

June / July, 2006

Dear Beloved of God, (as always, feel free to skip to prayer requests at the end)

The past couple of months have been an amazing, intense, difficult and joyful time for us. I was tempted to invoke Dickens' "best of times, worst of times," but honestly nothing in this process seems "worst" to me. Hardest. Most challenging. Busiest. Most to do and highest percentage of things that we personally don't have gifts or ability to do. But if I tell you after those descriptions that I'm loving my life, will you start to understand the paradox that starting Foundations is for me?

We finished our meeting hall/library/office! Yes, only the inside, but we unpacked our books after seven months (Gasp! Gasp!) and I have some office space again. When students arrive (next month!) we'll have somewhere to meet. The floor looks like hardwood and you can slide on it like a dance floor but also drop a hammer without making a mark. Better yet, it cost Foundations nothing except some bag lunches (Thank you, Fred and Matt! You rock!). Our upcoming project is to attach a deck...which Fred and Matt are making possible with their buy-a-board program!

When people have asked about Foundations I've said that I feel overwhelmed when I look at the Big Picture, but if I just keep my eye on the immediate task-at-hand, I'm okay. Well, that's fine...to a point. But various fronts need progress and it's easy to work on the more comfortable areas if we don't keep the overall picture in mind—which is overwhelming. Still, the theme we're learning repeatedly as we start Foundations is "Don't go around the hard parts; God is taking you through." When Kim and I drew up the overview for getting Foundations running with the Guinea Pig Class (the first group of students), we came up with these categories: County Planning and County Health District, Drilling Well, Electricity, Building Projects, Volunteers, Spreading the Vision and Raising Support, Curriculum and Teachers, Students and Community Life, Mission Trip, Recruiting New Students, and Short- and Long-Term Guests/Hospitality. When I say, "Foundations is a HUGE picture of which we're a small part and God is filling in the rest," that's the "HUGE" part. Some of these categories will be completed while others will be ongoing, but right now they're all alive and well and each could demand all the time we've got between now and August 27—and some still wouldn't get done. This *is* the most challenging time of my short life.

But that's fine. No, much better than "fine." Our pastor said to me, "I saw you in worship. You're really in that place of completely relying on God, aren't you?" Choosing to trust God when you could be self-sufficient (or retain that illusion) is like choosing to cliff dive when you could walk or drive down to the water. An imperfect analogy, but that's the emotional experience for us. I think wistfully sometimes about how we could be doing something much safer and more stable—and then thank God that we're not.

I just returned from a trip to Los Angeles with my daughter, Lydia, who is 9. We went for the dedication of my Godson (Lyd's Godbrother) Jordan Parks. We had a marvelous trip together, were greatly encouraged by family and friends, and Lydia astounded me with her maturity. Anna and Rich Parks are dear friends who have helped start Redeemer Community Partnership and Redeemer Covenant Church in South Central Los Angeles. Walking through these neighborhoods with Rich, hearing story after story, and seeing God's Kingdom at work reinvigorated my vision for Foundations. If God can do

it in South Central, He can do it in South Wenatchee! Now I'm reworking our curriculum to include a road trip to volunteer with Redeemer Community so our students can see for themselves what God can do and get a taste of His Kingdom. What happens after that? We can't even imagine. (Ephesians 3:20-21)

PRAYER REQUESTS (welcome back, Skippers!)

God has been faithful and will be faithful. Thank you for seeking Him with us.

- Students! Those coming in August and those God would reach for next year. As Kim's mom reminded me recently, the purpose of all this other stuff!

- Zoning and Permits—we've waded in. There are many forms and guidelines and questions and fees and... Jon Davies is partnering in this with me and I'm grateful for his knowledge, encouragement and great attitude. When we went to County Health two weeks ago, we discovered that a gal in their office, Margee, is a neighbor! She invited us to bring the girls over to ride horses or borrow their tractor, and she brought over her husband, Skip, to meet us that evening. Margee was excited for our vision and gave us tons of helpful information on the process. Now that's an answer to prayer! Please keep praying that God would open doors and give us favor with the right people and wisdom for these applications.

- The well. We need water for the students. Drilling is pricey. Here we go...

- Building. The calendar flipped to July. Loudly. We start in August. Some projects need materials and volunteers (finishing the cabins), some need permits and materials and volunteers (the kitchen/dining hall/shower room).

- Organization. A friend, Natalie, just volunteered to help with some administrative tasks. Thanks, Father! With eleven different major categories (see above), I've dropped a few balls. I'll spare you the list. But Kim and I need to do a better job and we need more help to keep track and manage it all.

As promised some time ago, I've included our budget. In Fall of 2007, with a full class of students paying tuition, our income and expenses will approximately balance. We'll need to raise some support for mission trips, scholarships, etc. This is the start-up budget. I've wrestled a long time to see this document with Faith, and I'm still getting there.

But I do know God will provide what we need, when we need it, because this is His work and He is faithful. I'm grateful for all we've received and humbled by those who have given faithfully and generously when I know it costs you. Thank you!

If Foundations is a ministry you want to support (tax-deductibly), please consider pledging to give regularly. Pledges would help us tremendously as we gear up for these big projects. Plus, we can soon receive electronic giving! Are we cutting edge or what? Thank you, Bob Floyd, Treasurer Extraordinaire! You can access the form (and read more about electronic giving) through the "Partner

With Us” link on our website, wwwFOUNDATIONSministries.net. Hey, did I mention our website is up and running?? Yeah, go see! I’m really excited about it. We’re still tinkering, of course, but it’s a great start. Thanks, Tim Dearborn, Web Designer Magnifique!

I’m also including a new response form and a wish list. Because we’ve needs in many directions, we offer many opportunities to get involved. We need people with building skills, those without specific skills but willing to work, and (did I mention?) people with organizational skills. A friend just offered to co-ordinate volunteers for fixing up the student cabins; she’s going to organize teams and have a competition! Bless Kim H. and praise God! Finally, a Great Big Thanks to the person who sent chocolate in response to the last letter. I laughed all day!

May God’s love overflow in you and yours!

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Clockwise: The land, Jacob in a student cabin, the girls by the house, the meeting hall in progress (with help big & small).

