

The Hanna Newsletter

Missionaries to Taiwan



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



May 18, 2017

Dear Praying Friends,

Thank you for praying for our family over these last few months since our March newsletter. Here is a report of what has taken place in our lives and a look forward to the next stage of our journey.

The first part of our furlough ended in early May with Matt's completion of a semester of seminary studies at BJU. We evidently did not clearly communicate in our last letter that he would NOT be graduating in May (he received well-wishes from several people). He still has six credits remaining, which he plans to complete through online coursework. However, the three courses (nine credits) just finished make a May 2018 graduation possible. He will be receiving a Master of Divinity degree.

On the other hand, our daughter, Beth, DID graduate from BJU on May 5th with a B.S. degree in Biology. She finished her coursework last December and then stayed with us at home until her May graduation. The two of us enjoyed having her at home, as well as having Luke and Rose in town nearby. Having the kids close kept Marla sane while Matt was nose-to-grindstone in his coursework. With the completion of the semester, Marla is glad to have regained her husband!



The Lord provided housing for us this semester through the ministry of Dr. Mary Kraus, who invited us to live in her basement apartment only three blocks from campus. It was ideal for our needs. We are very thankful for Mary's gracious generosity and for the Lord's care and provision for us.

We have enjoyed the opportunity to step back into the life of our sending church, Morningside Baptist. The four months from January to early May marks the longest period that we have spent at the church in nearly 25 years. We determined early on that we would not accept speaking engagements outside of our home church during this time. However, we did have several opportunities to preach and teach in local ministries within our congregation—including the Chinese congregation.

During these few months in Greenville, we also enjoyed the opportunity to become acquainted or to renew acquaintance with several BMM missionary appointees to Asia-Pacific fields, who have made Greenville their base. It is always refreshing and challenging to witness their determination, commitment, and zeal to reach their future field of service, while they confront churches and Christians with the burden of missions in their present field of ministry.

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During the four months at home with us, Beth prepared for her next steps in life and saw God work a major victory. She had been aiming for medical school with the eventual goal of becoming a medical missionary. However, she finally determined that God had closed the door for medical school and she began to explore other options. Her new goal is to work in a mission hospital laboratory as a certified laboratory technologist, so she applied for a few study programs that could train her in this field. She was initially perplexed about her plans when she was not accepted in any of the programs that she had applied for, but then later, she received a call-back from her preferred school for a position that had unexpectedly opened up. She is now working a summer job at the Ark Encounter in Kentucky and will begin her 12-month study/training program in August in Columbia, South Carolina.

Our daughter Rose was recently engaged to her college sweetheart, Mike Elmore, and is making plans for an August 4 wedding. That date is near, but since they have been dating for several years, it was not an unexpected decision. She will be moving in late May to Vermont to prepare. We are praising the Lord for his provision in advance of safe housing and good employment for her. Only Luke will remain in Greenville, but he is also making plans to move, so that he can be near the girl that he has been dating for a few years.

Marla and I flew back to Taiwan on May 13/14 for six weeks of ministry at Cornerstone Baptist Church. Matt will be preaching and teaching to give Josh and Rachel Stewart some relief and a few weeks of vacation. They have valiantly carried the load of leadership in the congregation in our absence. We will be traveling at the end of May to Australia and New Zealand for twelve days to visit our BMM missionaries in those locations. We will be seeing some old friends and meeting others for the first time. Pray for our ministry during this trip and that we would gain a greater understanding of the needs of the missionaries and of the people that they are attempting to reach. Matt's survey trip to Indonesia (originally planned for June) has been rescheduled for August. Please pray as he makes preparations and arrangements for that trip.

We have already purchased our tickets to return to the US on June 29. Lord willing, we plan to settle in the Cleveland area for the second half of our furlough. We already have a full itinerary of meetings to report to our supporting churches in Michigan, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania. We will also have opportunity, when we are not traveling, to coordinate closely with our BMM home office and continue the process of integrating into our administrative position and responsibilities. In July, Marla and I will be participating in our annual BMM family conference and governance meetings, as well as helping Beth get settled in Columbia SC. Then, in August, our family will be gathering in Vermont for our daughter's wedding.

One big item for which you can pray is our need for housing in the Cleveland area from July-December, 2017. We are confident that the Lord will provide something suitable in answer to prayer. We will conclude our furlough and return to Taiwan on December 28.

In Christ,
The Hannas