

THE BOZEMAN REPORT

July/August 2016

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Then Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men." (Mark 1:17)

We have hit the heart of the summer once again. That has brought with it a lot of wildfires across the west once again. We are enveloped in smoke most days, as there are a couple of pretty large fires burning in Hamilton, MT, as well as in Yellowstone National Park. The photo, to the right, was taken from our back deck, and shows just how thick the smoke has been in the mornings. Some days, the smoke clears out with the wind, others, it smells like a campfire all day long! Fortunately, these fires have been sparked in areas that are not heavily inhabited, so we have not had the kind of problem that has recently plagued California.

The month of July was an "up and down" one for us. It is hard to believe that we have already been here for over a year now! I will start with the best of news: our

oldest son, Jacob, made the decision to obey the gospel. We are thankful for his decision, and solicit your prayers on his behalf.



We were able to spend some time traveling over the end of June and into July to visit with family, and take our kids to a summer camp down in Alabama. We had a good visit with everyone, and even had the chance to visit with a couple of the churches that support us in the work here. It is always good to "check in" and visit with those who have a part in our work!

While we were gone, we had the opportunity to share with our friends and family the joyful news that we were expecting our 4th child. Unfortunately, shortly after our return home, we learned that we had lost the baby to miscarriage. It was a very difficult time for both us and our children, who were very much looking forward to a new baby brother or sister. We received a tremendous outpouring of love and support from brethren and friends, around the country. The brethren here in Bozeman were tremendous, helping with anything we could possibly need, including especially prayers and support! I have been amazed at how many friends we have had that have suffered through the same kind of tragic loss in recent months and years. I decided to write an article that tried to express our experience going through such tragedy, in hopes that it would be of help to others who are facing similar difficulties. You can read that on my blog at: <http://kris.learnagodswill.com/2016/07/21/truly-god-is-good/>. I would be happy for you to share that with anyone that might benefit. It seems to me that this is an experience that is often "kept to ourselves", unless, like in our situation, others know about the pregnancy and must be informed of the loss. Perhaps, as difficult as it is, it should be shared more openly so that brethren can be a bigger help during such difficult times!

The end of July and the beginning of August was a welcome time. While I realize that there is no real "break" between the months, when it has been difficult, it seems like there is an advantage to the break! We were

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Average Attendance:

Sunday: 13

Wednesday: 11

pressed to figure something out concerning our housing, as our lease was to be up on August 15th. Fortunately, we were able to find a suitable house to purchase before our deadline (by about 2 days), and our landlords have been gracious enough to work with us, allowing us to stay in our rental until we are able to get the house closed. This was a huge burden off of our minds. Purchasing a home in the community also makes us feel much more “permanent” in the area, and we are anxious to have a place to share with brethren, and a place to open up more readily for Bible studies. We will be in a better established neighborhood, with many more families, which we hope will provide more opportunities.

Justin has also found a new house for his family, which he will be closing on in just a few minutes as I write this report. We are very thankful for the opportunities we have been granted, but the downside is that we will both be moving within just a few days of each other! This will, of course, be very time consuming, stressful and tiring. Prayers for us and our families over the next few days would be much appreciated!

The work continues to move forward, though sometimes seemingly at the pace of a snail. We continue to get some interaction through our online advertising. We have had some contact through both our Facebook page, and our MeetUp page. We continue to find a challenge in getting these virtual contacts transitioned to physical contacts. Justin and I have also

made some contacts as we have gone through the home buying process. Of course, we don't know how any of these will pan out, but it has been encouraging to have the conversations, and we continue to pray that the planted seed will grow, and produce fruit. I also have continued to work toward convincing my friend from high school that he is in need of change. While I thought some circumstances recently might open his heart, I am still finding it difficult to show him that there are significant problems in his life. He still calls me often when there is something difficult in his life that he is facing, so I see this as an open door, no matter how small the crack may be.

We have been blessed with a lot of visitors this summer. We have had vacationers from Texas, Kentucky, and Alabama over the last few weeks. We have had visitors for nearly every Sunday service for the whole month of August. Many of those visitors planned their trips to be with us on the Lord's day. This is something that is very encouraging to us! We are in an area close to a major vacationing destination (Yellowstone Park), but it still takes some planning and a desire to travel the hour and a half to two hours outside the park to meet with us. We appreciate those who are willing to plan ahead to do so!

On Wednesday evenings, we continue to meet in our homes, and provide for the Winburns (who live in Billings, and drive to Bozeman on Sundays) to join in via a virtual study. This has worked out wonderfully, and we are thankful for the technology that allows them to join in with our Bible study! Their participation has been a great encouragement to us, as well as to them. A lady in West Virginia (Norma Lauer), who is unable to meet with the local congregation because of health problems, has also been joining us most Wednesday evenings.

We are so very thankful for your continued support of our work. Thank you for your prayers, your notes of encouragement and your financial support. It is always a boost to us to receive a note or an email from those who are following our endeavors here in Big Sky Country! Thanks for thinking of us!