

Tom & Ruth Denlinger Family Newsletter - December 2013

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Merry Christmas To You and Your Family! We are doing well although this Christmas will be the first year that we are not fully together as a family. Our son, **Ryan**, is 18 and is currently on his outreach phase with **Youth With a Mission Arctic Mercy** on Kodiak Island in Alaska. He started his Discipleship Training School in September in Homer, Alaska. He completed his training in November and will be working on the mission field there until the first week of February. We are a close family so having Christmas without him is a little hard for us to get used to. But my wife, **Ruth**, and I know that we are entering a new time in life for our young adults to move into their own journeys. It is something every family goes through and we are excited for each one of our children to seek the LORD with all their hearts. **Ruth** has been working as a personal care assistant in a home for mentally challenged people for the past 5 years. We have been married for 28 years and we want to be well pleasing in His sight!



(L-R) Tom, Chloe, Alex, Ruth & Ryan

Our son, **Alex**, is now 21 years old and works two jobs. He continues his job in the food trade industry but is also an investor/trader in Private Securities and Derivatives. God's favor is on him and I am so thankful that he is working in a field that he loves. He is a gifted young man with a huge heart for serving the LORD and helping people. He is also a very talented drummer and uses his years of experience in church worship teams.

Our daughter, **Chloe**, is an 11th grade homeschooling student and has many dreams for her future. For the past three years she has been working as a counselor in training at Kenbrook Bible Camp and this summer she hopes to be a full counselor - totally in charge of her group of girls. She loves cooking and baking and wants to be an interior designer. She loves worship music and has sung in several different worship teams.

We want you to know that we appreciate you more than words can say. Your prayer support is greatly needed by me as I work in Alaska and seek the Father for His plan. I will be honest and share with you that being an innovator and visionary is not an easy path to walk sometimes. It is challenging to "re-invent the wheel" and start a ministry from scratch. But it has many rewards along the way. But it is imperative to remain focused in this kind of work. The words I use with our LightShine staff that I seek to be known for are "**obedience, faithfulness and persistence**". I often speak on those themes when I speak in churches because those traits must mark any ministry that seeks to develop long term relationships with people in other cultures.

Recently I have been developing my friendship with a native Alaskan man who is a well respected elder among his people. We have known each other for years - a true relationship of respect for one another. We have sent many, many people to help in his village and we gave them many tools for ministry. But only recently have I realized that we were closer as friends than I previously understood. That made me feel very good because the love that I had for him, his family and his people was not only realized but it was also acknowledged and returned as a brother in the LORD. This kind of relationship takes time to establish. **Native Alaskans are used to the concept of covenant relationships among their people.** You cannot survive in the harsh north without true and lasting commitment for each other. I will not share all the disappointments that he has had with white missionaries over his lifetime. But what I am learning is causing me to deepen this relationship with my friend and seek the LORD with him in how to break the stranglehold that Satan has over many of his people. **The key to overcoming the onslaught from the enemy is to build a covenant with the people to show them that as one people, we are stronger and can withstand anything that Satan throws at us.** This can only be fully accomplished through the message of the Cross. But it must also involve commitment for everyone involved to become one as brothers and sisters in Christ. This is the work we are doing in Alaska. Please pray for us as we continue to build relationships that will last for all eternity!

Please continue to pray for us. Intercessory prayer is vital to our continued success. **Pray** for God's favor to increase in me among native people in Alaska. **Ask the LORD** to open new doors of opportunity for us. **Pray** that He gives me wisdom to initiate new strategies for growth in our ministry. **Pray** that the Father would send more workers to us. Thank you so much!

Tom Denlinger - Ministry Director