
NEWS *from* BONNIE

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Wrapping up...

Greetings from Seattle where I am in furlough countdown mode! My furlough officially began in May and will be ending right after New Year's. While the summer was mostly spent moving, settling into my new home in Seattle, and reconnecting with friends and family, the fall has seen me straddling my old work life and my new work life.

I have been driving up once a week to the Canada Institute of Linguistics (CanIL) to teach Morphology (the study of words) one last time. It is one of my favorite subjects, so it has been nice to teach it again. I ended up with 19 students, which was the most I've ever had in this class! Thankfully, I was able to keep working with Damien, my TA from last spring, and he has done an excellent job of being available for students in ways that I just couldn't be this time around. I am grateful that overall the weather has been good. There was only one week where we had to get creative because Seattle was snowed in.

Looking ahead to the future ...

As I mentioned in my last newsletter, in January, I will be joining SIL's International Language Program Training team¹, working as a Distance Learning Instructional Design Consultant.

Over the last couple of months, I have been doing a lot of background reading and messing around with online education technologies. I have been discovering that there are both areas where I know more than I thought I knew (particularly about course design and pedagogy) and areas where I know as little as I thought I knew (e.g. on the technology front). I am slowly starting to feel more comfortable with being an "expert" and consultant in this domain.

In November, I traveled to Dallas to participate in a gathering of Training Coordinators from around the world and across Wycliffe's various partner organizations. I appreciated the chance to do some face-to-face work with members of my new team. I also enjoyed seeing some old friends and meeting other people with whom I am sure to be exchanging lots of emails in the future. It was an exhausting 9 days, but I think that good things were accomplished in the meetings and that the interpersonal connections made will be very valuable in my new job.

I have been invited to travel to Kenya in February to lead a workshop on distance learning instructional design for those involved in training and curriculum development in Africa. I have already started doing some preparatory work for that, and I am anticipating that this will be my primary project for a couple of months. A few other projects are in the pipeline, so I am feeling confident that there should be plenty of work to keep me busy.

It is exciting to be able to weave together lessons that God has taught me through my Berkeley experiences, my time in Africa, and my CanIL teaching into materials that I can share with colleagues to improve training and make it more accessible to people spread out around the world.

¹ One of Wycliffe's main supporting partners, involved in training and fieldwork

The State of the Union Update

After several months of dragging and not feeling like myself, I finally had some encouraging news. Bloodwork showed that my thyroid levels were borderline low, and in addition, my doctor is pretty sure that the 3 years I have spent up here in the cloudy Pacific Northwest have reduced my Vitamin D stores. I have been taking Vitamin D and thyroid supplements for almost a month now, and I am starting to feel better. I wouldn't say that I am quite at 100% yet, but instead of having a one-to-one ratio of good days and bad days, I am regularly having two to three good days in a row. More encouragingly, even on my "foggier" bad days, I am feeling like more brain cells are available than were previously. It is also good news that I am resorting less and less to caffeine and sugar to keep myself going on days where I just can't stop and rest. There is still potential for improvement though, and I would appreciate your ongoing prayers.

I continue to feel more at home in Seattle. I did not make quite as much progress on the building community front as I had hoped in the fall. Once work picked up, there just wasn't as much energy left over to participate in social events, thanks to my reduced energy levels. However, I have made baby steps forward in meeting new people and getting involved at church, and I am still very happy with my decision to move back to Seattle.

Thank you for partnering with me,

Bonnie Henson

Rejoice with me that:

- * I am starting to feel more like myself again!
- * My fall class has been going well...and my drives back and forth have been uneventful (except for the one snow day!)
- * My travels to Dallas were safe and productive
- * My finances look more stable than they have in a while, but I continue to live more "on the edge" than I am really comfortable with. Please pray for ongoing provision.

Please uphold these concerns in prayer:

- * Pray for me as I prepare for the Nairobi workshop
- * Pray for a good beginning with my new assignment
- * Pray for wisdom as I try to set up healthy rhythms for this new season in my life
- * Continue to pray for me as I seek to become more established in my new community. I am part of a biweekly group for Career Women at church, and I will be spending more time interacting with the SPU community during Winter Quarter (Jan-Mar).

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