



NEW LIFE NEWS

The official newsletter for New Life Presbyterian Church • February 2012

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

By Randy Dykstra

“For Such a Time as This” was the theme for the CMC West Coast 2011. CMC refers to Chinese Mission Convention, a convening of 2800+ mostly Chinese Americans coming together in San Diego, December 27-30 at

But there are many in China who name Jesus as their Lord. Pray that the Chinese American Church is effective in their outreach...and that Chinese students in the USA continue to be introduced to the God of all history.

the Town and Country Hotel in Mission Valley. As a result of the encouragement received from NLPCA mission’s coordinator Dean Abbott, ten NLPCA members attended workshops and listened to speakers at the convention. We were treated to three days of insight into the Chinese American church and how it is responding to the biblical call of mission.

Motivated by my family’s hospitality towards Chinese students at SDSU, I attended several workshops that delivered insight into the Chinese educational experience in the United States. Nearly 25 percent (100,000) of all international students enrolled at US universities are from the PRC, or mainland China. The Chinese government has a plan for students, and familiarity with our culture, language and economy is part of that plan. But our God has a bigger plan for these students, and the convention and workshops helped me more clearly see the “big picture.”

Other workshops focused on Chinese Christians in business, media, his-

tory and cross-cultural mission. With the recent economic rise of China and the likelihood that its international influence will continue to expand, the theme of CMC West Coast, “For Such a Time as This,” was appropriate. And as you can imagine, the daily devotionals and large group meetings examined the life of Esther, and Mordecai’s observation of why she was made queen in a foreign land.

Sponsored by “Ambassadors for Christ” (www.afcinc.org), CMC West Coast grew out of similar conventions on the east coast. Exhibitors sold books and Bibles in Chinese, provided information on short and long-term China ministry opportunities, and introduced conventioners to a variety of educational opportunities at seminaries and colleges. I’m glad I took the time to participate and learn. For as long as the door is open, China is coming to us. Three students that we have befriended over the years have responded to the gospel. Christianity is not a new idea to them. One has a Christian aunt in China... another a Christian grandmother. Mao’s

Cultural Revolution has been responsible for the current generation being raised with an anti-Christian bias. But there are many in China who name Jesus as their Lord. Pray that the Chinese American Church is effective in their outreach...and that Chinese students in the USA continue to be introduced to the God of all history. ☛

EIGHTH YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Eight years ago this month, we launched our first issue of “New Life News.” We want to thank you for your articles, poems “Did You Knows,” suggestions, patience, encouragement, criticisms, ideas, forgiveness, stories, appreciation, humor, willingness, testimonies, reminders, trust, cooperation, motivation, corrections, time, and tolerance. We wish to thank God particularly for his continuous kindness, timing, and inspiration. DAC (Diane, Allison, and Court) ☛

HOME-MADE MEXICAN FOOD

By Harold Ritchie

For over a year Juanita and her five sisters and one brother in the San Diego area have prepared and sold delicious Mexican food once per month in order to raise money for their nephew in Mexico, Daniel Reyes. He had endured pain for quite some time, and it was discovered that his kidneys had not developed properly. He then went on kidney dialysis and is awaiting a kidney transplant.

Juanita is very appreciative of the support of many members of the New Life community who have bought and enjoyed their Mexican food on an on-going basis. ☛

Editor’s Note: Please contact Juanita as to menu offerings, prices and which Saturday of the month the food is available.



A SERVANT OF CHRIST GROWS UP IN NAKAALE

By Dave Okken

Recently, Sunshine and I were looking through some pictures we snapped back in 2000 when we first visited Karamoja. We were meeting some of the village residents and exploring the possibility of coming here to serve. Everything was so foreign to us, and it was overwhelming to even contemplate the prospect of our living here. Ten years later, thinking back while looking at those pictures, there we see little Lokwii Zachary standing amidst a group of Karimojong, all of them wrapped in the local blankets, the traditional attire.

The seed of the Word was perhaps first planted in his heart under the big tree as he listened when Pastor Tony Curto first preached here January 7, 2001. Over the months and years, sitting under the preaching and teaching and through his friendship with the mission, Lokwii grew up hearing the word of God. Some planted, others watered, but God gave the growth (1 Corinthians 3:6). When Lokwii was a young student in school, I can remember many Lord's day mornings hearing Kristie Freeman (Scott) helping him learn the Children's Shorter Catechism. Eventually, he could recite all the answers. When we interviewed him for church membership, what a thrill it was to hear him articulate his faith in Jesus. It is common practice in this culture for Christians to take on new names at the time of their baptism and on December 14, 2003, it was my great honor to baptize Lokwii Zachary David.

