April 2014

A few weeks ago, as I looked at my poor little rose bush after Paul was done pruning it --- I had to think …. poor ole thing!..... he's been whacked at and chopped at --- and made to look naked and pathetic! But then the warm weather descended and my brave little bush is sprouting tender little leaves and showing all signs of, not just surviving --- but thriving!!! What an example of hope! Don't you love Spring?! It's something we missed while living all those years in Latin America where we had only two seasons, rainy and dry --- so we LOVE watching the dead turn to life. It's SO appropriate for this time of year when we remember Jesus and that he walked out of that tomb and brought LIFE --- ETERNAL LIFE to us and "whosoever will" trust in Him as their savior!!!

In these past months The MTC (Missionary Training Center) has been going through a "pruning process". There has been a big change-over in the leadership and, Lord willing, this will continue to result in tremendous growth toward even better preparing ourselves and students for the huge job of Church planting. Upon graduation, these students scatter across the world and work in isolated, vulnerable locations, reaching the unreached. These needy people are often forgotten, people groups that are still without a gospel witness in their own language. What a huge challenge! How DO you prepare these courageous, dedicated young lives for the type of challenges they are going to meet as they enter these foreign fields!? Our team of trainers is constantly on their knees, dependent on almighty God for this huge task. Because of the need for leaders --- and leadership coaching --- Paul has been asked to "coach" one of the teams, for a year or two. For years, Paul was heavily involved in leadership training in twelve countries, and it's one of the things he loves to do.

We can see how this new involvement enhances our role in Member Care --- which is our primary ministry. Paul now has an office on campus which gives him greater contact with both staff and students. Until now --- he has worked out of our house, which is seven miles from the campus --- so we see this as an added blessing in carrying out the ministries that God has given us. We feel like we have the best ministry at the MTC! J How cool is it to have a "job" that includes loving and being an encourager to your co-workers, as well as teaching students! J

Also ---a little different kind of "pruning" is going on in our lives (again) --- and that is our "health issues". Years ago --- I used to ask God "why" --- WHY would He allow such painful pruning and whacking? But I don't ask that anymore! After all these years I have been made extremely aware of the "whys" of God's pruning –that whacking away of my body (which pretty much resembles that rose bush of mineJ). But over and over again --- God has graciously revealed some of those reasons and I am (usually) at peace with that. How we appreciate your prayers for us as we've walked this journey together! We have leaned very heavily on them! I guess you might say we're in another one of those pruning processes and if we keep this metaphor going --- you might say that the "pruning and whacking" is about to begin. Hmmm --- that kind of says it well --- as I am scheduled for back surgery on April 15th. This Wednesday is my pre-op appointment. Unless something unforeseen occurs. It was VERY difficult to make this decision!!! I've gone through this two other times (on my lower back) and with all the

other surgeries I do NOT go into this ignorantly! I know exactly (well --- pretty much) what is coming and I must say I dread it like the plague. It's kind of like signing yourself up for torture. But --- for many reasons we have decided that it is time --- my quality of life has deteriorated to the point that I'm willing to go through it --- with the prayer that this will relieve at least some of my discomfort.

Paul's also getting "trimmed"J Tomorrow morning he goes into the Cancer Center and will have full body scans to see how much the Lymphoma has progressed. It's been several years since they did the full body scan, so it will be interesting to see how much it's progressed. The mass in his throat (kind of) shrunk after 12 radiation treatments, almost a year ago now --- and we are anxious to see how things check out as we talk with the Doctor on Tuesday. He still has none of the symptoms that they've told him to be alert for and since the stint in his heart in October he's definitely got a spring back in his step (well --- maybe that's a little overstated J). But --- we'll have more to report on this situation after we talk with the doctor.

So --- here we are again --- leaning heavily on your intercessory prayer! We love and appreciate each one of you! And we thank our almighty --- all sovereign God for the opportunity to rest completely and absolutely on Him! Please pray for us! I can sit here today and write all these encouraging, wonderful (and very TRUE) things --- but in ten days I will be in the throes of it and we really appreciate this quote from C.S. Lewis (my new favorite author) as he says it so well!

"We are not necessarily doubting that God will do the best for us; we are wondering how painful the best will turn out to be".

Have you ever felt like this?! We totally trust our God --- we are extremely aware and believe firmly that God is SOVEREIGN and that He knows all about the "pruning and whacking" --- and has our futures lovingly under control! But ……. we are so human!

Thank you for being our co-workers!!!

Paul and Faith Wyma