

Dear friends,

2009 is coming to a close and winter weather is at the door—literally! I hope wherever you are, you are enjoying the season and keeping warm. For me it's the first holiday season with my family in Minnesota in nine years. For Carol it's also her first mid-winter visit to the land of 10,000 ice skating rinks!

After traveling from California to Calgary and on to Minnesota by car in October and then flying back to Calgary and returning here Minnesota in November, we're now pretty settled in the Twin City area at least for the time being. In earthly terms, our visits to Calgary were on "bad" terms. In October we went to visit our pastor, battling late-stage cancer. In November we returned to support the family after his passing.

In spite of the sadness of the situation, our time spent in Calgary was a great blessing. I have never seen a dying man so full of faith and so caring for others even in the midst of weakness and pain. And his funeral was a celebration—friends and family shared about how his life had impacted so many lives. Carol and I were honored to be among those to share with the attendees what David Bedwell had meant to us.

Additionally, as a result of the situation we had the opportunity to meet Pastor Bedwell's family, who all come to lend their support. Even as the youngest of five sisters and three brothers, he was respected by them and they served him to the very end. We were blessed by their care, as well as their willingness to welcome us and make us feel like part of the family.

Not only this, but we also had the pleasure of having time to get to know Pastor David's pastor and wife – Pastor John & Doris Lucas. They not only welcomed us into their home, but also gave us much encouragement and advice, as well as a way to provide tax receipts for our (future) financial supporters. We were impressed by their dedication to missions around the world and their desire to see new missionaries succeed.

Being back in Minnesota is certainly an adjustment, after a three year absence. It is not only adjusting to the weather, but also lifestyle, culture, etc. I have found that much has happened in this country and in the lives of those we know and love. So far, though it's been challenging, it's also been enjoyable.

As I said, the weather isn't easy to get used to. At the beginning it was very hard for Carol and she had been experiencing a lot of bleeding. But fortunately she is doing better now, though it still is really cold! Even though I am a Minnesota native, I'm finding the weather more difficult to adjust to after a three year absence.

For the most part we are planning to spend a majority of our Sundays at the church that I grew up in, and that my parents and one of my brothers also attend. Things have changed of course, but there are still many familiar faces and it has been great to chat with some. We've



also started doing some visiting of friends and family and hope to do a lot more before we leave in early March 2010. Let us know if you'd like to get together : )

During the past month or so I've have been working during the day. Through a temp agency I've been able to help with a data entry project at a local IT company. Though doing repetitive work can be tiring, it's been an interesting new experience and I've been trying to do my best and be a good team player. But I'm still trying to get used to getting up at 6:00 AM!

Looks like we might get a white Christmas after all. But no matter what the weather might be like, let's take some time to reflect on the reason for our celebration. Jesus is not only the reason for this season, but also the other 364 days of the year. As we come to the end of 2009, let's make it a point to serve Him in all things throughout 2010.

Wishing you a joyous holiday season,

Sam and Carol

Prayer points:

~ Please continue to pray for the Bedwell family, for peace and purpose to continue in David and Beverly's footsteps

~ Pray for Carol's continued physical and cultural adjustment during the next three months in Minnesota.

~ Pray for God's provision for our future ministry through His body.

Praise points:

~ Praise God for His protection on all of our travel and His bringing blessing out of sorrow.

~ Praise God for His provision of work.

~ Praise God for giving us reason for living—because of Jesus.