

REFRESHED AND RENEWED

“Norman writes: Since our last prayer letter I have conducted the *Introduction to Islam* seminar in Great Missenden and for the CU at the Chilterns University and both went very well. On 23 July I am conducting the seminar again for Greyfriars Church in Reading.

I was also the speaker at a special service in Beaconsfield — *God in the life of...*, followed by supper with the leadership team and that was a brilliant evening. It's also brilliant that Ricky is reading the Bible he requested more — he has it under the counter in his shop and he reads it when he's not serving. He also wants to chat about spiritual things when I spend time in the shop. **(A challenge for you — find and befriend an Asian shopkeeper and share your faith in Christ with them — it will definitely bear fruit).**

SABBATICAL

As many of you will know, the month of May was a sabbatical break for Denise and I — it was an amazingly God-blessed time. Being 'out of ministry' was a real gift. The student body took us to their

hearts very quickly and it was a joy to share their lives for a month. All Nations is still a very wonderful place and 23 years on from when we left, they are still preparing quality people for mission service in many parts of our world. When we were there as students a good number were from Africa, Asia and Europe, but now there are an increased number from Korea, Hong Kong and Singapore. The countries they are preparing for has also changed, with more students going to places like Laos,

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Vietnam, China and the ex-Russian states like Kazakhstan. We were very impressed at the courage some students showed in accepting God's call to very difficult and dangerous situations. I found that a great challenge. Hannah Buxton, a member of the family who gave Easneye as a missionary training college, prayed that it would in every generation be a 'fountain of blessing to the Church and to the world,' — God continues to answer her prayer.

WORSHIP

The times of worship were wonderful and the tutor group we were assigned to

DEAR FRIENDS...



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were very encouraging. The lectures and the library were a great source of inspiration — there's one of our 10th anniversary booklets in the library. Denise studied leadership and I studied 'post-modernism', which I found enthralling and came to the conclusion that the 'post-modern world', although making it a harder place for Christians, actually presents us with a greater opportunity for the Good News of Jesus since the days of the early Church. Yes it will be harder as we will have to make sure that what we profess is borne out by the lives we lead, but with people leading increasingly fragmented and dysfunctional lives, Christ is the only One who can fulfil what they are looking for, which is PEACE. (I believe that unless we begin to really understand post-modernism, its affect on the world and how we can relevantly proclaim Christ and live out the Gospel, then we will lose this generation or maybe every generation. God is giving us this opportunity, but will we/the church take it?) I feel that I would like to further study how we can relate the Gospel to a post-modern world and I could do that at All Nations, so in time I will explore this possibility.

IMPRESSED

I realised that God had guided us to take the sabbatical at All Nations, the place we had gone out into mission from. Being back there really impressed upon me, that after 23 years of working cross-culturally — which at times feels like being an overseas missionary — the time is coming for me to return to my own culture. Please pray for me in this, that God will continue to guide and that I would not miss His leading and guiding. The management group are incredibly

supportive of me and are encouraging me to talk with 'experienced' people who can walk through this with me. They have also set aside funds for this process.

SUPPORT

I have returned from sabbatical with great thankfulness to God, refreshed, renewed and with a possibly greater desire to proclaim Christ in this generation than during my 28 years as a Christian. Thank you for all your encouragements and support.

Denise continues: "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof". How blessed we are to have the opportunity of R and R during our Sabbatical month. What an opportunity for reflection, which was always an encouragement whether

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the Lord had things for us/me to understand about myself and my drivers, or things to learn about what He makes of my/our small efforts over the years for Him.

FRIENDS

We both left All Nations with a deep sense that whatever direction we choose for the future, then He will bless us. He has called us 'friends' and of course, friends know what the other wants. We both love our Lord more than anything else — one thing back into perspective is that He has called us into relationship with each other as husband and wife and that after Him, we belong to each other before the ministry. Perhaps that had got a little out of focus with two busy ministries on the go! We long to work together again and

feel that this is going to be the outworking of our future in some wonderful way. Please pray that this will work itself out.

The Lord continues to bless Lacey Green and surrounding villages. Please pray for giving to come into focus and for us as a church to honour God and give accordingly for His mission to go forward in this place. We were in deficit last year and the parish share takes us up even higher this year. The Lord's will be done in this place. Pray for that, more than anything else! Continue to pray for blessing and knowledge of His love to pour itself out among the post modern communities I/we serve among — in the schools and in the villages.

FAITHFULNESS

Thank you so much for your faithfulness over so many years. Without our working together in mission we would be worth nothing. Pray also for us that a door

will open for mission opportunity beyond the natural — that His supernatural power will be poured out to call and to save many here.

Our love as always,

xxxxxNorman & Denisexxxx

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