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CENTRAL ASIA

Harry and Stephanie Lannon

It has been difficult to settle here, to find somewhere to live and to learn the language while in coronavirus lockdown for the past ten weeks. We are staying in the house of colleagues, who are away having a baby. Stephanie has struggled on trying to teach herself the language using a book and audio that we brought from home. We have had conversation practice together most afternoons, with me as the teacher. It's just as well we have been married for 30 years! I have been able to sit with one of the security guards, six days a week, reading the Word, discussing, and reading secular booklets. Please pray that he would be enthralled by the beauty of Christ.

The situation around the country is pretty depressing, with continued daily bomb blasts and killings by the Taliban and ISIS despite supposed peace talks. Now the coronavirus is beginning to take its toll too. Pray that the Lord would have mercy on this tortured country and bring repentance and peace.

Please pray that we would be able to spend some time in the Wakhan Corridor this summer, in order to be able to find a place to rent and have some idea of what we can get permission to do there, in order to have a witness. We just need great wisdom and guidance to know how to work it out in practice. We will have to charter a small MAF plane to fly in and send supplies by road, which the Taliban control, which is why we have to fly.

Praise the Lord that we are both still in good health and encouraged that we have just managed to open a bank account and are negotiating with a landlord to rent his house as a base here in this town. Praise Him too that our children working in Belfast are all safe and well. Please also pray that Duncan and Ashley, in Kenya, would be able to organise their summer break, despite virus restrictions. Thank you for remembering us in your prayers. (10/06/2020)

JOTTINGS

Julie-Rachel Elwood (Zambia). Julie-Rachel is attempting to return to Zambia but has had four flights cancelled. Her work permit expires in August so would appreciate prayer that it will be renewed.

Ronnie and Anne Cairns (Japan). Last Sunday (7th June) churches were able to meet together physically again. The number gathering at any one time was prescribed, but it was a joyful day nevertheless for the believers. Japan continues desperately to need the Gospel and to need the prayers of all of us.

Monthly prayer meetings

Due to the current Covid-19 pandemic the monthly missionary prayer meetings have had to be cancelled until the government restrictions have been lifted.

ZAMBIA

David and Lorraine McAdam

We certainly seem to be living in strange times! The assembly here re-opened for the first time in several weeks (after the Government had banned large gatherings) as has happened throughout the world. The elders took the decision to restart the meetings even though there are a number of restrictions, for



example, the meeting has to be limited to one hour and everyone has to wear face coverings. However it was good to be able to remember the Lord again. Although we have prepared, as best we can, for a coronavirus

onslaught, this has not materialised. So far we have not had lockdown in Zambia, travel restrictions have been minimal, and schools have now reopened. Let us thank God for this and keep on praying that the country might be preserved.

There have been only a few deaths thus far. Hospital work has continued more or less as normal, although our surgical workload has been reduced as people are being encouraged not to travel much. God has been good in that Dr Felix Chibwe, a Zambian surgeon in assembly fellowship, has been with us now for several months, also our son Jonathan, who is also able to do quite a bit of operating. Pray especially for Dr Chibwe, as there may be the possibility of his coming here long-term, and this would be a tremendous blessing for us all. Pray too for Jonathan, as he hopes to return to the UK in July, Lord willing. Our sister Rebekah Heelam continues to be a great help at the hospital, especially with Julie-Rachel Elwood 'stranded' at home in Northern Ireland, due to the current travel difficulties. We thank God for such enthusiastic young brothers and sisters. It was a joy to go up to the operating theatre about 1am one morning last week for a caesarean section, only to find that Jonathan had already delivered the baby with Rebekah helping the operating team! The baby was crying heartily and I was not needed at all!

The gospel continues to go forth over the hospital intercom each day and for the past month we have also been having open-air gospel meetings around the village. Pray for those who speak! (07/06/2020)

PRAYER

The Assembly in Drum (County Monaghan) has been planning for a special outreach activity in the autumn in the neighbouring town of Cootehill. Present restrictions have made this uncertain. They would value prayer for God's guidance.

Olive Wilson (Cyprus and Israel). I would appreciate prayer as I proceed to register as living in Cyprus. Until now with my trips to Israel, I have had tourist status, which is only for 90 days, but it seems best to postpone travel for a month or two yet. Please pray I can produce the correct documents as Cypriot bureaucracy seems to be stricter than most other EU countries.

BRAZIL

Billy and Ellen Watterson

The present pandemic has brought changes to the daily routine of people all over the world — believers and unbelievers alike. Here in central Brazil (State of São Paulo) we have not been able to meet since the 21st of March. During that time, some of the younger believers have tried to help older believers and neighbours, doing their shopping, paying their bills, baking them a cake, and similar things.

