

2017 in Retrospect

Dear and good friends,

Greetings from Hawaii where Nancy and I are visiting our middle child, Amalia, her husband Kyle, and their two daughters, Eden and Aila. All are well.

We're at the start of another year. 2017 certainly seemed to be chaotic. Just about a year into President Trump's ascension to high office, the news (and fake news) often seems more reality show than reality. Unfortunately, North Korea isn't a mere video game, and their testing of missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads into the skies over our allies in South Korea and Japan—not to mention our own skies—is just plain scary.

Terrorists shot down the innocent and turned vehicles into weapons of destruction on bridges, bike trails and walkways.

It was a destructive year for hurricanes as well, especially Harvey, Irma and María. It seemed like every week there was a new storm brewing off the Antilles.



The year was a bit of a challenge for us as well. I felt that I got old in 2017. We each reached full retirement age, choosing not to retire yet. After living pretty much doctor free for most of our lives, we both ended up in doctors' offices more than at any other time. Nan had surgery in September and had some complications. I was called on to cook (daily) and clean (occasionally), and I got to spend lots of time with my precious wife.

On the other side, I contracted Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever (apparently the Appalachian version) two days before I left for Peru.

Fortunately, Nancy diagnosed it and demanded that I go to Urgent Care. Her diagnosis was confirmed and I got started on some super antibiotics. RMSF is easily

treated, but if left untreated, it can be very dangerous—even fatal. I continue to be grateful to be married to a great nurse.

A bit more somberly, I may have Parkinson’s Disease, although no doctor has diagnosed it yet. I mentioned this in the Retrospect last year, and there has been little change. There is no test, just a long list of symptoms, many of which I seem to have, at least minimally. I’m closer to a diagnosis than I was a year ago, and I’m fighting symptoms with a few meds and natural supplements and pretty rigorous exercise—at least when I’m not in Hawaii.

But the bitter was mixed with the sweet.



We were able to see our three adult children and six grandchildren. Elisa lives just five minutes from us in Wake Forest, while Amalia et. al are in Hawaii (the Big Island). Isaac, Elizabeth and JoJo are in Atlanta. JoJo was born to Isaac and Elizabeth on April 21. We’re looking forward to a big Hinerman reunion in June. The occasion is Nan’s mom’s 90th birthday. Great grandma has three daughters, seven grandchildren and eight great grandchildren. All but one of the grandkids are married. FYI, the above photo shows Amalia’s daughters, Aila (3) and Eden (7); and Nancy.



Isaac and JoJo enjoy Atlanta’s first snow of the season just a month ago.

Nan and I stayed active with Wycliffe in 2017.

In February we spent several days visiting Carolina colleges to talk about Wycliffe, linguistics and Bible translation. I enjoy doing this, and it's fun to hang out with Nancy. Here I'm talking about translation with students from Gardner Webb University in North Carolina.



I also gave a paper on Mam cultural values at Columbia International University (aka Columbia Bible College). My now-yearly visit to the University of Hawaii at Hilo comes up this Friday (Jan. 12). It's another talk on the potential pitfalls for good translation.

Nancy and I enjoyed a visit to Guatemala in March. We lived there for 19 years and each of our children was born there. We have lots of great memories and good friends. While we were there LAMP sponsored a literacy Olympics, a series of events to encourage people in their Mam reading and understanding of Scripture. This was extremely inspiring for us.

Byron and his colleagues with LAMP continue to promote use of the language and the Mam Scriptures. Here he is reading the Mam New Testament on his weekly radio program. He is a gifted communicator, and his audience is in the tens of thousands (my estimate). He's also very sharp technologically. LAMP published at least six new titles in Mam in 2017. Today there are probably some 75 books authored in Mam. These give people practice in reading and appreciating their native language, which supports the reading and the message of the Scriptures.

While in Guatemala, Nan and I also met up with the Vaters who got LAMP started some twenty years ago. We hadn't seen them in years.

Old Testament (OT) translation continues on course. Byron invests part of his time in helping the Translation Committee, which is ably led by our pastor friend, Samuel. We hope that the whole Bible will be available to speakers of Central Mam within a few years. The project is funded and advised by Wycliffe colleagues.

In April Nancy and I received our 40-year pins with Wycliffe. In June Nan and I celebrated 42 years of marriage.

I returned to Peru in May. I taught a semantics course first semester and a course in Discourse Analysis second semester. The discourse course was a new class at CILTA. I taught the last week of that course from home in North Carolina in a "virtual classroom" facilitated by my colleagues and students in Peru. I also graded papers and kept in close touch with students online and taught my class. This was a first for me, proving that at least in theory, old dogs can learn new tricks.



CILTA, second semester professors and assistants

2018 is upon us. May we not be ashamed of the Gospel of God, the Good News for the world in every language and for every culture.

Thanks for your partnership

Wes and Nancy Collins