



NEW LIFE NEWS

The official newsletter for New Life Presbyterian Church • June 2012

GOD'S KINGDOM COMES TO CLARKSTON, GA

Story and photos by Trudy Verdick

I was planning a trip to the south to visit old friends and thought I should pay a visit to the Hastings, our missionaries in Atlanta. Their work with the refugees of Clarkston, GA, a suburb of Atlanta, sounded like an interesting story to actually see. God has been at work in Jonathan and Beka for many years molding them and shaping them into servants who seek out the lost and boldly share the gospel in word and deed. They often will ask their unbelieving friends, "How can I pray for you?" As they make their needs known, the Hastings proceed to pray for them. It has opened up many a conversation and bond of friendships on which to build. Jonathan and Beka move about comfortably in the community of Clarkston, fluent in Arabic and enjoying the rich culture and tastes of their new home. Their children, Gabriel, Nathaniel, Elysse, Andrew and Josiah are following along learning and observing as they grow within their covenant family.

Jonathan, equipped with a B.A. in Biblical Studies and a Masters in ESL, serves with our denomination's mission to Clarkston's refugee community by establishing after-school tutoring, adult ESL classes, sports, and summer outreach programs all based within Kris-topher Woods, an apartment complex which is home to many refugees from many nations and people groups displaced over the past 20 years (*photo page 2*). I was able to meet Sandy, the on-site business manager for the complex. She has managed these apartments for over 20 years and praises the Hastings and the other team members for their care and concern for her residents. Sandy



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sees "Abraham's blessing to the nations," but Jonathan is not sure if she truly recognizes the source.

The migration into and out of Clarkston is continual as people find safe haven from their countries' political/religious persecution. Over time, they either become thriving citizens of the U.S. and move to other cities or once it is safe, return to their homeland. We know from the scriptures that migrations of people are orchestrated by the one true God. While moving about millions of people on the earth, he has the details of individual lives ordained as well. The Hastings live out of the knowledge of God's sovereignty. (We at



New Life have a living witness to God's movement and blessing of Laotian people in the 70's, just ask Paula Hawthorne.)

It was interesting to learn what a refugee is and what path they must take. According to the 1951 Geneva Convention, a refugee is a person with a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is located outside the country of his nationality, and is unable or unwilling to return to it.

Once refugees leave their home country, most go to refugee camps to live and wait. The average stay in a refugee camp is five years. Refugees await an interview and approval from the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) to go to a refugee receiving nation. For those who may come to the United States, the refugees also await approval from the U.S. Immigration

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tion and Naturalization Services (INS). Only those refugees with sufficient proof of a well-founded fear of persecution in their homeland will be allowed to go to a new country.

Once approved, refugees must find a sponsor or borrow money to pay for the cost of transportation. Refugees will then fly to America. Before they arrive, they will have been assigned to a refugee resettlement agency such as World Relief or Lutheran Refugee Services. These agencies help refugees with their settlement needs for the first ninety days in the United States. Since ninety days isn't much time to get a household setup, find a job, learn English, etc. resettlement agencies also work to find sponsors to help the refugees long-term. Unfortunately, a majority of refugees are not sponsored. Following their ninety days in the states, Friends of Refugees and other relief agencies may continue to provide long-term care and services to refugees.

Since Clarkston was designated as a resettlement city in the early 90's, approximately 60,000 refugees have been resettled there. With over 150 different ethnic groups represented in and around the city, Clarkston has been

named "the most diverse square mile in America."

Along with "going to the lost" and providing services in their apartment communities, the Hastings and their other MTW team members are planting Mosaic Fellowship, a PCA church dedicated to the worship of our triune God to welcome believers and seekers from the diverse community of Clarkston. Every Lord's Day evening a van drives through Kristopher Woods and some of the other apartment complexes picking up old and new friends who have no transportation, bringing them to worship. I was blessed to worship with this fellowship. It was sweet to see both the sermon's text of Philippians 2:5-11 printed in four languages in the bulletin, and a group of young people lead the singing of a hymn in a Burmese dialect. The organizing pastor, Jay Taylor and his family, have moved into the refugee apartment complex.

Our missionaries in Clarkston are dedicated to pushing back the curse of Babel by equipping the immigrants with new language and American



Kristopher Woods, an apartment complex which is home to many refugees from many nations and people groups displaced over the past 20 years.

culture navigational skills. But more importantly the Hastings are dedicated to the refugee universal need, which is the safe haven in Christ alone with all the benefits that God's indwelling Spirit provides.

