

NEWSLETTER 22

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What a wonderful year 2011 has been already!

In January, Anne and I flew to **Kuala Lumpur**, Malaysia, to attend the 30-year reunion of Malaysian students in Canadian Universities, for whom I had the privilege of being the chaplain in the early 80s. We saw more than 20 of them, travelling to Penang in the north to Singapore in the south. We were so thrilled to fellowship again with these students, now successful career men and women. We were treated like royalty and welcomed so warmly. It was my fourth time in Malaysia, having stopped over on my two ministry trips to India, but this was only Anne's second visit, the last being in 1987, 24 years ago.

'En route' to Kuala Lumpur we stopped over in **Hong Kong** for four days, staying at the YWAM guest house in Kam Tin, a 900-year old village in the former New Territories. We used to live in Hong Kong in 1967-69, when I taught with the British Army, so this was a time of reminiscing. We remember Shatin, in the New Territories, as a beautiful, long valley with barely 500 inhabitants – now it is a major city of over 500,000 people! There we found the amazing compound of the St Steven's Society, founded by Jackie Pullinger as a healing centre for drug addicts. We had known Jackie well and I had gone into the infamous 'walled city' with her on two occasions. It was a great delight to see her again and to reminisce of those days. What a privilege it was to see first hand the amazing things that the Lord has done through this unassuming, dedicated servant. We walked down-town Kowloon, taking many photographs, ate at the YMCA, now a magnificent hotel and travelled by train to the border at Wo Lu, once a large plateau of fish farms with a distant horizon being the mountains of China., but now a thriving city of skyscrapers. Our highlight, however, was visiting again the site of the old "walled city", now a beautiful park in the heart of Kowloon. There we found the large stone erected in honour of Jackie and the work she did, by the Lord, among the drug addicts, criminals, prostitutes, etc., of that evil place. After two wonderful weeks in Asia, we returned to Vancouver where Anne left me to take the short flight to Victoria and home, while I continued on my journey to Toronto, Montreal and **Port au Prince, Haiti**.

My journey from KL to PaP took 42 hours and covered two nights without sleep. However, I was amazed that over the next two weeks I felt no jet lag!

My initial invitation to Haiti was to speak at a staff retreat for the teachers of Quisqueya Christian School, a large Secondary school, staffed mostly by missionaries, for children of ex-pats and middle class Haitians. The retreat was at a wonderful beach resort, far from the devastation following the earthquake of a year earlier, so evident throughout the city of Port au Prince. I taught three sessions on 'abiding in Christ' to the ~70 in attendance. However, while in KL, I had received several emails asking if I would do more – to which, of course, I readily agreed. Thus I was to speak each day to all the students in the high school – about 200 of them, plus staff. This was a great time of worship, followed by my teaching, some more worship followed by my telling some of the stories of God's wonderful leading in our lives. (As many of you know, I have a lot of such stories!) I also spoke at the Sunday service of Quisqueya International Church, pulpit I had also occupied on my last visit to Haiti 8 years ago. On my last evening I

spoke again to a group of young men, orphans being disciplined by a young missionary couple. What a joy that was as I heard them sing so full-heartedly before my message.

Many opportunities were given to me to minister one-on-one to some of the teachers, probably the most important ministry I had while there. Teachers are still carrying the pain of the trauma of that horrendous event a year ago when several students/parents/fellow missionaries lost their lives. One afternoon while I was there, a student dragged a desk across the floor in an upstairs classroom, causing a panic in the class below where they thought another earthquake was coming. They and their teacher fled the room, the latter confessing to me two hours later, that he was still shaking! We must remember the victims of that devastated country and pray that wisdom will be given to the NGOs and governments as they try to rebuild and develop Port au Prince to be 'the Paris of the West' as it was once called.

I flew back home, arriving on Wednesday, February 16th, just in time to pack our car, sleep a little and next day, drive the 8 hours to **Midway** where we are now beginning our two-month sojourn as interim pastor. More about this time in my next newsletter.