

Dear Prayer Partners,

***“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” John 1:14***

Another Christmas season is fast approaching, and once again we are reminded of the marvelous miracle of the Savior, God in the flesh, that we might receive GRACE and TRUTH!! What a wonderful message we have to give to the world! It is because of you, our faithful prayer warriors and supporters that we can carry on the ministry of sharing this gift with the folk here in Arizona. Thank you for your faithfulness and we trust you will enjoy the blessed truth of this season. Merry Christmas!

## **Ministry**

It has been a joy to see God working in our little church here in Rimrock, AZ. Some of the folks we have been praying for and working with for a long time have been showing more interest, and a couple have been very faithful in attendance. We have also seen a couple of new ladies attend our Ladies' Bible Studies, which Sue teaches each week. God has been answering prayer, and we praise Him for it!

We continue meeting at the nursing home facility each month conducting a service for the patients there. It has been a blessing to see several of those folks become faithful. We praise the Lord for those who help with this ministry from our own church too.

Mike was asked to preach at one of our "sister churches" where we are also helping with their Christmas choir music. It is truly a blessing to help in these other small churches.

We are planning to have a special musical service on Christmas Day, featuring our son, Mike, and his family who will be visiting for Christmas. They have agreed to bring several special numbers, and we are trusting the Lord will bring visitors for this special service. Please pray with us for all upcoming holiday services and special events.

## **Mission**

What a special blessing it was to be able to attend Missions Conference at Ambassador Baptist College held the first week in November! God provided every need for this trip, including a wonderful place to stay while there. This is the first time we have been able to participate in this annual conference in 3 years. This particular year the college focused on church planting in the USA, emphasizing how our own country has truly become a mission field, much like any foreign field! It was a joy to make many contacts with

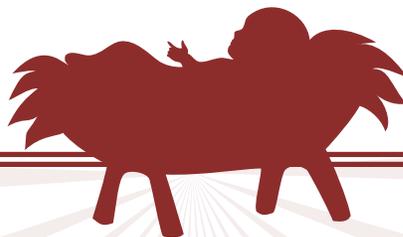
students who are contemplating missions, and particularly in the western USA! Please pray with us that these students who expressed interest in the West will continue to pursue God's leading, and that we would be able to assist them in the next few years to locate the areas where God has chosen.

It was also a very special blessing to hear the preaching from Brother Danny Whetstone and others during the week. What a refreshing time for us! And of course, to see former students going on to serve the Lord, renew friendships, and make new friends and contacts - all was a special blessing for us. Thank the Lord for allowing us to make this trip!

## **Family**

Since this prayer letter is also our Christmas letter, we like to share special things about our family. We believe that God has blessed our prayers, efforts and years in the ministry when our main focus was teaching and training our children! Today, we can see some of that "fruit" as our own children continue to serve the Lord they learned to love!

Melody and Jim Bjur continue their service in Arica, Chile, pastoring, teaching and training others to know the Savior and serve Him. Their daughter, Rebekah, is in her 2<sup>nd</sup> year of teaching English in Shanghai, China. Jeremy graduated this past May from Bob Jones University in Culinary Arts and is now working as a chef at the Wilds Christian Camp in NC. He is preparing for a missions trip to Nova Scotia in February with a team from the Wilds. Joshua left home this year and is now living in Greenville, SC working to be able to pursue a career in nursing in the coming years. This leaves one daughter at home, Debbie. She has been learning artistic skating recently and has participated in several competitions. We are thankful for the work that God has done and is doing in the lives of their children AND their church people!



Joy and Kent Ramler are pastoring in Frederick, MD serving in their 7<sup>th</sup> year. Their oldest daughter and husband, Ruth and Justin and almost 2-year old, Jessi, live about an hour from them. They enjoy being grandparents close by. Jack is in his Sr. year as a Bible major at BJU and looking forward to grad school following graduation. Rose, a Sr. in high school, and David, a freshman, help in the church and Christian school there. Rose plays piano very nicely, and David has continued with violin. The highlight of their year was getting to take a missions trip to Spain with their parents!

Mike and Stephanie Smith saw many changes this year in their family and lives. In April, we were privileged to attend Mike's ordination in Longmont, CO. This was a very special occasion to them, but also to us! What grace God has bestowed upon our family! They are currently finishing up work on a church and parsonage in Ferron, UT but are seeking what the Lord has for them next. While Rachel is at home helping Mom and taking online Bible classes, her twin, Sarah transferred from BJU to Maranatha Baptist College to continue her studies toward the medical field. Her sister, Bethany joined her as a freshman. That left Drew, a Jr. and Katelyn, a freshman to help hold down the home front. They stay very busy helping both Dad in the construction work and Mom at home. Drew spent several weeks this past summer with MTT on a missions trip to Brazil and loved it!

Jeff and Becky Smith still live in Elbert, CO. The church where they serve in Colorado Springs is growing, and the entire family serves in many different ways. Their lives changed a lot this year also, since Jared graduated from high school and is now studying Graphic Arts at BJU. He became roommates with his cousin, Jack! They love it! Joel is a senior in high school, very involved in sports (and everything else he can be)! Joel also went on a missions trip last summer to visit missionaries in Brazil. Jocelyn, 10<sup>th</sup> grade, Joanna, 8<sup>th</sup> grade, and Jessica, 6<sup>th</sup> grade are all super

busy with their dogs, kitties, goats, chickens, and I'm not sure what else Becky has there in their country home!

Ed and Heather Smith, in Cincinnati, OH stay super busy also. Titus, 1 year old, and Tucker, 1<sup>st</sup> grade give Mom and Dad lots of busy moments and fun times. We were elated this past year to have a phone call from Tucker telling us he had "gotten saved!" What wonderful news!!! Katie, in 5<sup>th</sup> grade, plays piano and Sophia, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade both love to cook, bake, and help in the home. Eddie continues to work two jobs in two different hospitals. But he finds opportunity to spend family time together, and also is very active in their church. Heather does substitute teaching in their Christian School from time to time, decorates the church for each of the holidays throughout the year, and still finds time to take care of a busy household! Ed was also privileged to go on a missions trip to Costa Rica this past year as a sponsor for their youth group.

We praise the Lord for the family He has given us, and our heart's main desire is to see "that my children walk in truth." We are burdened for any of our grandchildren who do not know the Lord or are wandering from Him. What blessings they are missing! We truly appreciate your prayers!

We wish you a **Blessed Christmas** as you remember the wonderful Gift God has given us!

In His service,

*Mike & Sue Smith*

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