



Compelled to Go!

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Dear Friends, Family, and In-Pact Partners:

It seems like we can never get to a schedule of sending our praise/prayer letters in a timely fashion. So, once again, we are writing a long overdue note, almost four months since our last letter the end of July. We're now back at Chapel de Oro in Yuma, AZ, and our ministry season has three Sundays under its belt. As is usually the case, much has happened since our last letter, so we'll try to bring you up to date on the following:

Summer at Greer Chapel:

Once again Greer Chapel broke its own "first-timers" record by going the entire season with first-time visitors in every one of the 20 Sunday services, including the final unofficial Sunday when we met as a small group in a home. When you combine that with the previous seasons, the Chapel has had first-time attendees in every service for over 40 consecutive seasonal Sundays. And, again as last year, we have had new "regulars" begin attending. Clearly God is blessing the ministry and influence of Greer Chapel.



The Chapel influence grows in the community as members become more involved. We also hosted a hospitality booth at Greer Days giving out free water for both "man and dog", candy, literature and Bibles. The men's and women's Bible studies grew this year, in size, spiritual depth and closeness. The men especially made even stronger commitments to pray for the community and for various needs and issues. The entire congregation is also committed to praying for revival to touch Greer. And, of course, we couldn't do without the annual hotdog cook-out at the Reichert cabin, with well over forty in attendance.



The wildlife and Fall colors this year were spectacular. We don't have space to show you all the pictures we'd like you to see, so these will have to suffice. And, this year cold weather chased us to Yuma several days early after we had below freezing nights and three measureable snows by the third week of October. Here's an excellent YouTube aerial view of Greer shot by a local guy. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kb3azizC-Zs>.



Also, for the second season, Bob's sermons have been video-taped. Here's a still shot from one of them. This year, however, they are immediately available via the internet. Steve Williams, one of our leaders, created a YouTube channel where all but two of the sermons are posted. Bob continued the series, "The Wonder of It All" for the duration of the season. If you would like to watch them, you will find eighteen of the twenty at the following YouTube link. Check them out. <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwckdkurqiYcPbBS-xz0T6g>. They were also posted on Facebook, but for some reason, Facebook removed them. However, you can find the study sheets posted there in PDF form so you can print them off. You can access them at this website at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/168281700490054/>. Unfortunately, it seems in both cases that some of the sermons are missing, but most of them are accessible.

Today in Yuma:

Since our season in Yuma is only three Sundays old, we don't have any pictures other than the ones below of a recent sunrise over the Gila Mountains immediately east of the Park. These were taken from our table where we enjoy constant views of desert life, shadowed evening skies, and cloudless moonrises.



This season may be one of transition for the Chapel. Over the Summer several families experienced deaths or health issues that are not allowing them to return. Last year our first Sunday we had 103 in attendance, but our first Sunday this year we had 79, and then this past Sunday 80. In addition, we've had at least two of our praise team members who have had to drop out for health reasons, one of them terminal. Others are talking about not returning next season because of age or health issues, and that includes some in leadership.

Bob was asked to "say grace" at the Park Welcome Party, attended by around 500 people, so this gave us an opportunity to connect with new people. Several have attended services because of that. He was also asked to give a brief presentation at the flag raising ceremony last Monday for Veterans Day. These events may not seem important, but they are because they give the Chapel exposure in this 1,200 site RV resort.

We're trying some new things this year for the Chapel. For example, this year the two of us are hosting our own "Welcome Week" at our site the first week of every month. We invite people who arrived in the park the previous month to drop by any Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday afternoons for a chance to get to know them better over light snacks. We had a total of around twenty who stopped by last week, and then Sunday at least six couples apologized for not coming because they either forgot, or had other obligations.

Since Mexican Train Game is so popular in Greer, we thought we'd offer it to folks here in the Park. It will be announced for the first time Sunday, so we'll see if there's an interest. We're also offering to do some special one-day "seminars" or "workshops" on various topics, and are waiting to see if there is any interest. We'll have a better idea about that ministry possibility in coming days, and will share more about the Yuma ministry later.

