

Merry Christmas From the Hannas



December 1, 2015

Dear Praying Friends,

Jesus Is The Reason For The Season! However, when you think about it, Jesus is the reason for everyday life! As Creator, He gives us our physical life. As Sustainer, He preserves our existence. As Redeemer, He gave His life for us so that we can have eternal life through Him. As Priest, He intercedes for us. And as King, He will be coming back for us.

These past two years have been quite the whirlwind (yes, we missed last year's Christmas mailing since Marla had pneumonia), but God and His promises remain true and faithful! Here is a re-cap of 2015 so all of you can catch up with us.

Many of our 2014 family plans changed when Dad Hanna (Feb) and Mom Tolly (April) went to be with their Lord. Since we did not get an opportunity to help our young adult children with some needed business (originally set for the summer of 2014), we decided to spend the Christmas holidays with them. It was a delightful and profitable time, while house-sitting for some dear friends (in spite of the pneumonia!).

In early February 2015, we returned to Taiwan, just a few weeks before Chinese New Year! Cornerstone Baptist Church held its annual business meeting/elections. Then there was a 3-day winter youth camp in the Taichung area. In December, our co-worker, Dolly Wong informed us that she felt God was moving her on to another ministry. We praise the Lord for Dolly's tremendous contributions in so many of the church ministries while she was here for six years! She returned to Singapore with her mother the week after Chinese New Year. She is still dearly loved and greatly missed!

Anticipating the Bollons arrival (family of 6 with GFA missions) and wanting to downsize to a smaller place, Matt and I took up the challenge of moving out of the church building apartment and into a smaller, nearby one (mid-March). A church family volunteered to arrange and pay for our move. What an enormous blessing! This moving company was so efficient, that from start to finish, it only took 4 hours! That included dis-assembly and reassembly! It did not take long for us to feel at home in our new apartment.

With April came Cornerstone's 10th anniversary of being an organized church. Brother Henry Tsuei and his wife, Grace, had returned to take part in it, and Henry was the speaker for that day. A lot has happened in those 10 years, but God remains faithful. The Lord continues to build His church here in Kaohsiung, Taiwan! We praise His name and give Him the glory!

Our daughters, Rose and Beth, were able to come "home" for the summer (May through July). It was their first trip back to Taiwan since they had left for college. While here, Beth went on to Cambodia for a 5 week medical missions trip, while Rose accompanied Mom and Dad to Singapore for the week-long Asia-Pacific FBFI conference with Dr. John Vaughn. We thoroughly enjoyed all the speakers' messages, as well as the wonderful and uplifting fellowship with so many other Asia-Pacific missionaries!

Also in May, we gladly received some BMM missionary co-workers who came to us from a different field. Due to health needs, Josh & Rachel Stewart changed to the field of Taiwan for ministry. They have been busy getting settled and picking up language studies again. Please continue to pray for their entire family (Nate-4, and Anna-2) as they adjust to living and working alongside us here.

June had a bit of a lull to it, but July's summer youth camp was exciting and encouraging! This year's speakers were several missionary and local Chinese pastors. Also sprinkled into each service were testimonies from their wives, or from returning young people going forward for the Lord (3 missionary kids, and some Chinese assistant pastors).

The Bollon family finally arrived during our busy week of VBS, taking up residence in the 2 floors above the church. They, too, are being immersed in language and culture, and would appreciate your prayers. VBS was a bit different this year. It ran from 10am to 4pm for 3 days, but it went very well.

August also brought some sadness for Marla, as her oldest sister, Bethany McCurley, passed away. Bethany first saw a dermatologist in January. There was a debate of a diagnosis – lupus or lymphoma, trying various medications to see what worked best. Later, they removed her gallbladder, and saw spots on her liver, giving her a definite “lymphoma” diagnosis on June 26th. It was a very rare, but aggressive cancer. By August 26th, she was already with Jesus. We were very glad for our 3 kids to be able to go visit her 10 days before her death. They were our young ambassadors. And then the girls were able to go back and attend her memorial service. Praise the Lord, Bethany did not have to suffer for very long. Please pray for her family as they miss her.

September started a new semester for the Chinese Baptist Bible College. Several of our own church brothers and sisters are taking courses (Life of Christ; OT survey; Systematic Theology). In the middle of the month, Matt went to an outside location to teach Chinese pastors and laypeople the book of Revelation. He is also teaching that course now during Cornerstone's adult Sunday school time.

We've just celebrated Thanksgiving, which can and should be an “everyday life attitude”, NOT just a seasonal thing! All of us have been blessed in SO MANY WAYS! May we take the time everyday to say, “Thank you, Jesus!”

Luke continues at his job in Greenville, while maintaining a long-distance relationship with his girlfriend, Faith, in Alabama. Rose is looking forward to finishing her education SOON! Beth will have one more semester next fall. She is planning to take her MCAT (med-school entrance exam) this summer, and begin checking out some specific medical schools. All 3 attend church together on Sundays.

In December, Cornerstone BC has planned several evangelistic outreach ministries that you can be praying about: 12/5 youth activity; 12/7 Gospel presentation at a nearby pre-school; 12/12 Ladies' Christmas brunch; 12/19 youth gift exchange; 12/20 childrens' program (unsaved parents are invited); 12/26 Christmas play/musical.

Things to look forward to and pray for in 2016

- Cornerstone's continued progress in obtaining legal status with the government
- the church's need to move before the end of March (We have a potential building and moving date in February.)
- M&M visiting supporting churches in AZ and CA during the month of April
- Rose's graduation from Bob Jones University, May 6, 2016

In Christ,

Matt & Marla Hanna family