Every day we have written a short meditation from the Word of God (300 to 600 words) which is sent to a WhatsApp broadcast list, reaching all the saints here in Pirassununga. Two teenagers here in Pirassununga who professed to be saved some time ago, and whose parents are in the assembly, have requested baptism — one just days before the pandemic, the other a couple of weeks ago. Through WhatsApp we can answer many questions they have and help in many ways.

The literature work continues more or less normally. The task of translating and publishing the Ritchie Commentaries will keep us busy for many years, if the Lord does not return. Since travelling is severely restricted these days, we can profitably use our time in translating, correcting and preparing these books for publishing. The Post Office is still working, so we were able to print and distribute a few hundred parcels of 'O Caminho' the free quarterly magazine we publish. And so we continue, praying that we may faithfully serve the Lord whatever the circumstances. (03/06/2020)

ZAMBIA

Ian and Marilyn Campbell

We came back to the UK, on furlough, in February, hoping to get back to Zambia at the beginning of July. Although all the usual furlough activities (visiting, report meetings, organising supplies for Zambia etc.) are restricted, we are managing to keep busy. We are thankful to be in Northern Ireland with our daughter Gemma, and able to do some practical jobs around our very neglected house here, not to mention the Zoom meetings, Bible Studies, and even some 'socially distant' visiting!! Thank you all for your prayers for us, as we wait to see when we can return to Zambia. The Lord is in control!

Before we left Chingola, we 'handed over' the running of the Bible Centre to the Zambian team we have been working with, over the years. Please pray for them - they have been 'thrown in at the deep end', with the unexpected Covid situation affecting the work in different ways. The virus does not seem to have hit the country hard, yet, but there are definite restrictions. The team is not allowed to visit the prisons. However, they are continuing to pick up the completed courses, mark them, and return them to the prison chaplains on the same three week rota. Sales in the bookshop have plummeted. People are struggling to feed their families, never mind buy a Bible! However, the team have continued the Market ministry, and even added another market to the programme!! They have met, and all agreed to continue working, even if their salaries are reduced. We are thrilled with the responsibility and commitment they have shown, and the decisions they have made, BUT ... they DO need your prayers. The Devil will want them to fail. (10/06/2020)

IRELAND

Michael and Shirley McKillen

We had our last physical meeting together as an assembly on Sunday 15 March. Since then we have moved most things online and reworked our weekly timetable to try and best suit present needs. Whilst far from ideal, we are thankful to have been able to do so and are encouraged with the high level of engagement from the assembly.

Each Lord's Day we have 40-50 minutes together on Zoom followed by Bible teaching, which is pre-recorded and posted online. Times of prayer and Bible study are also run online several times during the week. Interestingly, a number of extra studies have developed ad hoc. A few of the men are involved in a study of Hebrews and of Ephesians. Recently some of the ladies commenced a study. We were pleased that quite a number of our teenage girls also joined them for that. One brother has been doing a study with his elderly mum online, two of the elders are meeting weekly with a family who recently moved to the town, and three of our teenage girls have, separately, completed online evangelistic studies with international university students.

'Rooted & Grounded' (our teens' group) continues online. It has been good to see new leadership heading this up and helping the young people learn how to study the Word for themselves. Each month a couple of teenagers also practise giving their testimonies. It is a joy to hear many speak of the Lord's dealing with them. We are thankful that although our travels and our programmes are restricted, the Lord and His work are not. (04/06/2020)

ALBANIA

Enri and Sylvia Nase

We would like to pay tribute to our dear brother Cecil Gaw who went to be with the Lord on the 20th April. Through the Albanian Christian Fund, Cecil contributed hugely to the work of the Lord in Albania by providing thousands of Bibles, Christian literature, humanitarian and financial support for the assemblies. He loved the Albanian people and dedicated many years to visiting the country, preaching the Gospel (in Albanian) and ministering to the saints. We remember him fondly and pray for Mildred and the family circle at this time, that the Lord will sustain and comfort them.

Following lockdown our meetings have been taking place virtually. We 'meet' each evening – Monday to Saturday. Three meetings are specifically for sharing and prayer, two are for Bible studies through the book of James, and also our usual midweek meeting to which we have recently started to invite a speaker from abroad. On Sunday mornings we have time for praise and worship, with a word of encouragement or gospel. Believers from Librazhd and Fier, as well as some of the Albanian diaspora in Germany, Austria, Sweden and America join in. Besides these, we continue with individual Bible studies, teenagers' class and youth ministry all in Zoom room.

The pandemic has brought a sense of unity among the believers. While some have unfortunately been laid off work, others have stepped into help. There is token government assistance, but it falls well short of covering the basics of food and rent so we have been able to help where needed. (19/05/2020)