

HEARTS IN SEOUL



June,
2020

The Trinklein Family Newsletter



Hans



Gretchen

Thou Shalt Not COVID



Abi, 22



Mike, 20



John, 18

Well, the semester has drawn to a close, all papers graded and submitted, every “i” dotted and “t” crossed...I think. Of course, it helps that the Korean “i” doesn’t *have* a dot, and their “t” looks like this: ㅌ! Nothing to cross, there, but there were still plenty of opportunities to drop the ball anyway. Bless the Lord, we all made it to the finish line.

It has been an incredible challenge—these past few months—trying to carry on teaching as if it were “business as usual” when practically nothing was “usual!” Even though we were tasked with teaching our various subjects to full classes of students, the overwhelming concern this semester was “contain, and prevent the spread of, COVID-19!” As a result, professors professed to empty rooms, enthusiastically exhorting and instructing with only a single videocamera eye watching them.

I have learned the intricacies of Zoom-Room technology, managed to translate the instructions for Luther University’s new LMS (Learning Management System), and painstakingly converted my lecture notes to PowerPoint presentations. I have now taught five full classes of students whom I’ve never seen (the sixth class, thankfully, was done through videoconferences) and folks, I have to tell you: I like the old way better. © The energy and interaction that comes from face-to-face instruction just can’t be beat.

But the health concerns had to come first, of course. Even the in-person interactions on campus were affected! Masks, masks, everywhere—and you learn to recognize people just by their eyes or hair. (Which is a challenge for a Caucasian living in Korea! Sure, all the locals know who the tall white guy is, but for me? Help!) Masks aren’t all that much fun after the first few hours, either. It’s always a relief to get back to my office where I can breathe freely. There are jugs of hand sanitizer at every turn, and even when we meet in conference, we have to have *additional* safeguards in place—go to the picture gallery at the end of the newsletter to see the full-size sneeze shields we were required to install between each participant. It has been a great exercise in “putting the needs of others ahead of your own.”

And there has been an unexpected benefit from these efforts! Last month, Luther University was recognized by the Korean government for excellence in COVID-prevention practices (see photos). It makes it a little easier to handle when we have to pass through temperature-screening checkpoints at the entrance to every building and “preach to an empty choir.”

There’s been another blessing of the coronavirus constraints: due to the slightly different structure of our weekly classes, I have begun including a special “application” section for each weekly English class video. Specifically, the “application” takes the general topic of the chapter and ties it in to a Biblical theme. Thus, for the chapter on Clothing, I talk about being clothed with Christ/the robe of righteousness; for the chapter on homes/houses, I talk about the home in heaven Christ is preparing for us, and so on. It has been a lot of fun, and how gratifying it has been to read students’ evaluations of the class at the end of the semester, saying that they really appreciated the Bible emphasis! This is all the more rewarding given that a large percentage of our student body is not Christian. *Those* students have been very

honest in their homework assignments (where I include a question or two relating to the Bible application part)—they admit they have no connection with (and sometimes even no interest in) the Christian faith...BUT many also admit they’ve never heard these kinds of things said about Christianity before! For some it is the first time they’ve ever been exposed to the truths of the Gospel.

So, *PRAY*, friends in Christ! Pray that these first precious seeds, sown by those crazy American professors, would find a place to take root and grow in their hearts! Pray also that the Christian students would be encouraged and strengthened in their faith. And pray that Jesus Christ would be honored above all in our school. They say that the Christian army is the only army that advances on its knees; let’s give that saying some grounding in reality!

God bless you all, and God bless both Korea and the United States of America as well!



Fun Korean Fact:

“T Money” is a pre-paid card that can get you anywhere using the Korean public transportation system; it works on buses, subways, trains, taxis...even rental bikes! Plus, you can get up to three free transfers, as long as it’s within half an hour!

To be added or removed from the mailing list, please email hans.trinklein@lcms.org with the word “add” or “remove.”

Synod Contacts: Phone: 888-THE-LCMS Web: lcms.org Email: infocenter@lcms.org

(See some of the pictures larger at trinkleinfamily.wordpress.com.)

Sibling Strip

(Special guest post by Jael Karth)

Having a baby has...changed my opinion on my relationship with God. For example, I like to think of myself as a good mother. I feed him, I change him, I cuddle him, I love on him, and I keep him from accidentally killing himself. By all accounts, my child has no reason to complain. Yet you should hear the murderous screams that emerge from his pack-n-play should I happen to put him in there when he doesn't think he's tired enough. Or the constant whimpering when he has slightly wet his diaper (Prince and the Pee, anyone?) ...which turns into full-on wailing when I set him down to change him. Or when he's hungry and crying and so I hold the "spigot" in front of his mouth...and he just screams louder and louder AS MILK SPRAYS INTO HIS MOUTH. So often I just want to look him in the eyes and say, "I know your needs! I'm taking care of you! Give me 2 seconds! Take a chill pill!" But...whenever I do...God gently nudges me and asks, "Well? Can you tell yourself that? I love you more than you love Ezzie! I'm taking care of you, just like you love Ezzie! Stop screaming!"

Gretchen's Pearl

As things around us seem to be constantly changing, it is comforting to know there is One Who never changes. He remains seated on His throne. He is not worried or stressed; He is not wringing His hands as He tries to figure out how to undo the mess we humans have made out of everything. He remains perfectly calm and eternally in control. Praise the Lord that He is our Father, that He is trustworthy and good, and that His love endures forever! He remains the Calm in the midst of the storm; the Center in what appears to be a flurry of craziness. We have been listening to a whole series of sermons that are highlighting the truth that we are "in Christ," a phrase that Paul repeats many times throughout his epistles, especially Ephesians and Colossians. One 2-verse section that is so amazing and powerful to me is Ephesians 2:6-7. It states: "and [God] raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus, in order that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace toward us in Christ Jesus." May the Lord open our eyes to see things from His perspective; from the vantage point of His throne in the heavenly places! May we be those who carry words of hope and truth to everyone around us! Our whole world needs the Good News. As the world hurtles toward the judgment seat of Christ, may we boldly share the News that there is forgiveness of sins (Ephesians 1:7 & 1 John 1:9), deliverance from our sin nature (Romans 6), and new life available to all (2 Corin. 5:17 & John 3:16)—in Christ.

Thanks for your faithful love, support, and prayers!

Gretchen

Jael



Panoramic view of one of the recording studios at Luther University



Clear plastic "sneeze shields" (see Hans' article)



Hans holding his grandson



A socially distanced service at ILC



LTU's COVID Prevention and Safety award

Prayer Requests:

- For the family's safe return to Korea in mid-August
- For continued wisdom for the family while in America
- For fruitful discussion during Gretchen's online Bible Studies
- For God's blessing and protection for orphans born in Korea
- For Korean Christians to step up and adopt those orphans

To support us, you may send a tax-deductible gift to **The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, P.O. Box 66861, St. Louis, MO 63166-6861** or securely online through the LCMS website, at lcms.org/trinklein. Make checks payable to the LCMS, writing "Support of Hans Trinklein" on the memo line. You can also send your gifts to our friends at **Mission Central 40718 Highway E-16 Mapleton, IA 51034**.