

What a privilege to be here in Taiwan again. Taiwan is celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the founding of the Republic of China on Taiwan. Dr Sun Yat Sen established the Republic in 1911. It has been a very noisy event with a lot of fireworks. As with all anniversaries there has been a time of looking back over the events of the past. There is also a time of looking forward with anticipation to the future.

We as well are looking back over the many years of involvement we have had in what God has been doing here. It has been 47 years since we first came. I am a second generation missionary in that my parents left for central China in 1929 as newlyweds of two weeks. The good seed that they planted there over the years is still bearing fruit today. I have enjoyed the opportunities I have had to renew fellowship with some of them.

As we reflect over the past year we are thankful for the visiting ministries that encouraged us. Lionel Batke came in March and Elsie Welsh in April. Hearts were blessed and refreshed as they shared in our churches and fellowshiped with our national pastors.

We were strengthened over the summer as we travelled in Canada to some Bible camps and supporting churches. Many assured us afresh of their prayers and interest in God's work in Taiwan.

Early November found us back in Taiwan working with our national pastors and churches. Christmas afforded a great opportunity to tell the blest story so familiar to folks at home, but not so familiar here. A short time ago I was in our Kaohsiung church and met with Pastor Tzu. He is a chaplain in the prison system there. He shared that recently they baptized 92 inmates upon their confession of faith in Christ. He is thankful for the financial support we are able to channel to him through our Fellowship.

Chinese New Year was February 3rd this year. My sister Christine and two of her daughters, Elaine and Linda were here to visit us in this holiday season, also Eleanor Forge of Swift Current. We had a great time together visiting our churches and seeing the Island.

We thank God for the freedom we have to share the gospel here in Taiwan. In the coming year we are looking for new and greater opportunities to share this precious gospel story. Pray for our national pastors as they labour in their communities holding forth the Word of Life. Your prayers for the financial needs of the work are always appreciated. Continue to pray for the prison ministry. We rejoice with Pastor Chu Hong for the victories, but there are also many challenges.

After writing this letter at the end of Chinese New Year, I had a challenging trial. On February 17th, I was taken to the Chiayi Christian Hospital with chest pain. An angiogram revealed I had four, 90% blockages in the arteries of my heart. The solution was open heart surgery, quadruple bypass. I am very thankful for the prayers on both sides of the world on my behalf. God graciously undertook and I am recovering well. God is good and everyday is a gift.

Yours for Souls in Taiwan
David and Dennice Matson

