



"The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us. 'For in him we live and move and have our being.'"

Acts 17:24-28 (NIV)

So much has happened since the last time we shared an update with you, and through all of it we have been reminded of God's perfect timing and arrangement of people and circumstances for his good purposes.

First, I'd like to share some good news of how the Spirit has been working in the lives of some of our CWEF program participants in recent months:

- Kanhchana, our health director in Cambodia, has begun training second-year [HEAL](#) program advocates using lessons from CHE (Community Health Evangelism). Several of the advocates who were given the gift of faith through their participation in the program last year are now intentionally bringing their husbands or other family members to training so they can hear the Gospel along with the practical and valuable health training.
- Melody, a CWEF university intern and previous high school scholarship recipient, has received the gift of faith and is preparing for baptism.
- We had the opportunity to host Summer, another university intern and previous high school scholarship recipient, here in Shanghai earlier this month. She was invited to tell her story at the

annual fundraising auction for [Concordia International School Shanghai](#). The Spirit is working in Summer's life through his Word and through friends, and she was able to join us for worship service during her visit with us.

In our last letter we shared that Persephone, previous CWEF executive director and my (Josh's) supervisor, had stepped down and was planning to return to the U.S. in January to care for her ailing father. As it turned out, she had to leave in early November, as her father unexpectedly was injured in a bad auto accident (from which he thankfully has recovered quite well), and in early December I took over the role of interim executive director for CWEF. This was a bit of a shock that I wasn't quite prepared for, since I was also pushing hard to finish the final project of my master's degree before the end of the year. Due to all this, the last two months of 2016 was an intense period of long hours, little sleep and – let's be honest – a lot of stress. By God's grace, Coco and I will also remember this time period as one in which the Lord covered us with his abundant love and peace through many answered prayers, unexpected supporters, perfectly timed encounters with good friends and his ever-sustaining Word. We sincerely appreciate all of you who regularly pray for our family.

In January, we enjoyed the gift of spending time with our colleagues for an LCMS family retreat and CWEF annual meetings. All the members of the LCMS Asia team and our families met together in southern Taiwan during the first week of January for worship, fellowship, learning and fun. Our little John enjoyed celebrating his 2nd birthday and having fun with a LOT of new friends in Taiwan. Two weeks later, Josh traveled to Phnom Penh



and Kunming for program planning meetings with the CWEF Cambodia and China teams. During these meetings, we were blessed to be joined by Julie Lutz, the newest member of our CWEF team and one of the people God brought to help out at just the right time. Julie has been serving with LCMS in Papua New Guinea for nearly 30 years, but due to some visa issues, she isn't currently able to return to PNG, so she has agreed to come serve with CWEF in a temporary role supporting our local staff, and is working out of our office in Hong Kong. Thank God for Julie!

In the past two months, our team in China has been focused on adjusting to new laws that have come into effect in China regulating international non-profits with operations in mainland China. The primary change is that we need to re-register our offices through the public security bureau (the police). We are currently in the middle of this quite lengthy process and would very much appreciate your prayers: that we could complete the process as quickly as possible, that we would be allowed to continue operating as we have been and even that God would open up new opportunities as a result of this re-registration process.

Meanwhile in Cambodia, our health and education programs continue to move forward, and at the beginning of April I will be making a trip there to spend time with our team in Phnom Penh together with LCMS colleague Rev. Charles Ferry. Pr. Ferry is based in Indonesia and is responsible for the Southeast Asia area, including Cambodia. He has recently been added as a member of CWEF's board of directors, and I'll have the opportunity to introduce him to our programs and

partners there, including members of the burgeoning Cambodia Lutheran Church.

In early March, our Cambodia staff worked with a service team from [Hong Kong International School](#), who supported one of our bio-sand water filter projects there.

In family news, John has started attending 'school' – a small daycare in our neighborhood. He is loving it, and so is Coco, as she now has some very welcome free time during the week. She and I have begun getting more engaged in our church here Shanghai – Coco's now singing with the music team and I've started teaching Sunday School – 6-8 year-olds (!). It has been a fun and meaningful addition to our lives these past few months.

PRAYER REQUESTS

- For CWEF's board of directors and regional LCMS leadership – wisdom as they seek out a new permanent executive director for CWEF and potentially other positions as well.
- For LCMS International leadership – as they seek to fill open roles in the Asia region, particularly: regional director and regional business manager.
- For CWEF's organization re-registration process in China.
- For Julie, as she continues to adjust to life in Hong Kong and work with CWEF.
- Continued prayers for Persephone as she adjusts to life back in the U.S.
- For all the people connected to CWEF's work, that the Spirit would be working in their lives.