Follow the Hastings work in Clarkston on our Missions' Wall in the West Foyer, or better yet request their monthly e-mail letter from: Jonathan and Beka Hastings untilallshallhear@swissmail.org.

You may also help them by designating your support to them by writing "Hastings" on your offering envelope.

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SUMMARY OF MAY 3 SESSION MEETING

Submitted by David Dinwiddie

All church members are welcome to come and observe most of what happens at most of the session meetings. Member interviews and church discipline issues are done in "closed session." Visitors are dismissed prior to the closed session portions of meetings. We now attempt to schedule the open session to occur at 6 p.m. out of respect to potential visitors.

At the session meeting that occurred on Thursday, May 3, we did the following:

- Authorized expenditures up to \$1000 over budget to send Assistant Pastor Ben Rochester to General Assembly.
- Affirmed that Susan Hunt is already on the list of approved women speakers paving the way for her to be used as a speaker at the women's retreat.
- Listened to a presentation from Ray Call on Hispanic Ministry ideas.
- Received an update of our ESL initiative from Phil Reinheimer.
- Granted a request received from Barbara Abbott to set up and maintain a women's bulletin board.
- We considered a request from Katie Heinze to host an orphan choir, but decided that we did not have sufficient time to do the necessary research, scheduling, hospitality and advertising for this to be successful in the timeframe that the group was available.

Keep praying for the session. Pray for unity and wisdom as we deal with the best ways to expand the kingdom in San Diego. God bless you. •

JUNE PRAYER SCHEDULE FOR WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY IN INDIA

By Sherrene (David) DeLong

Mission to the World (MTW) is hosting a conference entitled "Women's Discipleship Program (WDP) May 24-June 9 to train women in India. She and her team would appreciate prayer. (Editor's Note: DH)

June 1 Pray for our last day of the WDP as the team teaches practical theology and the roles of women in the church. Pray that we will honor the Indian women.

June 2 Ask for super-natural strength that only the Lord can provide, as the teachers and workers prepare for another week of ministry.

June 3 Pray for a missionary as he leads

us in a devotional. Pray that we take corporate and individual time away so that the Lord can refresh each of us.

June 4 Pray for additional rest and preparation for the conference. Women's teaching and children's programs are intended for a larger group of both women and children at this conference.

June 5 Pray for the first day of women's ministry as the teachers introduce God and Jesus as presented in the Apostle's Creed. Pray for the children's ministry team as they teach stories from the Old Testament (Creation/Fall, Noah, Abraham, The Exodus and the giving of

the Law). Pray for translators for both the women's and children's programs. Pray that they will, through the help of the Holy Spirit, be able to communicate truth.

June 6 Pray that the hearts of the women will be transformed and that God will use the women who participated in the WDP as his ministers of the gospel.

June 7 Pray for our last day of ministry and team debrief. Pray that each member of the team is able to begin processing what the Lord has done both in and through her while in India.

June 8 - 9 Team departs for home. ☺

NEW LIFE'S BLOGGERS

Compiled and submitted by Lisa Mammina

Confessional Outhouse (confessionalouthouse.wordpress.com)
Written by Reuben Settergren

I blog most frequently at the ConfessionalOuthouse(.wordpress.com), a team blog where we dour confessional types hang out while the Evanjellyfish mainstream parties in the main house. With a name like that, you can expect frequent scatological humor, like "Saints and Sitters" instead of Saints & Sinners. Most of the Saints are WSCAL profs or alums, especially if they are vocal advocates of "W2K" (Westminster Two-Kingdoms) theology, like David van Drunen, Michael Horton, and the late Meredith Kline. The distinctive thesis of W2K is that secular is not a 4-letter word. Culture doesn't have to be transformed or redeemed to be legitimately good and fit for Christian participation. For a few of my favorite posts, search the blog for "The Gospel of Starbucks," "Solomon and Canon," or "The Threat of Baptism."

Okkens in Karamoja (karamojaokkens.blogspot.com)
Written by Dave and Sunshine Okken

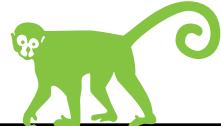
This is our family blog that we started in 2008 for the purpose of updating our friends, family and church of our ministry here in Karamoja, Uganda under the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. It includes official updates of the work and pictures and blogs of our family life.



