



Seedtime & Harvest

Field Notes from Angola

First Retreat a Time of “Retelling”

Life is punctuated by moments of transition, when one stands at a turning point and faces a new future. And what do the people of God do in such moments? They tell stories.

It was in such a moment that Moses stood with the fledgling nation of Israel on the plains of Moab (Deut 1). They were about to cross the Jordan and enter the Land of Promise. Everything was about to change. And Moses knew that at such times, the story must be told. He recounted to Israel the story of where they had been, of how God had led them, fed them, disciplined them, remained with them.

Our team is in such a moment. Having already left our homes in America, we’ve “wandered” for the better part of a year in language learning in Portugal, and now we gaze over the seas, ready to cross into a land of great unknown and great promise. Everything is about to change. So, in early November, we took the time to tell our story.

It was our first annual team retreat, a time to step back from the all-consuming routine and see things from a different perspective. Through drawings, photos, lists, songs, and prayers, we told how God has brought us to this point as a team. We remembered

the people who have blessed our journey and the prayers God has answered. He has been profoundly faithful! It drives us to joyous song to relate what He has done, and it compels us to trust Him “to guide the future as He has the past.”

Of course, we had a ton of fun too. On a tranquil dairy farm in the Portuguese interior, we enjoyed fresh milk and yogurt, “Settlers” board games, a tractor ride, sightseeing in Evora, team Scattergories... you get the idea. Never a dull moment with this lot!

And now, refreshed by that interlude, we gaze more expectantly across the river as our move to Angola approaches. And like the Israelites before us, we face it with confident joy, knowing that this is God’s story – and with Him we’re ready to go!

~ Danny Reese

The Angola Team:

Rusty, Laura, Alex & Stephen Campbell

Nathan Holland

Robert, Teague, Efesson & Biruk Meyer

Danny, Katie, Eliana & Sophia Reese

Jordan Yarbrough

Planting churches, nurturing growth, harvesting a nation

Timeline

*We are in a holding pattern for now as we wait for our Angolan visas. Once visas are issued, things will start to happen fairly quickly: the men will take a two-week “home set-up” trip to Angola; we will ship our container from the U.S.; and we will begin the relocation process. During this time of waiting, we plan to continue our language studies. **Please pray for our visa situation and for peace as we wait on God’s timing.***



The Angola Team, November 2010

Prayer Requests:

- *Praise for our language teacher's successful surgery over the Christmas holidays.*
- *Praise for good forward progress in learning Portuguese.*
- *Continue to pray for our language acquisition.*
- *Pray for our visa process (see the sidebar on page 1 for specifics).*
- *Pray for our fundraising — several team families are still seeking monthly and one-time support.*
- *Pray for us as we continue to fine-tune our strategy during our remaining time in Portugal.*
- *Pray that our relationships with one another will continue to be deepened and strengthened.*



Thanksgiving

The Holidays, Missionary Style

Celebrating holidays overseas is a wonderful, though sometimes difficult, time. Even though we miss our families, we have the blessing of being able to celebrate with new friends. I think missionaries often put more time and care into celebrating holidays because it's a time to feel close to family in the US who are doing the same activities. It definitely requires some creativity, but that just makes it all the more memorable! Let me share with you a little about our celebrations here in Portugal.

For Halloween, our whole team joined in the (eventually successful) search for orange pumpkins to carve, the kids wore home-made costumes, we went trick-or-treating door to door inside the Campbells' apartment, Tosta Mista Man (Grilled Cheese and Ham Sandwich Man) made an appearance, and we all had tons of fun!

The intrepid Teague hosted a wonderful Thanksgiving dinner not only for our team, but also many of our Portuguese friends. Thanks to a few care packages, some extra "from

scratch" ingredients, and a bus to cart "Irene the Turkey" home in, we had an extremely delicious meal. We even got to share the story of the first Thanksgiving in Portuguese and explain what food we were eating to our guests!

An added bonus to our holiday season was celebrating some Portuguese holidays, like Dia de São Martinho, when everyone eats roasted chestnuts. We also got to enjoy the wonderful dried fruit and nuts that are a traditional part of Portuguese Christmas fare.

We found creative ways to make Christmas special this year, like a trip to Spain for the Meyers, roast lamb for the Campbells, Skyping with family, and celebrating with other world-travelers here. Several of us participated in the Christmas party at the Lisbon church of Christ. We also continued our tradition of exchanging handmade gifts at our team Christmas party. We are truly thankful for everything God has done for us this year, the very first year of our work overseas.

~ Katie Reese



Halloween