

Sure didn't see that coming!

Do you remember our comments in the January prayer letter about how glad we were that 2018 was over because of health issues? You may also recall in our April letter our saying that "we're both in fairly good health" and that "life has been relatively quiet." We think God smiled, because He knew what was ahead. Right after the April prayer letter was sent out, Marvin was diagnosed with a severely leaking mitral heart valve. After several tests the cardiologist recommended heart surgery for Marvin to get the valve repaired as soon as possible. On May 8 we checked into the hospital at 5:30 a.m. It was a long day of waiting. We were excited to get the good news at 2 p.m. that Marvin came through surgery well. The heart surgeon was able to repair the valve through minimally invasive surgery (an incision in Marvin's right upper chest) so the breastbone didn't have to be broken. Marvin did so well that he was able to go home a day early, on Sunday, May 12. However, full recovery is slow, much slower than Marvin would like, but improvement can be seen each week. He saw his cardiologist June 14 and was told that he looked good. When Marvin complained about a lack of stamina, the cardiologist reminded him that he had undergone heart surgery. At the writing of this letter, Marvin is working half days, some at the office and some from home. God has been with us through it all. We have been greatly encouraged by Him through dozens of cards, emails, texts and phone calls from so many praying people and supporting churches that have expressed love and concern, promising to pray for us both. You may or may have not been aware of this adventure, but we know you pray for us. We are so thankful for those prayers!

On Monday, June 17, I had my six-month cancer checkup for CLL (chronic lymphatic leukemia). I was concerned that the stress of Marvin's health would affect mine, so I was a bit nervous that morning. The doctor was very pleased with my counts. They were holding steady and everything else looked good. I go back in six months. We are praising the Lord for these good results.



On June 21, Marvin and I celebrated 44 years of marriage. God is so good. He built our home and sustained our marriage through easy times, tough times and all the times in between. Little did we two country kids know that day what God had in store for us and where He was going to take us. We're grateful to Him!

This year we also celebrate 35 years as TWR missionaries. We have lived in three different countries, had the privilege of meeting incredible people, have seen some wonderful sights and have had the joy of serving our Lord in an amazing worldwide ministry. We couldn't

have done it without you. Your prayers and financial support have encouraged us through the years in ways you will never know. Thank you for being there for us through it all as we reach out through TWR to the uttermost parts of the world with the love of God!



God is never surprised!



TWR's Silk Road Transmitter began broadcasting across the vast steppes and mountain ranges of Central Asia on June 10, bringing the gospel to millions in this largely unreached region.

Going out first on the Silk Road airwaves, beginning at 10 a.m. U.S. Eastern Daylight Time (UTC 14:00), was *Radio Bible Project* followed by the acclaimed Bible-study program *Thru the Bible*, both in the Kazakh language.

Programs in Central Asian Russian, Uyghur and Uzbek rounded out the first broadcast day.

Installation of the transmitter was completed this spring after more than 1,700 supporters of TWR (also known as Trans World Radio) provided the \$593,000 cost of the project. And since the transmitter was funded, over 500 people have already donated to provide programming for the region.

"TWR is privileged to have been granted permission to broadcast with a powerful 200,000-watt facility to Central Asia," TWR President Lauren Libby said. "The Silk Road Transmitter will touch an additional 60 million people in this spiritually hungry region. Please join us in praying for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity."

Although the Silk Road conjures images of camel caravans carrying valuable fabric, spices and other commodities along the ancient trade routes, today the region is at the heart of China's endeavor to link Asia and Europe in a massive economic-development project. But the countries here are also mostly rated as "not free" and Christians face a "very high" level of persecution, watchdog organizations report.

"We were doing a lot of home [church] groups after 11 o'clock at night because after 11, police go home and are not working," Central Asia pastor Makhset, whose last name has been withheld for security reasons, told a TWR missionary video team. "When we had no Bibles, we heard from Trans World Radio some preaching and encouraged each other. Media and Trans World Radio, I think, are very important to our country."

TWR has been broadcasting in Central Asia for more than two decades, but the Silk Road Transmitter represents a significant upgrade over a previous transmitter that wore out in early 2017. Broadcasting continued to the region from other TWR transmitter sites but had to be scaled back. The stronger Silk Road signal covers large portions of six countries – the core area comprising Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. The five languages broadcast over the transmitter are spoken by people groups mostly classified as unreached by the gospel.

In addition to the in-depth study of *Thru the Bible* and the Scripture readings and explanations of *Radio Bible Project*, Silk Road broadcasts include programs such as *House Church*, *Power in Persecution* and *The Christian Home*. Another powerful program is *The Way of Righteousness*, which has been highly effective at introducing the gospel to Muslim listeners from the perspective of their own faith.



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