



# Hearts In Seoul

## The **Dust** Begins to Settle



Hans

Gretchen



Abi, 21

Mike, 19

John, 16

Wow, what a summer it has been! We have flown half-way around the world, had our first-ever Seoul-Trinklein-Family wedding, driven more than *seven thousand miles* in about six weeks, and seen so many friends (old and new!) that my head is still spinning, trying to grasp it all. Right now I (Hans) am the only family member who's back in Korea—new semester and all—while Gretchen and the (three remaining) kids spend a little quality time with her parents and sisters in Arizona. They'll be back this way in mid-September, by which time I hope to have overcome my jet lag and be pretty well accustomed to the new semester's routine.

I thought about sending a newsletter in the middle of the summer, but

- a) we all would have had to type our articles "on the road" which isn't easy, even with the *huge* van we were using, and
- b) it would have been little more than an extensive collection of wedding pictures anyhow.

Of course, there's nothing *wrong* with wedding pix—but I think we'll have to post most of them on our blog, with only a couple to grace this paper. See the link to our blog site at the top of the second page, if you want to see more!

Be that as it may, it was a delightful, frenetic, uplifting, too-brief, encouraging, whirlwind visit to our homeland. To everyone we were able to visit, thank you for your warm welcome and listening ears; to those we couldn't see this time around, please know that we love you all and I hope we can see you on our next Home Service trip. One and all, please continue to pray for us, and thank you for your support!

In addition to my teaching duties, a new opportunity has been given to me: acting as vacancy preacher at the (English-language) International Lutheran Church in Seoul. It's one of our two "home churches" here in Korea—the other one being a Korean-language congregation—and the LCMS missionary pastor who serves there just took a call back to the States. So I will be preaching each Sunday until they either get a vacancy pastor or the new LCMS missionary pastor is assigned to this incredibly diverse congregation that serves English-speaking expatriates from countries all around the world. I preached last Sunday, and nobody was waiting in the back with tar and feathers after the service, so I guess I'm "on deck" for this weekend, too.

There's one more exciting bit of news to share with you: as you may remember, the Korean Ministry of Education has been performing intensive audits/reviews of the many universities here. It's a VERY demanding process that lasts for months, and we've all been feeling the strain. An unfavorable review can result in a university (and its students!) being denied essential financial aid. Well, just last week Luther University (LTU) received the results of *our* review, and we passed with flying colors! This is a tremendous blessing from God, as it enhances our reputation and will—Lord willing—bring more, enthusiastic, students to our campus where we can give them the Good News in every class. Praise the Lord with me!

God bless and keep you all...

### Special Prayer

Many of you have been praying for our Russian friend, Evgeni, whom we met in Korea over a year ago. A few days ago, he contacted us with the news that his mother died. Thankfully, Hans has been able to help him as he prepared to return to Russia. Please continue to pray for Evgeni, that the Lord would meet him in his grief and reveal Himself as the God of hope and comfort.

## SIBLING STRIP

"Home is where the heart is." Now I know that many—if not all—of you have encountered this phrase multiple times. I had heard it many times before we moved to Korea, but I never truly understood it. Maybe it was because I lived most of my life outside a small Midwest town; I never had to go through the pains and problems of uprooting and relocating to a different house and neighborhood. For the longest time I considered this a blessing, and I was thankful for the stability that living in only one house offered. However, the fact that I was so firmly established in southern Illinois made the idea of moving understandably difficult, so I (honestly) dreaded the move. When we got to Korea, though, it was easier than I feared, largely because I had purposed to enjoy every moment of our time there. I had expected this to be tedious and forced, but (thanks be to God) I had no trouble at all adapting to the new lifestyle and cultural differences. In fact, I love living in Korea just as much as (if not more than) I loved living in America! Earlier this summer, I had expected to be disappointed by the "old" American way of living when we came back to the States for Home Service, but again, I was pleasantly surprised by how much I loved it here; I didn't really want to leave. In the last few days, though, I'll admit that I've been thinking a lot about my friends back in Korea; and while it's been amazing to visit home again, it'll be even better to be back home once more.

As Hans mentioned, these past few months have been jam-packed with so many blessings. My heart is full as I think about all the precious people we have been able to spend time with--family and friends (old and new). There are some of you loved ones we were not able to see, but we hope we can connect with you all next time. Or better yet, come visit us in Korea!

After the flurry of wedding preparations in early July, we said farewell to our oldest daughter, Jael, and her husband, Levi, as they headed out on their honey-moon/support raising trip. They plan to be in Guatemala for language study this fall and then head to Paraguay to begin their work there in the new year (Lord willing). Please do pray for them, too, as they adjust to all the changes in their lives and embrace the ministry God has called them to in South America.

The kids and I will be flying back to Korea in a few days. We will have some adjustments, too, as we get used to having an empty seat at the table (and in the van) and a very quiet extra bedroom. I suspect the Lord will provide some opportunities to fill the seats and that spare room in the coming months! He has faithfully provided opportunities for us to "practice hospitality" in Korea during the past two years, and we will look forward to visits with whom-ever He sends our way!

As we prepare to return, I know it will be difficult to say goodbye to our loved ones here. However, I have noticed in the past few days, the Lord has been bringing to mind many of the dear people we have met in Korea. There is a longing growing in my heart to see them all again. The Lord is so gracious! Thank you for your continued prayers for us, as we return to the Lord's ripe field in Korea.

In Jesus,

*Gretchen*

*Mike*



1. Hans giving a presentation in Southern Illinois.
2. Gretchen, Abi, Mike, and John with Gretchen's parents and some of our friends.
3. The family on Jael and Levi's wedding day.
4. Gretchen and Will talking at a presentation.

### *Prayer Requests*

1. Blessings on Jael and Levi's marriage and travels as they prepare to deploy for mission work in Paraguay.

2. Safe travels for the rest of the family as they fly back to Korea soon.

3. That Jesus would be glorified in and through LTU and LCK.

4. Peace between North and South Korea as the peace talks continue.

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