

November 2006 Email Update

Greetings from Cameroon,

Yes, I'm back from Tabenken - the village where I have been living these last 3 weeks. Thank you so much for your prayers for me during this time. Everybody in our group was healthy, and we had a safe journey both ways even if it was rather bumpy and long. On the way into the village we worked hard to stay dry in a leaking bus. On the return trip we tried (unsuccessfully) to avoid the dust from the roads - a result of the arrival of dry season.

Although certain moments were not always easy or pleasant for various reasons, it was a beneficial trip. I stayed with Caroline and her uncle. Caroline normally lives in Douala, a port city, but was in the village taking care of her parents. They, along with several neighboring families who live in the same compound, were wonderful hosts. They were very willing to share their lives and cultural with me so I was able to learn and experience many things. Here is a picture of Caroline (left) and Beatrice gathering njamanjama (a dark green vegetable).

Here Caroline is cooking fufu which is basically ground corn (much like thick grits for you Southerners). This plus njamanjama forms their staple meal. I typically ate this at least once per day, though my record was three times in one day.

During my time in the village, I had my own room. Among other things you can see part of my water filtration system and the mosquito net over the bed (which also made sleeping with the sound of rats skittering around more peaceful).

One of the cultural events I attended was a funeral and burial for an 80-year-old grandma. She was a believer, and the hope and joy during the celebration was apparent. I instantly, and rather uncomfortably, became the official photographer and was asked to take a number of pictures.



The people of Tabenken speak Limbum, and several years ago the translation of the New Testament was completed. Very few people know how to read Limbum, and their understanding and ability to speak English is very, very limited. Among the people there is a great desire and interest to hear God's Word in their own language. However, for many, they do not think it possible for them to personally learn to read. As we arrived and discovered this, one of the great privileges and joys we had was to begin small literacy classes in each of our homes. It is amazing how possible it is to teach people to read even without personally knowing the language. It is our prayer that our time in the village will give birth to many grass-roots literacy classes. Here is a picture from one of our evening literacy class sessions.



It's great to almost be finished with AOC (Africa Orientation Course) and now preparing for the next steps. Lord willing, Monday, Nov. 27, I will be leaving for Switzerland. I will be collecting my winter clothes and visiting friends, family and several Bible study groups I was apart of. I leave Switzerland for the US on December 2. December 4 I begin aviation recurrency training at JAARS to renew my aviation licenses that have been lying dormant since my arrival in Switzerland about 1 ½ years ago.

I am trying to upload pictures to my website (www.petersonfamily.info/robert), but I have not been able to yet because of internet problems. Hopefully I will have the pictures uploaded by the end of this week. One email is just too short to mention everything that happened. I will be adding a lot of commentary to the pictures on the website to explain some of the other significant events from village phase.

Praise:

- Arrival of an aviation fuel shipment this week (we didn't have much left)
- Good health and strength with no problems from Crohns
- A good village visit to Tabenken.
- The chance to encouragement and help the Tabenken people with literacy

Prayer:

- Final week of AOC, goodbyes to friends who will be spreading out all over Africa.
- Visit to Switzerland and several opportunities to share with Bible study groups
- Recurrency flying in the US – good weather and that I would re-learn quickly
- Establishment of on-going Limbum literacy classes and that more people would begin to use the Limbum N.T.

Thanks so much for your continued prayers, notes of encouragement and faithful support. They are each a special blessing to me, and I am so thankful for such a wonderful support team.

May the Lord bless you! In Him, Robert

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