

Dear Praying Friends and Family,

November 8, 2023

When life around us sometimes seems out of control, how grateful we are to know the One who IS in control and who understands and carries us through each moment.

Ten days from today, we will drive up to Chicago, spend the night with our daughter, Janelle, and her family then head out to O'Hare airport early on Nov 18th for a long flight to N'Djamena, Chad. We will spend 3 intensive weeks there connecting with our TEAM Chad family of missionaries. The third week will be our TEAM Chad annual conference - 29 missionaries and 15 kids, by my calculation, plus visiting people helping with the conference, will be together in N'Djamena for a week of fellowship, worship, teaching and business.

Our hope is to spend face-to-face time with each of our missionaries, listening to them, hearing their stories, encouraging them and praying with them. It will also be a good time to connect with as many of the missionary kids as possible during those weeks. Being our first trip to Chad in our new member care role, this is a very important foundational time as we lay the groundwork for this ministry with our team in Chad for the years ahead, a team which is of course very dear to our hearts after being a part of them for 32 years. After many years in leadership in Chad Rich is very conscious of needing to clearly keep in mind and heart, the ethos of our new ministry to this team.

Another important aspect of this trip is for Anne to bring some closure to her years of pouring her heart into the women of Acacia. She is looking forward to seeing many of these women again and hearing what God has done in their lives. It will be a joy to catch up with David and Lucy and the rest of the Acacia team, learning first-hand how God is leading them onward and upward in this ministry. We will look forward to reporting back to you more about that when we return from our trip.

A third important event during this trip will be a 2 day round trip with MAF down to our former village of service, Béré, to spend time with a dear Chadian friend and his family, Pastor Angal Paul, with whom we worked side-by-side in ministry for many years. His health is fragile and he is needing encouraging. Anne and I have decided to do this trip together.

These past few months we have continued to build relational bridges into our missionaries' lives – video calls, messaging, emails, home assignment debriefs and the special joy of occasional face-to-face visits when opportunities arise for our paths to actually cross. In September we were blessed also to spend 5 encouraging days with most of TEAM's GloCare team, those who make up TEAM's team of member care personnel scattered across the globe. In January Rich is planning another 3 week trip to South Africa, Zimbabwe and this time also Mozambique! He will attend the South Africa/Eswatini ministry area's annual conference, then fly to Zimbabwe and immediately hit the road with some of our team-mates there to go and spend 3 days with one of our couples in Mozambique whom he has not yet been able to meet.

On the home front we continue to spread our wings in our community, and particularly in our church here, Bethany Baptist Church. Rich is enjoying working with those precious 5 and 6 year old "Sparks" in the AWANA ministry as well as becoming more involved in Bethany's global outreach as a part of their SEND team (mission's committee). Besides keeping the home fires burning here in Princeville, and watching our little 7 month old grand-daughter, Hesed, once a week (now that is pure joy!!!) Anne is also helping at church in the nursery every two weeks for a ministry called "MOMents" (similar to MOPS), an outreach to mothers with young pre-school children. Mom and Uncle are doing okay even in the face of the inevitable challenges of ageing. We thank the Lord for the privilege of sharing a home with them and the blessing of being able to love on them at this time in their lives.

Things to pray for from all of the above:

- 1) Anne's health and energy levels, especially in light of all of the above activities and exertions that are ahead of us in the next 4 or 5 weeks. We thank the Lord that she is feeling well enough to even entertain such a trip but will need wisdom and help from the Lord in the energy department.
- 2) Safety in all of the traveling to be done as well as health and strength – grateful that our “fall” colds are behind us now and came BEFORE we traveled!
- 3) That we might be a blessing and encouragement to our team in Chad – for fruitful interactions with each of them and wisdom to know how to be present in the moment with them.
- 4) For my brother and his wife (Paul and Debbie), as they drive out from Pennsylvania to keep our home fires stoked for 2 weeks while we travel ... then for our daughter and her husband (Eliane and Cameron – with little Hesed 😊) as they keep holding the fort for the rest of the time until we return. So grateful for loving family who help make these trips possible for us!
- 5) That we might continue to learn and grow in how best to pro-actively care for our TEAM missionaries scattered around the African continent.

We are entering the season of Thanksgiving here in the US. Anne and I have MUCH to thank the Lord for ... first and foremost His amazing love and grace toward us in Jesus who died to pay the death penalty for our sins and rose again from the dead to give us certain hope for eternity – a hope that is so needed in this world being torn apart by godlessness and war. We also thank the Lord for each of you who so faithfully pray with and for us, and who give sacrificially so that we can continue in this ministry. Thank you! May we be found faithful to the task He has set before us and may He bless each of you abundantly in these remaining weeks of 2023. Please don't hesitate to let us know how we can be praying for you also.

With grateful hearts,

Rich & Anne Hoyt

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