



Dear friends,

I hope the months since I last wrote to you have been blessed, especially this week as we prepare to remember our King's great sacrifice and victory. As I reflect on the magnitude of Easter, I am once again convicted to "go and do likewise." Actually putting this into practice in a real way is a major struggle, with self-centeredness standing in the way and looming large. Thankfully, the Word is full of encouragement. I heard a sermon a couple weeks ago that quoted the following passage from Job 23, which hit me right in the gut, in a good way:

*"But he knows the way that I take; when he has tried me, I shall come out as gold."*

Later, in the same chapter, it says:

*"...he is unchangeable, and who can turn him back? What he desires, that he does. For he will complete what he appoints for me, and many such things are in his mind."*

At this early point in my life and career, I can't think of many things more beautiful...or frightening. Over the past few months, I can see that God is beginning to prepare me for these "many such things" that are in his mind. They are daunting, but they are exciting. A great adventure awaits.

Since the beginning of the year, our schedule here has been full-on, beginning with a series of annual winter meetings with LCMS Asia Pacific teammates, gathered together in Hong Kong to be strengthened in the Word and to map out vision and strategy for the upcoming work in our varied countries and contexts.

Next was a meeting with several of my CWFEC co-workers and teachers from several schools we partner with in Guangdong province and Shanghai. These teachers and our staff had come together to support each other for the advancement of Concordia Leadership Academy (CLA), a leadership & life skills training program developed by CWFEC and implemented by middle school & high school teachers at their schools. We have just launched CLA at one of our partner schools in Shanghai since the beginning of the second semester, which began in early February after a long break for Chinese New Year. The program is off to a great start, and we have been encouraged by a wonderfully positive response from the participating students and teachers, as well as the school leadership. Now begins the hard work of how best to expand and improve the program for the 2012-2013 school year.

In addition to the launch of CLA, our Saturdays have been very full these first two months of the new semester with seven teams of volunteer English teachers serving at three migrant schools. One of these volunteer groups is a new relationship for us -- a newly-formed Shanghai NGO that is mobilizing high school students from several area international schools to get out and serve the community. We had a great experience with them and are hopeful for a longer-term partnership beginning next school year.

In the midst of all this activity, an awesome blessing was provided for our staff this month: a series of non-profit management workshops provided free of charge by a new organization based in Beijing. I attended three separate sessions in the month of March, making for a pretty intense schedule over the past month. Joined by CWFEC teammates and new friends from a number of other NGOs, these sessions have provided very professional and practical training in strategic non-profit management, program evaluation, and financial leadership. I feel that God really led me to these workshops at just the right time; an important component of the larger 'training program' he is putting me through.

Speaking of additional training: as a part of my upcoming transition to a 'career' position with LCMS, I've been strongly encouraged by my supervisors to begin working toward a master's degree. I'm happy to report that I found a program that seems to be a great fit. I applied and was accepted to Azusa Pacific University's Master of Global Leadership program, which is designed for someone like myself, who is serving in a cross-cultural context in an overseas ministry or NGO. The program will take three years, and most of the coursework will be done online, save for two-week classroom sessions each summer. I'll begin the course in August with the first of these summer sessions in Haiti.

Those two weeks in Haiti will come toward the end of nearly three months that I'll be spending in the U.S. this summer to connect with supporters like yourselves. This 'home service' time will mostly be spent in California, Missouri, Iowa, and Nebraska. Those last two states have been the site of some amazing and humbling provision that the Lord has showered on me in the past few months. I'm looking forward to meeting many new friends and supporters there. If I haven't written to you personally to set up a visit yet, be on the look-out for a note from me, as I'll be putting more time into summer scheduling in the coming few weeks. Please continue to keep me and all of my LCMS & CWFEC co-workers in your prayers. It is my joy to partner with you for His glory in Asia.

感谢, Josh