

Christian Friends of Korea

조선의 그리스도인 벗들

Activity Report

Volume 17

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“Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be.” John 12:26a

Reflections on 2011

As we look back on 2011, our hearts are filled with gratitude and praise to God for his very real presence in North Korea and in our midst...teaching, leading, guiding and enabling us to serve Him in the DPRK. We are thankful for your faithful prayers and partnership that makes it



Hiking to Unmyul TB Resh Home

possible to travel to the humble places we find at the end of the road – in order that we may encourage in Jesus' name those who lack for health and hope, and those who sacrificially care for them. It is a great privilege to bring food, medicine, blankets, encouragement, prayers and your love to them in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ. And it is also our profound privilege to receive their thanks, their smiles, their welcome and

hospitality that they urge us to share faithfully with you.

We traveled widely in both March and November - bringing greetings from you to the patients and staff at our supported facilities, checking on the arrival and distribution of shipments, and learning of new needs. In May and September/October, we had technical teams in country working to complete several projects that have brought transformative change to multiple locations. And we have continued to facilitate ongoing training at the National TB

Reference Lab in conjunction with the May, September, and November visits. Finally, in September and December, we had team members engaged in assessments and delivery of emergency flood relief to affected areas. So it has been a very full year, and we give thanks to God for His strength, favor and provision, and to you for your prayers, partnership and faithful support, that have made it all possible.



CFK flood assessment team member, Ed Poitras, confirming the airlift shipment in Pyongyang

We are so pleased to report back to you regarding the major projects completed in 2011:

- Training and solid progress towards international accreditation in laboratory methods that took place at the National TB Reference Laboratory in May, September, and November
- Full renovation and re-equipping of the operating suite at the National TB Hospital
- Construction of a year-round passive solar greenhouse at the National TB Reference Hospital and installation of a water tank, pump, supply and distribution lines/outlets to the greenhouse
- Greenhouse propagation workshops held in several locations
- Water tank, solar panels, pump and distribution lines/outlets installed at the Kaesong TB Hospital bringing water to at least 15 departments in the 150 bed hospital
- Training in the use of medical equipment, and repairs to multiple pieces of equipment that were completed at several hospitals
- Windows/doors/tile/roofing materials delivered to 3 TB care centers to improve patient living conditions; and assessments completed for several additional rest home renovation projects
- Assessments of several new water projects and a proposed training center
- Delivery and dedication of the Rev. T Dwight Linton Memorial Vehicle now in regular use
- Active participation in the emergency flood relief response funded by the US Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance as part of the USNGO consortium effort to help flood affected areas in N/S Hwanghae Provinces and Kaesong.



Renovated and re-equipped operating suite at the National TB Hospital



Water system installation team at Kaesong TB Hospital

So far, for the calendar year 2011, we have delivered 9 container shipments to the DPRK, valued at \$7,592,671, and 3 major shipments from China, valued at \$162,803. We are working on more shipments now and hope to ship at least 2 more containers from the US and one order from China before the end of December.

On these journeys, we are privileged to visit patients, talk with directors and staff members who work sacrificially on behalf of their patients, and tell all of them of the many people around the world who remember them, who pray for them, and who love them. How is it that we love them?...“we love because He first loved us.” As this word is shared in director’s small meeting rooms and in the rooms of recovering patients in many end-of-the-road places, the love and light of Christ is shared, and the response is most often one of genuine gratitude, warmth and deep hospitality.



Paul Rader shares the donor list with TB rest home director

Vehicle Dedicated in Memory of Rev. T Dwight Linton

On Monday, November 7, 2011, our team, along with Ministry of Public Health officials and the staff of the National TB Hospital gathered for a bi-lingual dedication of the Rev. T Dwight Linton Memorial Vehicle. CFK board member Kay Rader read Psalm 121, Sam Linton (Dwight’s youngest son) and Heidi Linton (Director of CFK and niece by marriage) shared remembrances of him, and Paul Rader, (Ret) General of the Salvation Army offered up a prayer of dedication in Korean so that all present could understand. “Uncle Dwight”, as he was known to many of us, was a member of the board of CFK and a frequent ambassador for Christ to the DPRK. He died unexpectedly on January 11, 2010. Contributions given in his memory were received by CFK, and invested in a new vehicle to help facilitate CFK’s ongoing work. This rugged 11-passenger + cargo bay Iveco is built on a light truck chassis and carries CFK’s logo and name in both Korean and English to many far corners of the DPRK.



CFK team visits Unpa TB Rest Home

On the most recent visit – its maiden voyage– it proved its worth as we safely covered over 3400km (2100 miles) while visiting 19 facilities, taking it to many places where the road turned to trails, and then simply disappeared.

Inside, near the door is a permanent plaque that honors Dwight Linton’s life of love and service to God and to the peoples of Korea and those who gave gifts in his memory. Thanks to all who contributed to the memorial fund; we look forward to the new vehicle safely supporting many future visits.

