



CHRISTIAN FRIENDS OF KOREA

조선의 그리스도인 벗들

Activity Report

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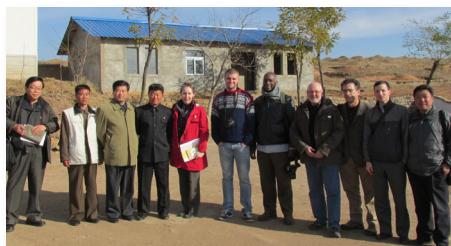
“And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.” Romans 5:5

She had put on make-up and was the most brightly-dressed among the four women in the small, cold room furnished with two old cots, handmade quilts, and a new bright green patient mat at a TB sanitarium far out in the countryside. Sunlight streamed brightly through the bubbled but sparkling clean window glass of the room. Clearly excited by our visit, in just a few sentences her story tumbled out. *“I am only 22 years old. When I got sick I was so worried about the future. I really didn’t know what would happen to me. I was so afraid to come to this place. But after coming here I’ve gotten much better. Thank you so much for sending us medicine and clean water and other things. I’ve been here 3 months now and feel so much healthier. Thank you so much!”*



CFK Notes Progress at 26 Care Centers from November 9th - 23rd

What a privilege it was to travel to the far reaches of North Korea on your behalf, visiting with dedicated care center directors, staff, and patients like this beautiful young woman, checking on the arrival of shipments, of progress made in construction, and of the direct impact this work is having on thousands of lives. Our team of



Six CFK volunteers gather for a photo with staff members at Sariwon TB Sanitarium.

eight visited for two weeks this time, covering over 1630 km in order to go to 26 of our 29 supported facilities – including many found at places where the “road” literally comes to an end.

There has been so much progress made this year at many different facilities. Scores of greenhouses - including 51 that arrived this year in two shipments - are really having a very significant impact in terms of food production.



A group of staff members and patients work together to install a new greenhouse provided by CFK.

These are being used well to produce 3-4 crops of vitamin-rich fresh produce each year – starting with lettuce/spinach/crown daisy/onions in winter, to cucumber/tomatoes in spring/summer, to cabbage/lettuce/spinach in fall. Each greenhouse is producing anywhere from 1-3 metric tons of produce every year – which comprises anywhere from 15-60% of the total vegetable needs of these facilities. In most cases, the greenhouses provide nearly all the fresh vegetables given to patients and staff during the winter months. What a joy it was to come in out of the cold wind into well-kept warm greenhouses, steamy from sunshine and thriving plants.

Four new deep water wells were successfully drilled this year (in partnership with Wellspring and North Korea's Office of Groundwater Management). They are now providing abundant clean water to South Hwanghae TB Hospital (treats 12,000 patients/year), Paechon County



New hand pumps for deep water wells.

People's Hospital (treats 15,000 patients/year), Paechon TB Sanitarium (treats 420 resident patients/year), and Haeju TB Sanitarium (treats 240 resident patients/year). Each of these care centers has new hand pumps (including donor plaques) installed in the new wells, giving staff, patients and members of the community immediate access to clean, abundant water. They will still eventually need solar panels, a water tank, electric/solar pump, pipe, and hydrants installed to carry the clean water to the various buildings and wards of these large care centers, but at least for now they have a protected source for clean and abundant water, which is already improving patient and staff health and welfare. We asked for wells to be drilled at four more places in the coming months, and hope that we will have funding to drill at several more places before the end of 2014. As many directors say, ***“Water is life! Please convey our deep thanks to the donors for helping us.”***

We were so encouraged to see a new patient ward almost completely finished at Changyon TB Sanitarium. This sanitarium was relocated to this site in 2010, occupying some existing small run-down buildings perched at the top of a hill overlooking the West Sea. While the

view is spectacular, it is also remote, so visiting there is a several-hour ordeal, as is delivering patients or supplies. Nevertheless, through a generous gift from Korean Christian friends in Australia, we were able to send roofing materials, windows, doors, tile and other goods, and they were able to construct a beautiful new patient ward just a few meters up the hillside from the beach, as well as partially renovate one of the existing buildings. Within two weeks' time, patients will be moving from the old ward into this sparkling new building, enjoying one of the most beautiful and serene views



The director of Changyon TB Sanitarium proudly points to a new patient ward overlooking the West Sea.

of a seascape anywhere in the world while recovering from TB. If we can raise additional funds to send more materials, they are eager to renovate more of the existing old buildings. We hope to do this and also get permission to help them complete a gravity-fed, solar powered water system here later this year to help resolve their serious water shortage.

Unpa TB Sanitarium also finished a lot of work this summer, bringing a new patient ward near to completion. Again, we supplied doors, windows, roofing, and other finish materials, and they supplied and built the main structures, resulting in a new facility that will provide a clean and safe place for patients to rest as they recover from TB. The change at this facility over the past several years is tremendous as well. The water system we installed in 2010 continues to work very well, supplying clean water not only to the rest home, but also to the surrounding community, and provides water for



The new patient ward at Unpa TB Sanitarium is nearing completion.

irrigation of their greenhouses and farming areas. This place stands out as a beacon of hope amidst a very poor surrounding mining community.

