
Cross Cultural Discipling Mission

Benjamin & Karen Rees

September 2011

IF YOU RECEIVED THIS VIA E-MAIL: We value your prayers, but we also value your good will. If anyone who receives this would rather not receive it in future, please let us know and we will remove your address from our list.

IF YOU ARE READING THIS ON THE INTERNET and would like to receive this prayer letter regularly (I [aim](#) for once a month), please send your request to <reesmission@gmail.com> and we will add you to the mailing list.

Weather (2:55 p.m. On September 9): sunny and slightly hazy. Temperature, 32 °C (90 °F). Relative humidity, 63%. Air pollution index, (general) 25-55, (roadside) 55-85.

UPCOMING TRIP TO THE PHILIPPINES

In a few days, Lord willing, we will be in the Philippines. We are scheduled to fly to the island of Cebu on September 13, and to return on September 22. Larry Carlson has invited me to be guest speaker at the “Founder's Day” celebration of Cebu Bible Seminary. CBS was founded by Larry's parents, Ray and Imogene Carlson in 1947.

Our congregation in Hong Kong supports five Bible colleges in the Philippine. Two are on Cebu – Cebu Bible Seminary and Central Philippines Bible College. We hope to visit both colleges while we are there and to spend time with both the Carlsons and the missionaries working with the other college, the Pyles, and with their respective Filipino co-workers. I will probably also preach at least twice on the one Sunday we are there.

This will be our first visit to Cebu. All our previous trips to the Philippines have been to the main island of Luzon. Every visit we make to the Philippines helps deepen our understanding and appreciation for the culture of the people we mainly work with. We expect to also do some sightseeing – Cebu has a lot of historical sites – and HOPE we can get some rest. Our last vacation was over 15 months ago when we went to the U.S. for our daughter Megan's wedding.

* Thank God for this opportunity. Pray that everything goes well – for safe travel, for all the arrangements to go well, etc.

* We have been told that churches in that area have been having some internal problems recently. This makes us very nervous, and yet we feel God had a hand in the arrangements. Pray for wisdom from God in what we say and do, so that our presence will at least not hurt, and, if possible, will be of some help.

OTHER COMINGS AND GOINGS

In November the church here will celebrate its 30th anniversary. Some former members of the church who are now overseas have volunteered, with the help of a couple of current members, to pay the main expenses of bringing a Filipino preacher, **Daniel Medina**, from the province of Isabela, to be the guest speaker at the celebration on November 13.

Three weeks before the church anniversary, on October 23, a group within the church, the Ambassadors, will celebrate its anniversary. There is no way anyone could afford to bring a speaker from overseas for this, but it happens that **Rogelio Sinoto**, also from Isabela, is due to visit Hong Kong for other reasons just at the right time and has agreed to be the speaker.

My cousin, **David Ruder**, and his wife **Dian**, plan to come again at Chinese New Year in late January of next year. They are both musicians, and Filipinos, generally, love music, so their visits are popular with the church. We usually arrange some kind of workshop, seminar, or other special activity to make use of their talents and training when they are here.

Besides our own ministry, I am one of the officers of the Hong Kong Evangelical Fellowship, which organises the Hong Kong Keswick Convention. This is an annual Bible conference, patterned after the Keswick Convention in Britain (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Keswick_Convention). Every year they bring a prominent speaker from overseas to deliver a

series of Bible lectures for the general Christian community here. I managed to get them to invite Randy Gariss to be the H.K. Keswick speaker in March 2012. Randy is the main preaching minister of the College Heights Christian Church in Joplin, MO. Randy and CHCC have been active in the relief efforts after the Joplin tornado in May. Randy's wife Julie will accompany him and will also have some part in the Keswick events.

* Thank God that all these people are able to come and minister here. Please pray for all their plans and preparations, for their trips, and that their time here will be a blessing to them and to the church. Pray for the special events in the church.

When I was growing up on the mission field my parents used to stay on the field about 4 or 5 years and then spend about a year in the U.S. and Canada. That kind of schedule was fairly standard for their generation of missionaries and made good sense when travel was mainly by ship and relatively more expensive and more complicated than it is today. But many circumstances have changed with the years. It is now common for many missionaries to travel back and forth every year.

We have continued to aim for a trip only every two or three years, but in recent years various family events have taken us to the U.S. more often than that, while, on the other hand, in recent years it has become very difficult for us to get away from the work here for very long.

Now, with our kids both settled in the U.S., and some of our other relatives (and ourselves) getting up in years, we are feeling the need to make more frequent regular trips – probably every year. We expect most of these trips to be very short, but we hope to occasionally fit in a longer trip to do some of the things we have not had time to do for on other trips, such as visiting ageing relatives and former members of the H.K. church who have moved to Canada or the U.S.

Current plans are to make a short trip sometime in 2012 – possibly in May – and then a longer, three-month trip between mid-May and Mid-August of 2013. I will give more details in a future letter. In the meantime if you would like to see us on one or both of these trips – and especially if you would like us there for some particular event, please let us know.

* Thank God that Janece England of Missionary Relief Services, can relieve us in 2013, so we can make a longer trip then. Please begin now to pray for these planned trips.

SHORT NOTES

I (Ben) had a medical check-up earlier today (Sept. 9). The initial assessment is that I seem to be in good health, but there are a couple of possible matters for concern and further tests are being done. My prostate is enlarged, though my PSA level has always been low in past tests. And I have a small lesion on my left temple that may be a basal cell carcinoma. If so, it will need to be removed. I also saw the eye doctor recently. My second cataract is now ready for removal and the doctor suggested I get it done as soon as I can fit it into an already packed schedule.

* Thank God that I am generally in good health. Pray that these small worries don't turn out to be anything serious.

After the May tornado in Joplin, MO, the city put a temporary moratorium on rebuilding of homes to keep roads open for removal of rubble. This has now been lifted for most or all of the area, including the area where our daughter Megan and her husband live, and they have started rebuilding their house. Pictures are available in their Facebook photo albums.

* Thank God that Megan and Matt have been able to start rebuilding. Pray for good and speedy progress. Right now they are staying with my sister Phoebe. Pray also for their emotional well-being after the stress of losing their house, and, for Megan, the stress of counselling other people who also suffered trauma in the tornado.

Thinking of pictures: I don't have time to include any in this letter, and don't have any really recent pictures anyway. But this is a reminder that if you can find our Facebook page, most new pictures I take, of church activities, etc., are usually quickly downloaded to Facebook albums so our church members can see them – and you can too. I also occasionally post pictures to the albums on our mission website, although unfortunately I tend to usually be somewhat behind on that.

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