

HEARTS IN SEOUL



January,
2021

The Trinklein Family Newsletter



Hans



Gretchen

New Year, New Home, New Classes...

Same trustworthy, unchanging God



Abi, 23



Mike, 21



John, 18

Hello dear friends!

Well, the new year certainly started with a bang, here in Korea—at least for the Trinkleins! Due to brand new government action, the cost of housing nearly doubled, effectively overnight. This had a seismic impact on the housing market, as you might imagine.

Here in Korea, many people own one individual apartment (think of a condo unit in America) and if it's big, or in a good location, it's common for them to rent out that "owned" apartment while they themselves live in another (smaller, cheaper) place; the difference between rental income and rent expense often covers other living expenses. At least, that was true until the rules changed. Suddenly many of those people found they couldn't afford to do that any longer...and that included the owners of OUR apartment. Only a few days after New Year's, we were told that they wanted to move back into it. Further, they wanted us out by January 28th so they could do some remodeling first!

Thus began some very stressful days.

Since Luther University/Lutheran Church in Korea is responsible for providing housing for us (a real blessing in the LCK/LCMS partnership) it was technically their job to find us somewhere new to live. But due to the rule change, apartments like ours were simply not available within an hour's drive of LTU. Ack!

Then the University did something very kind: there are two small "guest" apartments in the faculty housing building, which share a communicating door (like some hotel rooms have). LTU took those two apartments and declared them to be "one" for us! Further, the apartments were re-painted, re-papered, re-floored, and while one of the kitchenettes was simply removed (it's now our "laundry area") the other one was completely re-done! (So were the two bathrooms!) It's wonderful. All together it's about 2/3 the size of our old apartment, but since Jael isn't living with us anymore, that extra bedroom is a storage room/clothes closet. And we are **loving** the location. Now we're not *next* to campus—we're ON campus! There are trees! A "mountain" to climb! Only two floors, instead of 15...and we know all of our neighbors. (It's a 100% Lutheran 'neighborhood,' in fact! ☺)

I'll let others in the family talk about the craziness of the move, although any of you who have had to deal with it yourselves will understand. We're still trying to unpack everything, and slowly, sloooooowly, things are getting back to the new normal.

Of course, January and February are supposed to be devoted to class preparations—but January was kind of consumed, and the official rules about schools and such change on a weekly basis, so it's been very hard to plan anything effectively. The no-more-than-four rule is still in effect (though if you make the room big enough, there must be some kind of exemption, because some of our offices have—gasp!—ten or more people within the same four walls (2 meters apart, of course). The exciting news? I've been asked

to teach a seminary class on the Holy Spirit this semester! I'm really looking forward to it, and since (as of yesterday) I'm now free enough to spend time in my office, it's time to get down to business. Oh, that God would put the *pneuma* in my sails, as I prepare to lead the seminarians on this journey of discovery and growth!

I won't deny that (in my opinion) January 2021 has been one of the most stressful, unsettled months we've had since we arrived in Korea. And given the ongoing uncertainty of government-mandated teaching restrictions and the sharply reduced number of college applicants nationwide, anxiety and pressure remain high at the University as well. But I remain as confident as ever that our almighty, loving Father is still on His throne, guiding and guarding His children through the unfolding drama of these last days. *Man*, I can't wait to see what He does with our messed-up world! What glory, what praise will come when He causes everything to work together for the good of those who love Him, and are called according to His purpose! (Romans 8:28)

God be with you 'til we meet again!

Fun Korean Fact:

There is a saying in Korea that if it snows on your moving day, you will have good fortune! That may be one of the reasons why January is in the top three most popular months for moving!

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

Sibling Strip

Gretchen's Pearl

When Johnny came back to Korea with us in December, we were all expecting to have a nice, relaxed winter hanging out as a family. And then we found out that we were going to have to move. The relaxed month of January turned into a very NOT-relaxed month as we started packing everything up and trying to figure out where we were going to be living by the end of the month. Fast forward a month, and here we are in the faculty housing at the university.

My room's a bit smaller. I don't have a closet anymore either. But none of that bothers me, because right behind the university, less than 60 seconds' walk from our new front door, are the woods. A little mountain covered in trees, a mountain that is a home to deer and squirrels and magpies and snakes and cats.

When I first heard that we were going to have to move with less than a month's notice, I thought it was a bad thing. "Aww, no, but this is right in the middle of our time being back together as a family..." And yes, we lost a lot of family time because of the move. But I think that the woods are going to make up for that eventually, and I look forward to the hours I'll be spending among the trees.

This month Hans and I experienced our fifth move as a couple. There are few things in life that rattle me more than a move, and this one was no exception. We had been told that the owners of our previous apartment would graciously cover the cost of the move, since they gave us such short notice, but we had no idea what all was included in that. So we spent many days packing things in boxes and lining those boxes along a wall in the living room in preparation for moving day, as we had done in our previous moves. When the day finally arrived, seven people descended upon our apartment at 8am and, in a flurry of activity, began to disassemble beds and other furniture, loading everything into their trucks. One of the workers, a young man who spoke excellent English, asked me whether there was anything in the wardrobes in our bedroom. I told him they were empty. (We had packed nearly everything into boxes already, except for some items in the kitchen cupboards.) He looked surprised. At this point, I realized they had planned to pack everything. If we had done nothing in preparation, they would have come in, packed things into boxes, moved it all to the new place, unpacked the boxes, and put everything back in its place (wardrobes, under bed drawers, file cabinets, etc.). He did say that our preparation saved them a lot of time and work—they were able to finish the entire job by 4pm—but part of me was stunned. Here I had spent days stressing over this move, sorting and packing and planning and organizing... Now that we are in our new home, I am pondering a lot of the things that happened this past month. I want to learn the lessons the Lord is trying to teach me. I don't regret the preparations we made and the work we did, since we were able to get rid of many items we don't need and pass on blessings. But I want to abide in God's presence and experience His perfect peace, even when our lives seem to be in upheaval. Those movers did not need our "help" with packing or loading or anything. God does not need my anxious activity to accomplish His purposes in my—or anyone else's—life. I want so much to learn to fully trust in Him, abiding in Him and yielding to His sweet and peace-filled Spirit. Please pray for me. I seem to be a slow learner.

Gretchen

Abri



Ladder truck on moving day



Our final "Family Game Night" gathering at the old apartment



The beautiful view from our new front door

Prayer Requests:

- Thanksgiving for a smooth and relatively easy moving process
- For boldness and courage for Gretchen as she witnesses in Seoul
- For clear direction and provision for Mike and John's college studies
- That the coming semester would be free from COVID complications
- For peace, unity, and revival in both the United States and Korea

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You can also send your gifts to our friends at **Mission Central 40718 Highway E-16 Mapleton, IA 51034**.