Prior to the beginning of Chapel ministry here in Yuma, we were able to make an overnight trip to Prescott, AZ, to visit Bob's cousin and his wife, Ken and Myrt Tolliver. Myrt had recently undergone chemo for cancer, and is doing great. Ken had recently had some heart issues that were alleviated by the implantation of a stent. Even though the visit was brief, it was great to spend some time with them. Ken is probably the closest to Bob having a brother as anyone. Their respective fathers, Robert Dale (Bob's Dad) and Ray, were the same way.

Other Ministry Matters:

We still stay connected to other ministries that we have either started or support financially, and they are all doing well.

+ The Farsi ministry is still having a major impact around the world, with "contacts" in over 30 countries. They continue to be the largest Christian social media ministry to Farsi speakers in the world. They consistently run 650,000+ Facebook visits a month out of which the 160,000+ Facebook "friends" receive their material weekly. "M", "K" (in a Middle Eastern country as a refugee), and I think "F" in Germany each personally respond to about 3,000 inquiries every month. The satellite television broadcasts he mentioned are produced in CBN's studios in Kiev, and the network estimates that they are seen by between 5 and 10 million Farsi speakers each week. The network recently gave them a third hour per week for ministry. At \$250 cost per minute, they are receiving weekly free broadcast time equivalent to \$45,000 each and every week!

"F" continues leading a network of about 16 groups, assisted by "V", who was the first guy I mentored with "M" at the very beginning of that ministry in 2006. "H" is also in Sweden still doing ministry to refugees there. If you remember, "F" was the first person "M" led to Christ, and he now serves that network in Germany.

Finally, "M", "M2", and "K" still do lots of translating. "K" has been a vital part of the translating, even from the country he currently resides "in hiding", because he speaks fluent English. They are trying very hard to get him located close to where they now are. I'm also writing two books for them to translate into Farsi, and also still videotaping all my sermons for them to use as they need.



"M" & "M2" prepping for taping



Joel and Ira speaking to training center opening



Sergei and Family

+ Joel and Ira Colon continue ministering through OC International in training evangelists and missionaries in their new training center, and teaching in various locations in Ukraine. He and two of Ira's brothers attended the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington several months ago and had a chance to meet and talk with a number of spiritual leaders. Joel continues working directly with the Farsi ministry in preparing materials for their social media, as well as developing new technology for their use. They are also working on many short videos that can be easily exported into closed countries, and also iPhone and Android mobile phone apps for easier access. Some 70% of their 160,000+ viewers use mobile phones as their point of access.

Last August they both traveled to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan to spend time with former graduates and also interview potential future students. The school now has a team in Nepal and has another team ready to go to Belarus. Their new session opened in September. And, in spite of all of this, Ira continues translating in various venues, and keeping the coffee and flower shop operating smoothly as a ministry to locals.

+ Sergei and Inna Lyakhov are still in Ulan Ude in Siberia where they continue leading the congregation they planted sixteen years ago. You may recall that Sergei was president of the senior class Bob taught at St. James Bible College in Kyiv in 2001. We still remember him standing over the map of Ukraine, weeping, as he drew an arrow from Kyiv to Ulan Ude in Siberia. Their work continues to grow dramatically in spite of ongoing persecution and harassment as they share the Gospel, train evangelists, and plant new churches among the Buryat people. Interestingly, we learned a few months ago that Leo, the first young man Bob baptized at KIBC back in 2006, has direct family connections with Ulan Ude.

+ Saied and Rana remain in a refugee camp in a North Atlantic country, enduring harassment, still waiting for the country's immigration people to provide the resources they are supposed to provide. They are safe & well.

