

Luce Leaf Notebook

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We'd like to catch you up a little on what God is doing in our lives and ministry these days. Summer is ready to start, the World Cup is in full swing. Kevin and I went to a PromiseKeepers convention this past weekend, but Chris could not come since he was taking the qualifying test for his Massachusetts EMT credential. Bridget and Kevin are beginning to pack for Africa, and Savannah is growing more beautiful every day. Lois is becoming more acclimated to her work with the Old Colony Hospice, finding the job less stressful, but still challenging.

We appreciate your faithful encouragement to Lois and me in our transition to a new ministry area, and the preparation God has been coordinating that enables us to serve Him more effectively. His hand has been clearly evident from the timely completion of our ministry at Christiansen Academy, to the striking match between my University study and our new ministry opportunity with the mission, to the provision of our needs for living and a research assistantship at the University to help with my tuition. Our financial support continues at almost 85% of the mission requirement, for which we are grateful. The deficit will need to be made up before we can return to the field. The Lord has always met all of our needs, and we are confident that He will continue to do so.

My immediate goal is to finish writing my dissertation proposal and defend it before the University faculty by the end of July. That is a lot of writing, and some difficult preparation, so I would appreciate your prayers. I have been doing a lot of reading, studying, and organizing of ideas about the professional development process. Now it is time to consolidate the picture of the current state of the art, and focus on the question I will be studying, that is, how intentional, collaborative learning among colleagues can improve effectiveness in their classrooms. Once my research proposal is approved, I will begin working with a group of teachers who will be the subject of my study as they design and implement this unique approach to professional growth in collaboration with their school system and the University. My study will seek to describe the levels of involvement of the participants and the related effects on classroom implementation.

"What does all this have to do with your ministry with TEAM?", I heard you ask. I'm glad you asked, because I was hoping for a chance to share that aspect with you, too. In January, the TEAM board approved a

new initiative to implement a similar approach to personal and professional growth among missionaries. I am part of a team of eight missionaries, mission administrators, missiologists, and technical experts whose goal is to design and implement this approach to lifelong learning that is intentional, collaborative, and collegial. We want to provide the tools and facilitate the opportunity for each missionary to establish a lifelong pattern of growth in Christlikeness and effectiveness of ministry while they continue on the field in ministry. In order to do that, we are bringing together pastors, seminary professors, and field missionaries into collaborative study groups to look at issues they face in ministry, and together discover ways to serve more effectively where they are. Much of the linking among participants will be facilitated by an internet connection that will allow global collaboration and efficient distribution of learning resources. This project is now in the "rapid-prototyping" phase, that is, we are testing and revising the concept as we put it into practice with two small focus groups of field leaders and new missionary recruits. After this phase and more feedback from as many stakeholders as possible, we hope to roll out the program late next year with a field test that involves a broad cross-sectional ministry area.

Right now it looks like my program at the university will be completed in time for me to be redeployed to another region, serving there as a training coordinator for TEAM's new personal and professional development program (Lifelearner.net), including working with educators at MK schools. For all this to happen, I will need your prayer. I need to stay on track with my doctoral research, our team will need to develop useful resources and tools for learning and promote a positive, eager anticipation of how God can use this initiative to make us more effective in communicating the Gospel to a world in desperate need of the Savior.

Please continue to pray for our brothers and sisters in Venezuela. The political and economic conditions are very unstable, and the spiritual need of the people is still great. The Church there continues to grow, but they need our prayer because the struggle is won in the spiritual realm, and we can still participate in that, even at a distance. Thanks for your participation,

Roger and Lois

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