Dear friends,

Happy New Year!

As you receive this letter, I will be in SE Asia, at a retreat/training for our workers based in Asia. Although I am writing this in advance, I can tell you who is planned to come and what we hope to focus on during the ten days we have together. I would really appreciate your prayers, not only for me and my facilitation of this event but for each and every one of the participants that they would be refreshed, rested and better equipped to return to their individual places of ministry. Please pray as well for us to come together well as a group since none of us work in the same geographic location it can be lonely for our field staff who serve in isolated locations with little contact with other foreign believers.

Some of the topics we will be covering are:

- Different models of “business as mission”
  - We strongly believe in ethical and honest business. We do NOT do a business as a cover or something “pretend”. We support legitimate businesses that show that businesses run on Christian principles can be successful. Through business, we can model how to care for one another. Some businesses focus on their employees for sharing the gospel, others on their customers, still others on the community. It is often said “work is worship” and that all people need two things, “Jesus and a Job”. Business as mission hopes to provide both and break down any artificial division between work and ministry.

- Cross-Cultural Inter-personal skills.
  - Communication is always tricky, even in our own culture and our own families where misunderstandings happen despite our good intentions. This is magnified several times over when working in a second (or third) language and in a culture where gestures and behavior patterns have different meanings. We’ll spend some time on listening skills as well as conflict resolution and coaching.
• Disciple-Making Movements
  
  o One of the growing approaches to reaching unreached people groups is called DMM or Disciple Making Movements whereby the gospel is shared in a manner designed to promote quick expansion so that groups of people may come to faith in Christ rather than one individual at a time.

• We will also have times of praise and worship, sharing about our challenges and joys in our work, and just having fun. A very special field trip will be when we visit one of the projects where our CVM workers are starting a new training center for training students and farmers in animal health and husbandry.

Please pray for our facilitators and our hosts as they voluntarily travel and serve to challenge, empower and facilitate each one of us to better serve in our own unique callings. Pray for those in closed countries and with security concerns. It will also be a special opportunity for some of our newer workers to be mentored and encouraged by some of our more experienced ones.

In addition, please pray for our participants:

• A single woman partnered with nationals to train pastors in animal health as an entry into rural communities.

• One new family on the field going through culture shock, another busy in language school.

• A family starting up a business with challenges in hiring, marketing, etc.

• A couple serving as mentors to nationals and foreigners doing a variety of Christian outreach ministries and businesses.

• A family teaching at a university.

• A new couple preparing to serve in Asia next year as they raise their prayer and financial support this year.

• A couple of new people who have heard God’s call and are exploring possible places of service.

• A family doing community projects in remote Muslim villages.

• An expatriate (foreign) vet married to a national doing ministry and training.

Thank you all for the privilege of serving this team of workers. We couldn’t do it without your prayers and your financial support.

In partnership with you,
Karen and Ron Stoufer

Stoufer Family Contact Information:
19303 Fremont Ave N
Seattle, WA 98133
kstoufer@cvmusa.org

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