Personal and Family Matters:

+ Family – Cindy and Kevin are still in Medellin, Colombia, as missionaries, while Christopher now lives in Waxahachie, TX, following university graduation. He has a lovely “young lady friend”. Debbie and Mike are in Buena Vista, CO, still active in church and community service groups. Cheri and Bob remain in St. Paul, MN, and are now grandparents for the 17th time via their five. (That means we’re great-grandparents 17 times!) Deanna and Jim are still in Galesburg, IL, where Jim pastors Fields Church and does hospice care. Michael is working in Galesburg, and JoyLinn is a Freshman at Olivet Nazarene University and plays in marching band.

+ Our Health – Jo Ann continues doing amazingly well following her heart attack a year ago this week. Now that we’re back in Yuma, she’s looking forward to walking, swimming, and biking. We just ordered her three wheel “bike” a couple days ago from Florida, and expect its arrival early next week. Bob’s knee recovery has not been as positive as we had hoped. Following “clean out” surgery in the knee last April, we were not able to take the next step until the end of August when he began a series of five “Visco-supplementational” shots that we had hoped would both reduce pain and create strength and stability.

Unfortunately, the surgeon diagnosed arthritis in both knees with the injured right knee being “bone on bone”. There isn’t much pain in the joint itself, but there is constant pain in the upper shin area, and frequent pain that “comes and goes” in his right foot, in his hips, and in his lower back. This past Monday his new Primary Care doctor told him that the knee is beginning to shift inward, stretching the interior ligament and constricting the anterior ligament. So, he not only sometimes uses the cane for more stability on his feet, but also wears a reinforced wrap-around knee brace as of this past Monday. We’re hoping that muscle strengthening might help, but the doctor told him the problem was mechanical and not strength related. But, hopefully, with walking, swimming, and biking, it will at least stabilize. If not, then we’ll face the next step – no pun intended. He plans to buy his bike as soon as Jo Ann’s arrives.

+ Our Future – We had a wonderful third season in Greer, and everyone is anxious that we return next May. That is our plan. Our second season in Yuma is now four weeks old, and everyone is excited about it. However, it appears that several families are not returning this year, others plan to make this their final year, and still others are arriving much later than normal. Last year our first Sunday saw 103 in attendance, but this year we had only 79. But we are excited about the season. We assume we will return next year to Yuma as well.

From a human perspective, it doesn’t make sense for us to relocate at this stage of life, but we feel this may be something in the future. Jo Ann has been following Bob around the world since 1961, and he thinks maybe it is time for her to come back to her “home” to be closer to her three siblings and families. And, since we already spend 10 to 10 ½ months of every year in Arizona, we’re beginning to think we need to become more serious about looking for something “permanent” to call home base. It doesn’t make lots of sense for us to spend \$800+ per month on a house we use less than two months each year.

Believe it or not, we’re seriously considering the possibility of a Park Model RV right here in the Resort to use as our permanent home, escape the heat by ministering in Greer at 8,500 feet elevation from late May through mid October, and spend the rest of the time in Yuma. No decision has been made, of course, but one thing is certain; ---- we definitely need to sell our place in Missouri.

In the meantime, while we continue praying and seeking counsel, we’ll keep on serving the Lord, and look with a measure of amazement as we approach our 60th anniversary in January. We don’t plan to come home for Christmas. Monday when Bob was meeting his new doctor, the doctor commented several times that Bob was “a very young 80!”. When he told Jo Ann, she said, “Next time he says that, tell him, ‘You should see my wife!’”

Prayer Requests: We need specific, concentrated, extended praying on these matters.

- Continued health – extended days, increased endurance, open doors, knee issues, weight loss for both.
- Wisdom and insight into God’s Word for preaching, witnessing, writing.
- Ongoing financial needs, both personal and ministry-related. \$2,000+ repair costs on both 5th wheels.
- Numerous friends in both chapels with health and family needs.
- Direction for Yuma chapel as this seems to be a year of transition.
- Big financial needs for the Farsi ministry and the Colon’s.
- Clarity in the possible decision to move, especially selling MO home and hoping to buy a park model right next to us.

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

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