



## A WINDOW AND THOUGHTS FOR THE NEW YEAR

I have been blessed with a corner office. I especially enjoy the fact that over half of my sixth-floor office is exposed by windows to the outside. As I look out the windows, I view ice- and snow-covered streets, houses, trees, and buildings. It is beautiful. My favorite time of the day is the early morning hours, while it is still dark. I love the quiet stillness of this time when I can express my heart to God.

Ruth and I really enjoy the seasons. I grew up in Southern California where I enjoyed a perfect climate and the beach. Leaving California, I went to Washington State where I began college, marriage, family, and ministry; there I delighted in the beauty of the evergreens, mountains, and the Puget Sound. Over 20 years ago we were sent from there to the Dominican

Republic for missionary service. The sights, sounds, and the familiarity of the warm-hearted people of the Caribbean continue to resonate in my mind. I love the Caribbean; yet, when it comes to describing the seasons, it seems to be hot and hotter with a rainy season.

Getting back to my window, I enjoy viewing the distinct seasons a year provides. My window to the outside also provides me an opportunity to gain a different perspective on issues. It is easy to become nearsighted with tasks and self-absorbed to the point of losing perspective on what really matters. I often remind myself that my relationship with God and people is what is paramount. Policies and procedures, buildings and ministries all have their place, but they will never

take the place of prominence in my life because my family, friends, and people in general have that place.

Life can become overwhelming—so having a “window” to focus outwardly is crucial to adjust our perspective and to focus on what really matters. As a brother, let me encourage you in this new year to have a consistent devotional time with the Lord. As we speak with God and listen to the Holy Spirit, not only does our perspective, at times, change on things, but the change is often very, very good. May God bless you and grant you His favor this year!

Your friend and brother,  
*Rick Johnson*

## MK OFFICE UPDATE



Chad and Dargan Phillips

I trust this holiday season has been a great time for each one of you and your families. Someone recently posted a question on the ISMK alumni Web site about Christmas traditions. It is so fun to read about family traditions. One MK tells how her mother used to close all the doors and windows so she could crank up the air conditioning. She lived in a hot climate and wanted to feel cold on Christmas.

Others wrote:

*“When we lived in Truk, the only time of the year we could get flour, meat, and veggies*

*was Christmastime. One of our first years there, my parents sifted the flour and made tortillas, and we had burritos on Christmas Eve. That was either 1978 or '79, and it's still not Christmas Eve until we've had our burritos!!!!”*

*“One particular year we were up in the mountains and had no decorations whatsoever, so everything was homemade (yes, even paper snowflakes). We found a bush to be a tree, but my favorite was using eucalyptus branches as our pine decoration around the fireplace. The house smelt awesome. Every year since (including this year) I put out dried eucy leaves to ‘take me back.’”*

I wonder what my kids might write about when they are alumni? What will they think back to and remember with fondness? MKs certainly have some very interesting traditions—mixtures of

several cultures and households, all being blended into their own traditions.

We pray as you head into this new year that you and your household have made some memories.

### Reentry Packets

I recently prepared the college reentry letter for our high school juniors and seniors. If you have a high school junior or senior, they will receive a packet from our office in February. Please be certain to go through the packet thoroughly. We have compiled quite a bit of information that will be vital to their college experience. This past September I received several phone calls from parents or MKs who were panicking about the details of starting college. Take the time to prepare your MK for what is ahead! Blessings to each of you,

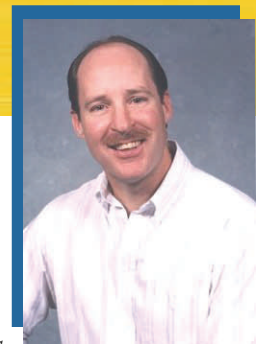
Bwana Chad and  
Bwanita Dargan Phillips

## SPOTLIGHT on David Wentling

David Wentling has been in central Eurasia since January 2006 serving as a language learner, evangelist, and mentor to the nationals. Here is an excerpt from a recent newsletter.

*The throat of the goat is cut and the blood is drained into a marble drain system, eventually finding its way to the sea to mingle with the blood of thousands of other sacrificed goats on this most*

*holy of Muslim days, Eid. The religious tradition has its premise found in the Bible*



## SPOTLIGHT on David Wentling *(continued)*

with the story of Abraham and his son Isaac (but of course the Islamic world believes it was Ishmael), the chosen son of promise. Abraham was asked by God to sacrifice his promised son but, at the last moment, was redirected to a ram caught in a thicket. Abraham proclaimed that God is his provider (Jehovah Jireh) for sacrifice and prophetically proclaimed the coming of God's promised Son, Jesus Christ, in which He would not stop the sacrifice but allow

Him to be the final blood atonement for mankind.

On December 31 it will be a common sight to see a goat on the streets of this city in Central Eurasia. It would seem that some goats are privy to their situation. I have read that there have been goats AWOL throughout the city and have been retrieved from even a rooftop. [Each is] an unwilling sacrifice and more like a scapegoat, contrary to our Lord's willingness. Like the scapegoat, many people will also escape the

blood and gore of this holiday and use the three-day event to travel. The people of this city continue to look to the West as a light to their present-day situation and do not partake in many of the Muslim holidays. Nevertheless, in a city with an estimated 14 million people, the sea will run red from the feeble attempt to honor a false god that continues to require blood every year.



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