

In His Hands

(Psalm 31:15)



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Dear Friends and Family,

It is a privilege to update you on the events of this last year and share with you my ongoing preparations for serving with Wycliffe Bible Translators as a pilot/mechanic. I also want to share just a few ways I have seen the hand of the Lord in my life and in the lives of those around me.

First, I continue to have the great privilege of leading a college-age Bible study Sunday nights. We spent the last year working through 1 Corinthians and recently began 2 Corinthians. The requirement for me to prepare each week has been both an enormous challenge and blessing to me personally. It encourages me to see God's Word changing others. Please pray that God's Word would be communicated clearly and meaningfully.

Over the last year, I have also completed three new aviation ratings: CFII (Certified Flight Instructor - Instrument), Multi-engine, and I.A. (Inspection Authorization), which is an additional maintenance rating. I also had the chance to participate this summer in a Brigade Air Camp with Christian Service Brigade. I've enclosed an excerpt from "On Eagles' Wings" that shares more about this program. Among the eight kids I worked with, only one was serious about the Lord. I pray that God would use the one short week we had together to impact all of their lives for eternity.

I have spent the last two years teaching at Moody Aviation since I graduated in 2001. Not only have I gained some excellent experience, but it has also been a privilege to be involved in training future missionary pilots and mechanics. It is a joy to work with staff and students who have a passion for God and for seeing the Gospel reach the most remote ends of the earth.



By now, many of you also know that on February 19 the decision to close Moody Aviation Elizabethton was announced to the staff and students. The plan provides for current students to finish their training, so the school will remain open until the summer of 2005. A new Moody Aviation program, utilizing primarily local community college resources, is in the process of being started in Spokane, Washington. As a result, my position, along with ten others, ended June 30. Most simply, the shutdown has asked us to renew our faith and reliance on God, His wisdom and His provision. It has been exciting to see the many ways He has opened new opportunities for those affected by this announcement.

So, what am I doing now? First, even though I am no longer on staff at Moody Aviation, I continue to be involved in training future mission aviators. Mark Howard started at Moody Aviation and, after taking a year off to work and get married, was unable to resume his training at Moody Aviation because this final flight class was already full. When his situation became known, I agreed to do his maintenance and flight training individually. We have restarted his training and are weeks away from finishing his Powerplant maintenance license and have already begun his flight training. He continues to make great progress. He has been able to join Moody Aviation's flight ground school sessions, which is a specific answer to prayer. Please pray that I would do an excellent job with his training and that the Lord would provide the finances he needs to complete his training.



King Air N50AJ—Photo courtesy of Erick Stamm (reprinted by permission)

My second unexpected opportunity is a part-time position flying a King Air 200 (*above*), a corporate turbo-prop aircraft. The aircraft is significantly larger than others I have flown and utilizes turbo-prop engines that burn jet fuel. With the increasing difficulty in getting Avgas, turbo-prop aircraft are quickly becoming a necessity overseas. Wycliffe in Papua New Guinea utilizes this same model. Praise the Lord for such an unexpected opportunity. He really does do “immeasurably more than all we could ask or imagine.”

So what's next? I'm excited to report I was **accepted as a member of Wycliffe Bible Translators** on October 1, 2003. In the coming months, I will be completing various training programs that I need to prepare me for ministering overseas and I will begin seeking the prayer and financial partners the Lord has for me.

I am very excited and looking forward to transitioning to ministry overseas. I am so thankful for the productive and significant opportunities I continue to have here in Elizabethton and as I begin the final stages of my preparation. I so appreciate your continued prayers for me. The joys and successes of this year are clearly the result of much prayer.

Sincerely,

Robert Peterson