



January 22, 2019

Dear friends,

When we first contacted NTM back in 2010 we knew very little about tribal missions, but were compelled by the priority of this work in God's kingdom plan and by the opportunity for average folks like us to jump in. We didn't know how far the road would take us, but were determined to follow the Lord in obedience as far as He would lead. If He enabled us to learn two languages and live in a tribe translating His word, it would be a great honor and a high calling, one that we must fulfill. If we were not able to go that far, we would serve as support people in-country, gladly using other gifts to further the team. If not that, then we would whole-heartedly promote and support the work from our home in Canada.

During my first visit to Papua in Nov 2014, I came down with Chikungunya, a tropical, mosquito born disease, and after several months of slow recovery from sore joints, I suspected I would likely have a chronic condition. I did not realize how much it was also affecting my mind, but the early signs that it was taking a mental toll have greatly increased in the last two years.

The symptoms have become so severe that I have been mostly bed-ridden since July. I would gather my strength and pour a day into a project only to spend the next week in bed as a result. Since November, I've met with four Doctors – psychologists and MD's and even made a trip to Australia seeking help. They have found nothing medically wrong with me and no consistent psychological diagnosis, but all agree with my symptoms being linked to Chikungunya. Over the course of months Dawn has become overwhelmed with the extra load and the concern for her ailing husband. The kids are also concerned and are missing the dad they used to know.

The needs of our YMMP (NTM Indonesia) family are also real and the departure of many team-mates in the last two years has increased my resolve to persevere in spite of any hardship. But things have gotten to the point where I must make a choice between the well being of the team and the well being of my family – I can't postpone this decision any longer. We need to go back to Canada to get well – for my health and the health of my family. However, we learned from our recent Home Assignment that we can't uproot our family annually ... so we will be leaving June 1st and staying in Canada for the next five years – until Levi graduates. I've begun a conversation with our Ethnos Canada leadership about a new ministry role when I regain my health – so we can still be part of the work from our home in Canada.

My last interior project, one that I looked forward to for several years, was building the Yoon's home in the Morop tribe in October. It grieved my soul that I was not strong enough to work on their house beyond the first three days. But the Lord provided, through various people, the workers needed to get the roof on in the same amount of time that I had planned. Today, with tears in our eyes, we trust that the Lord will also supply the support people for this YMMP team – that He will (continue to) provide.

The YMMP Papua team will be frequently in our prayers and forever in our hearts. We wish we could serve them more ... we hope the Lord brings us back in the future.

In His grip,

Duane