

The Hanna Newsletter

Missionaries in Taiwan
with Baptist Mid-Missions

"Good news from a far country" - Prov. 25:25

March 30, 2009

Dear Praying Friends,

We've been climbing mountains! Not literally, of course, but figuratively speaking we have been pushing for the summit for more than the last two months. Now that we are "at the top," we can look back and survey our progress in order to share with you what God has accomplished here at Cornerstone Baptist Church.

In our December letter, we wrote: *"We are in great need of a larger meeting place. Please be in special prayer as we begin looking for the location of God's choice."* In January we began to look in earnest for a potential church building in our neighborhood. After inquiring by phone and personally viewing many different sites, we finally found ourselves at an impasse. Buildings that were big enough for our present congregation were beyond our ability to purchase; buildings that we could afford to purchase were not big enough for our congregation. And in no case could we find an affordable location that would give us enough space to allow for future growth.

Then, in February, the real estate company which was occupying the corner location right next to our church closed their doors due to the poor economy, leaving the building empty. We have "coveted" that location since our first opportunity to view it more than 4 years ago. It has twice the auditorium space and about two and a half times the overall floor area of our present location. Our church literally shared a wall with that building, which meant that we would not need to move away from our present, well-publicized location in the community. Finally, it is on a conspicuous corner of a major boulevard providing high visibility. After direct negotiations with the owner of the building we signed a three year lease for a reasonable price.

This was a big step of faith for our people to take; there was some doubt and much discussion before the church voted to go forward with the proposal. But thank the Lord, when the decision was made, only one dissenting vote was cast. Our monthly rent and utility costs will approximately double, but our financial condition is sound and we are confident that God will provide the needed increase in income to meet our obligations. We are still hoping to locate and purchase a piece of empty land in the community on which we can build a church building in the future.

The agreement was reached on March 1, giving us exactly one month in which to prepare the building for use and move everything over into the new location. Every Saturday in the month of March was declared to be a church work day. Work crews composed of members and attenders of our church helped clean, fix, and organize. Evenings throughout the week were used for painting and other projects. During the day contractors and other workers were in and out of the building in a steady stream. Money flowed in through special offerings and flowed out again as quickly in expenses. We set Saturday, March 28 as the date for "the big move" and Sunday, March 29 as the date for our first service in the new building. Praise the Lord, we successfully met our goals and enjoyed the blessing of meeting in our beautiful, roomy new church auditorium on the day appointed.

So today we are enjoying the view from the rest station at the top of the mountain. Although we are physically and emotionally exhausted, we are spiritually satisfied and rejoicing at the victory that God has given to us. But as we look ahead we can see that our mountain path includes more peaks to conquer. The climb looks steep. We desire your prayers for us as we begin the next stage of our ascent.

We have two peaks yet to surmount in the next month. We are planning a special Easter Celebration for Sunday, April 12. Although we are now completely moved into our new building, there are still many necessary work projects that need to be completed before the special events of that day. Please pray that our people would have the stamina to stay the course to the end. Our plans for Easter include an early sunrise service on BanPing Mountain (more mountain climbing!) and a special afternoon celebration service in which our church choir will perform an Easter cantata. We will invite our community and other fundamental Baptist churches from our area to celebrate Christ's resurrection, our church's fourth anniversary, and the dedication of our new building. Afterward we plan to hold a baptismal service and then enjoy a catered meal in our fellowship hall. Please pray that many unsaved people from our community will come and hear the gospel. One of the conscious goals that motivated our congregation to make this move was the desire to expand our witness and ministry in our city.

The second peak we have yet to climb will more directly involve our own family. We will be moving into the upper 2 floors of the church building. You may recall that it was just in November that our family moved into our present apartment. It was certainly not in our thoughts at that time that we would need to move again so soon. But such is missionary life. By renting the upper two floors of the church building (which contains 5 upper stories and a finished basement), we are helping to bring down the church's monthly rental costs to an amount they can afford. Also the church will have a caretaker on the premises. But we benefit as well. We will pay less rent than we are now paying and gain more space. We've lived in the church building before, so we understand fully the liabilities involved, as well as the benefits. We have given notice to our current landlord that we will be out of our apartment by the end of April. So after Easter is over our next big hurdle will be getting everything ready to move our household into our new quarters before the end of the month.

In the midst of all of the physical labor which has occupied our energies for these past few months, much spiritual work has also continued to take place. Teaching, preaching, counseling, visiting, administering, and organizing the Lord's work here at Cornerstone Baptist Church are all ongoing responsibilities which we cannot (and do not wish to) escape. The physical facilities which we are working so hard to prepare are merely the scaffolding which allows us to conduct the spiritual ministry of building the church. As a part of our church moving project we challenged our congregation to commit themselves more fully to the Lord by committing themselves to the ministry of our local church. We rejoiced when several long-time attenders finally made the decision to join the church membership and become more



Pastor Delaney teaching Sunday School



Fellowship after the service

ed to hinder us during the course of this project, we know that he will continue to do so. Please pray that we will be alert, prayerful, and armored against his attacks.

In Christ,

*The Hanna family
Matt, Marla, Luke, Rose, and Beth*

actively involved. Larger facilities also reveal greater needs and provide greater opportunities. So we also rejoiced when some members took the initiative to start new ministries which have long been needed.

If what has been accomplished sounds like more than one family could ever do, then your perception is correct. Most of the work was carried out by the sacrificial efforts of the members of the congregation. When my responsibilities became heavy, our missionary team stepped in to help carry the preaching and teaching load. This whole project has really been a team effort and has brought both our congregation and our ministry team together in unity of purpose. Please pray that God would continue to give us unity and that greater and more effective ministry would take place as a result. Just as Satan has repeatedly and blatantly attempt-



Teen Choir