

Christian Friends of Korea 조선의 그리스도인 벗들

Activity Report

Volume 18

December 2012

“Behold, I will bring in health and healings;

I will heal them and reveal to them the abundance of peace and truth.” Jeremiah 33.6

On November 20, 2012, a CFK team returned from our fifth visit to the DPRK for 2012. Team members (including experts from Stanford University) arrived on November 1, and spent nearly three weeks engaged in training towards international accreditation of the National TB Reference Lab, making repairs to equipment, installing water systems at a hepatitis hospital and a TB rest home, and confirming \$4,815,877 worth of shipments sent to the DPRK since our last confirming visit in June. During the November visit, we traveled to twenty health care centers to confirm the arrival and distribution of these shipments, and met with directors, staff and patients.



The CFK confirming team saying farewell to the staff of Changyon TB Rest Home

Progress and Challenges

During our travels, we saw both encouraging signs of progress, and evidence that the basics of life are still a grinding struggle for large segments of the population. The drought that lasted from February to the end of June greatly impacted the harvest for many rest homes. Some care centers lost nearly all of their crops, despite replanting as many as three times. Other places were only able to bring in a small fraction of their usual harvest of corn or



Greenhouse damaged by strong winds

soybean. The drought was broken by rains in July, but downpours and high winds from typhoons that swept through in July and August caused localized flooding and damage in many places. One rest home reported that high winds tore over 1600 concrete roofing tiles from their facility, and the plastic on many greenhouses was torn to shreds. Others reported that their perimeter security walls crumbled from flooding or strong winds, and corn and vegetable crops were flattened in the fields. Some places were delaying the harvesting of cabbage for kimchee-making in order to give the crop a few extra days to grow before freezing temperatures set in. The good news is that despite the early drought the overall harvest of rice and corn nationwide seems to have improved slightly over last year with timely inputs of fertilizer. Directors reported that the government is providing more consistent rations of corn and rice for patients, but the diet for many is still lacking in fat, protein and many nutrients, and it is clear that securing enough food continues to be a significant concern for many places. The canned meat provided by CFK's partners, Christian Aid Ministries and the Mennonite Central Committee, still composes a very significant portion of the protein supply for most care centers – ranging from 30-70%.



Visiting families whose homes were damaged in the flooding



Canned meat donated by Christian Aid Ministries

Greenhouses Help Expand Food Production

A recent shipment of 24 passive-solar greenhouses (8 x 20 meters) was nearly fully delivered by the time of our visit, and many were already assembled and planted for winter vegetable production. The greenhouses have proven to be an important source of fresh food (spinach, lettuce, crown daisy, and onions are the usual winter



winter crops growing abundantly!

crop) especially from December to March, when nothing can be grown outside in the below-freezing temperatures. One place reported that 70% of their fresh

vegetables over the

winter months came from the greenhouse. Importantly, they also help give an early start to spring crops for transplanting outside. We are grateful to our Norwegian partners, Evangelisk Orientmisjon, for making the recent order of greenhouses possible to improve local food security at so many care centers.

Water Systems Bring Life and Hope

The water team successfully connected the water system at Hwangju TB Rest Home into a newly drilled deep water well at that facility. This completely solves the clean water shortage that has plagued them for decades - providing safe and abundant water for the staff



The North Hwanghae water team stops for a quick photo

and patients at this facility. Our team was also able to install solar panels, a pump, several hundred meters of water lines and ten frost-free hydrants

at the North Hwanghae Hepatitis Hospital, while

working side by side with scores of staff and volunteers at this facility. What a joy it was when the solar panels powered the pump, filling the system and sending clean water through the distribution lines to the first hydrant! Our team enjoyed simple hot lunches and warm fellowship on site, together with the director and local officials – and as work and engagement progressed, relations warmed and deepened. We were able to share with interested local staff, patients and officials that young Korean-American teenagers “[NK24]” raised the

funds that were used to complete the project, motivated by their love for God, and His love for the people of the DPRK.