We are so encouraged to see many places eager to take on the considerable work involved in renovation activities in order to provide significantly improved care and shelter for their patients. At Changyon especially, this was no small task as their water source is a spring forming a shallow pool located some 600 meters across a valley from the facility. Not only did they have to make multiple trips with their tractor up and down the hill to the spring for water every day in order to care for their patients, but they also had to make many extra trips for the water needed to hand mix all the concrete necessary for the construction of their new patient ward.

We are grateful for two new grants that will help us send renovation materials to many more facilities in 2014. We hope to raise an additional \$190,000 so that we can help all 13 of the facilities that have asked for our help, and have provided detailed plans of what they hope to do. Renovated facilities make it more likely that patients will stay at these care centers during their treatment, receiving better nutrition, clean water, rest and supervised care that improves their treatment outcome.



CFK board member Dr. Sissel Topple reunites with a nurse at Unryul TB Sanitarium 12 years later. 2001 (left) November 2013 (right)

Progress in Relationships

Relationships continue to deepen and strengthen. One of many highlights of the visit this time was CFK board member Dr. Sissel Topple meeting again with a nurse who has served at Unryul TB Rest Home for over 25 years. They first met in 2001 during CFK's second visit to this facility. What a joy it was for them both to meet again! Another highlight was an impromptu friendly volleyball game played between the staff of a hepatitis hospital, our team and our MoPH colleagues. Many patients gathered outside to watch and cheer. During our visits to the countryside, we no longer need to pack picnic lunches but are generously hosted for lunch or dinner by the care centers we visit, who share with us the best of what they have while



Patients watch as CFK volunteers play a friendly game of volleyball with North Korean colleagues and sanitarium staff members.

engaging in productive discussions. Our meals were simple but very tasty - usually including hot soup and rice, vegetables grown in the greenhouse, kimchee, roasted chestnuts, apples and warm fellowship while outside the wind was cold and snow flurries warned of the coming winter. One place left their ripe persimmons hanging on the trees like bright orange jewels so we could enjoy them fresh from the tree during our visit. And they took us with great pride to see their immaculately-kept greenhouse to pick beautiful ripe tomatoes hanging heavily from robust vines grown from the seeds we had supplied to them earlier this spring.



CFK was shown hospitality with a beautiful meal prepared for our visit and served inside a greenhouse provided to the facility by CFK.



Persimmons being picked from the tree especially for the CFK visit.



The greenhouses are yielding several kinds of produce including some grown from seeds sent by CFK.

Growing Change

Certainly while the lives of large sections of the population remain extremely difficult, especially with the onset of winter cold and hardships, driving through many miles of countryside we saw small but significant signs of improvement underway in many places. Several factories that had been shuttered for many years are now showing signs of life and renewal. Bicycles and cell phones continue to proliferate in the



Piles of cabbage for kimchee-making were seen everywhere during the November trip.

countryside, and new public parks - including bright playground equipment - have been built, even in provincial cities. Some apartment balconies, especially in the Kaesong area, sport single solar panels that charge batteries, providing power for lighting at night and for recharging cell phone batteries –speaking both to the ongoing power shortages and to greater disposable income (at least for those working in the special economic zone). Importantly, large passive solar greenhouses are being constructed on farms, in schoolyards, and by military units. These can only increase both the amount and variety of healthy food available for the people. Children on the whole appeared better dressed and better fed, although there are still far too many who are outside on bitter cold days with only a light jacket and poor shoes while carrying heavy loads, fetching water, or walking long distances. Late November is kimchee-making time, so cabbage was being harvested in many corners of the country, transported, washed, and prepared for winter.

The improvement in the grain ration for patients that we heard about in 2012 appears to

be holding steady in 2013, with most patients reportedly receiving 450 grams per day, generally of rice, although in some places other food is substituted when rice is not available. Nearly all places still rely very heavily on the canned meat supplied by donations from Christian Aid Ministries and the Mennonite Central Committee as other supplies of protein are rare and minimal. Clean water and nutrition are so vital to patient health and recovery.

Development Challenges

The most obvious and rapid changes are to be found in Pyongyang, to be sure, with many massive construction projects underway or recently completed, including large entertainment facilities such as the dolphin park, new water parks, equestrian center, renovation/expansion of the Korean War Museum, as well as many new apartment buildings, parks and other amusement facilities. Of course, the challenge is that all these new massive public works all draw on a very finite resource;

severely limited electrical power. As a result, and despite the dedicated focus of MoPH colleagues, the National TB Reference Lab

development project has been greatly challenged this year by more frequent and prolonged power outages, retarding progress.

Nevertheless, a cutting edge diagnostic tool was introduced this year, they are working on proficiency testing and are in the process of doing a pilot drug resistance survey in N. Hwanghae Province to begin to understand more clearly drug resistance patterns that can guide intervention and treatment. We hope that our joint efforts with Stanford University to build lab capacity and proficiency can continue, however, the electrical power issue and significant funding challenges stemming in part from the continuing difficult political climate may jeopardize the continuation of what has been thus far a highly productive five-year effort.



