



## Newsletter 2009 -- No. 2

### Family Matters

**Most of the readers of this newsletter are aware our reports have been delayed by Brenda's recent medical problems.** Those on our email list you have been able to follow this unfolding story. The first part of this newsletter is for those who receive these reports by regular mail.

On **March 26<sup>th</sup>** I wrote:

Dear Friends,

It is with deep regret that I am canceling this year's trip to Australia which was to begin April 14<sup>th</sup>. To paraphrase the apostle, we wanted to come to you—I and Brenda, more than once--and yet Satan hindered us. I will miss seeing my friends and working with the churches. There are several things that make the trip inadvisable. I will try to list them in some order of importance.

1. **Brenda's health.** This reason alone would be enough. As most of you know she has been struggling the last several years forcing me to make my yearly trip without her. Her problems have become acute lately and we are making an intense effort to find help. This is, of course, expensive and time-consuming. I will be devoting all possible resources to this challenge. Our goal is to get her well enough to make future trips with me. She has much to offer through her teaching and wisdom.
2. **Funding.** When I bought tickets for the trip this year, I once again had to tap our savings. This, obviously, has a limit and that has been reached. Funds must be raised for this trip and I have simply not had the time to devote to this effort. I am already deeply in debt for previous trips and cannot add to this problem.
3. **Response from Australian churches.** As you know one of my *Mission South Pacific* strategies is to work with established churches. This year, two churches invited us to hold workshops. A couple of others asked us to preach on Sundays. In addition there was a short teaching opportunity with MSOBS. This really isn't enough to justify the expense. There was just too much "down time." No doubt, other opportunities would arise after my arrival (they always do as you can gather from past reports), but logistics would be difficult and expensive. On the other hand, response has been quite good for Jerry Tallman's workshops and he is willing to make the trip without me. We are deeply grateful for that.
4. **Personal business matters.** Family difficulties have trumped personal business matters and they need to be dealt with. I will be devoting a great deal of time to catching up with these.

**April 23<sup>rd</sup>** I have been so involved in serving (Brenda's) needs and a search for medical help that I have not been able to send our regular reports. Thank you for your patience in this regard and your continued concern for my beloved wife.

At this writing Brenda is in the hospital for pain-control, observation and tests. Today, the second endoscope revealed a duodenal ulcer which was cauterized. This had penetrated a nerve deep in the tissue and was bleeding accounting for at least some of the abdominal pain.

I want to thank all who wrote encouraging notes when I announced I was canceling my trip this year. We remain deeply grateful for your prayers and expressions of love and concern during these trials.

**May 5<sup>th</sup>** First of all let me express our gratitude for all the prayers, encouragement and support that serve to remind us that God works through His people to comfort, strengthen and encourage. This is one of the most valuable things about being in fellowship with God's people.

We feel optimistic about the future and envision a time when Brenda will be back to optimal health. We are deeply grateful for the interest and prayers of all our friends, family and colleagues.

**May 12<sup>th</sup>** I wish you who know her could see Brenda now...the change is amazing! More color, more energy, etc. (We are addressing her primary immune deficiency with gamma globulin injections every 21 days.

She also has a large hiatus hernia which has caused stricture of the esophagus...all of which, including taking too many ibuprofen and aspirins for her fibromyalgia (yes, that too!) probably caused the ulcer...we now have hope that she will become well enough to function fairly normally...and...can eventually resume attending assembly and activities she excels in such as teaching, sewing and having folks in for meals, etc. I am excited that she will eventually be able to travel with me to the South Pacific.

Once again, we are so grateful for the help received. Your prayers have been highly valued and deeply appreciated. University church (our congregation) has been, and continues to be very encouraging and supportive. How wonderful to be part of the family of God!

## Recruiting and Training Mission Teams

### Ipswitch Team



Sunday night worship with Matt, Tish and Jennica (Greg is out-of-town)

Brenda and I continue to work with this team of ACU graduates moving to Australia in January

2010. What a great group of young men and women! They are very serious about their preparation...but they are also serious about having fun. They meet together every Sunday evening (when not out searching for support) with us and the Greens for a time of fellowship, mentoring, planning and worship.

### SIBI School of Missions

**Beginning in August, the Sunset School of Missions will host the largest advanced missions class in our history.** As Dean of Missions, Kevin Haynes writes, "We are excited as twenty plus people, forming four or more teams, have placed themselves into our hands for teaching, training, and preparation for the mission field." *Your support enables us to continue this essential work.*

## Training Men and Women in their Own Country

**From Academic Dean, Ted Paull:** Again this year we have been blessed by teaching help from Sunset International Bible Institute (operated by the Sunset church of Christ in Lubbock, Texas, USA). Last year we had Ed Wharton and John Massie visiting and this year

**Jerry & Connie Tallman** visited. Jerry spends about 3 months each year teaching at Sunset and the rest of the year visiting churches for evangelistic training. The Tallmans sold their home and bought a mobile home to be able to do this work with minimum cost to these churches.

The classes taught on evangelism here at the school were certainly worthwhile.