Food, Floods, Need and Aid

The overall situation in the DPRK is highly complex, with many layers. Outlooks and predictions can often differ significantly from season to season. With our travels, observations and discussions over the past 16 years in many remote parts of the country in mind, we continue to try to gain some understanding of where the larger situation is relative to prior years, while paying particular attention to the current situation that we find in our supported health care facilities, and the patients being cared for in them. We pray for wisdom, read reports prepared by UN agencies, resident non-governmental organizations and others, talk with fellow aid organization representatives actively working inside the country, engage in our own travels and discussions and pray again for wisdom. In March of this year, in our visits to the countryside, we heard widespread concern regarding the winter barley, wheat, and potato crops – the crops that are usually depended upon to carry people through the lean spring season. We also heard at that time about what was described by local people as a long, cold winter with over 40 days of below 0 degree weather that impacted early spring crops and contributed to food shortages over the lean spring and summer months. The summer proved difficult for many as 3 typhoons swept through the southern parts of North Korea – damaging some facilities where we have worked for many years and causing some loss of life, and flood damage to homes, care centers, roads and crops. In the flood affected counties, many of our rest homes lost their entire summer vegetable crop, and generally at least 1/3 to 1/2 of their corn/soy crops. While this damage was severe in localized areas of several counties, it did not turn out to be as widespread as in some previous years. We had teams in country for nearly five weeks of the fall harvest season, and thankfully, near perfect harvest weather conditions seem to have helped the farmers bring in a good Fall harvest (estimated by UN FAO to be 8.5% better than last year, largely due to an increase in available fertilizer) without weather related loss or spoilage.



Visiting patients at Paechon TB Rest Home



Flood damaged home in S Hwanghae Province

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Reflections on the DPRK after a Confirming Visit with CFK - November 5-19, 2011

Paul A. Rader & Kay F. Rader (General (ret) and Commissioner of the Salvation Army, and missionaries to Korea for 22 years. Kay is a member of CFK's Board of Directors.

Returning after four years, our impression is that the citizens of Pyongyang, at least, are somewhat better off. They appear to be better dressed, there are



more vehicles on the road, more cars and bicycles. Though broad boulevards are sometimes eerily bereft of traffic, at other times there is considerable movement. On several occasions, we had a hard time taking a left turn into the road to our hotel due to busy oncoming traffic.

Having said that, our initial impression as we drove to the hotel from the airport, and the image still in our minds and hearts even now, is the darkness. There are still no street lamps, few lights in the windows of high rise apartments, no store windows aglow with displays, no lights on bicycles, no flashlights. We couldn't help noticing how the wide-ranging beams of the head lights on the new CFK van were providing a path of light for the pedestrians of Pyongyang as they stumbled along the footpaths or competed with traffic, trudging forward in the darkness.

Darkness is one of the stark realities of life in North Korea. One Director told us they get electricity two hours a day. In this regard, four years have made little difference. Solar panels were among the most frequent requests from the directors. Our MoPH colleague's demonstration of the wind-up 'flash-light' included in the doctors' bags seemed a favorite attraction to doctors, nurses and other staff members at the institutions we visited. They gathered round him like eager children to watch as he turned the lever, creating a bright light. With every turn of the handle they leaned in more closely. These dear people are deprived of this basic commodity. Nevertheless, the statues of the Great Leader are bathed in it.



In our travels across over 2,000 miles of North Korean countryside far from the capital city's perimeters, we had opportunity to observe the daily realities of life. While food is scarce, at least in the provinces we visited (North and South Hwanghae) we saw little evidence of *severe* starvation levels of need. Even so, the sight of people (often women and/or children) foraging for food in harvested fields or on the

denuded hillsides tells its own story. Some food is distributed by the government to the citizenry, though it is not clear how consistently or how equitably. Generally speaking, when asked how much of the protein patients receive comes from CFK, the directors of the homes and hospitals said, "About 60-70%." The greenhouses are among the most appreciated contributions of CFK and may themselves provide 30% or more of the food for the institutions. Heavy rains in the summer washed out seed and harmed the harvest in the worst flood affected areas (although the national harvest was reported to be 8.5% better than last year owing to more fertilizer being available this year.)



N Hwanghae TB Hospital greenhouse, Spring 2011

The introduction of the donor lists afforded opportunity to present the motivation for CFK's ministries, and our entourage seemed quite willing to accept prayer before meals in the Korean language.

We were given much greater access to patients who responded with enthusiasm and appreciation, sometimes reaching out to us with their hands, leaning their heads onto our shoulders as we took photos, thanking us effusively for sending medicine and nodding approval and appreciation when told we will be thinking of them and praying for them.