Later in the visit we heard first-hand how transformative these water projects truly are, as we visited three places in Kaesong where we had completed water systems within the past year. All three reported that they were able to significantly increase their food production as a direct result of having water for irrigation. **One place was able to grow 2.5 Tons of cabbage and radish this year due to the new water supply, where before they could only grow 1 Ton; in another larger place, their yield was 6 times that of last year – they went from 2 Tons of vegetables last year to 12 Tons this year!** Chinese cabbage and radish– the main staples in Kimchee - are the main fresh vegetables during the winter and spring months (besides what can be grown inside the greenhouses in winter). In addition, **directors reported that the health and spirits of the patients was much improved with the new abundance of clean fresh water for drinking and washing.** One facility had refurbished nearly all their buildings after



Greenhouse irrigation materials

the water system was installed in June 2012 – and they said, “the work was easy because we had plenty of water near to all the



TB patients are so glad to receive water filters

buildings to mix with the concrete and mortar.” It is a joy to see the ripple effect caused by one major change - these projects are truly transformative on a multitude of practical and relational levels.

In November, we signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Ministry of Public Health to work with Wellspring and the DPRK's Office

of Groundwater Management to drill water wells at multiple facilities. We plan to have deep water well handpumps installed at each well so that each place can use the clean water right away until we can return at a future time with teams to install solar panels, pumps, storage tanks, distribution lines and frost-free



A DPRK official tries the handpump

hydrants. For those places where well drilling is not possible due to road or other limitations, we hope to deliver simple water filters to at least be able to purify the drinking water for patients at these facilities until permanent solutions can be found. A pilot study completed earlier this year in Pyongyang demonstrated that filtered water significantly reduces the frequency and severity of gastro-intestinal problems in TB patients.

Priorities for 2013

In addition to the lab training, water and building projects planned for 2013, we also hope to continue sending renovation materials so that facilities can replace broken windows and leaky roofs and thereby improve basic shelter for patients. Materials were sent earlier this year to several places, and renovations at these facilities are in process. With your help, we also hope to send high density foam floor mats for all patient rooms so that patients no longer have to sleep directly on hard, often cold, floors. Hospital beds are also needed at some facilities. Basic transportation is also a very critical need, and we hope to send an order of cargo motorcycles as soon as possible. Detail on these and other projects is given in our Gifts of Hope catalog, enclosed. We are so grateful for your prayers and financial support that make it possible to bring lasting hope and change to so many lives.



Project materials at our warehouse in DPRK

The Cost of Dedication – the Personal Toll of TB

While we are grateful for many good developments that bring hope, we were also deeply saddened on this visit to learn that a director of a rest home where we have worked for many years contracted TB again – for



Dr Kim receives a handmade quilt with gratitude

the fifth time in 16 years. He is awaiting diagnostic results from the National TB Reference Lab but is strongly suspected to be infected with multi-drug resistant TB. We visited him at his rest home, and

are very concerned for his condition. He is among the most dedicated of directors, and was given a high award earlier this year for the care he shows for his patients. The cocktail of medicines needed to treat his drug-resistant TB costs nearly 100 times what a treatment regimen costs for a regular TB patient, and the growing need for these drugs dwarfs the tiny supply. He is a true partner to CFK and a friend, and we were grateful to be able to visit him, assure him of our love and prayers, and give him a beautiful hand-made quilt. Please pray for this man, and many others like him— pray not only for his physical healing, but please also pray that he will somehow be able to hear and embrace the transforming message of the Gospel that brings true hope.

National TB Reference Lab (NTRL) Working Towards International Accreditation

There are thousands of people in the DPRK – we don't know yet exactly how many – who are facing a diagnosis of multi-drug resistant TB (MDR-TB). It is for our director friend, and others like him, that we have been working so hard for the last four years, together



Dr. Kathleen England training two North Korean doctors at the NTRL

with experts from Stanford University and the Bay Area TB Consortium to renovate, equip and prepare for international accreditation the National TB Reference Lab.

Until now, North Korea has not had a laboratory where patients like our friend could be diagnosed correctly. But within the past year especially, the lab staff have developed their skills and knowledge such that they are gaining verifiable proficiency in these testing methods. Everyone is working as hard and as fast as possible to build capacity and excellence in the lab so that patients like our friend can get the help that they need in time. And we are very proud of the lab staff's continued progress which we hope will earn them international accreditation sometime in 2014 – but it is a race against time, and many lives hang in the balance as the numbers of drug



At the Pyongyang Pediatric TB Hospital a young boy waits for care

resistant patients keeps growing. Lab accreditation will be a tremendous accomplishment in its own right – and will lead to wider and more sustainable international support not only for the expensive drugs needed to treat patients like our friend, but also to expand prevention efforts and stem the tide of devastation caused by this disease in the lives and health of so many North Koreans. Please pray that we will have the funding needed to support advanced training efforts, and also pray that the lab staff will fully master the necessary skills and gain experience.

