



Compelled To Go Compelled To Go

Issue #129
June 24, 2016

Dear Friends, Family, and In-Pact Partners:

What a busy time it has been since our last letter! We can't believe it's been over three months since we last wrote. How many times we have changed the date on this issue! We have been trying to get this letter sent since early May, but circumstances and new events have kept delaying it. Both we and others have been busy in both ministry and personal lives, and delays just kept coming. And, frankly, everyone has also gone through major spiritual and emotional battles. We'll share some of that a bit later.

Here we Are:

As we continue our post-mission-field journey after 2008, (Colombia three times, Cuba twice, northeast Kansas City, Germany, Sweden, Finland, Ukraine, five months in Detroit, MI, and numerous interim pastorates, revival meetings, retreats, and the like), we are now concluding our fifth week of ministry in the little mountain town of Greer, AZ, where Jo Ann's sister and brother-in-law, Dot and Bill Hutchison, planted Greer Chapel over 20 years ago with just a handful. Now there are about 35 families from various states who spend all or part of the hot Summer months in Greer's cooler climate at 8,500 feet in the White Mountains of eastern AZ. Last Fall Bill and Dot asked us to assume this leadership, and ---- here we are!



Greer stretches along a long valley.



Homes, cabins, resorts scatter the valley.



Greer Chapel rents Community Center.

On May 10th, we hitched up our travel trailer and, with one mishap (below left), arrived at the Mountain Aire RV Park to assume pastoral leadership of this little chapel that exists only five months out of every year. It seems the "mishap" may possibly be a significant one. We're waiting for the insurance adjuster to come and take a look. While it took two hours to get the trailer properly positioned, we couldn't have asked for a more ideal location (below center) right next to internet range extender and with perfect satellite dish location. Our pad has been extended (below right) and we will soon have our storage shed in place so all the "stuff" under the blue tarp (below center) can be properly stored. The park is older with small spaces, but a real family aura.



First services began May 29th, and three Bible studies began the following week. GC is one of six self-funding "resort" ministries in the Desert Pines Baptist Association of about 20 rural and small-town churches. It is an unsalaried volunteer position with only travel costs and trailer site rental provided, so we depend heavily on special "project" support to sustain us. This is especially true in that we incurred several thousand dollars of unexpected costs on the trailer, the Suburban, and local furnishings and equipment. Our cushion is depleted already as we had to purchase some audio items and a camera to videotape Bob's sermons to be used in the Farsi ministry's video production for Facebook, YouTube, and CBN's Farsi broadcasts (more on that later). So, we're asking you to be in serious prayer for funding the remaining three months still ahead.



We are unofficial town "chaplain/pastor" (no local pastors or churches), and have made good connections with unofficial leaders, first responders, and business owners. We are been well received. Additionally, we will minister to the many Mormons and Native Americans, and, as time allows, minister to pastors, church leaders, and congregations throughout AZ and western NM. Our primary role, though, is to Greer Chapel.

Weekly it's: Sunday worship, fellowship, writing; Monday laundry, Women's Bible study, writing, visits; Tuesdays to Show Low & Snow Flake, Wednesday, afternoon Bible study; Thursday men's prayer breakfast; Friday, "game fellowship"; and Saturdays, final prep for Sunday. Shopping and a little R&R fit in wherever.

Of 22 distinct Native American Indian tribes in AZ, the Apache is closest (the Ft. Apache reservation is only five miles to the west) and Zuni, Hopi and Navajo to the north. Locals and others coming from throughout the Southwest need Christ. Then, believers need a place where they can grow in the things of God, and churches and pastors need encouragement, training, and equipping for what lies ahead.



The region is beautiful! Area lakes and the Little Colorado River are filled with trout. Deer, Antelope, Elk, Big Horn sheep, mountain lions and bear are present. Highs are in the mid to upper 70's and at nights you need a jacket. So far we have taken one specific "take-some-time-off" little jaunt of 45 minutes on a little road leading into the "Wallow Fire" of 2011 that came right to the edge of Greer (below center), destroying only one home.



Lava rock harvested from this peak.

Note 2011Wallow Fire Damage.

High ranch country with snow on mtns.

Numerous events have taken place since we arrived, including Memorial Day celebrations, the annual Greer Days (parade, vendors, and all), and the Cedar Creek forest fire currently still being brought under control. It has burned over 45,000 acres so far. People have been pretty skittish over the fire even though it is over 30 miles from us because the Wallow Fire started far away as well in 2011. Greer Days brought back many memories to us. There's nothing like a small town celebration. Add to that the wild west atmosphere of Arizona, and it's a great experience of flags, horses, old west gunfights, vendors, vendors, and veterans.



Farsi Ministry – Exploding Exponentially:

When Bob began meeting with "M" and "V" around our kitchen table in Kiev over ten years ago, our goal was to minister to as many of the 10,000 or so Farsi speakers living in the city as possible. We had no idea that the ministry would reach far beyond that, and we certainly didn't have any thought that it would lead to a global ministry touching Farsi speakers in over 35 countries. But, that is what has happened. We have received several highly abbreviated updates from "M" the past two months in which he informed us of the amazing growth and impact the work is still having. It's like reading the Book of Acts and the Epistles all over again.

