

The Hanna Newsletter

Missionaries in Taiwan
with Baptist Mid-Missions

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

January 31, 2012

Dear Praying Friends,

January of 2012 is now history. This year Marla and I both reach the half-century mark. The unstoppable march of time is a daily reminder that our lives are only a vapor that soon vanishes away. But because of our connection with the eternal God through Christ Jesus, our activities and service have been linked with His eternal purposes, values, and meaning. In light of these facts our prayer is "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" (Ps. 90:12).

The march of time also means that there is much for us to report. Marla has continued to recover from her major surgery last August and is now at full strength. We are thankful for the Lord's grace and mercies to her. Luke and Rose are both continuing in their studies at BJU. Luke will be graduating in May with a B.A. in Bible and has enrolled in the Seminary for graduate work. He has also been accepted in a position of Graduate Assistant, which will help him pay his own way forward. He still plans to be involved in some type of missions ministry in the future. Beth will finish her senior year of high school with graduation in May and then will be enrolling at BJU in the fall, Lord willing. Finally, Matt completed another block course toward his long-term goal of gaining a doctorate.

Cornerstone Baptist Church has also been inching forward toward the goal of graduating to full indigenous status. We have somewhat plateaued. We encourage ourselves with the reminder that church planting in Taiwan is a marathon and not a sprint. This year we will pass the 10-year mark since our first service, but by the completion of our next term we hope to see the church achieve full independence. Some progress has been made toward our church's legal registration, but we are taking our time researching and considering all the options before we fully commit ourselves. Please pray that God would guide us in this process. The landlord of our present property has agreed to extend us only a one-year lease this time. We had hoped he would grant us a longer one for better planning and stability. But, if we can complete registration before our lease expires, we will be in a position to begin looking for property to purchase.



Sam and Jean Hung and Marla

Sam Hung has been doing an internship on the church staff while working on his seminary

studies. In addition to his online course work, Matt has also been tutoring him in homiletics. This week he and his wife, Jean, took our teen group to winter camp. Ten teens accompanied them. Pray for Sam and Jean's spiritual growth and maturing as future leaders.



Cornerstone teens

We had two baptisms in November. But then we lost a few people as well. Our biggest challenge in building the church has been in the area of changing hearts and lives. Since this is a work that only God can do, we need you to pray along with us that God would transform the thinking of believers to conform to His word so that Cornerstone can be established on a firm foundation.

This year God opened a door of opportunity for us to present the Christmas story in two different public elementary schools during the month of December. About 450 students in 15 classes

heard the gospel. A full report of this ministry can be found on our website.

Our approaching furlough is creating a certain amount of discomfort in the minds of our people, as they wonder what will happen in our absence. We are arranging replacements for our furlough a little differently this time. Instead of one family replacing us for the whole time we're gone, we are arranging for several different couples or individuals to come for short term stays. Our furlough will begin at the end of April and last 10 months. Spread out over that period, three different replacements will come for one or two months at a time. In addition, local missionaries and co-workers (including Sam Hung) will help with preaching responsibilities between replacements. While this is not ideal, we trust that it will be another step in weaning the church of dependence upon the missionary. Please pray for these replacements and for the church as they learn to work with people having different personalities and temperaments.

Please pray especially for the needs of our children's ministries. We have faced challenges with staffing the children's church for several years. We are having trouble in two areas. First, we don't have a committed leader for the children's church ministry; second, we are not being successful in communicating our philosophy of ministry to those who are involved. As a result, people are pulling in all different directions and creating friction. While we have good leadership for children's Sunday School, the problems in the children's church are affecting our ability to achieve our overall goals. Pray that God would raise up a person in our congregation who shares our burden for the children's work.

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We also continue to face a similar need in our youth work. While we have several people helping, no one person is willing to accept the responsibility of leadership. This is certainly an area in which God needs to transform the minds of believers to act in ways that are counter to Chinese culture.

Pray for our preparations for furlough. We are still working to plan and arrange our travel schedule which will begin with our arrival in the U.S. at the end of April. We still have some supporting churches which have not yet confirmed a date for us to visit. We will be visiting with our western churches in May and June before returning to the east for conferences in July.

Thank you for your faithful prayers offered in our behalf and in behalf of the believers here at Cornerstone Baptist Church. We thank the Lord for your partnership with us in the work of reaching Chinese for Christ.

In Christ,

the Hannas
(Matt, Marla, Luke, Rose, and Beth)