



May 8, 2023

Dear Praying Friends,

In the midst of all the world's chaos, it is extremely comforting to know that God is totally in control! This knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord gives us the peace and joy that passes all understanding. May we hold fast to our faith and lean hard on God's grace to be faithful to the end.

There is much news to share with you, so grab your coffee and enjoy the read.

We rejoice that our coworkers, the Stewarts, were able to return in March! They had a busy, but spiritually refreshing furlough. The children grew quite a bit while they were in America. We are very glad to be working alongside all of them again.

Since our winter letter, the saber-rattling from our big neighbor has continued, and even increased at certain times. We are not alarmed or surprised by these events. We are safely kept in God's hands. So, we continue to keep busy with ministry, giving out God's truth to our congregation and to our neighborhood. Matt is trying to finish up his preaching series in the book of Hebrews before we leave on furlough. It has been rich with many principles to put into practice as we face these uncertain times. Not the least of the themes we are studying in Hebrews is the necessity to persevere in our confession of Christ, even in difficult days.

One praise that we have to share concerns a "prodigal" who has returned to the Lord, her family, and our church. After four years of living in the world, this young woman willingly stood before the congregation to confess her sin and to request restoration to the church family. We have been holding weekly counseling sessions with her since her return. It has been a joy to observe her teachable spirit, her desire and willingness to change in accordance with Scripture, and her renewed participation in the body life of the church.

As Easter was approaching, Marla led the choir to sing a cantata that they had first practiced in 2020. Because of the Covid outbreak that year they were unable to perform it. The choir chose to use one song per week, from March 12th through Easter Sunday for special music, instead of singing them all during one performance. A few of the choir members have expressed interest in keeping the choir going after we leave in June. Marla will soon hand over to them the keys to the music cabinet.

On March 18th we received word that Matt's elderly mom was being taken in for an unscheduled

surgery. Matt's brother was able to arrive in time to help during her initial hospitalization and recovery.



Easter Choir Specials

Then Matt flew in from Taiwan to assist her in making the transition from the rehab hospital to living independently at home. We're thankful that she has had a swift recovery. Thank you to those who knew and prayed for Matt's mom and for his travel to California, which went very smoothly.

In our last letter we mentioned our intention to stay at Cornerstone BC until the end of August, at which time we would be departing for a furlough in the US. In the meantime, we received exciting news that our daughter and son-in-law are expecting our first grandchild around July 20. Then the Stewarts notified us that they sensed God leading them to return to Cornerstone BC after completing their furlough. These facts permitted us to reconsider our original plan and move our departure to the US up a few months. We have purchased tickets to return on June 27 and we are working through the process of handing over the church leadership to Josh Stewart.

After much prayer and consideration, we are confident that our decision to step away from the leadership of Cornerstone BC is the right decision. Over these last 21 years we have joyfully observed Christ building his church. We believe that we have accomplished all that the Lord desired for us to accomplish here. Please pray for guidance and wisdom as we plan and prepare for our next steps in ministry. Pray for Josh and Rachel Stewart, and their family, as Josh assumes leadership of this congregation. Pray also for the church; until we leave, Matt will continue his training and instruction of the pulpit committee as they begin the process of seeking out a national pastor. The committee will continue to operate after we are gone.

Thank you for your faithful prayers and financial support. We praise the Lord for your partnership in this ministry endeavor. During July and August we will be spending some time with family. Then from September through January we will be reporting to supporting churches, primarily in Michigan, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania. Pray for our safety in travelling and for God's blessing as we minister in the churches.

In His service,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matt & Marla". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Matt and Marla Hanna