- The ministry is currently the largest Farsi social media ministry in the world with over 100,000 Facebook subscribers. Of these subscribers, the vast majority are still practicing Muslims.
- Facebook and YouTube posts go to over 35 countries, with over 250,000 unique users visiting the Facebook site each month. The page gets over half a million hits each month, with half of these visits from people in Afg***stan, Ir*n, and Taj***stan. Approximately 65% of the visitors to our page are Muslims.
- Many salvations take place each month, including members of the Taliban and ISIS.
- Our site has over 1000 videos and a lot of other material for download and use in evangelism, Bible study, and discipleship. Many of the underground churches in Ir*n are currently using our videos and material from our website.
- Our video programs have recently been picked up by satellite television and are currently aired for two hours each week during prime time-slots. Estimated audience for the programs is 5 to 10 million. [The internationally-known network has offered this air time that normally costs \$200 per minute to produce to the ministry free of charge.]
- People have accepted Christ in faraway places, including many from Afg***stan. One example is the conversion of a young man out in the desert many miles from the nearest church who came to faith and is being discipled through a cell phone charged by a solar charger. Another example is a young man who, after coming to faith, walked for days and many miles to go to India as a missionary to share the Gospel there.
- One of the greatest needs in the Farsi work right now is a vast network of serious intercessory prayer warriors who will lift up the team in courageous praying on a regular basis. For that reason, "M", "M2", "V", "F", and Joel have formed a specialized private prayer network of intercessors to which they will communicate short but specific praises and prayer requests. So, if you are willing to be part of that prayer ministry team, please e-mail us with your e-mail address, and we'll pass it on.
- One of the most exciting reports from our Farsi team comes from "F". After many months of delays, his parents were able to visit him in Germany, the first time they had seen each other face to face in about five years. While there, both his father and mother accepted Christ into their lives. This is a major answer to prayer, and we still rejoice in our hearts for their salvation. Pray for them as they grow.

Joel and Ira: The flower and coffee shop (at <https://www.facebook.com/CoffeeFlowers.cafe/?fref=ts>) is the platform business Joel and Ira opened as a means of ministry and funding other aspects of their ministry. They have faced many recent spiritual, emotional, physical, and financial challenges, and even though there has been great improvement in those areas, they really need your prayer support. Much of their ministry relates directly to the Muslim world. We encourage you to message them on Facebook and request their updates and share words of encouragement. They are in the process of opening a leadership training center as they continue serving through <http://www.onechallenge.org/>. They deserve your prayer and your support.

Timur: Timur and his family still minister in Russia, but his wife is going through horrible episodes of discouragement and depression because her family has turned against them. They are facing severe financial burdens and have had to find another place to live. They, likewise, would benefit greatly from your prayers and your financial help. Again, their ministry focuses on the Muslim population around them, especially those who come from Timur's home country, Uz***stan.

Saied: We don't hear often from Saied, but do know he and his wife remain in Norway as Syrian refugees where they continue ministering to area Muslims and preaching in Arabic services at a church near the refugee camp. His two oldest sons are still in Russia as university students where they share the Gospel and train leaders, and his mother and his youngest son are still in Syria very near territory controlled by ISIS. A couple of weeks ago, we got the following message from Saied:

"Our village (Kvrabhm) exposed to rocket fire from Islamist terrorist pilot defected from the Syrian army. But the question is: Why is it wants to secede from the Syrian regime bombards Christian villages? . Note: My son Richard across from the place of explosion of the rocket before the hour but we thank the Lord Jesus on the preservation of the life of my son."

Sergei: We've not heard from Sergei and his team in Siberia for several months, but ask that you continue praying for them as they faithfully share the Gospel with the Buryat people in many towns and villages.

Personally: Overall, we are thrilled to be here and, even though it is a very different type of ministry for us, we know this is where the Lord wants us to be. Jo Ann is "almost in heaven" back in her home state and close to some of her family members. It has been a special blessing to be so close to her sister, Dortha, who is less than an hour away ministering in a similar role with husband Bill.

That notwithstanding, there have been some irritating struggles. Bob apparently ended up with a spider bite on his hand from just before we left Missouri, and it was exceedingly painful with burning feelings for many weeks. His hand swelled considerably, and even now with all inflammation and pain gone, a knot the size of a penny remains under the skin. He also has periodic "apnea" like episodes in the early morning hours that impact his sleeping. He generally settles for four to six hours of uninterrupted sleep, so afternoon naps are common.

Both of us still battle shortness of breath due to the 8,500 foot altitude, so we're still working on getting a good walking discipline in, and hoping to lengthen them to the point that we can venture out onto the many hiking and walking trails that range from 8,000 to 10,000 feet in altitude. Between schedule, heat, and lack of endurance, we simply have not taken advantage of the beauty around us. Bob has yet to go trout fishing.

PRAYER REQUESTS!

We originally shared the Greer ministry opportunity with only eight or ten individuals, and God quickly provided for our anticipated expenses. However, we greatly underestimated the amount of traveling we would be doing, and the overall cost of living here in Greer, and we did not foresee unplanned costs. So, we ask you to pray that the Lord will provide the additional needed project support. Our personal resources were quickly consumed with unanticipated vehicle, trailer, and ministry equipment costs, but we know the Lord will faithfully provide as He impresses others to be part of the project.

Eleven of the 440 families and individuals who receive our LUMglobal reports support Life Unlimited monthly. Special ministry projects like this are funded separately as special ministry projects like this one. If you feel prompted by the Holy Spirit to share in this ministry, we will be deeply grateful.

In addition, while space doesn't allow a long list, each team, individual, and ministry noted above is in great need of prayer support, financial undergirding, and increased strength and stamina. Please make a point to put us all in a priority position on your daily prayer life.

In His Bond, By His Grace, and For His Kingdom,
Bob and Jo Ann (The Tollivers)

IF you feel led to give for one of these needs, make all checks out to Life Unlimited Ministries, & designate its use in the Memo line so we can distribute it correctly.