



June 2021

Janet's Journal



What is a "Calling?"

Someone recently commented on our use of the term "job opportunities" for our open positions in Wycliffe without talking about "calling." That gave me pause, and I began to think back on what drew me into this ministry over 42 years ago. Did I join because it sounded like a fun job with better pay? I left a very good job as a secretary in a law firm to join Wycliffe, so it certainly wasn't the salary! Has it been "fun?" Yes, I've had lots of fun experiences (anyone remember my cow story?), but it's also been difficult at times and not necessarily fun. What did attract me to this mission was their desire to take God's Word to people all over the world who don't have access to it and translate it into a language that speaks to their heart. I believe you have to be "called" to do this work, and God uses many ways to communicate that calling; through the Scriptures, other people and circumstances. God used all three to confirm that He was "calling" me to join and be part of this ministry.

I believe He started that process when I was a teenager while attending missions' conferences at my home church near Philadelphia, and hearing about the many opportunities to serve on the mission field. Upon graduation from high school I had no skills I could use in missions, and I needed to grow more spiritually, so the time wasn't right. Since I didn't come from a Christian home, my only contact with missionaries was through the church. I put them on a pedestal and didn't feel adequate to serve God in this way. As an example, I used to take my mother's Bible (until I got my own) and have the missionaries "autograph" it. My mom wasn't very happy about that!

There are decisions I made after that which I regret and which delayed my getting serious about applying. However, I also believe God was using those situations to prepare me for the right time several years later, when I had some work experience and was more spiritually mature. After I got a little "nudge" from a pastor at a church I was attending in Florida, I started serious prayer about the decision to seek God's will in regard to serving in missions and applied to several different ministries. By then I had met a number of missionaries personally and realized they were normal people, sinners just like me, and understood that God didn't want perfect people, but just wanted me to be willing. So I want to assure you that although we may use a different terminology sometimes, we do take God's "calling" on individuals very seriously when it comes to whether someone is accepted or not. Among other requirements, we make it clear that we are a faith ministry and people have to raise their own support, which can be very intimidating, so only those motivated by God's Holy Spirit are going to follow through with further investigation.

Mobilization

With life returning back to normal a bit, but still uncertain, we decided to work on an online event that will fill the gap until we are able to do in-person events again, hopefully in 2022. Our new

event is called Pathways and will be held in July and August. I encourage you to check it out and maybe register to attend yourself at <https://www.wycliffe.org/events/pathways>.

Pathways' online learning platform hosts a mix of self-paced learning and live sessions with Wycliffe missionaries. Over the eight days, you'll attend four to six hour-long live sessions and participate in a private discussion group. You'll be able to discuss the lessons with your fellow participants, dialogue with your instructors and share your observations and prayer requests as you explore your next step in missions.

I continue posting open positions on college and mission websites, as well as helping with recorded Scripture to correct the timing so that it agrees with the text. So far I've completed 18 books of the New Testament for the Scripture App Builder.

Personal News

For the summer I joined a community pool to cool off, and signed up for a couple one-day bus trips to the Museum of the Bible (June) and Longwood Gardens and fireworks show (July), along with a five-day bus tour around New England in July. I'll end the summer with my annual trip to the beach in August with the same friend who joined me last year.

I continue to "encourage" Chunky to eat his special food, although I have to include some regular food he likes for motivation. It will take time to see if this helps him gain weight and reduce his symptoms. Thank you for your prayers for him.

Now for my BIG news! Drum roll, please! I'm going to officially *retire* as of June 30. However, don't get too excited—I have to take a two-month hiatus from work, but then plan to return in September to continue my current job as a part-time *Volunteer*.

As my member status will change to "retired," my financial situation will also change slightly. If any of you feel led to stop your support, please feel free to do so without any hard feelings. I think I have adequate retirement savings in place along with Social Security to provide for my needs. However, I am still allowed to receive income from existing donors who choose to continue to give, but it will be called "pension." It will need to be identified as such if you mail it to Wycliffe, with a note stating, "Preferred for Janet Morris' pension." Wycliffe will still issue tax-deductible receipts for these gifts. If you have an automatic bank transfer in place, no further action is needed unless you want to stop it. I understand if you choose to stop, but will also be appreciative if you decide to continue, however God leads you. There are always unexpected expenses we can't predict (such as my insurance deductible after a deer hit my car recently!). Also, if you'd like to be removed from my mailing list, please let me know.

As part of Wycliffe's team, I have sometimes found myself doing things I hadn't planned or imagined, like living in a jungle village as a partner to a translator, traveling to colleges and speaking in classes (I'm an introvert!), visiting famous places like Machu Picchu and the Galapagos Islands, eating boa burgers and alligator tail and hiking up volcanoes. In each situation I have found God faithful. I've seen people groups receive God's Word in their language for the first time. As God has been faithful to me through the past years, I continue to trust Him for the future. During this time you have blessed me with your involvement in my life, enabling me to serve others. I'll continue to encourage people towards mission service, especially through my volunteer work with Wycliffe after my hiatus. Review my journey through the photos below.

I am so very grateful for the faithfulness of my partners over these 42 years. You have encouraged, prayed for and financially supported me—some of you from the very beginning. Others have joined my team in recent years just when you were needed. I appreciate each and every one of you who have been part of my journey. My next newsletter will be in September when I return to my job as a Volunteer Events Coordinator.

In Christ's service,

Janet

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Praise for:

God's provision through faithful financial partners
The opportunity to serve in Wycliffe and keep working after retirement

Pray for:

Chunky's health to improve
A good transition to retirement
Many to sign up for the Pathways event