Edible Gardens – Point Loma (ediblegardenspointloma.tumblr.com)
By Sue Martin

My blog *edible gardens-point loma*, is about edible gardening in coastal southern California. I write about gardens, food, family, community and place. The blog is a very personal work, an opportunity for me to capture thoughts, memories and experiences of gardens, gardening and the gardeners I have known. I share what I've learned from thirty some years of having my hands in the dirt. The photos in my blog are mostly from my garden. Flowers and trees in my yard or travel images show up occasionally along with some poetry. *Edible gardens—point loma* started as an adjunct to my nascent consulting business. For a time, I helped people plan and plant vegetable gardens and offered a workshop on *The Second Season Garden*. Then my day job demanded more of me, and the blog took on a life of its own. ☺

Celebrate the "Year of the Dragon" at Nighttime Zoo. Attractions include besides all the animals and flora, a 20 foot long "serpent" in the Zoo's Panda Canyon, the Monkey King Stilt Walkers, and the Hebei Chinese Acrobats at Hunt Amphitheater. Meet Jon Verdick at 5:30 p.m. Fridays beginning June 22 (member's only this first Friday) to August 31 for fun and fellowship at the zoo. See Willy at the entrance for an itinerary if you arrive after 5:30 and catch up! ☺



*Whoever is thirsty, let him come, and whoever wishes,
let him take the free gift of the water of life.* —Revelation 22:17 NIV

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

THRILLED TO BE BACK

by Dorrie Anderson

In January, 1996 during one of Minnesota's coldest winters on record, I moved from a hot and humid part of South Africa to Minnesota. Why did I choose Minnesota? Well, we had relatives in Minnesota, and I had a job offer from one of their contacts. I have no doubt that God very definitely brought me to Minnesota. However, if I had not had to wait six weeks for my "Green Card," I am certain that I would have left for "warmer pastures" right away. By the time the six weeks had passed, the ice and snow had started to thaw a little. In fact, we even experienced a "heat wave" in early February when temperatures finally climbed above freezing. As spring approached, I began to feel a little bit more settled. My parents had moved to America a year after I did, but one winter in Minnesota was enough for them! In 1998 we all decided to move to San Diego, which I had fallen in love with on a previous trip. I did not stay very long. During the following twelve years, I tried to move to San Diego again twice. I never did find a job I enjoyed or suitable accommodation, so each time I moved back to my church and friends in the Twin Cities.

Finally, in August 2008 I made my fourth and final move to San Diego. I moved right at the beginning of the economic recession, and it took a little longer than I had hoped to find a job. After much prayer the Lord miraculously provided a wonderful, six-month temporary job for me at the East County Career Center working as a case manager in a federally funded summer internship program for low income, at-risk youth. At the end of 2009, the Career Center offered me a permanent job, which I gladly accepted.

After moving to San Diego I attended New Life with my parents, Es and Rosemary Anderson, for a year and a half before feeling the need to try out some different churches in the San Diego area. One day I was enduring an ear splitting, anthropocentric (human centered) worship service at a "mega" church when something snapped... What on earth was I doing at a "rock concert" on Sunday morning when I could be back at New Life where



the worship is holy and Christ-centered and where the Word of God is preached? I hurried out of the service—away from the crowd who appeared so captivated by the Christian contemporary music and by the "glorified church entertainment." I must say that I fully agree with Gordon Sears in his excellent article entitled "It's the Music, Brother." "The demand and acceptance of radical changes in Christian music has done more to hinder the work of the gospel of Christ and advance the growth of apostasy within the professing church than anything else."

I am thrilled to be back at New Life. I attended the "New Member's" class in January and February where I learned a tremendous amount. I also joined the choir in January which I am thoroughly enjoying. Janet is an outstanding director! I plan to help with Sunday school and in the nursery soon, and I hope to join a small group in the next couple of weeks. ♫



Ben Rochester's Ordination Ceremony May 13th with Elders. Photo by Allison Dossett

GRADUATE LIST

Submitted by Allison Dossett

High School

Daniel Creedon - Kuyper Preparatory School
Christopher Felix - Julian Charter School-Alpine Academy
Josh Gilbert - Christian Heritage School
Stephen Kazules - Rex Regum Academy



College

Jocelynn Bowman – Prairie Bible Institute
Steven Dossett – Pt. Loma Nazarene University
Jonathan Scott – UCSD
Linnea Wood – Southern Nazarene University

Seminary

Ben Rochester – Westminster Seminary CA
Trey Jasso – Westminster Seminary CA ♫