

## Opportune Times

When we left for Indonesia back in 1999, we felt badly about leaving friends, family, and especially aging parents. We knew we were going to be away for four years and weren't sure which (if any) good-byes might be final. If we had listened to our emotions at that point, we might never have left Canada. But we were certain that God wanted us in Indonesia. After having been there for 8 of the last 9 years, life and relationships in Indonesia have become our new norm—our friends and emotional supports are there. If we had listened to our hearts, we might just have stayed there. But this time we felt God telling us it was time to spend some extended time in Canada. Our experiences so far confirm that it is God's will for us to be here for this year.

### An Opportune Time in Ministry



In the brief time that we have been back, God has enabled us to be a part of things that we would never have wanted to miss. On August 24<sup>th</sup> our family was able to attend the Eagle River Baptist Church one last time. The congregation is feeling led to close the church in Eagle River and join with the Baptist church in Dryden, believing that they will be stronger together than they are as two separate congregations. The Eagle River church was Bill's first full-time pastorate, Bill and Janice were married while Bill was there, Jonathan and Marigan's formative memories of church are of our experience there.

Without the constant affirmation I received from that congregation during my initial years in ministry, I may never have stuck it out. I still have a picture of that church on my office wall for inspiration. I was able to preach the

second last sermon that was to be preached in the Eagle River church, the whole family was able to attend, and in this way be a part of their difficult but exciting transition.



### An Opportune Time with Family

We've been able to celebrate special events with our families: Janice's Dad's 82<sup>nd</sup> birthday, Bill's family's annual camping weekend.



Two weeks ago Bill's uncle passed away. Seemingly out of the blue, the family called Janice to come play the piano at my uncle's memorial service. At the memorial service I (Bill) met cousins and family who in some cases I



had not seen for 40 years—some of whom had grown closer to God and others who had just kept wandering away from the Lord. Bill had an opportunity to share a few words at the service, noting the irony of it taking a death to bring everyone together. He also noted that through Christ's death, God

enables all people to be reconciled to Himself and each other, and that by believing in Christ's work on the cross we will all meet again in heaven. Again, God knew that was one opportunity that we would not have wanted to miss.

### **An Opportune Time for Growth and Renewal**

We're not only experiencing the silver linings but also getting opportunities that are reason for pure praise. We are all studying and loving it. Janice is taking two courses plus further piano lessons. She sometimes complains about having to practise 7 hours a week, but I think she is having far too much fun for it to be considered work. I (Bill) am taking three courses, one of which is a guided reading on the topic of Evangelical Christian perspectives on political involvement. This is proving to be very interesting, especially since we are in the midst of two elections on our continent. Marigan has taken to college like a...I don't know, a farmer to dirt? She has made a lot of friends quickly and is adjusting well so far. Jonathan is in his third year in the music program and shares two classes with his Mom. So all's well on the educational front. God is good.

### **An Opportune Time to Create Future Opportunities**

God is giving us opportunities to reconnect with existing partners in ministry and make new connections that will ultimately benefit our friends in Indonesia. Bill and/or Janice are booked into churches every Sunday (except Thanksgiving) from now till the beginning of December.

We've also experienced a lot of generosity, personally, from friends and family who know who they are, but whose names would be embarrassing to mention. All in all, our experience is revealing that God's timing was right in allowing us to be in Canada for this year. We look forward to what God is yet going to do.

### **Prayer Opportunities**

- 1) It seems that more churches than we remember are looking for pastors. Pray that God will raise up young pastors for His Church in North America.
- 2) Pray that God would lead us into meaningful experiences of Christian fellowship while here in Canada. Worshipping in a different church every Sunday is not conducive to feeling at home in any one church. We continue to give as we speak in various churches, but also feel a need for spiritual input.
- 3) Keep praying for our Indonesian friends, whom we miss terribly at times. I still feel like I should be going to play badminton on Fridays with students and staff over there. Showing pictures of people over there was kind of embarrassing at first because it was hard to keep from getting emotional.

### **Praise Opportunities**

We praise God that everything here in Canada has worked out as well as we could have hoped for—better than expected, actually. We're in our own house. God provided us with a car. God's people have been very gracious and generous. We're enjoying our times with family (immediate and extended). We're all enjoying our studies. The balance of ministry and studies seems to be working. So, there's lots to praise God for.

### **Opportunities to Get Involved**

To subscribe (or unsubscribe) to our updates, visit our website at: <http://www.dyck.northernmicro.ca>

#### **Become a Team Supporter by contacting:**

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Thank you and may God bless you.

*Bill and Janice, Jonathan and Marigan*