



December 2015

Dear Friends,

Happy Christmas!

Warm Christmas greetings from Melbourne. As we prepare to celebrate good news of great joy, we are reminded of a recent visit to partners in South East Asia. Our trip coincided with the celebration of Eid al-Adha in one country, followed a few days later by a visit to one of the most significant Buddhist pagodas in the world.

Eid al-Adha is a festival when Muslim people around the world remember Abraham on Mount Moriah, nearly sacrificing his son. Animals are sacrificed in the mosque and every person in the local community will be blessed by eating meat as part of the celebration. We were blessed by eating durian ice cream – durian is the famous “stinky” fruit of the region. The best way to describe it is like a cross between onions and petrol. We travelled on to Singapore to meet with a CMS family who are leading a large International church at St George's in Tanglin. Our next stop was a predominantly Buddhist country, famous for its pagodas, including a huge temple at the heart of the city with a gold outer covering. So within the



A gold pagoda

space of a week we spent time in predominantly Muslim, then Christian then Buddhist contexts. We were reminded afresh of the challenge of



Eid al-Adha

learning to live in another culture and the significance of training people well for cross-cultural mission. As we spent time with men and women who have trained with us at St Andrew's Hall, it was deeply encouraging to hear them tell us that they have felt well-prepared and thoroughly equipped for cross-cultural life and work. We rejoiced to see their persevering faithfulness.

Pastoral Care of Missionaries

Rachel has been working as the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator for CMS in Victoria, the state that we live in. She has been covering the role for a colleague who is spending seven months involved in short-term mission. Rachel has enjoyed supporting missionaries who are on home assignment, many of whom we know from St Andrew's Hall. She will be finishing this job at the end of January.

Family News

Tom has just finished a Masters in Social Work. He has been appointed to a job as a social worker in the same hospital where Mia is a Radiotherapist. This is a wonderful answer to prayer and the role is pretty much exactly what he was hoping for. Tom and Mia will be able to travel to work together, making their commute easier. Tom's role is part-time, which leaves him space to be involved in leading the youth ministry in their church.

Sam is finishing up in Nepal at the beginning of December. He finished his semester of academic study in early October and then worked as an intern in the Australian Embassy in Kathmandu. Things have been challenging in Nepal with a blockade on the Indian border preventing basic supplies getting into the country. There are widespread shortages of petrol, cooking gas and many other household goods. Sam leaves Nepal in early December and will travel to Switzerland with his girlfriend, Melanie, who is from Zurich. Melanie works for a Swiss mission agency based in Kathmandu. They will then travel on to England. Sam gets back to Australia at the beginning of February.

Jonathan has started as President of the Christian Union at Monash University. He will be involved in the Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students "National Training Event" which takes place in early December. This is a conference for 1700 students from around Australia, aimed at equipping them for Christian life and service.

With our warmest greetings,

David and Rachel, Tom and Mia, Sam and Jonathan

PRAYER POINTS

Thank God for:

- The encouragement of seeing the fruit of our training ministry in the lives of those serving long-term in challenging contexts
- God's continued grace and kindness to our family

Please pray for:

- Rachel's continued role as Pastoral Care Co-ordinator for CMS in Victoria, especially in the busy conference season in January
- David is speaking at a CMS conference in Queensland in the first week of January. He will then be involved in a study intensive for his doctoral program in late January
- For wisdom for Jono as he leads the CU committee at Monash
- For Tom as he begins as a social worker at the Latrobe Regional Hospital
- For Sam as he returns to Australia and re-enters life here, knowing that re-entry is often a bumpy part of the cross-cultural journey.

Please contact your local Crosslinks office to change your contact details

Crosslinks, 251 Lewisham Way, London SE4 1XF Tel: 020 8691 6111 pletters@crosslinks.org
Crosslinks, 32 Montgomery Road, Belfast, Co. Antrim BT6 9HL Northern Ireland Tel: +44 (0) 28 9079 6028