



December, 2004

Dear friends,

We are drawing near the end of the year. Advent Season reminds us of the missionary heart of God, that “God so loved the world that He sent his one and only Son.” It also reminds us of the urgency of our calling to “be diligent and ... persevere” (1 Timothy 4:15) because the Peace proclaimed by angels has not yet extended to all the earth.

I am nearing the end of the writing of my dissertation. I have completed four chapters, and am about halfway through the fifth and final chapter. I will present it to my committee, Lord willing, on the first day of classes in January. My committee will review it and make recommendations to prepare the final draft for my defense, which should come during February.

The task force on personal and professional development for TEAM is also nearing the end of our work. We have put together an integrated learning process for our missionaries that will help them to grow in ministry effectiveness from their first inquiry with TEAM through their retirement, and beyond. Based on the plan we have developed and the portions we have already implemented, we are poised to take the next step.

We have proposed that the mission establish a Centre for LifeLong Learning which will incorporate the four primary aspects of our work:



1. The Day of Prayer and Vision, which we encourage as a means for each missionary to set their goals and direction in ministry at least once a year.
2. Learning for Intercultural Effectiveness, a series of five preparation phases that our missionaries will participate in from the time they first apply to TEAM through their first years of cultural and linguistic acquisition on the field.
3. The LifeLearner Network, a tool that we have developed to enable missionaries to access learning opportunities to increase their effectiveness wherever they are in the world, while they are in the midst of ministry.
4. Leadership Development, a specific series of learning experiences designed to help missionaries develop their skills and gifts in leadership both in their local ministry and in the larger context of missions.

The mission leadership has enthusiastically endorsed our proposal, and would like us to fully implement it as soon as possible. Of the eight specialists who have made up the task force, they are asking four of us to serve as program coordinators for these four segments of the Centre for LifeLong Learning. They have asked me to be the Program Coordinator for the LifeLearner Network, and to take on that role immediately upon completing my doctorate. This will involve overall coordination of the LifeLearner Network, learning group facilitators, and helping missionaries to document their progress. I will also be helping to coordinate learning partnerships with other educational sources such as seminaries and colleges, church missions pastors and other resource centers in the U.S. and around the world.

Lois and I enjoy the frequent visits of our kids, and our rapidly growing granddaughter Savannah. She will turn three in March. Kevin and Bridget are living about five minutes south of us in East Bridgewater until they start seminary at Gordon-Conwell in June. Chris still lives about five minute north of us in Whitman, where he begins classes for his paramedic licensure in January.



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