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Dear Friends,

We pray you enjoy these testimonies from the weekend of Martha Kooyers' graveside and memorial services held November 2-3, along with notes from Papua New Guinea and elsewhere.

**Cory Kooyers, son:** The Japanese thought they could take out the American fleet in Pearl Harbor without repercussions, assuming they could continue unopposed, conquering islands and nations in the Pacific. But the Americans rose up in force and sent many young men to stop them. Americans, Australians and New Zealanders died in Papua New Guinea defending freedom, and if they hadn't my parents would never have gone there as missionaries. There would have been no open-door welcome in the early 1960's when they first came to PNG.

**Jerry Kooyers, Orneal's youngest brother:** Martha was unusual; she packed up children and household to follow Orneal across the ocean to a foreign country. When they came back on furloughs and moved in with us for weeks at a time, my wife Geneva remembers, "Martha fit into our family well and did whatever she could for two women to get along in one kitchen and one house. Material things did not matter to her. She was much more concerned about people and would tell me many stories of their life in Papua New Guinea." Martha had a meek and quiet spirit, something very rare in women, and it made her a beautiful person.

**Ann Thomas:** It was 1977 and I had come to Ambunti fresh out of high school to help for a year and a half. "This is your first day teaching," Martha said to me; "let's stop and pray for you." I can still hear Martha's laugh when telling her the missing chalk story (I finally believed my students' account that Buria's pet cassowary was coming into the classroom and eating the pieces I left in the blackboard tray!!). Her laugh always lightened the scene in daily incidences and reminded me that all was right with the world because the Lord was in charge. One day both Neal and Martha needed to leave Ambunti for a week while I continued teaching in the school. Martha said to me, "If something comes up, take it to Buria. If he can't handle it, take it to the Lord. Be like Hezekiah who spread the letter out before the Lord by the altar. Then everything will surely be okay." Sometimes I doubted my ability to teach well, but Martha would say, "Many others are cleverer than we are, but they are not here. We might not be super talented at this, but we are the ones who are here. We will just do it, and God will use us."



**Tonny Apiningi, PIM teacher:** In 1986 I came to Ambunti and lived with Anton Biap while a student at the Ambunti Akademi. Evenings at Anton's I would often hear the families of the PIM staff people praying and singing together as they held devotions with their families. Their example convinced me that the Christian way was a good way, and I began attending church services. After finishing my studies and starting a family, I attended leadership courses taught by Neal. My wife sat under Martha's teaching in a Sunday School course and because of it has been involved in leadership with other women. My wife remembers Martha fondly. Now I am a PIM teacher.

**Tim Manthei, son-in-law, husband of daughter Pam:** When I went over to PNG as a young man to check out this organization of which I had been asked to become a board member, I saw Martha always in the middle of the people, busy with some project, regularly bandaging a large tropical ulcer on a young man's leg, or giving work to some needy person. If Neal was the vision behind PIM, Martha was the heart. Martha was also very interested in politics and got me reading the *Wall Street Journal*.

**Michelle Hawkins (daughter of Doug & Leah):** "I have a high-paying job for you!" These words from my Grandma were infamous for my brothers and me. It usually meant we would be working for eternal rewards, and my childlike mind didn't find such rewards very meaningful. Grandma excelled at finding helpers for the myriad projects she always had going, and the little bits of humor with which she spiced up our jobs went a long way towards giving us good attitudes as we did the work. Grandma's life became a living reflection of James 2:18— "Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds." Because of her example I now find myself seeking out those "high-paying" jobs, willingly serving family, friends, and God's kingdom :- ).

**Doug Heidema, son-in-law, husband of Leah now in heaven:** Martha drew on my tech support frequently for her work on the computer. I would tell her how to do something, and she would write it down on a sticky note. But I often wished I knew her filing system. Then when she asked me the same question again, I could have pointed to the right sticky note! She never gave up; she was tenacious in getting a grasp on how to use the computer to good advantage.

**Derek (son of Eric & Penny)** who went with Grandma to PNG for three months in 1999: I think if Grandma were here, she would say, "Get to work! Do it in a team. And have fun while you're doing it."

**Eric Schering, son-in-law, husband of Penny:** One of Martha's favorite scriptures was Psalm 91: "He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty (vs 1). Because he loves me, says the Lord, I will rescue him. I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name (vs 14)." Martha loved the Lord, she loved serving him, and she spoke of him often in PNG. For Orneal serving in PNG was a thing of obedience, but Martha loved it. She loved teaching adults how to read, seeing the children's eagerness to learn in their classrooms, bringing food to people who were sick, and getting out into the remote villages to observe in the schools. "With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation." Martha lived to 92; she had a long and fulfilling life.

**Pam Manthei, daughter:** August 5<sup>th</sup> I had the idea to read Esther to Mom so I knelt down by her, resting the Bible on the arm of her reclining chair so my mouth was near her ear and our faces were close. We read chapter by chapter, taking a break at the end of each one so she could rest. Mom was tracking with me through the whole book and we finished it. The next day she wanted me to read it again. But she soon got tired and said, "Let's put that on the schedule for tomorrow." That night Mom went to be with Jesus (Aug 7), and I got to thinking later, "When was that festival of Purim in the book of Esther?" I did some research and found out that this year Purim was on March 1, Mom's birthday! Was Mom a queen like Esther? We're thinking. . .



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**Ronnie Smiley (wife of PIM Board Chairman):** Over the last 10-12 years, I have been touched and influenced by Neal and Martha's tenacity and faithfulness. Neal has inspired me to be steadfast, unwavering. Martha's heart for spreading the Gospel through PIM and her devotion to Neal and

family has influenced me too. She was truly Jesus' hands and feet, self-sacrifice and obedience in action. I'm catching her vision of knowing Christ and the power of His resurrection in daily life. Thank you, Martha and Neal.

**Valentine Yanak, PIM teacher in PNG:** I would like to give my word of respect to late Martha Kooyers, a mother and founder of PIM. I have been very sad about her death. When I heard of it, I canceled classes for three days to show my respect. Thank you for training us. What a blessing that has been to us! Without you, Martha and Neal, we would not be enjoying the blessings that we have currently. Thank God for these two lives.

**Walt Kooyer (his grandfather removed the "s"), first cousin to Orneal,** PIM board member: Daniel 12:3—"Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever." Martha is shining like a star.

**Rueben Wak, PIM Manager in PNG:** We pay tribute to the founders Orneal and Martha Kooyers and to their daughter (the late Leah Heidema). Thank you to those who prayed and said, "Go forth in the work of Pacific Island Ministries" back in 1977. The high calling and obedience to the voice of God came with its blessings: "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy" (1 Peter 2:9-10). The teaching and discipleship ministry made us a people belonging to God. We are now the recipients of God's mercy, and we give glory to God.

Many of you who could not make it to the Memorial Service on Saturday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>, were praying for us. Thank you! It was a wonderful time of tears and happy hope because of our Lord Jesus and all he has done for us as well as all the fine fellowship we experienced being together. We look forward to the future with you, building on the strong foundation they laid in Christ.

Yours in Christ

Penny Schering