Pyongyang City is currently in a state of rapid change, despite difficulties with electrical power.



Joe Manickham, Asia Director for the Mennonite Central Committee, stands with the director of a sanitarium holding cans of donated meat.

Regardless of the continuing challenges, we are grateful to God for the traction and results that we are seeing after many long years of responding to a truly desperate situation. That said, with continually growing numbers of patients (now reported by WHO to be just under 100,000 – putting North Korea among the highest TB disease-burden countries in the world, including a significant proportion suffering from drug resistant forms of TB), the fight is far from over. The situation is precarious at best, and hard-fought gains are very easily lost.

We cannot thank you enough for your prayers, your partnership, your encouragement and support. It is such a privilege to visit these places on your behalf, deliver the list of donors to each director and share with them about



CFK board member, Mr. Steve Aceto provides the director of a sanitarium with a donor list.

your love for God and your desire for them to know about God's love for them and for their patients. They are deeply touched by our willing-

ness to come again and again to see them, show them love in many tangible ways, and bring them encouragement. They often express in words their very sincere and heartfelt gratitude for what is provided to them, and in deed through their warm hospitality, careful stewardship of the resources provided to them, and care shown to the staff and patients.

Dr. Kim Ha, the dedicated director of Hwangju TB Rest Home is greatly improved after starting several months ago on special MDR-TB medicine provided to him through the Eugene Bell Foundation. He knows of your prayers for him and his patients and hopes with our help to build a new ward to support the recovery of suspected MDR-TB patients at his facility before he retires from his work. We agreed to help his efforts, so long as he promised to first take care of his own health.

NK[24] and AGI Support to Continue in 2014

We were grateful to learn that several Irvine CA churches plan to participate for the third year in a row in a prayer, awareness and fundraising effort

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Partner Reflections



*by Arild Nordlie
Board Chair,
Evangelisk Orientmisjon
Norway*

"I had some ideas in my mind about what it would be like to visit DPRK, but being there, seeing things, smelling things and meeting the people was more than I could ever imagine. It captured my heart deeply. In spite of all the hardships they face, to see their smiles; they are so beautiful.

For Evangelisk Orientmisjon, I realize we are participating in something important. It was so encouraging to see the plaques with Norwegian names of donors on greenhouses and water pumps. I will return to my friends in Norway and tell them that the funds are well spent and our help makes a big difference for those receiving it.



A donor plaque like the one above is placed on all greenhouses. It includes the CFK logo and the name of the donor who provided the funds for that greenhouse.

The enthusiasm in the faces of some of the directors was very nice to see. As far as I can see they understand the big difference CFK makes for their patients. I feel that in spite of all the challenges you face, God is in this, and in His time this country and its people once again will receive God's blessing.



Mr. Arild Nordlie stops to pose for a photo with a staff member at a North Korean sanitarium.

I will always take you with me in my prayers and hope to be able to come back."

Psalm 34. 1 - 6

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Construction is nearing completion on the new training center located at the Central TB Prevention Hospital.

to benefit CFK's clean water projects in North Korea. Early in 2014 the youth groups from several different churches are joining together in this effort, crossing denominational lines to build unity



We are truly blessed to see young teens passionate about Christ and helping to provide water to the less fortunate.

among the greater Body of Christ, experience hunger through fasting for 24 hours, and raise funds for clean water initiatives in North Korea. They are welcoming other church youth groups to join in this effort. Also, Alternative Gifts International is featuring CFK's patient mats project in their catalog for 2013-2014, and we are grateful for their help to provide warm blankets and mats that will

cushion and insulate patients from cold concrete floors as they rest and recover from TB.

Looking Ahead

In 2014, we expect another very full year. In March we plan to return with a technical team to complete the construction of the new Training Center located at the Central TB Prevention Hospital, with the dedication of the new facility and initiation of training activities planned for May.

We are also looking forward to sending the materials many facilities need to build new wards or renovate existing ones. And later next Fall, we hope to install more solar-powered water distribution systems at care centers.

greenhouses, tractor parts (invaluable to all the centers) to keep the tractors in running order, as well as our regular shipments of food and medicine. We also hope to help ease severe local transportation constraints by sending motorcycles/cargo tricycles once we have enough funding to place the entire order.

With the continued constraints on the economy, we understand that this is still a really difficult time for many. Yet, we are grateful for your sacrificial and faithful support of this work, and pray that it will continue. When we think of the thousands of patients that are cared for every year at the facilities where we work – patients (just like the young woman) who arrive very sick and afraid and who are discharged several months later restored to health, with new hope for life and a future, we can't help but be profoundly grateful for the privilege to share some of the love and grace God has lavished on us with these dear ones who are surely among the "very least of these." May God richly bless you with His presence and peace and continue to make us instruments of His peace in this corner of His world.



Dr. Kathleen England (of Stanford University) wraps a North Korean nurse with a warm blanket provided by Christian Aid Ministries West.

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:
@TheCFKorea
/ChristianFriendsofKorea

Website: www.cfk.org
Email: cfk@cfk.org
Tel: (828) 669-2355 Fax: (828) 669-2357