Training Center Construction Planned for 2013

Building upon what has already been accomplished through the National TB Reference Lab project, the Ministry of Public Health and CFK also signed



Medical training in the NTRL hallway!

in November a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to construct a new Training Center at the Central TB Prevention

Hospital in Spring 2013. The training center will provide new classroom and working space so that crucial training workshops can be expanded. We anticipate also that it will open up new opportunities for expert volunteers in a variety of specialties to join with CFK and share their expertise with DPRK counterparts in the years to come. So far we have raised \$51,955 towards this construction project, and we ask for your support to raise the remaining \$63,045 needed in order to complete and furnish the facility. We hope to ship a container of building materials in January, and expect construction to begin in the Spring of 2013.

Hand-Made Items and Warm Hospitality

We were really privileged to deliver to faithful staff and needy patients beautiful hand-made blankets, knitted-squares blanket kits, hats, shawls, scarves, vests, and small dolls made by you, our donors. When we presented your gifts marked with



Veteran 20 year nurse wrapped in the warmth of a prayer shawl

gift tags including your names and photos, we shared with patients that because God so loved the world, He gave His son – and it is because of God's love that we want to share His love with them. We told them that these were made by hand, by people all across America, who love them and pray for them. The gifts were very gratefully received, and clearly brought warmth and joy to many downtrodden hearts. We also brought yarn and knitting needles for distribution to patients, and were assured that patients would enjoy passing the time by making something special for their loved ones.



The Changyon picnic

Many places graciously made lunch for our visiting teams, and we enjoyed warm hospitality despite the often cold November temperatures (inside and outside the buildings!) A particularly memorable day was November 13th, when we visited Changyon TB Rest Home and shared a picnic cooked over an open fire on the beach below the rest home. After lunch, much joy was shared as we laughed and all joined in a friendly impromptu throwing game of "topple the rock pile". For an hour or two, the differences of nationality, position, language, belief and long-held official animosities melted away as we became members of one family just enjoying simple food, warm fellowship and a beautiful place together. It felt like a warm family thanksgiving reunion, and at memorable times like these, reconciliation doesn't seem quite so impossible or far away.

As we close out 2012, we are grateful for God's guidance and abiding presence as this work continues to expand in the DPRK. Thank you for your faithful prayers and support on behalf of the North Korean people through CFK. Your letters, emails, phone calls, prayers, volunteer efforts, and support inspire and encourage us greatly, and we are ever thankful for your faithful partnership. May His name be honored and glorified, as we love and serve Him together among the people of the DPRK.



The CFK team visiting Chongdan TB Rest Home

Guest Columns: My First Visit to North Korea



By Roald Foreland, Director of Evangelisk Orientmisjon, Norway

What made the strongest impression on me during my stay in North Korea was to see children who look much younger than they actually are because of malnutrition. It is hard to believe that the girl in the red jacket (seen below) is 10 years old; to me, she looked closer to 5. We were able to meet with many children in a TB rest home and also at a pediatric hospital. Because of malnutrition, they are much more vulnerable to all kinds of diseases. The ones we met had TB or hepatitis.



Children in treatment at the Unryul TB Rest Home

Another thing that made a very strong impression on me was how disciplined they were and also how easy it was to connect with them.

According to the World Health Organization, about a third of North Korea's 24 million people are suffering from malnutrition. This makes them more vulnerable to contracting a number of diseases.

The main purpose of the trip for me was to check if the greenhouses that we have provided through CFK had reached their destinations. CFK ordered 24 greenhouses that are being set up near rest homes for patients with tuberculosis or hepatitis. A greenhouse is of great importance for vitamins and nourishment, and helps each care center be more self-sufficient. I was pleased to see that the greenhouses had arrived, some were set up and others were in the process of being set up.

We experienced very good fellowship within the team, which consisted of six persons from the US, and one each from Australia

and Norway. It was very nice to have a Korean-speaking pastor from Australia on the team. One of the representatives from the health department, who really became friends with him, said: "You are the funniest pastor I



Rev. David Kim (center) in joyful fellowship with North Korean colleagues

have ever met!" This must be a great compliment. I am very thankful to CFK for letting me be a part of this trip. In the future we hope to contribute to many more greenhouses. We also plan to support sending deep water well hand-pumps, and water filters for those places that need them.

