



SCOTT AND DEBBIE CHRISTIANSEN



November 19, 2015

Dear Pastors and Praying Friends,

Every time I sit down to compose a prayer letter to you, it seems that another major event happens, and it delays getting news to you. A lot has happened in our lives and ministry, so let me try to get you “up to date.”

First of all, in all the events that have happened regarding Debbie’s cancer in the last few months, we have learned the truth of this verse: *“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.”* (John 14:1) This verse has become an anchor in our lives, as we realize that no matter what God allows in our lives, we should not allow our hearts to become troubled.

The doctors estimated that Debbie would have about three to six months to live following her diagnosis in March of this year. Then her hospice physician said, “Weeks to months, but before Christmas.” Now I am hopeful that she will stay with us well into the New Year.

Regarding Debbie’s Health:

Debbie has lost a lot of weight and is very weak. But her mind is sharp, and her attitude is great.

The nerve pain that had kept her “up time” to just 10-minute segments went away in June. It was a blessing to be able to have her sit at meals and cook a meal a day.

Recent tests on her liver in late October have shown that the tumors have stayed the same or shrunk a little. Thank you for your prayers!

About 2 a.m. on Sunday, October 18, **Debbie’s right upper leg snapped due to a tumor that had eaten away the femur.** She was taken by ambulance to our local hospital and was put in traction. She had surgery to place plates, screws, and bone cement to repair the fracture. She was able to come home after 16 days.

Debbie is now in a rented hospital bed in the living room of our apartment. She is taking physical therapy and is using a walker to regain the ability to walk. Thankfully, presently she needs no pain medication!

We are concerned about another tumor that is in about the same place in the other leg that puts her in danger of another fracture.

We are very grateful for all the gifts, notes, and prayers we have received from you during this time. God is good all the time.



Debbie (in traction) gets an encouraging visit from Kim Lawrenson and Bible college students!



Family Visits:

We have had some wonderful visits of family members we have not seen for about four years.

Our youngest son Caleb came to be with us in early July. He just graduated from Hyles-Anderson College in May. He has been a tremendous help to us in many ways, and we appreciate the time he has been willing to invest with us. He has learned a lot about our team and work here in Dumaguete. He has been active in soul winning and has been “adopted” by our college students as an older brother. He even got to preach twice in our college chapel and did a fine job. He will be going back to the States in mid-December and will be getting back to his master’s studies at Hyles-Anderson.

Our daughter Ruth, her husband Mike, and their two children went back to the States in May to raise support so that they can come back to start a church in Mindanao, the island just south of us. We got to spend a few days with them at a resort just before they left. Deputation has been going well for them, and we are very proud of them.

Our son Joel and his new bride Crystal came to visit us for a couple of weeks in June. Thank you, Pastor Crowell and Beth Haven Baptist Church, for sacrificing to provide their airline tickets. This was our first time to see them together as a married couple, and the time spent together went far too quickly! Crystal’s joyful spirit made her a favorite with our college girls.

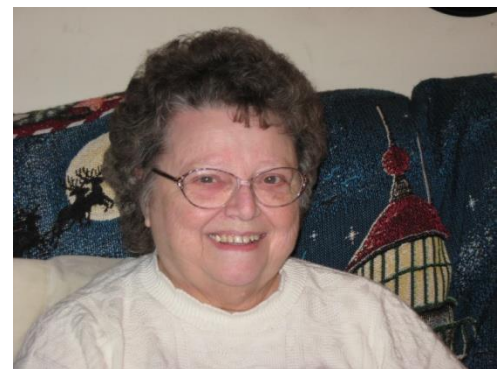
Our son Micah and his wife Abbie were able to come in July for about a week. Again, it was our first time to see them as a married couple. They are on deputation now to go as FBMI missionaries to Ghana, West Africa. You could tell they had learned from their trips to Thailand and Ghana since they flew in and then proceeded to travel by bus seven hours to us without any assistance. We loved “catching up” with them and the work they are looking forward to in a very poor part of the world. We are very proud of their love for the Lord and for souls.

We flew our son Amos and his new wife Lacey in for a visit in early September. They live in Maine and are busy in their local Baptist church there. We got to sit down together and watch the DVD recording of their wedding and let them give us a personal commentary of their special day. Now when we talk to them about our work here, they can picture the people, culture, and climate.

