

NEWSLETTER 45 May 2018

My, how time flies! I recently received an email from a special couple we knew when serving on the Mercy Ship 1990-94. They said how they looked forward to reading my newsletter but added it was time for an update. Guilty, as charged!

We continue to be in good health and very aware of how blessed we are. We are still praying for Anne's thyroids to be reduced so that she can breathe more easily but she has a very positive attitude.

Since my last letter, We continue our ministry to University students, hosting a supper and 'Core Group' each week. There are 8 regulars in attendance and we are so blessed as we see their passion for the Lord. School is over now but, each Tuesday, there's a knock at the door and another student visitor to eat our food and to enjoy some fellowship. I'm looking forward to continuing this ministry when the summer is over. Beside those students there are other young men who come to see me for some mentoring – what a privilege!

I mentioned in my last letter that we had spent a few days in Vancouver visiting friends and staying over with Rami, Hani, Nesibah and Zainab, our Muslim family. On the ferry to Vancouver there was a young lady behind us in the line-up. She was unsure of the procedure so I helped her with her heavy luggage and we accompanied her to make the right transport connections on the mainland. She told us she was from Iran and was studying for her doctorate in Mathematics. Imagine our surprise – and delight – to receive an email from her on Christmas Day wishing us all the joys of the season. She had found my email address on the web. I immediately invited her (Farnaz) over for supper only to be disappointed that she had already returned to Iran. We kept up correspondence, with our assuring her of our prayers for a successful presentation of her thesis and her regretting that we had not met during her 6 month sojourn in Victoria. Then came the delight in early February, that the local university had arranged funding for her to return for another two months to augment her PhD work. I found her accommodation with dear Christian friends and we spent some great times together when she was here – even attending the Easter Sunday service together. She has now returned to Iran but we keep in touch. We are so blessed with the Muslim young people the Lord has brought into our lives.

Later this year I shall be 80 years young. All our family were intending to come to Victoria in November to celebrate with me. However, some better plans have materialized! Our grandson Taylor (from UK) will be marrying Olivia (from Ottawa) in July and the wedding will be here. Everyone is coming! Rob & Andrea from Wales; Lynette & Philip from Australia with their son Michael, daughter Chloe (boyfriend Sam), daughter Emma (husband Luke). Corinne (partner Rick), Terry, their daughter Kayley (Nick and 3 precious great granddaughters) all live here – as do Rob and Andrea's other children, Meghan (Jeremy and two other precious great granddaughters), Matt (Elaina) and Dylan (Jen). I'm sure the wedding will be wonderful but I'm also anticipating an early birthday party! Of course, I'll still expect another celebration in November – for my friends!

My weekly Bible studies have continued after the Alpha program – *Walking in the Footsteps of Moses*. In January I presented 4 teachings on apologetics, ending the series with a wonderful presentation by one of the young men I mentor, Steven, complete with 'professional quality'

overheads. I also had one of my students make a presentation at our Core Group – Patricia taught us to be ‘critical thinkers’. It was outstanding! I’m always so delighted when I can give platform to such anointed young people.

In June Anne will be joining me and a few others, as we journey again to Esperanza for a week of work – helping out at this former Mission hospital, now a retreat centre.

My prayer ministry continues with prayer walks around the university each week and a silent prayer time at church each Monday evening. I spend much time there praying, in particular for the lost and the sick of our church. I have grown in intimacy with the Lord through my prayer times and see this as my main ministry these days after many years of travel.

Thank you for reading my newsletter – I hope it has been a blessing to you. I am enjoying life so very much with a wonderful wife and surrounded by many friends, but I must admit to excitement when I think that soon I shall see the King!! Keep looking up!

Rejoicing in His mercies,

Gareth
Victoria, May 2018