

NEWS FROM WES & NANCY COLLINS



Nancy and I joined Wycliffe Bible Translators in 1977, two years into our 45-years-and-counting marriage. We studied linguistics and cross-cultural ministry, and then traveled to Guatemala in 1979 when Nancy was 7 months pregnant with Elisa, our firstborn.

Eventually Amalia and Isaac joined the family, all three kids born in Guatemala. We lived in a Maya-Mam Indian village for most of the next 19 years, concentrating on learning the Mam language and translating the New Testament into Mam, which was

dedicated in 1999. During our time in Guatemala, Nancy home-schooled the kids, and also established a rural clinic. In 2000, I entered the ivied walls of the Linguistics Department at the Ohio State University. I received my Ph.D. in 2005, and several months later, Nancy and I traveled to Ricardo Palma University in Lima, Peru, where I taught linguistics and “culture engagement” courses for the next 13 years.

During this time, I had over 300 students, mostly Latino, but also Indigenous. The majority of these former students are now involved in cross-cultural ministry, especially Bible translation and literacy, around the world.

Parkside Church has played an important support role over our missions’ career. I attended Parkside in the late 60s. I grew up in the Briardale Projects in Euclid, graduating from Euclid HS in 1969. Nancy, also graduated in 1969, but from Carrollton, a farm town in Southeastern Ohio. She studied nursing at OSU. We met on a missions’ trip to the Cayman Islands in 1974 and were married a year later. Parkside (then The Chapel) became one of our ‘legacy partners’ and began to support us even before we left for the field. Over the years, Parkside sent

work teams and ministry teams to Guatemala to promote the work and encourage us. One particular blessing from Parkside was your support of Parkside member, Laura (Welch) Brown, who schooled our three children to free Nancy up for her clinic ministry in Comitancillo, the village where we lived. During Laura’s year with us, we spent all but two weeks living in our village home. It was our most productive time in all our years in the village.

Presently Parkside is funding a literacy project aimed at building readership for the Mam Old Testament, a project in which I am not directly involved, but whose director, Byron, is a former student of mine in Guatemala. He also served as teaching staff in training programs in Venezuela and Peru. Byron also heads up Parkside’s ESI (Equipping Servants International) ministry to the Mam. Jeff and Terry Mills and Kep and Deb James came to Guatemala to help us celebrate the 20th anniversary of the publication of the Mam New Testament, and to establish ESI among the Mam. The list could go on. You have always been there for us.

I am presently writing a book on the history of how Mam has been written over the years. Our goal with this book is to add to the growing prestige of this lovely language, while providing a forum for the discussion and celebration of Mam, one of the New World’s great languages with over a half-million speakers.

The Central Mam Bible is scheduled to be available digitally soon. We are excited.

Parkside has been great blessing to us. Thanks for your partnership with us in the Gospel.

May the God of peace be with you.

WITH LOVE AND APPRECIATION,
WES AND NANCY COLLINS