



# STEPHEN & LAURA HOLT

GATHER UP THE FRAGMENTS THAT REMAIN THAT NOTHING BE LOST

JOHN 6:12

WINTER 2007/2008

## PRAYER LETTER & MINISTRY UPDATE

Dear Praying Family and Friends;

In Mark 10:29-30 Jesus stated, "Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time..." We are often asked about the difficulty of leaving our families and we certainly are not minimizing the heartache but God is gracious and has provided many "substitutes". One of the greatest blessings received along the way is meeting God's people; they are simply the best and we are privileged to meet our extended family in Christ.

For example, Dad and Mom Stanley attend Seminole Baptist Church in Seminole, Alabama. This church has an "adopt a missionary" program where each supported missionary is adopted by a church family. Roy and Yvonne faithfully pray for us and the work in Sierra Leone. They write us letters and send us little things to let us know we are in their thoughts. While in Seminole in February, we had the joy of joining them to publicly proclaim the Gospel. What a thrill to minister on the street with our "Dad and Mom".

Our two granddaughters live in Uncasville CT and we do not get to see them very often but the Lord has given us a large, scattered "collection" of children who fill the gap. One very special young lady is Demaris Rugullies, also from Seminole Baptist. We also want to thank the Thren family at our home church in DeLand, FL for allowing us to be "Grandma and Grandpa" to their six children. Thabeh Brocket is a lovely girl we met at Old Paths Baptist Church in Clarendon, NY. She, along with her brother and sister, were adopted from Sierra Leone and are now being raised in a Christian home. Her letters are always a joy to our hearts. We don't have space to mention them all but we are so very grateful for each one who helps to fill that spot in our hearts.

**MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS:** The months of December and January were spent at our home church in DeLand, FL. After six months of traveling, our trailer needed some repairs! We were also able to replace our light-weight pick-up truck with a heavier duty Suburban. During that time we participated in the regular church outreach efforts including street preaching, visitation, nursing home work, and five area Christmas parades in which the church had a float and distributed Gospel tracts. Our annual Bible conference, held the third week in January, was the finale to our brief respite. We were certainly refreshed by being home for a time.

The week following the Bible conference, we were at Sweet Springs Baptist Church in Ardmore, AL for a week-long mission conference. During the month of February we had the special privilege of ministering in two Christian academies. While visiting with Community Baptist in Moulton, AL, we addressed several groups of students at Lawrence County Christian School. During our stay in Seminole, AL, we were asked by Central Christian School in a neighboring town to address both their elementary and high school students. We have a presentation geared toward elementary-aged children that shows them what life would be like if they lived in Sierra Leone. This was well received at both schools. The children were attentive and asked great questions. The teens at both schools viewed our regular presentation and I gave them a challenge to consider what they are doing with their lives as they approach graduation and "real life".

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The youth pastor at Seminole Baptist asked Laura and me to teach the Friday night teen groups. Laura had a great time giving the girls a "beauty makeover". Using her own testimony and Psalms 96:9 which says, "O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness," she showed them how God can enable them, through personal holiness, to be beautiful inside which will result in a beauty that shows outside. Later that evening the youth pastor and I spent about an hour witnessing to one of the young ladies who attended the class. We recently learned that Barbie has made the life-changing choice to trust Jesus Christ as her Savior! Please pray for her growth in the Lord.

While the girls were getting their make-over, I was challenging the teen boys to recognize the value of serving the Lord Jesus Christ with their whole heart. 1 Samuel 12:20 "...yet turn not aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart".

We are very grateful to have so many opportunities to touch young lives; we are praying for lasting fruit from these efforts. Who can tell, maybe one of these young people will come to Sierra Leone and help us in the Lord's work there.

While ministering on the streets of Foley AL with a large group from Seminole Baptist, Pastor Ray Williamson led a teen-aged boy to an understanding of his need for salvation. Praise the Lord - street work *does work*. As a direct result of public ministry, there is a soul no longer going to hell!! Charlie then brought his skateboard buddies by so they, too, could hear the Gospel and he has expressed his desire to attend church.

**NEWS FROM SIERRA LEONE:** I recently spoke with Pastor Michael Mansaray in Freetown and am thrilled to report that the church in Waterloo has started a Christian school. This is a great blessing to the families in that area. The only alternatives previously available were Islamic schools where Arabic and the Koran are mandatory or no school at all. Please pray for the growth and protection of this new school as well as the school started in 2005 in Tombo. In Michael's own words, these are "Muslim infested areas" and our fellow-laborers need our prayers.

Thank you for praying for Brother Michael's housing needs. He is building a home on a small piece of property he owns. The block walls are up and the metal roof should be installed soon. Their hope and prayer is to move in before the rainy season starts in May.

**TRAVELING SCHEDULE:** We are currently in Millington, Tennessee and greatly appreciate the hospitality of Pastor Steven Matheson and New Hope Baptist Church in allowing us to park here for several days. We need to fill some gaps in our schedule and staying put for a while greatly facilitates that effort. During the spring months we will be in Ohio, Indiana, and Minnesota as well as Ontario and Manitoba Canada. During this phase of our deputation journey, we will be traveling greater distances between meetings and mountainous terrain; we appreciate your prayers for safety, health, and protection more than we can express. Please also pray that the Lord would continue to touch hearts and lives as we minister in these churches. We truly desire to be a blessing and help to each church we have the privilege to visit.

We are very grateful for each of you, our prayer partners. May the Lord bless each of you as you labor for Him in your Jerusalem.

By His Grace;

*Stephen and Laura Holt*



In January, Laura spent a week in Connecticut visiting with our daughter and her family. Grammi enjoyed her time with our grand daughters Ruth and Rebekah. Our third grand daughter, Rachel, is due at the end of July!



Saying good bye to Demaris Rugullies of Seminole Baptist in Alabama



At Lawrence County Christian School in Moulton, Alabama preparing to address the students during chapel service.



Pastor Ray Williamson of Seminole Baptist kneels in prayer with Charlie.

Praise the Lord for a fragment gathered!



Public ministry with Dad and Mom Stanley



The future of the church! Proverbs 22:6 Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

Young and old alike benefit from the public proclamation of the Gospel. This was Mr. King's first time street preaching.