

I'm Dreaming ...

December 14, 2009

Dear Family & Friends,

We send our warm greetings to you at this Christmas season. We thank you for your faithfulness in praying for us, supporting us, encouraging us, loving us, and standing behind us over this past year, and over these many, many years (almost 20 years now) that we have lived in Taiwan. Holidays are the time that our thoughts turn toward home, family, and friends. But as the years pass, our definition of *home* is changing. "*Home is where the heart is*" has begun to take on a new meaning this year in particular. This will be our first Christmas in which a family member, Luke, is absent from our family celebration. He will be spending the holiday school break with Grandpa and Grandma Tolly in Michigan. A part of our heart and home can be found there. *Home* is represented by the loved ones that are closest to our hearts.

Home is certainly not a house. We've never had the opportunity to settle down comfortably in any house; we've moved our complete household three times in the last fifteen months. The house that we now call *home* is probably the most comfortable one that we've ever lived in, yet we have no guarantee of how long we will be permitted to stay in it. *Home* cannot be identified geographically as a city, state, or country: The United States, Michigan, California, South Carolina, Kaohsiung, and Taiwan all have a place within our hearts, but they do not represent the one place to which our hearts are increasingly turned.

Home is where our Savior is, "whom having not seen [we] love" (1Peter 1:8). More and more, that is the place for which we work, hope, and wait. Is it possible to be nostalgic about a place you've never seen? Jesus said, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2b-3). That is our true *home*. Wouldn't it be wonderful if this year, while we were celebrating Jesus' first coming, we could also celebrate his second coming! Then all of our scattered friends and loved ones in the Lord will be gathered from each distant place and we will all go *home* together: *Home for the holidays!*

I'm dreaming of a bright Christmas
Unlike any Christmas ever known,
Where that City glistens
And people listen
To hear the Savior call his own.

I'm dreaming of that bright Christmas
With every year that takes its flight.
May you not grow weary; do right!
And this Christmas may your faith
be changed to sight.

M. Hanna

Love,

the Hannas
Matt, Marla, Luke, Rose, & Beth

P.S. For current news and information about our family (including recent prayer letters), please visit our website & blog: <http://www.hannas.org>.