

# MISSIONS TO KIRIBATI



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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We are excited to share that the first phase of the Kiribati Bible Project is complete and has arrived on our shores. This month we received over 43,000 John and Romans with the Gospel message given in the first few pages. We already know of one soul coming to the Lord as result, and we have seen many reading the booklets around our little atoll. God promised His Word would not return void. Thank you for your prayers and faithful giving throughout this project. Our church members are excited to distribute them and share the Gospel with those around us. The second phase of the entire New Testament is completed, and we are half way done retyping the Old Testament. Please continue to pray for this important endeavor, for those actively involved in helping, and for many souls to be saved.

We are thrilled at what God continues to do through Tarawa Baptist Church. In the last few months we have seen several people come to know the Lord as their personal Savior and follow the Lord in Baptism. Abwai and Taneira are both taking on more responsibilities as they train for the Lord's service and are a tremendous blessing to the ministry here. As our church grows the need for land becomes more pressing. All the paper work is finalized, however it must appear before the magistrate court for final approval. That process can take months, but our lawyer recently contacted us with amazing news. We have a confirmed date for a hearing with the magistrate on May 28. Pray for God's will as we look for a permanent home for Tarawa Baptist Church.

In the midst of these exciting ministry victories, our family has faced some difficult trials. We would like to ask you to join us in prayer for the health of two of our children. Only three weeks after returning from the States from helping her parents move, Brooke and our two youngest children had to return for medical purposes. This all unfolded after seeking medical attention for some symptoms Bennett was having. The doctor here in Tarawa told us that Bennett had a heart murmur and needed to be seen by a pediatric cardiologist. We have no cardiologist of any kind in Kiribati, so we considered going to a nearby country. God closed those doors to that option and was clearly directing us to bring him to the States. Brooke, Adelynn, and Bennett returned. We are thankful that Bennett's heart murmur is innocent and should not present any problems. His symptoms pointed to chronic asthma, and the doctor prescribed the appropriate treatment. He is still undergoing treatment and will be monitored by a doctor over the next couple of months as we adjust those medications.

We also had some concerns about the health of our daughter, Adelynn, and thought it best to bring her for a physical as well. During that physical, the doctors discovered that her thyroid is profusely enlarged. She was referred to a pediatric endocrinologist, and has been diagnosed with Hashimoto's disease (an autoimmune disorder causing her body to attack her thyroid and result in hypothyroidism). She has already begun thyroid hormone replacement which she will most likely be on the rest of her life. During the course of testing, they have also discovered that Adelynn is insulin resistant with pre-diabetic symptoms.

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She has been placed on a very strict diabetic diet to prevent this from occurring. Please pray much for her as we find a new normal.

The doctors need to monitor her closely over the next several months as they regulate her medication and thyroid levels. Then, Adelynn will need the care of a Pediatric Endocrinologist for the remainder of her childhood and youth. Due to the rapid change and growth in children and adolescents, she will have to be monitored by a specialist at least every six months. This is a complicated issue for us in Kiribati with the closest specialists being in Australia and New Zealand. Please pray for wisdom and direction as we try to obtain medical visas, find a reliable doctor, and arrange everything needed for this to take place. We know God is able to make a way.

In the meantime and after much counsel and prayer, God has opened the door for Daniel and myself to return to the States. We will be returning for five months for a medical furlough while Adelynn's condition is monitored and Bennett continues treatment for his asthma. My brother, Joshua Daku, and his wife Frances feel it is God's will for them to fill in for us during our absence. Joshua and Frances know God is calling them to serve Him in missions, however, they have not begun deputation. Despite this, they are willing to step out by faith to serve the Lord here in Kiribati for this time. This is a tremendous blessing to both my family and the ministry here. If you feel led to help them in any way you may send the support to us through BIM I marked "Kiribati Interim" and we will forward those funds to them.

We are amazed at God's faithfulness in our lives, at His provision, and His care each step of the way. Lamentations 3:22-23 states, "It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness." We know that our children are in His hands and that His faithfulness will not fail them. Thank you for your prayers for our family and for the ministry. God continues to be at work here in Kiribati as souls come to Him and He gives our family strength each step of the way. It is your prayers that make a difference! May we all be busy about the Lord's work till He comes.

Your Missionaries to Kiribati,

Joel, Brooke, Daniel, Adelynn, and Bennett



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