

Needham News

Christmas 2011

Dear Friends

Thank you so much for your faithful prayers. The year 2011 is almost at an end and as far as I (Ken) am concerned without doubt it has been the best year of my life so far.

Some of the places I regularly visit were as enjoyable as ever such as the Capernwray Bible School in England and Germany and the Ecola Bible School in Oregon. Christ Church, Kilkeel is our home church and has a wonderful variety of ways to reach young people. We are especially pleased that a number of these young folk have welcomed us geriatrics with enthusiasm, even inviting us for meals and to speak at events they have organised.

Hawaii is also a regular stop and includes my favourite high school, the Baptist Academy. Kauai Christian Fellowship is a warm, vigorous and crazy crowd that is one of our favourite churches. Check out the writings of Rick Bundschuh, who was a co-author of the book "Soul Surfer" written by Bethany Hamilton and a special advisor for the film of the same name.

Hawaii was also the setting for our first visit to Waikiki Baptist Church. Like KCF they have just over one thousand people attending their Sunday services. A middle-aged couple from Japan came in to one of these services. They were on holiday and the husband did not go to church, but on impulse they came in off the street. Both were in tears by the close of the meeting, he because he was experiencing the joy of the new life that Jesus gives those who trust Him, and she because this had been her heart's desire and number one prayer for more than twenty years.

The most exciting part of the year however, was the visit to Malaysia. It was an inspiration to be introduced to the vitality and effectiveness of Community Bible Study International. I had been invited to be the plenary speaker at their Asia/Pacific conference. The setting was a wonderful resort hotel outside Kuala Lumpur. The repercussions of that conference will be felt for years to come. Following this there was an intensive three week stint of ministry shared with our son-in-law Steve Burmester, vicar of St Chad's, Handforth near Manchester, England.

The Church in Malaysia is experiencing enormous blessing as they reach out to the thousands of impoverished migrant workers, providing their only medical care amongst other practical and relevant help. These workers come from nine other countries in the region. One statistic is that more than 18,000 Vietnamese have become Christians in Malaysia in the last two years.

One of the churches spearheading this outreach is Harvest Christian Assembly, Klang. We were able to visit a huge derelict supermarket they had just bought. Three months later, three of the seven floors have been renovated and a beautiful 1,200 seat worship centre was inaugurated. There is also underground parking, an Olympic sized swimming pool, restaurant, day care and numerous other facilities.

“Do you ever take a holiday?” is a question we are sometimes asked. This year we were blessed with a most marvellous experience - a seven day cruise out of Vancouver, Canada. We went north to Glacier Bay, Alaska. The words “stunning” and “awesome” are so frequently used and misused that they have almost lost their meaning but that is how I would have to describe this magnificent desolation.

The time in Canada was not all holiday though! I also spoke at three week long camps and in three churches, including Peoples’ Church, Toronto. It was eighteen years since my last visit there and the Sunday attendance now tops 6,000. The pastor is Charles Price who is also a former Torchbearer colleague and the author of a number of helpful books.

Most of this year has been greatly enriched for me by being able to have my lovely wife with me. We celebrated 47 years of marriage in July. I am asking her to bring you up to date on her special activities. She will also edit and censor all that I have written.

This year has been a lot of travel for me (Eva) and fitting in the other activities is sometimes a challenge! I enjoy accompanying several people on their faith journey and was part of a group organising a Forum for those who are interested in mentoring for spiritual growth. The original inspiration came from Tony Horsfall who has written a number of books – one of the most useful of which is “Working from a Place of Rest”, something I am trying to learn to do! Four of us invited the group to come to Ireland this year and they did! It was a very profitable time in November.

I also still facilitate Quiet Days in our home when they are requested. Occasionally we are asked to introduce the principle of Listening Prayer to groups or individuals who have not yet explored this way of hearing from the Lord and that is always exciting. The editing/censoring of this letter is another matter!

Am I retiring? Well not yet! We spent three weeks in Australia - each week in a different place, but with well-loved and special friends too long neglected. Not only did God move in each of these places, but we have been signed up for more wide-reaching ministry in all of them. This is planned for 2013.

After Malaysia the most fulfilling time came during my first ever visit to Moldova. This small, former communist country is desperately poor economically but I found there the warmest, most enthusiastic and dedicated of churches. As I left there were tears on both sides and pressing invitations to return asap, matched with a resolve on my own part that this is something that I need to follow up.

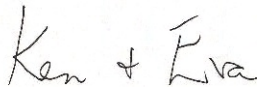
Scandinavia has a wonderful culture and in both Norway and Denmark I found Jesus at work and many people hungry for a deeper walk with Him. I am deeply thankful for the many friends I have there and the great organisational help I receive.

That only leaves our several trips to Turkey throughout the year. We have met some interesting people there and had opportunities to speak in expat churches. We’ll be happy to tell you more one to one. Space is running out here! It is a beautiful country and friendly people

This year I have been emphasising the simplicity of the essential Gospel. One becomes a Christian by personally inviting Jesus to live and reign at the core of one's being. Living like a Christian simply means letting Him out to connect with everyone you meet. Having the Saviour inside fills my emptiness and purifies my filthiness. Letting Him out transforms my aimlessness and transcends my uselessness. THAT has made the past year so exciting and gives high hopes for 2012.

Thank you again for journeying with us in prayer. An itinerary for 2012 is attached for your interest and in the hope that we can count on you to keep us in your prayers.

In the Life and Love of Jesus

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ken + Eva". The letters are cursive and connected.

Ken and Eva

Ken Needham's Proposed Itinerary – 2012

January 1-5	Home		
5-12	Edmonton	Alberta	Canada
13-21	Forest Hill	California	USA
21-28	Battleground	Washington	
28 – 29	Portland	Oregon	
30 -			
February-3	Ecola Bible School	Oregon	
4-24	Kailua	Hawaii	
25-			
March-2	Auburn	California	
3-9	Georgetown	California	
10-14	Murfreesboro	Tennessee	
15-26	Various places		Denmark
27-			
April 1-25	Home		
26-			
May-16	Young Moldovans visit our home area		Ireland
17-			
June-18			Undisclosed
19-30	Home		
July1-23	Various places		England
24-31	Home		
August 1-21	Home		
22-			
September -5	Cape Town area		South Africa
6-9	Home		
10-27			Undisclosed
28-			
October 1-12	Various places		Denmark
13-20	Bodenseehof Bible School,Friedrichshafen		Germany
21-31	Home		

November and December – Yet to be finalised