These experiences helped us grow in our relationships, our language learning, culture learning, and for me to meet my "in-laws."

Our mother cooked for us, made sure we had enough water for bathing, and made sure all our needs were met. I got to observe and learn about the threshing of sorghum. I participated in peeling dawadawa, which would be processed into a cooking spice. I got to watch my mother cook and go with her to farm. There were times during the day our mother and sisters would be out in the fields and I would be at home with grandma and the great-grandchildren. It was a joy to learn from the oldest to the youngest in the family. Grandma was usually the first one to tell me to go sleep in the middle of the day (to take a nap). The 2.5-year-old great-grandchild started to pick up on teaching me words and so she would start pointing at things and ask, "What's this?"

We were there to participate in the baptism of another great-grandchild and join in the celebration. The cooking started at 4:30 AM, and women from neighboring households came to help. Church started at 7AM and following church, the congregation gathered at the family home for a delicious meal of rice.

I was taught by my mother my role as a woman. I was told that it was my role to take care of the dishes after we ate and to do the sweeping of our room. I failed many times attempting to speak Komba, but our brothers, sisters, mothers, father, and grandmother showed grace to me again and again and again. I am but a very small child, learning how to take care of myself and speaking little.

In July we finished this phase of village living. Michael was able to join the translation team for consultant checking a couple Old Testament books the last week of the month. The consultant joined us remotely from the U.S. Michael was able to help with technology factors related to the checking.



Michael farming with the community during village living (above).

Naomi carrying water with other women during village living (below).





The translation team met for five full days to consultant check 1&2 Kings and the beginning of 2nd Chronicles (above left)
Naomi's parents came to visit us! (above right).

A missionary family was able to join us for lunch on the 4th of July and we found some sparklers to celebrate with. We had a missionary family come and visit us for a week later in July and my (Naomi's) parents spent a few days with us in August. It was special getting to connect with family and friends.

From the middle of August to the middle of September we have struggled with sickness. Michael ended up in the hospital. At first, he tested negative for COVID. Then after his discharge I (Naomi) got sick and tested positive for COVID. Michael retested and he was also positive. We did our needed isolation near the hospital and were recovering. After our isolation we realized that our bodies were not yet ready for the physical demands of returning home. We have now traveled to where my parents live in Ghana to continue recovering and working towards getting back on our feet. We are doing much better and are heading in the right direction in returning to full health. Thank you for your patience; it has been difficult to communicate and provide updates while recovering and not feeling well.

Being sick has been hard and discouraging. In addition, we have had a very sick family member in the US. Our family is heavy on our minds, and it is hard being so far away. However, we know that God's promises continue to stay true. We are God's children. He never leaves us or forsakes us. He forgives us. He is coming again to take away sin and suffering. He gives us new life through Jesus, and we have hope in the resurrection.

Confident in Christ,
Michael and Naomi Ersland

Prayer Requests

- Praise God for being with us during times of sickness, ambiguity, stress, and healing.
- Praise God for being able to consultant check in July.
- Pray for us as we keep team checking and consultant checking.
- Pray for everyone here as it is the harvest season. May God provide favorable weather for the fields.
- The Ersland Family back in the US.
- How may we pray for you? Please let us know so that we may be praying for you!

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Checks written to Lutheran Bible Translators with **Ersland Ministry** on the memo line. You can also give online at LBT.org

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