

The Hanna Newsletter

"Our sufficiency is of God" (2 Corinthians 3:5)



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Church Revitalization - Katy, TX



November 3, 2024

Dear Praying Friends,

We have much to report concerning the progress of our ministry transition from Taiwan to Texas. In mid-September we received formal approval from BMM for our transfer from Taiwan to the field of North America and a green light to partner with fellow missionaries Gerald and Julie Hawk in the ministry of revitalizing Good News Baptist Church in Katy, Texas. But before describing the changes that are about to take place in our lives and ministry, let us first fill you on our activities since we last communicated with you.

Since March, Matt has been teaching a weekly online course in Biblical Greek; this class continues. In August, Marla and I traveled to Greenville, SC to connect with the leadership of our sending church (Morningside Baptist Church); the purpose was to communicate the new direction of our ministry. Afterward, we flew to Katy, Texas for a week of meetings with the Hawks; we focused on prayer, planning the structure of our ministry team, and our shared vision and goals for the church. We are continuing to meet with them regularly by video conference for planning and prayer.

The main event in September was our son's wedding in Huntsville, Alabama. Luke and Heather were married on September 21. Then, in early October we traveled to Grand Rapids, Michigan to participate in a three-day mission conference. We ministered the following weekend at Hope Baptist Church (Hope, Michigan), where Marla grew up. At the end of the month Matt attended a pastor's gathering, where he connected with area pastors and developed relationships in the hope of scheduling future deputation meetings.

Our official approval by BMM for service in Katy, Texas has cleared the way so that we may now begin to plot our trajectory to actually arrive there. In our last letter we optimistically projected that we might be able to move there by January 2025. It is now clear that we must modify this expectation.

We have been issued a new support estimate, which reflects the difference between the cost of living in Taiwan and the Houston area. Our new figures indicate that we are currently receiving less than 65% of our projected monthly needs. This means that we need to mobilize new ministry partners willing to pledge an additional \$2,400 in committed monthly support.

According to the Social Security Administration, the overall cost of living in the US increased by 5.9% in 2022 and by an additional 8.7% in 2023. The primary factors in these increases are housing and food; food costs have increased by 25.8% since 2020;¹ home rental prices increased by 26% and the cost of purchasing a home by 47% in the same period.² Marla and I had the opportunity to research the Houston area housing market during our recent visits there and discovered that buying a home is actually more cost-effective than renting by a large margin. Therefore, we are planning to purchase a home when we arrive in Katy. We already have sufficient savings for most of a down payment but need more monthly support before we can commit to a regular mortgage payment. It will be necessary for us to raise the majority of the additional support funds that we need before we can make that permanent move.

¹ "Here's How Much Grocery Prices Have Increased Since the Last Election," May 5, 2024, on the *Yahoo!Finance* website. <https://finance.yahoo.com/news/much-grocery-prices-increased-since-140029491.html>, viewed on October 19, 2024.


² "New Report Shows Housing Costs Strain Owners and Renters Alike; Millions Priced Out of Homeownership," June 20, 2024, on the *Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University* website. <https://www.jchs.harvard.edu/press-releases/new-report-shows-housing-costs-strain-owners-and-renters-alike-millions-priced-out>, viewed on October 19, 2024.



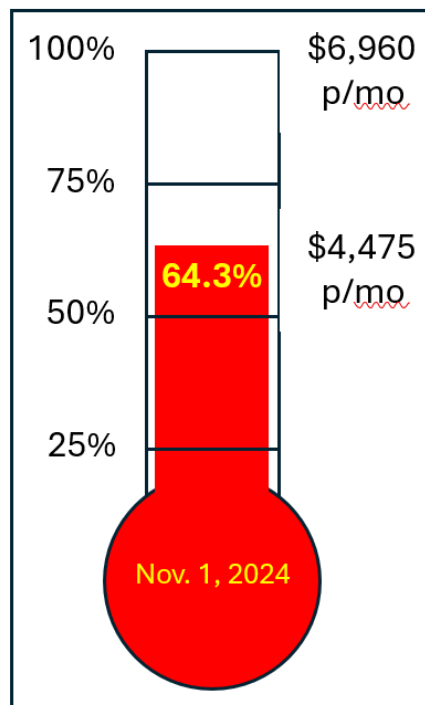
We are now making immediate preparations to begin deputation travel; we will be presenting our new ministry in churches in order to recruit new ministry partners. The last time we traveled in full-time deputation was prior to our departure for Taiwan 35 years ago. We feel a bit rusty in the skills required, and we certainly feel older than when we last engaged in this kind of ministry! Please pray for us as we prepare new informational material and media, contact churches and pastors, schedule meetings, and begin to present our ministry. Pray that God would quickly raise up new ministry partners for us so that we can move to Katy at an early date.

In the meanwhile, Gerald and Julie Hawk continue in their efforts to move the ministry forward at Good News Baptist Church. In addition to regular worship services and mid-week gatherings, they are reaching out through an Explorer's club for children, group and personal Bible studies, and special outreach events in the community. Please pray for God's blessing on them and their ministry. The sooner we can arrive in Katy, the sooner we will be able to pitch in to help them reach this multi-cultural community with the gospel!

In Christ,



Matt & Marla Hanna



Current Pledged Support