

“Elizabeth’s Pen Pal”
Missions Sunday
January 9, 2005
By Rebecca Enney

“Elizabeth!” shouted Mrs. Mawakasunga. “You got a letter from the North West Territories!” Elizabeth rushed down from her room and looked at the letter. “It must be from my new pen pal!” she exclaimed.

Now, in these days of computers and e-mail, I’m not sure if you know what a pen pal is. The Missions Committee at Pastor Ed’s church asked for a child who would like to be a pen pal. Elizabeth signed up and that means her address was given to a little girl someplace far away and that little girl wrote a letter to Elizabeth and now Elizabeth will write a letter back to her! And they can be pals.

Elizabeth carefully looked at the outside of the envelope for clues to what might be inside. It was kinda fat. She could tell from the handwriting that it was not an adult who wrote the address on the outside! “Oh boy!” said Elizabeth as she used the letter opener to open the envelope.

Elizabeth read the letter out loud to her mother. Mrs. Mawakasunga was just as excited as Elizabeth!

DEAR ELIZABETH, MY NAME IS MARY. I AM A DOGRIB INDIAN AND I LIVE IN RAE EDSO IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES. HERE IS A PICTURE OF ME AND HERE IS A PICTURE OF MY HOUSE.

Elizabeth held up the paper for her mother to see. “Look mommy! Isn’t she pretty! Oh, and this is her house!”

PLEASE DRAW ME A PICTURE OF YOU AND YOUR HOUSE. I HAVE TWO OLDER BROTHERS AND THREE YOUNGER SISTERS. I SLEEP IN THE TOP BUNK WITH MY LITTLE SISTER IN THE GIRLS ROOM. HOW MANY BROTHERS AND SISTERS DO YOU HAVE?

“I don’t have any brothers or sisters.” said Elizabeth, almost like she is disappointed.

MY DADDY SAYS THAT IT IS NOT DARK IN THE WINTER TIME WHERE YOU LIVE. IT IS DARK HERE ALL WINTER LONG. THE SUN COMES UP BEFORE LUNCH AND IT GOES DOWN AFTER LUNCH. THEN IN THE SUMMER THE SUN IS OUT ALL THE TIME. EXCEPT AROUND MIDNIGHT.

“Is that true Mommy?” asked Elizabeth. “Yes dear, that is because they live so close to the Artic Circle.”

TOMORROW MY DADDY IS TAKING ME TO VISIT MY COUSINS. WE WILL GO ON THE SNOWMOBILE ACROSS THE LAKE. IN THE SUMMER WE NEED A BOAT TO GO SEE THEM. HERE IS A PICTURE OF MY CHURCH. THE BLACK THING ON THE CROSS IS A RAVEN. MY DRAWING IS NOT SO GOOD. THEY LIKE TO HANG ON THE CROSS IN THE WIND.

“Look Mommy. Their church looks like a teepee!”

MY HAIR IS BLACK AND I HAVE BROWN EYES. TELL ME WHAT COLOR YOUR HAIR IS.

PLEASE WRITE BACK SOON! LOVE MARY.

Mrs. Mawakasunga brought the globe in to show Elizabeth where we live and the Northwest Territories where Mary lives. Elizabeth got busy right away. She found her tablet and a pencil and wrote her letter to Mary.

DEAR MARY, MY HAIR IS BROWN AND WHITE. MY EYES ARE BROWN. I HAVE TO SLEEP ALL ALONE BECAUSE I HAVE NO BROTHERS OR SISTERS. I AM NOT SUCH A GOOD DRAWER AS YOU, BUT MY FRIEND BARABAS CAN DRAW A PICTURE OF ME THAT I WILL SEND TO YOU.

PASTOR ED SAID A TEAM OF PEOPLE FROM OUR CHURCH MIGHT GO SEE YOU NEXT SUMMER, BUT HE SAID LITTLE KIDS CAN'T GO ALONG. I WISH I COULD SEE YOU. WE COULD PLAY OUT IN THE SNOW. PLEASE WRITE BACK SOON! LOVE, ELIZABETH

“Can we mail it right away Mommy?” asked Elizabeth as she licked the envelope.

Jesus was baptized and because you and I are also baptized, that makes us all one family. We are all brothers and sisters in the family of God. God wants us to love our family, the ones up close that we live with, like your mommy and daddy, and the ones far away, 3000 miles away, like Mary is to Elizabeth and the ones even further away, like our brothers and sisters in India and Indonesia where the tsunami came.

The world is a big place. We should start by loving the people closest to us.

THE END