

the youngest learned the memory verse and gospel-containing worship songs, and could explain the Bible lessons and missions stories. In August, we celebrated the church's fiftieth anniversary along with several former members and even some former pastors. It was a daylong event of testimony [often funny] and worship. We also celebrated the water baptism of one of our teenagers, which gave Will his first experience baptizing someone. We had a successful collection of school supplies and backpacks for those in need in our community. The churches here coordinate on benevolence activities like that, which is nice.

Around the building, we painted the sanctuary and foyer [lots of late nights for the volunteers], and remodeled how our praise team is set up. Now we are working on redecorating the foyer and remodeling the nursery. We upgraded the computers and hope to add flat screens and DVD players to the children's classrooms, as educational tools. Just about everyone middle school-age and up is volunteering in some way at the church. Sometimes they spontaneously surprise the rest of us: for example, this week one family placed fresh flowers all over the church and another put a stuffed camel with a note to smile up on the pulpit!

Personal Update. We have started looking at houses. Our first thought was to take advantage of the small village in farm country situation by finding a house that bordered the fields, but they are more expensive than we anticipated. Maybe God will bring us the right situation. The property taxes here are atrociously high, so being able to pay for the taxes each year is just as much a consideration as whether we can afford the purchase. We saw one house that was in the ideal location, but we were not excited by the floor plan; another had the ideal floor plan but serious ground water problems; another was a good compromise between the two, but has radon and two kitchens which would need remodeling. There is a 150 year old mansion across from the church for sale, so we went to look at it. Sadly, it is in great disrepair, both from negligence and from someone trying to break it into three apartments but never finishing any of the three.

LeeAnn drove into the Berwyn office once last month, and will be there for two days of training this week, but mostly works from her home office. When she is away, Will walks to the church, which takes about ten minutes [there are advantages to village life!]. We have talked with three of the families on our street. It has been hard to be social outside of the church context, because we have had such long to-do lists every week, at the church and at home. Hopefully that will even out. We went boating one day before it turned cold and have done some driving around in each direction, but most weeks our fun time has involved half an hour of HGTV before bed. There are lots of parks and trails, we just have to get out there. But now, first, we have to go buy some warmer clothes! There is no heat in our house yet, and we wouldn't know how to turn it on at the church, so we are relearning to wear layers.

The cats are doing well. They still wake up too early [4.00am on average] and they make a great ruckus in the morning, tearing up and down the stairs, chasing each other, but they are good animals, loving and friendly. They like to hang out with LeeAnn in her office most of the day. Kramer likes to greet us at the door when we come home, and George is always quick to join us on the sofa or bed.

Prayer Requests. that we find a sustainable life rhythm; that we find the best house for us; that Will gets more efficient with sermon and lesson preparations [since he is hesitant to lower quality goals]; that people stay excited about learning from us and they grow spiritually into leaders; that we become better and more effective leaders ourselves; that the church continues to have unity amidst diversity; that we not freeze to death.

Thank you for caring! We pray God will bless you...

Will & LeeAnn