

May 26, 2014

Dear Praying Friends,

We were shocked to discover that it has been six months since our last newsletter! If you have kept in touch with us by e-mail, on the web, or through social media, then you are aware of the events in our family that have contributed to our lack of formal communication. Here is a synopsis of the past several months so that you can continue to pray intelligently for our family and for the ministry of Cornerstone Baptist Church in Kaohsiung, Taiwan.

By mid-January, continuing deterioration in the health of Marla's mom, Lillian Tolly, led us to determine to send Marla back to visit, while her mom was still able to speak. The day Marla boarded her plane for Michigan (February 7), we received a phone call that Matt's dad, Art Hanna, had peacefully passed into the presence of the Lord in California. He was 93. Matt flew from Taiwan, Marla from Michigan, and our kids from South Carolina to attend the funeral. Afterward, Marla returned to Michigan while Matt remained in California for several weeks to help his Mom with the transition in her life. In early March, Matt returned alone to Taiwan to continue in ministry.

We decided to extend Marla's stay in Michigan when it became apparent that her mom would not be with us much longer. Marla and her sisters helped to provide full-time care for her at home until she too passed peacefully into the presence of her Savior on April 6, surrounded by her family. After a hectic two weeks of funeral, family visits, personal business, and international travel Marla and I both returned to Taiwan exhausted on April 17. We are so thankful for the godly heritage and the example of sincere faith and service to the Lord, which our parents have passed down to us.

We are also thankful for the committed believers and co-workers in ministry at Cornerstone Baptist Church, who stepped into the gap during our absence. In March, we held a baptismal service in which three individuals received baptism and joined the church. Children's ministries continue to stabilize and mature, as well as other important areas of ministry.

In early May, Luke graduated with a Master's degree from BJU. Originally, Marla and I had planned to attend graduation and spend a few weeks in Greenville with our children, but all the extra funeral travel changed our plans. Instead, we had to be satisfied with watching him march on the BJU internet webcast. Please pray for Luke as he plans the next steps of his life. Rose and Beth will be working in Greenville through the summer.

In the month since we have returned, we have faced some discouragements in ministry. Some of our church people are struggling with personal issues that threaten to turn them away from the Lord and the church. Our counselling load has increased as we attempt to deal with these problems in a biblical fashion. We have been forced to watch while others make poor choices, which we know will have serious consequences in their lives down the road. A few have deserted us to attend the brand new charismatic mega-church that has just been built a few blocks away. It seems that our church is presently going through a winnowing process. Please pray that God would help us to keep our focus on Him and not on people. Pray also that our faithful workers who carry most of the load will not grow discouraged. Matt has been preaching through the book of First Peter during our worship services. Together we are learning about the importance, necessity, and benefits of suffering in the life of the believer. This is not a pleasant or popular topic.

The Hanna Newsletter

Missionaries to Taiwan



"Good news from a far country" (Proverbs 25:25)



Looking forward into the next several months, here are some additional things for which you can pray. Dr. Yoh Shirato will be coming from Guam to spend a few months with our ministry this summer. He will be working with our choir, preaching, teaching in the youth ministry, and speaking at our annual youth camp. This year our church is responsible for organizing and conducting the camp. Please pray for an effective week of ministry to our teens (July 7-10). We will also be conducting a Vacation Bible School during August 11-15. Pray that we would draw in many children from our community and that we would see many children come to Christ.

Finally, we renewed our building rental contract with our landlord for another two years. This building has been a wonderful provision from God and highly suitable to our needs. However, the landlord continues to raise our rent; he has made it clear that he may sell the building at any time, if he can get the price he desires. It is well beyond our means to purchase it at the price he is demanding. We are continuing to actively look for another suitable property to rent or purchase. Pray that we would have wisdom and faith as we look for something more permanent for our use.

In Christ,

The Hannas

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