

May 8, 2008

Dear Friends,

It's been 10 days since Joel and Grace Margin left California after their 5 week visit here, and we're finally getting caught up enough to write and say "THANKS!" for praying for their time in the US. The Lord really answered prayer, and all the details worked out so smoothly! We really enjoyed hosting the Margins, and driving them all over the state. It was fun to play "tourist" with them in between visits to churches. A big thanks goes to Michele Hagen as well, who took care of them during their week in Washington.

Joel and Grace were able to connect with 3 Filipino congregations in northern California, and also shared at 7 other churches in both California and Washington. They got to see a number of people who have been in Cambodia with short-term teams, plus we were able to visit retired missionaries to the Philippines, Ray & Lorraine Streutker, who have known Grace ever since she was born! It was also great to take the Margins to the Heavenly Treasures store in Glendora so they could see the Reaksmei merchandise for sale there.

We also praise the Lord that the Filipino Network meeting finally took place during the Margins' visit. We weren't sure until the last minute that everything was going to come together, but it did, and all the participants expressed their appreciation for the chance to get together, have fellowship, and share their challenges and victories. Having American Airlines cancel so many flights right at that time only prevented one expected attendee from coming. Members of Sky Church, the Korean congregation that shares the Willow Vale facilities in San Jose, provided fabulous food for us (if you need a good caterer in the San Jose area, contact <www.greenfishcatering.com>).

Joel and Grace had several dreams for their first visit to the US, and the Lord worked out fulfilling all of them. A friend provided funds for the 4 of us to go to Disneyland, and we packed as much into one day as we could. Joel and Grace wanted to see snow, and while up in Washington, the Lord sent an unexpected snow storm to Snohomish right during their visit! Then, way back in primary school, Joel's mom used to get him notebooks with the Golden Gate Bridge pictured on them. So we spent a day in San Francisco and made sure Joel got to see the Golden Gate Bridge from 3 viewing points, plus we drove both ways across it. It was a clear and sunny day, which you can't always count on in San Francisco!

We are thankful that none of us got sick the whole time Margins were here, we had safe traveling over many miles, and best of all, lots of people got to meet Joel and Grace and now are praying for them and the ministry in Cambodia!

We also have to share with you one special "coincidence" during Margins' visit: we mentioned in our last letter that the Cambodia restaurant in Scotts Valley, Jia Tella's, was willing to sell our Reaksmei notecards and bookmarks for us. We prepared a poster with the artists' pictures to have next to the display, and took that and the merchandise to the restaurant shortly after Joel and Grace arrived. The next time Margaret's dad went to Jia Tella's (while we were in southern California), the owner told him that one of the cooks recognized one of the artists! So we went

back just before Joel and Grace left. It turns out that this lady, Tavy, used to teach English in Phnom Penh to Danet, one of our Phnom Penh FM college students! We took pictures together so Joel and Grace could show them to Danet when they got back to Cambodia. We are eager to pursue a friendship with Tavy in the months to come.

We packed a lot more into the time Joel and Grace were here, but don't want you to be too envious of all the fun things we did, so we won't tell you about picnicking on the beach, planting the vegetable garden, going to the Monterey Aquarium, visiting Daffodil Hill, shopping at Goodwill, etc., etc. :-)

Now the Margins are in the Philippines for the rest of their Home Assignment. I'm sure they're getting warmed up again after our cool California temperatures! Please keep praying for the mission team in Cambodia. Chris and Yuko Wilkins had to make an unexpected trip to Japan this past month, and Rebecca left for her Home Assignment the day Joel and Grace got back from the US. The weather has been very hot in Cambodia, and the power in Phnom Penh seems to be off more than it's on. Your prayers make a difference when missionaries are hot, stressed out, and trying to cover 3 other people's jobs!

Even before Joel and Grace left, David Yardy called to see if we could come to Indianapolis for some meetings in mid-May. In figuring out our travel plans, we were able to work it out to fly into Detroit, attend the wedding of one of Margaret's cousins, and then borrow her uncle's car to drive to Indy. So we'll be on the road again May 13-24, fitting in a visit with Jim's cousins in Ohio too. Please pray for our time at Free Methodist World Missions May 20-21. We'll mostly be focusing on the best ways to promote Country Shares and make sure the ministries around the world are being supported as well as the missionaries.

We've also been making travel arrangements to attend the Asia Pacific Free Methodist Missions Association (APFMMA) Congress in Mumbai, India, August 13-18. We didn't want to spend 23 hours traveling straight from San Francisco to Mumbai, so were thankful to work out reasonable tickets with stops in Hong Kong both going and coming back. We look forward to visiting friends there August 5-11 and August 21-27.

Thanks so much for supporting us both in prayer and financially. We are thankful that we can keep doing what needs to be done while living with Margaret's dad. Most of what we do right now is making sure that money given for missions is used responsibly and properly accounted for. Thanks for helping us help the rest of the missionaries do their job well.

In Christ,
Jim & Margaret