What a joy it has been for the mission to watch Lokwii David (as he now prefers to be called) mature as a person and as a follower of Jesus Christ. One sig-

nificant highlight was when Pastor Al and I conducted our first and only wedding ceremony in Karamoja. Contrary to his culture, but in obedience to Christ, Lok-



wii purposed not only to a union with only one woman, but to begin living with her as husband and wife only after sufficiently satisfying the demands of the dowry. He wanted to avoid the possibility of facing that unfortunate but all-too-common event where parents who have not yet been paid their due maintain some claim upon their (partially wedded) daughter. For a time a man and woman live together in what looks like full marriage. Yet, later, the parents reclaim the daughter and hand her over to another suitor offering more cows. We were very pleased when Lokwii opted for a more biblical path. Sufficient animals being paid, on a Saturday afternoon in the fall of 2007, Lokwii David was married to Asiyo Helen. They now have a three year old boy, Longole James, and a little girl of 18 months, Locoro Anna Grace.

Even as a young student the impressive grades on Lokwii's report cards gave evidence of a bright mind, and between his schooling and his years of interaction with the missionaries, his English became excellent. He showed himself quite capable when given opportunities to serve as a translator for

missionaries who were leading a Bible study or teaching Sunday school. As more and more opportunities were given him, he developed into a translator, and when the need arose for the mission to employ another full-time language helper, Lokwii was the obvious choice. He has been an excellent language teacher to us and has done outstanding work as a translator as we have preached and taught the gospel and produced written materials in Karimojong.

What has brought me the most delight has been seeing Lokwii David grow in his own ability to communicate the word of God to his fellow Karimojong. How gratifying it was the first time I sat under the tree among a group of Nakaale residents while Lokwii taught us about God's calling of Abraham to leave his home and go to a land which he was promising to give to his descendants. He communicated with such skill and confident conviction. It had the feel of a powerful sermon, and I found myself wondering – "Has the Lord been raising up, right under our noses, the future Presbyterian version of Charles Spurgeon of Karamoja?"

Pastor Al and I have been conducting something of an experiment giving more teaching opportunities both to Lokwii David and to our other translator, Lokwii Paul (our other Lokwii). Lokwii Paul was already very much in his element as a teacher. He came to us as one who had some theological training and ministry experience.

At times we accompany these brothers and sit under their teaching. Other times we send them alone. We have learned that, at least for some of the Karimojong out in the villages, our very presence can serve to hinder their freedom of expression and interaction around the word of God. The men have been extremely encouraged and excited about the work they are doing,

NEW LIFE'S ELDERS (A NEW SECTION)

By Elder Tom W. Ziegler, photo by Trudy Verdick

and we see how the Lord is using this to cause them to grow and know Christ more deeply. Our prayer times with them have been increasingly rich, and they are excited to study with us the very text which they have taught in preparation for the next week. (Generally, we like to teach a particular Bible story two weeks in row.) They share with us the comments and questions they have received, and the answers they have provided. We have had rich times of reflecting on how things are going while digging deeper into the text together.

For so long we have asked the Lord to raise up leaders among the Karimjong. Lokwii David may be turning into a wonderful answer to our prayers, and we are prayerfully wondering how his growth and development might just inspire others whom God will also call. As I listened to Lokwii David teach, the people were riveted, hopefully by the content of the message, but no doubt also by the sight of this son of Nakaale now grown up proclaiming God's word to them. Lokwii tells us of some who have marveled – "How did you come to be able to teach the word of God like this?" We are encouraging these teachers to respond by saying – "The Lord can call and equip you to do it as well."

We ask you to pray to that end. We know that such gifts to the church are the fruit of the finished work of our Savior (Eph. 4:8). As surely as Jesus has been raised from the dead and has ascended into heaven, he will raise up laborers for his harvest. So we invite you to continue to join us, praying with confident trust in Christ. Pray that Lokwii David would continue to grow into a faithful servant of the Lord, that God would continue to use our own preaching and teaching ministries, and that the maturing ministry of these Karimjong servants would be used powerfully of God unto the building of his kingdom in Karamoja. 🌱

I was born in Boston, MA in 1941, just before WWII. I was too young to remember most of the civilian privations during the war. My parents were fortunate to be able to buy a 1942 Chevrolet, one of the last cars made before the factories changed to making only military equipment. My father left his federal government job and moved to a civilian hospital in Bethlehem, PA where he worked as a pathologist. Toward the end of WWII we moved to Lancaster, PA where we stayed until I finished 10th grade. My parents, who had been liberal Protestants, found a Unitarian church which they liked, and my first religious instruction was in a Unitarian Sunday School. My parents let me start school at age



I first heard the gospel from a fellow student at MIT and became a Christian at a large Baptist church in Boston.

five and skip the seventh grade, allowing me to finish high school at 16. This was a great help in my later prolonged education. I attended MIT for three years majoring in Physics, and it was there I met my first real defeat in life, finishing junior year with three A's and three D's. My father insisted I switch to a pre-med curriculum and finish college at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, MD. What I took as a great defeat was a blessing in disguise. I have never regretted flunking out of Physics or being pushed into medicine. I first heard the gospel from a fellow student at MIT and became a Christian at a large Baptist church in Boston. My life was consumed by medical school and an internal medicine internship at Baylor University in Houston. The Vietnam War began and most physicians in training were drafted into the Army. I went to the Navy recruiter and was assigned to the

Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego. During the six months in San Diego I heard that UCSD was planning to start a medical school. The Navy sent me to the Mekong Delta of South Vietnam where I served the crews of vast numbers of gunboats and their barracks/supply ships for one and a half years. In 1968 I returned to civilian life and a medical residency at Columbia University, NYC. In 1969 I married my medical school sweetheart, Elizabeth. Together we decided to finish our training in internal medicine and sub-specialties at UCSD. At age 33, after completing three years of a renal fellowship, I was fortunate to receive a staff position at the new VA hospital which proved to be a lifelong career in operating the dialysis unit and nursing home. Elizabeth pursued a parallel pathway in infectious diseases and worked at UCSD, Hillcrest. We visited San Diego churches (almost all of them!) for over seven years and finally found Pt. Loma Orthodox Presbyterian Church, which later became New Life PCA. I have been blessed to be a part of this congregation for 36 years. Elizabeth died in 2006 from complications of her lifelong diabetes mellitus. In 2007 I moved to White Sands La Jolla Retirement Community. My major activity in life is reading newspapers, medical journals, and books relating to theology, economics, and current events, almost anything except fiction. 🌱

THE CHAIR

By Diane Henderson

On the third day of my Virginia visit to my daughter, son-in-law and two granddaughters, ages nine and eleven, a “tween,” I sat down in the family room to read *Noble’s Book of Writing Blunders and How to Avoid Them*, thinking it would have tons of information I was sorely in need of. The nine year old bounded into the room and leaped or is it leapt onto the new, black leather recliner. She proceeded to do headstands and backbends, turning inside out with tucks, turns and twists, and ended up with a grand finale dismount on the arm of the chair with arms thrust upward. I had heard her dad caution her the day before about the use of “his” leather chair to practice gymnastic routines. He had asked her to “take it easy,” which was like asking a baseball player not to spit. Later that same day, I had heard him say after her second offense, “O.K., now you owe me a dollar.”

The recliner with its smooth, luxurious leather and soft touch was a magnet. I looked up from my book as she continued her jubilant moves, and after a moment of consideration said, “You know, your dad wouldn’t like you jumping in his chair.” “Yeah, but he’s not here,” she responded. “I know, but God is,” popped out of my mouth. “We don’t see God, yet we try to please him in what we do. I like your dad; I love your dad, and it makes me sad that he would be displeased.” “But he’s not here,” she said again. “No, he isn’t, but God said in the Bible for children to obey their parents. Your parents stand in for God, and God wants you to obey them.” “Oh, Grandma,” she sighed. “Do you have to be so godly?” She was now looking at me upside down, her head and arms draped down over the seat of the chair with her legs pointed straight up the back. I laughed, “Didn’t know I was,” I said. Had I just passed the California grandmother test?

Whether or not that experience was meaningful to her, it had meaning for

me and wide awake at midnight, still under the influence of west coast time, I thought about what I could have said. I could have said how the link between loving God and seeking to obey him is inseparable, that the desire to please God is part of loving him. Her dad seeks to obey his heavenly Father and her Grandma “D” is in a lifelong struggle to do so. That is why we need Jesus so much. We rebel, sin, hopefully repent, and are forgiven and restored by His grace. Sometimes there are consequences. It’s the story of the Old and New Testaments, a story of the human race, and is the reason why we need a savior and why God sent his precious Son to suffer and die on the cross. I could have said the story doesn’t end there; it doesn’t even



end with the resurrection. I could have said we are not alone, ever. He is always here. He was and is and always will be present. I could have said that one day we will all bow down before our Lord who sits on a special chair. I’m sure there will be some of us who will be unable to resist turning backflips and cartwheels like my granddaughter, but I’ll probably just stare in wonder, followed by jumps of joy. ☛

NEW LIFE’S NEW DOORKEEPERS ADAM AND TABITHA KEMP

By Tabitha Kemp

We moved into the church sometime mid October. It was a week of craziness. Since then we often are asked what it is like to live on 40,000 square feet of holy ground. The question often comes from friends who, quite honestly, want to make sure we are surviving. But occasionally we have to explain it to the AT&T guy. “Wait,” he says, “where do you live?”

In the short time that we have been here, we have adopted a few things. We have adopted a cat named “Sniffles,” who can be seen on the ledge of our balcony as you drive around the church. We have adopted the belief that privacy is a luxury not afforded to those who have such large houses. We have adopted large waistlines due the excessive amount of free food given to us, and we are currently working on adopting the humility required to do this job.

Please pray for us that for the next two years we will serve you all and the community well. Pray also that we would have wisdom and love for those we find at our doorstep or in our dumpsters, and that we would not set the building on fire by accident. There was an unfortunate sugar melting incident that was a close call.

Feel free to stop by and say “hello.” Our doorbell is broken, so do not bother ringing it. Our landlord should be fixing it soon, but he says he is a little busy at this time. ☛

