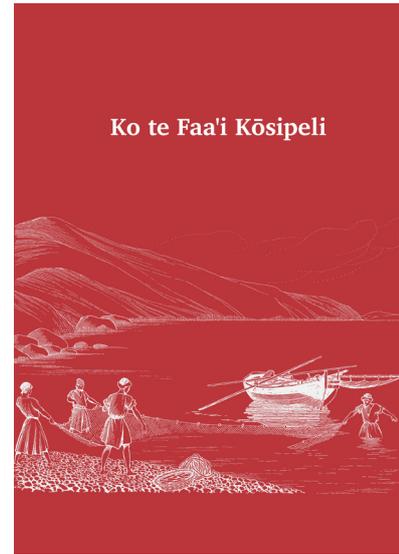


Presentation of the trial edition of the Niuaofo'ou Gospels. (Sitiveni is in front, second from the left.)



Dear friends,

It's been a very long time since we last were in touch. So it's hard to know where to start...

First of all, we are all well and we are doing fine. Mattie lives in Leiden, where she is in her third year of Ancient Near Eastern Studies (Hebrew, Aramaic, Egyptian etc.); Nina is in her first year of Graphic Design at the ArtEZ academy in Arnhem. This also means that it's just Antje and me here in Alblaserdam. So we're now empty nesters... It hasn't been too hard to adjust though, partly because Mattie had already left earlier. It did mean that we have spent the past months with the two of us together almost 24/7. Antje has been doing her Wycliffe work almost entirely at home since last March (the spare rooms have been very useful!), while I have also worked remotely all year, without any visits to the Pacific.

I'm trying not to let this newsletter be all about Covid, but it's hard to write even a single paragraph without bringing it up... The Netherlands entered another lockdown

in December, and this one may take longer than we had expected, partly because of the new and more aggressive strain that is making its way through Europe. We are grateful, though, that nobody in our family (including parents and siblings) has been infected. Vaccinations started last week; they is expected to take at least nine months or so, but it's great that at least the most vulnerable people and critical healthcare workers are getting a vaccine soon.

In the meantime, we just continue our work as well as we can. Antje is very busy with her Wycliffe-work and is now working four days a week. I'm keeping in touch with our SIL colleagues and the translation teams in the Pacific, mainly by email, but also by Zoom, Skype, Messenger, Teams and phone.

The **Nukuoro** Bible in Micronesia/Guam is getting very close to the finish line. In 2019 we finished the final check of the Bible text itself. After that, translator Betty Amon wrote book intros; we worked on spell checking and other checks, added

pictures and maps, and now I am doing the typesetting (putting the layout together, to get the files ready for printing), and Betty submits the proofs to a final check. It's great to see that many people from the Nukuoro community have donated towards the printing of their Bible – it now looks like this Bible will be completely self-funded.

Last year, I also typeset three New Testaments for languages in the **DR Congo** – another job that can be done remotely. I had met these translators in 2017, when I went there to check translation work for another language. It was great to work together with these people in the last stage of their project! The translations are now ready to be printed.

In the meantime, I'm keeping in touch with the translation teams on **Yap** and **Palau**, which I visited in 2019. These teams have continued work on their translations: in some cases, adding new chapters and books in first draft; in other cases, revising their drafts. Both islands have remained Covid-free so far; their governments imposed strict measures very early. I would really like to visit them again – working together in person is encouraging for the team and the consultant, and it is much

easier to discuss issues and get things done than remotely. But we're grateful for the many things we can still do, even though it will be a while before travel is possible again.

Translation work in **Niufo'ou** in the country of Tonga also continues. Early last year, we printed a trial edition of the Gospels (see picture), which was distributed to speakers to review. Also, translator Sitiveni Tu'ilautala has been visiting elderly people on various islands to read and discuss the translation with them. We hope to resume checking the translation this month; the plan is to finish the consultant check of the New Testament this year. Again, all of this can be done remotely; in fact, that's what we have been doing for years.

Finally: a lockdown doesn't mean we're locked indoors, fortunately. Antje and I have been hiking a long-distance trail (yes, even small countries have those!) along the Dutch coast, one or two days at a time. And last summer we cycled through the southern part of the Netherlands for two weeks.

*Lots of love,
Antje & Paulus*



Walking along the Dutch coast