
Chronicles from Africa

Robert & Esther Marsh – May, June and July 2011

South Africa & Democratic Republic of Congo - Church planting and radio ministry & Bible School

Radio:

July 2011, we celebrate 35 years of broadcasting daily in the Language of Lingala to the Democratic Republic of Congo. The first programs were aired in July 1976. Some history of how the program "Nsango Na Bomoi" started: In the early part of the 70's president Mobutu Sese Seko (Mobutu forever), divided all churches into three groups; Catholics, Kibangists and Protestants. Many missionaries were not willing to join the Protestant Council of Churches. Therefore, they were forced to leave the country. Mark Grings was one of those missionaries that left with a heavy heart. They could not compromise their doctrinal position. Later, the Lord led him to South Africa, and while settling in, he found out that Trans World Radio was looking to broadcast to Congo in Lingala. Thus many hours of recording programs composed of hymns and messages in the language of Lingala began. During the civil war (1997-2005) much of the country was closed to travel and many missionaries and pastors were separated from their works and churches and many people were displaced to other village or living in hiding in the jungle. Many were blessed and strengthened during this time as they were able to listen to "Nsango Na Bomoi."

South Africa:

May – August is winter in South Africa. This winter we have seen snow in quite a few parts of the country, and I know for some of you snow is not a highlight but here it is. School let out for holidays for three weeks in June/July, and this is the best time for "Know Your Bible Club" (VBS). We had a full week of activity starting with 164 children and ending with a high of 256. We had a well attended closing program with about 70 adults attending. There were 28 children counseled during the program. Do pray for the follow-up that needs to be done. Esther and some of her helpers have already visited some and seen some children come out to our Friday "Olympian" program.

We also experienced the home-going of one of our senior members, Vernon Schmidt. It was a rejoicing to be able to conduct a funeral of a believer who we know has gone home to be with the LORD. There were many family members present and the gospel was preached. I was able to preach a message entitled "I know my sins are gone" based on words he shared during his last time in the hospital. He shared this sentiment, "People think I'm crazy, but I know my sins are gone!" Pray for his wife Daphne as she adjusts to life without him.

Family:

Wyla, Esther's mother, has been in a care home for eight months now. She is in what they call "high care," as she wanders around, does not see well, and has taken some falls. She is doing well health-wise and seems to enjoy Esther's visits. It's always hard to say "Good-Bye" at the end of the visit. We praise the Lord for the friends we have that are willing to visit and accompany Esther.

Esther continues to home school the children and keep up with the many discipleships and youth ministries and the music. I will be in the states (mostly NC) from August 1 through the 31, to catch up on state-side responsibilities. Pray for the family while I am away, and for God to make me a blessing to those I come in contact with.

We have again hosted quite a few families just "coming through". We are thankful that we have a spare room to share with those who need a place to stay while traveling or doctor appointments or periods of rest.

We thank the Lord for your personal notes, prayer and support!
MARANATHA!!

Robert, Esther, Joshua, Cherith, Jordan, Jeremy, Chelsea, Chaylee, Winnie, and Wyla.