Pyongyang TB Hospital-Pediatric Ward

One is impressed that there are many good and well-intentioned people in the DPRK, genuinely concerned for the welfare of those they serve and genuinely grateful for CFK's help. We watched as an official from a local government office peeled an apple and offered it to Heidi. An incredible cookout on the beach below one of the rest homes appeared out of nowhere, providing an atmosphere of unprecedented camaraderie and friendship. One Director took our hands as we were leaving and said, "You have suffered much to come here," meaning that he realized the difficulty for people our age to travel so far. He knew the effort involved. They live and function in an environment of uncertainty, suspicion, fear and vulnerability into which it is impossible for us to enter fully. We pray for them.

The uniqueness of the approach of Christian Friends lies not only in the quality of the assistance provided, the accountability and integrity, the professional and technical expertise leveraged, and the immediate and practical value of the food and meds and equipment, but in our presence to those we serve in the name and spirit of Christ. We are there for Jesus' sake. Simply being physically present to those

we serve has important value and conveys what the gifts and expertise alone cannot, and bears its own witness.

In many ways the situation is as opaque to us and to the world as ever. We cannot know what the future will hold. We can know that God is not indifferent to the fervent



Pongsan TB Rest Home Patient

prayers of intercessors all around the world for this land. We come away grateful for the privilege of expressing the love of Christ in the service ministries of Christian Friends of Korea, always with the prayer in our hearts that

somehow the seeds of love sown will one day bear fruit in causing those we serve to look to the God who moves us to respond to their need with compassion and practical action.

In a meeting with the World Health Organization (WHO) Representative to the DPRK, Ethiopian, Dr. Yonai Tegegn, said, "Visiting in the country on road trips, I have seen the marks of CFK's work and have been greatly impressed. You are always there and making a difference. We are sincerely thankful for what you do. Keep it up! We do it for the men and women to whom we give hope for a better life. There are ups and downs but we are committed to this country's welfare like a marriage, for 'better or for worse,' but what it comes down to is the faces of the little children, and their mothers."

We long to be able to share the truth of the Gospel in words, knowing that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word. But until that day we



Kaesong Provincial Pediatric Hospital

are there in love and hope. The Psalmist tells us "*Blessed are those who consider the helpless. The Eternal will stay near them, leading them to safety, in times of bitter struggle.*" (The Voice) We trust Him to stay near those with whom we work, to lead them to safety, to spare them bitter struggle. We continue to hold to our belief in the Cross. One of our favorite authors, Oswald Chambers writes, "We get back to the bedrock of the Cross of Christ. In external history the cross is an infinitesimal thing; it is from the Bible point of view of more importance than all the empires of the world."

The particular petitions of the Lord's Prayer never seemed so relevant and powerful as they did to us as we shared them together in our daily devotional times: 'Hallowed be thy Name!' 'Thy Kingdom come on earth [this place] as it is in heaven.' 'Give us [give them their] daily bread!' 'Forgive us our sins [our indifference, our self-centeredness, our greed] as we forgive everyone who sins against us.' 'Lead us not into temptation and deliver us [and deliver them] from the evil one.' For [in the face of all that would seem to deny it] 'Yours is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory' now and forever. So be it, Father! Amen.

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Certainly, the overall situation appears to be better than the dark days of the Arduous March of the mid - late 1990s. Certain public areas of Pyongyang, in particular, are looking brighter, sharper and more modern than ever in anticipation of the April 2012 celebrations (the 100th anniversary of the birth of the late President Kim Il Sung) being planned. But there are still significant segments of the population that are in real need. And many more continue to live lives of extreme hardship and poverty, struggling on the very edges of survival, and highly vulnerable to any new or unexpected difficulties. As debate over food aid continues against a backdrop of highly charged political discussions, CFK will continue to report and respond to what we see and hear regarding the needs of the most vulnerable – especially those who are sick – among them, TB patients, hepatitis patients and children. Thank you for continuing to faithfully love and support the "least of these."

Clean water...a walk in their shoes

by David Syren, (ret) Firefighter/paramedic with the Anchorage Fire Department and CFK technical volunteer

We all have events in our lives that grab our attention, challenge the status quo, and change us forever. Sometimes, it comes simply by taking a walk in someone else's shoes, even briefly.



In the spring of 2010, I returned home to Alaska from a visit to North Korea not feeling very well. Having traveled there many times before with CFK to volunteer on various technical projects, I knew that in spite of being careful, it was not unusual to suffer from an upset stomach and indigestion. This can linger a bit upon returning to the US, but usually a few days of rest and familiar food puts one back on track and running strong. This time it was not to be. After a couple of weeks at home, I was still not doing well, so I started on a course of antibiotics. When, after a few more days, I was still sick, I knew I needed further tests. I soon learned I was infected with the parasite giardia lamblia. Alaska has a lot of this water-born parasite from beavers; many hunters, hikers and campers are exposed by drinking contaminated water during recreational activities, but even as a life-long Alaskan who is often in the wild, I had never suffered from this before and so it was a whole new miserable experience. The doctor prescribed Flagyl, the drug of choice for this ailment, and I started feeling better after about a week of treatment. Unfortunately, the normal dosage wasn't strong enough, or taken long enough to cure the problem, so I relapsed (twice more, over the summer). It wasn't until just before I was scheduled to return on the Fall technical trip with CFK (ironically to install clean water systems) that I started to feel like myself again.

