

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Merry Christmas from the Matthews!

We want to say a special thanks to you for your care and your prayer for us and our ministry. The farther we go in our inadequate service for the Lord, the more we know we ride on the wind of God's grace and the love of His special friends like you!

This summer our oldest, Jay, returned home after four years of military service, and is starting college courses in January. Jeff, nearing age 17, is enrolled at a community college, where he takes classes for both high school and college credit, under a special government paid program. Jenni, near age 15 is a "queen bee" at Northside Christian School, the only ninth grade girl, with ninth grade being the top class of that school. It's a full house, with two young men taller than Dad, and a young lady who helps keep her father in line! Jackie and I praise God for our children, even through the times of great testing.

Jackie is slowly coming back to strength after 1 1/2 years of surgical procedures, with great appreciation for each of you that has stood with her in this trial of her faith. She is beginning to bloom again in her gifts of creativity, hospitality, and leadership!

As always, it seems, I am at another trailblazing step in the ministry of prayer and missions mobilization. On the horizon is the opening of a mission service center in the Twin Cities, staffed by a team of us who will continue to serve the growing prayer and missions movement in the upper midwest. In addition to staffing the Minnesota Prayer Watch, this service center will serve the churches for the cause of world missions; it will also help initiate a fresh urban mission to the unreached people groups of our city; and eventually become a training center for new missionaries.

Will you pray with us for the wisdom, the staff, and the provision for this exciting next step? I would like to see this mission service center open under the banner of Youth With A Mission. Not only will this enable us to work with all churches (YWAM is an interdenominational body), but will link our efforts to more than 300 pioneering mission bases around the world. Also, this service center will function beside offices of several other mission related ministries which work in the Twin Cities -- including a new branch of the U.S. Center for World Mission, the Association of Church Mission Committees, and the Association of International Mission Services.

I and representatives from these ministries are now looking for a facility where we can begin; this collection of mission related offices might be called the Upper Midwest Mission Center, or something similar. Pray with us for the release of this united prayer and missions workplace.

Christmas is a most beautiful reminder of God's ways on the earth. Not with great pomp and show of strength did the Redeemer enter the earth, but as a tiny baby in a tiny place. And this is His way in your life: His life is planted in you, in your heart, like a babe in a manger; His purpose and plan for you is like a seed sown in a obscure place. Will it really come to pass?

"...AND GOD HAS CHOSEN THE WEAK THINGS OF THE WORLD TO SHAME THE THINGS WHICH ARE STRONG..."

In the new year, fix your eyes on Him...what He starts, He finishes...He never leaves you or forsakes you...He will hide your tracks from the enemy..."so let us press on to know the Lord. His going forth is as certain as the dawn; and He will come to us like rain, like the spring rain watering the earth." (Hos. 6:3)

With love,

John and Jackie
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