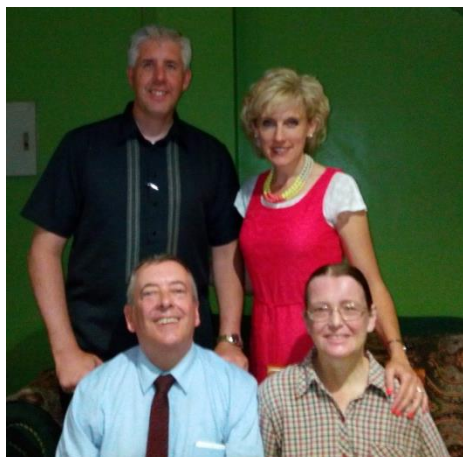
Our oldest son Nathan, Melissa, and their family have not been able to come due to the responsibilities they have taking care of four children, especially for Nicholas who has muscular dystrophy. But we continue to stay in touch with Skype and internet telephone calls. It is such a contrast to the days when missionaries had to rely on letters that would take months to reach their loved ones.

A Mother in Heaven:

On July 4, Debbie’s mother, Lucille Bates, went to Heaven after a long decline in health. While we were unable to travel back for the funeral, Debbie had been able to Skype with her while she rested in her hospice room in Michigan. Mom Bates loved the Lord and had a great testimony. The impact of her life can only be measured by the Lord, but we are grateful for all that she built into our lives, including her constant and prayerful support of us and our ministry down through the years. We are so happy that she is now able to enjoy the glories of Heaven and the presence of her Lord.



Lucille Bates, Debbie’s Mom



A Special “House Call”:

On August 7, we had the special treat of a personal visit in our apartment from Dr. John and Linda Wilkerson. Pastor Wilkerson was scheduled to speak at a conference on the neighboring island of Cebu and made special arrangements to stop by. They visited, prayed for us, and sang a special number. They brought along notes from those at First Baptist Church in Hammond and the IndoPhil Circle of the Women’s Missionary Society. We feel very loved by our sending pastor and church family and uplifted by their prayers for us.

Events at International Baptist Church in Dumaguete City:

In spite of all the challenges, the work here at International Baptist Church of Dumaguete City goes forward. We have just finished another semester at our college, and I have been very busy in teaching doctrine and Bible courses. It is great to see how our 20 students continue to grow in the Lord and their ability to reach souls.

We are so glad to be part of a soul-winning church where we see souls saved and baptisms every week. All our visiting children were able to go out and lead people to Christ while they were with us. During the Saturday of our missions conference in late August, we saw 415 saved using one-on-one soul winning. Just yesterday I took our college students out soul winning, and we saw 193 saved! The time that has been invested in training soul winners has really paid large and eternal benefits.



Scott during Saturday soul winning with Tata Manulcot, one of our faithful men at IBC



On September 29, our team welcomed its newest member, Ivanna Joy DeMoville. This is Bro. and Mrs. Randy and Kelly DeMoville’s ninth child, and we are grateful for a safe delivery. When Ivanna made her first visit to church, Debbie got to hold her. Debbie told Mrs. DeMoville, “When we found out you were expecting, I prayed for Ivanna but did not know if I would live to see her, and now I get to hold her in my arms.” There were tears of joy that morning!

Mrs. Kelly DeMoville with Debbie as she holds Ivanna Joy during her first day in church

Closing Comments:

Mrs. Marlene Evans, who battled cancer for many years, said, “I want to live until I die!” Debbie and I are so grateful that we can continue to have an impact on other’s lives for Christ while we still minister to Debbie’s needs.

Many of you know what it is like to tend to a loved one who is ill and restricted to being at home. While dealing with doctors, hospitals, etc. in a foreign country has its challenges, we choose to focus on the blessings. Even if we compare what we are able to do with what the average Filipino could do in our situation, we are very thankful and feel spoiled by the Lord.

Please pray for our team leader, Bro. Randy DeMoville, and our other team members, as they have added burdens due to our situation. Both they and our church members here have been examples of how Christians should bear one another’s burdens.

Thank you also for all of you who have contacted us, prayed for us, and given sacrificially for us and our children. We are always humbled when the Lord puts it in your heart to think of us and show your love to us from half a world away.

I would like to ask you to pray for strength, wisdom, and grace for the days ahead. At times we get very weary; but then we find that God’s provision is always there, and we discover truths that can only be learned in the furnace of affliction.

During this Thanksgiving and Christmas season, may the Lord bless you, your family, and your church with a thankful heart, blessed memories, and a determination to reach a lost world with the Gospel while we still have time.

Your co-laborers in Christ,

Scott Christiansen

Scott and Debbie Christiansen



In our apartment with several of our Bible college young men