My organisation, Evangelisk Orientmisjon, was originally part of China Inland Mission, which later became Overseas Missionary Fellowship. We are a small mission organization with projects in China and Japan. In the future, we hope to step up our efforts in North Korea. We are very grateful to be able to work together with CFK.

Needs Being Met, Friends Being Made

By John Miller, Founder and Executive Director, One Vision International

It's both an uplifting and humbling experience to return to North Korea with CFK, and to have the privilege of investing in this ministry. There are so many needs that CFK is working tirelessly to meet in our Lord's name. Through various projects from the TB hospitals and rest homes, to the National TB Reference Lab, it is quite evident that CFK looks not only to assist with material things, but also to empower the local workers to continue the work themselves. The training I witnessed from the Stanford University staff was that of dedication and an honest desire for the lab to succeed. Once the lab becomes accredited, there will be greater potential for more doors to open through the work that CFK and Stanford University are doing. I have made it a point to pray for the success of the National TB Lab project, and all workers, every day.

One thing evident to anyone who visits these projects is the need for clean water and warm bedding for the winter. Heidi has outlined the impact that clean water systems have had, not only on the patients' lives, but also in the amount of food they are able to grow in the greenhouses and land around the facilities. Also, with clean water, patients have fewer stomach problems, resulting in better retention of nutrition and medicines. Clean water is one of the greatest needs that we can help to provide for our friends. The look of joy and encouragement is unmistakable in the faces of the hospital workers when they see the new hydrants being used. The blankets and new beds are desperately needed during the freezing winter months. We praise God that these projects are taking place in this part of the world,



Inside:

- Progress and Challenges
- Greenhouses Help Expand Food Production
- Water Systems Bring Life and Hope
- Priorities for 2013
- The Cost of Dedication-The Personal Toll of TB
- National TB Reference Lab Working Towards International Accreditation
- Training Center Construction Planned for 2013
- Hand-Made Items and Warm Hospitality Bring Joy
- Guest Column: My First Visit to North Korea
- My Thoughts on the November Trip with CFK
- Celebrating CFK's Donors

and trust that they will be used to show His love to all.

The main encouragement to me is that so many times, as we would travel to the rest homes or hospitals, we were met by the staff with sincere affection. The impression is not that the staff and patients are happy to see us solely because we are a part of a CFK delegation, supplying greenhouses or medicines. Rather, you can see honest friendships being fostered between two groups of people who are only able to meet a few times a year. These relationships are being built through a love that many people around the world have for our Lord. For people who are making small donations, such as for doctors kits - to those making significant financial sacrifices, please know that so many good things are happening today!

It'll be hard to forget our lunch in Changyon, where we met by the ocean. We laughed, played games and fellowshiped, like brothers and sisters. This is a very special place and I look forward to our future involvement with CFK. It is a privilege to serve with this organization.



*Heidi greets the Pongsan TB
Rest Home director*

Celebrating CFK's Donors!

CFK's donors never fail to surprise us with their creativity, dedication, and faithfulness! One young lady named Abbey (age 6) set up a lemon-aid stand and had a bake sale and sent the proceeds to CFK. Another young woman asked her friends and family to support CFK instead of sending birthday gifts. A group of hikers did a walk on the Great



Abbey's lemonade stand!

Wall in China while raising support for CFK. We hear regularly from some who have come to know Christ while in prison, and they write to us and pray faithfully, sending contributions as they can. In California, four Korean-American churches from different denominations brought their youth groups together to pray and raise awareness and support for CFK water projects. Their teenagers fasted for 24 hours to better understand some of the challenges faced by their North Korean brothers and sisters, and raised nearly \$50,000 to help provide clean water (and by extension, expanded food production!) to care centers in North Korea. Many others have taken weeks out of their busy lives to serve on technical or confirming visits, paying their own way, and sharing their skills and talents.

Despite setbacks due to loss of employment or the overall difficult economic situation, you have remained faithful in showing the love of Christ to needy North Koreans. So many of you have reached out to us with words of encouragement, and with the assurance of your prayers. Thank you for your faithfulness and strong partnership in this work!



*A North Korean
smiles from the gift of
a prayer shawl*

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.

Christian Friends of Korea
PO Box 936
Black Mountain, NC 28711

Find us on:
@The CFKorea
/ChristianFriendsofKorea

Website: www.cfk.org
Email: cfk@cfk.org
Tel: (828) 669-2355 Fax: (828) 669-