Full-time students get in-class opportunities to teach and preach and are also involved in evangelism as part of one class, often teaching 2-3 times per month for churches and camps throughout NSW, Victoria and Queensland. Occasionally they go together to assist a congregation in preaching teaching and leading worship on Sunday. They did this for the Eastside church in Sydney on May 17. These activities



New student, Dan Bray pictured with recent graduate, Graham Wall

contribute greatly to their training.

The students always look forward to not having the regular teachers, because that means meeting irregular (new) brethren. The classes were greatly enhanced this past year by having Ed Wharton, John Massey and Marvin Ancell present special sessions. In addition to Jerry Tallman teaching in Evangelism, David Carr, Peter Tickner, Bob Marks and Roy Courtney continue doing a superb job supporting and encouraging this work in many ways, including their teaching.

**From Administrative Director, Craig Peters:**

This was the first year to be with the school from start to finish.. It was a bit different starting the school year in February ... but whereas that's winter where I come from ... it is Summer BBQ and Beach time down here. Since then, we have had Graham Wall graduate and Dan Bray return to the school. Our two third year students are mapping out their next couple of years of Ministry and at least one couple (The Andrew Giles family) are planning to enroll part-time later this year.

We finished our Monday night series "Renewal with Romans" a few weeks ago and have plans to start a new series in August. We enjoyed an average of 20 in each of these lessons. It makes us feel good to offer something that seems helpful.

In addition to their studies each week, each student is deeply involved in their home congregation. They often teach, preach and help with evangelistic efforts. They are often quite busy when school is not in session as well. Each of our third year students is working on a ministry plan that includes both local work and missions. A great portion of their studies is intended to prepare them for the obstacles they may face. They also create lesson plans for each

scenario. This generates a great deal of work for them, but each is bright and very resourceful.

Our annual Lectureship will be July 22-26. We are always excited about hosting that. It is so good to see brethren from all over the country. We also enjoy being a resource of encouragement to so many who work so hard for the Lord.

We also plan to do a Mission Week when our students serve a congregation in Australia. We haven't formally declared where that will be this year. Last year they spent 2 weeks in Coffs Harbour.

This past Sunday all of our students served the Eastside congregation. Sam preached, Dan served at the Lord's Supper and Satish led singing.

Because of the generosity of a woman in Texas, we have started a new Student support account. Her gift is helping our newest student: Dan Bray. The hope is to build on this so that we have support on hand for current student emergencies and help for incoming students. Presently, the fund has just over \$15,000. Although it draws some interest, we are using the principal directly in the support of as many students as possible. One incoming student has already received a pledge from this.

## Assisting Established Regional Churches



**Jerry and Connie Tallman return this month (June), having enjoyed an extremely successful mission judging from the following comments (see Ted Paul's comments above):**

**David Adkins, Melbourne:** *I know you were disappointed not to come with Jerry. It was truly a great occasion for the church here to have (him). He taught much, instilled confidence...and gave a much needed boost of encouragement to others. He showed...we should not be afraid to talk to people and...know enough to get started. He also gave good pointers on how to turn people's questions into studies...always be referring people to the Bible. I know people are working some of the techniques that he showed us. We ordered 40 copies of his book (to) keep refreshed on this important topic. ...some of the*

*brethren here (intend) to make sure what Jerry did was just the beginning and that we need to move on to even greater things. It was also good to have someone of Jerry's experience to be able to fire questions at and get answers... We pray that he will be able to come back and do more. I know he has received at least one invite to come back to Melbourne. People were impressed. Thanks for recommending that he come our way.*

**Ern Smith in Adelaide:** *Dear Dwight, Thank you for Jerry and Connie they were great. The talks were encouraging and informative...*

**Peter Searson in Brisbane:** *Greetings Dwight...thank you very much for encouraging Jerry & Connie to come our way, they did a great work and we have invited them back to do our Point Family Retreat in Easter 2011. Everyone here fell in love with them, we really enjoyed our time together...it was just too brief.*

## Remarks from Readers

### From a Beloved mentor:

*Dwight: Your MSP Newsletter for January was rich with human interest, faith building, global horizons and a challenge of partnership... It is particularly inspiring to me how you have continued your longing and passion for Oceania over so many decades. Your faithfulness to teaching, inspiring and supporting the work down under will be the means God will use to reach, touch and save countless thousands of souls. Heaven will be even the more meaningful as you meet them on that distant shore.*

### From a Colleague:

*So much good news, Dwight! Thanks for sharing this. And thanks for being available to God for this good work. To God be the glory!!*



***These past few months have served to remind us: earthly security is fleeting! Jobs that seemed secure have been lost. Talented leaders in every field have found themselves without gainful employment. If you are struggling to make ends meet, you are in excellent company.***

***Mission South Pacific, along with other small non-profit ministries doesn't have much financial "wiggle-room." And yet, somehow, our work must go on. Brenda and I are so appreciative of those who have been able to continue their financial support in these difficult economic times. We praise our Lord for each of you. Thank you!***

**Dwight Whitsett, Director, Mission South Pacific**