

## Head of the Class!

In 2017 there were two little girls who were coming to church with us but who were not going to school. The family was like many local subsistence farming families in the region: living in huts with thatched roofs without electricity or running water. They were similar in another way too – they weren't planning on sending their daughters to school. But because of the Scholarship Project we were able to offer financial help so that the two girls could be enrolled in preschool that year. Since then, they have been attending the private Christian school associated with the local church.

Many of the other students at this school come from middle-class Senegalese families with advantages like electricity in their homes, providing light to study by in the evenings, and parents who can speak French. But despite their disadvantages, these two girls are excelling in school. We just found out that both ended the first trimester of this year ranked first in their respective classes! Praise the Lord! I am so glad that these two girls have had the opportunity to learn to read and write and to uncover their academic abilities.

Thanks to all of you who give and pray for the Scholarship students. There are twenty students from preschool to college-age on scholarship this year. Pray that the Lord will bless and grow each one of them, both academically and spiritually, throughout this year.

## Change of Plans

I often think about James 4:13-16 when we share our plans with you. We make such detailed plans and budgets and ministry goals – and it is wise to prepare in these ways. But James warns us about trusting in our own plans when he writes:

*Look here, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we are going to a certain town and will stay there a year. We will do business there and make a profit." How do you know what your life will be like tomorrow? Your life is like the morning fog—it's here a little while, then it's gone. What you ought to say is, "If the Lord wants us*

*to, we will live and do this or that." Otherwise, you are boasting about your own pretentious plans, and all such boasting is evil.*

This is an area where I want to be more like the Senegalese who almost always use the Arabic phrase "insha'Allah" which means "God willing" whenever they talk about what they are hoping to do in the future. Because the truth is that "we can make our plans, but the Lord determines our steps" (Proverbs 16:9).



*The kids are enjoying the snow if not the cold!  
Will and Molly made this great snowman after Christmas*

We were planning on returning to Senegal this summer and moving to the capital city of Dakar. But the Lord is directing us to stay in the US for an extended time. This is in large part because of the needs of some of our children.

1 Timothy 5:8 says that "those who won't care for their relatives, especially those in their own household, have denied the true faith. Such people are worse than unbelievers." We have a responsibility to care and provide for the precious kids the Lord has entrusted to us. In this case, that means delaying our return to Senegal. While this is a surprise to us, we know that it is not a surprise to

the Lord. And we already see how He is weaving together good gifts and meeting needs for each member of our family through extending our time in the States.

And we are also encouraged because we can see how He has prepared good works for us to do ahead of time that will allow us to continue to be involved in bringing God's Good News to the people of Senegal even while we remain in Connecticut.

Even now Corey is actively working many hours per week with an online outreach team that is bringing the Wolof Scriptures to more people. We have mentioned this in our previous newsletters although for security reasons we can't go into much detail.

But we were excited to learn recently about other opportunities that Corey has the skills and experience to meet which can be done from anywhere in the world. Specifically, he is now available to help both the Sereer and Pulaar Bi-

ble translation teams to prepare their respective Bibles for publication, both in print and digitally, using both the Roman and Arabic script. The Sereer already have a complete paper Bible in print in Roman script, but do not yet have anything digital or in Arabic script. The Pulaar Bible translation team is close to completing their first translation.

To give more context, there are roughly 16 million Senegalese people. The Wolof is the largest and culturally dominant ethnic group in Senegal, comprising 37% of the total population. The next two largest people groups are the Pulaar (26%) and the Sereer (17%). Together those three groups comprise 80% of the total. (The remaining 20% of the population is comprised of people from more than twenty other Senegalese ethnic groups, plus people from other countries.) Making the Bible accessible in these three major language groups has the potential to impact the nation tremendously. We're also reaching out in the SIM world to see how we can facilitate for other language groups what we've been able to do for Wolof with Bible publishing in apps and online.

So, Lord willing, our current plan is to stay in the US for another school year after our regular Home Assignment ends this summer. Our SIM leadership has expressed their agreement that this is the right decision and has approved our new ministry plan. We are still members of SIM and will continue to depend on the Lord's provision through the donations you all send to SIM to support our work. If you are one of our regular partners and you want to make a change in your giving or have questions about this, please let us know.

There are a lot of mixed emotions in our family about being in the US longer than we planned, so we appreciate your prayers for peace for each member of our family. We also need to figure out some of the logistics, particularly housing. Our rental contract here ends this summer, so we are looking for another place to live in the Simsbury area beginning in June of 2022. We need at least three bedrooms and since we don't own any furniture, a furnished place would be ideal. Would you pray for the Lord's pro-

vision for us in this? And please do let us know if you have any leads for a place where our family might live next year.

### Love Never Gives Up

*Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.*

*1st Corinthians 15:58*

When Corey hung up after talking to a friend back in Senegal this week, he said to me, "You will never believe who is attending Pastor C.'s vocational school and going to church!" And he was right: when he told me, I couldn't believe it!

Jebo\* was in our Scholarship program up through the end of his 8th grade year which was in 2017, but at that point the committee had to discontinue his scholarship since he was not meeting the requirements, either in terms of academic effort and results nor in terms of participating in weekly Bible study. After we made this difficult decision, we were grieved to see he seemed to drift farther and farther away from what we would have hoped for him. He stopped going to church and school altogether and failed to capitalize on several job opportunities, getting himself fired four times that we know about and burning relational bridges along the way.

Therefore, it was wonderful and surprising to hear that Jebo is now living and being trained at a Christian job skills training school and choosing to attend church services! This news encouraged me greatly, but it also challenged me because Pastor C. had a long history with this young man and knew of his previous failures and poor choices, yet he was willing to extend another offer of grace and help. I think most people would have written Jebo off as a lost cause after so many years of outright rejection and a complete lack of interest in spiritual things. But the Gospel message is that God loved us even when we rejected Him, and He continues to pursue us with His grace and help even though we don't deserve it. Not one of us is a lost cause! That applies to His love for me and should also spur me to love others in that same grace-filled, never-giving-up way.

*\*name changed*

#### Prayer points

- Katie's dad, Tom Tindall, died very suddenly and unexpectedly on Sept. 29 of giant cell arteritis. We are grieving, although we grieve with the confidence that we will see him again in the presence of Jesus. Please do pray for our family and particularly for Katie's mom, Sally.
- Praise the Lord for His work in the lives of former and current Scholarship students and pray for each one to thrive.
- Pray for the physical and mental health of each of our kids. We are thankful for the resources available here in the US. Ask God to give us wisdom as we parent and as we make decisions.
- Pray for a place for our family to live next year.
- Pray for the online Wolof ministry to reach many with the Gospel.
- Pray for God to guide and bless Corey's desire to help with the work of getting the Bible out in various formats in Wolof, Pulaar, and Sereer.