Being sick with giardia was miserable - something I hope

never to repeat. Over 5 months, I lost 23 pounds (over 15% of my usual weight) from a parasite that many North Koreans have to live with while struggling under far more stressful daily living conditions. Like them, it wasn't like I could just crawl in bed and wait to get better. Life goes on with its work, projects, schedules, visitors and adventures - especially during our beautiful, yet short daylight-around-the-clock Alaska summers. At least it was summer, so I didn't have to stumble around in the cold and dark getting to the outhouse - often.

I can't imagine exposure to giardia without diagnosis or medicine for treatment, and many other contaminants abound in North Korea besides giardia that result in terrible suffering as well. Yet opportunities for change in North Korea are present. Some good water wells have been drilled, and many more are needed. One water project CFK completed at an outlying rest home and rural village took water from a pure spring source and protected it, installing a full gravity-powered system down to the village and rest home that resulted in virtual elimination of patient and community GI disorders that year alone.



I have seen time and time again how God multiplies the talents and resources provided through CFK so that many people there are helped and blessed in many permanent and life changing ways. We serve a Creator who is still creating, giving, forgiving, healing, and transforming. He loves His creation and longs to be known by each person alive today in every corner of the world, including North Korea. It is toward this end that we labor through CFK in North Korea to show God's love and, if possible, to share the Good News personally with those we meet along the way. In a certain way CFK is not so much leading the way for change along an existing path on foreign soil, but rather it has been granted a unique opportunity to forge a new trail in very difficult terrain fraught with many obstacles and dangers. It is this amazing opportunity that compels me to labor for Christ, within His care and keeping, in North Korea.



Outlook for 2012

In the midst of what will likely be a highly charged political year inside North Korea owing to the massive centennial celebration being planned around the late President Kim Il Sung's birthday, CFK's plans for active Christian engagement with the people of the DPRK through multiple projects and activities include the following (for more detail please see our Gifts of Hope catalog):

- We are working in conjunction with Stanford University and Bay Area TB Consortium colleagues and other skilled volunteers to put together a more intensive and lengthy training program for the staff of the National TB Reference Lab to build their laboratory skills and further them along in the accreditation process. While some funding has been identified to support these efforts, more is needed and we are seeking long-term sponsors who can help in this effort.
- We have been asked to add a second story to an existing building in order to construct a training center at the National TB Reference Hospital that can provide multi-purpose classroom space in order to facilitate a broad range of training initiatives. We see this as a highly strategic and necessary project, and we hope to raise the needed construction funds quickly so that it can be completed in 2012, and open the door more widely to skilled volunteers sharing technical expertise in a broader array of subjects.
- Clean water projects prevent disease and bring long-term hope and transformation to the daily lives of patients and staff of care facilities. We have identified multiple places in need of clean water systems and hope to complete as many as possible once funding is identified to support well drilling and project materials costs.
- We have been asked to undertake a hepatitis B vaccination project and are working now to clarify the parameters, costs and details regarding such a project.
- Greenhouses are tremendously valuable in enhancing food security at the local level, and we hope to send more as funding allows. We also hope to continue training in rural areas on maximizing production in the greenhouses.
- We hope to break ground on a new warehouse for CFK in North Carolina as soon as possible to enable us to receive, pack and ship containers and put together technical project materials more efficiently.
- As funding and resources are available, we will continue sending regular shipments of food, medicine, blankets, hand-knit items, doctor's kits, tractors, and other critical patient support materials. We also plan to continue providing basic materials (doors, windows, tile, roofing) needed for the renovation of rest homes.

We covet your prayers and faithful financial support as we continue to minister in the name of Christ to the people of the DPRK.

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Communications Updates



We are grateful for the hard work of two interns working in the CFK office this summer. They have helped us establish a presence on Facebook (search "*Christian Friends of Korea*"), and set up a new donor interface program developed by FiveTwo Foundation.

Please visit us at www.donate.cfk.org.

Scripture

CHRISTIAN FRIENDS OF KOREA

Christian Friends of Korea is a tax-exempt, non-profit organization founded in 1995 to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ through humanitarian, educational, and religious programs. Contributions to CFK are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. CFK also accepts stock or in-kind donations. Please make all checks payable to "Christian Friends of Korea."

If you are interested in supporting the work of CFK or to request information or materials, please contact us.

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