

Rodriguez Prayer Letter

SHANGHAI, CHINA - JULY 2011

The Churches in Beijing

In April Julia, Caleb and I visited the Beijing churches with



our parents. The churches in Beijing had a joint service with more than 80 members in attendance. My

dad preached and taught a class in the afternoon on the topic of preparing and delivering a sermon. Julia's aunt came to church that Sunday. She was deeply moved by the testimonies of two sisters who were recently baptized. She will go to Thailand with us and the Jacksons in August to attend a conference for Christians in Asia. We are praying she will be baptized in Thailand.



During my dad's sermon, the police called the leaders of the Wangjing church asking for information about our group. The church leaders invited the police officers to study the Bible with us and learn about Jesus. This call was likely related to the events taking place at the *Shouwang* house church in Beijing, see: www.nytimes.com/2011/04/18/world/asia/18beijing.html or www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-1318084. We have friends at *Shouwang* who were detained by the cops, evicted from their apartments and laid off from their jobs. Please pray.



Julia and I spent ten days in Beijing this month. Our trip was *super* encouraging. The church in Haidian is doing really well. After the May retreat four seekers decided to be baptized. Three of them were baptized two weeks

ago. Hai Gang is currently living with his girlfriend and is not ready to move out. Pray for Hai Gang to repent and be baptized soon, and also pray for the faith of the new believers.



Haidian Baptisms - Friday, June 24



Haidian Church - Sunday, July 3

Julia has an uncle and aunt that live in a city near Beijing. They have been trying to have a baby for 10 years. We visited them this week and found out that the aunt has the same illness as one of the sisters in the Wangjing church. Two years ago, that sister found a great doctor and our church prayed for her and she was healed. Last week we invited Julia's uncle and aunt to Beijing in order to have dinner with our church so they could share that sister's testimony and tell Julia's aunt and uncle about that doctor and our church and our God.



It was an awesome evening. Pray that Julia's uncle and aunt would give their lives to Jesus and that He would give them a baby.

Gary and Danita and the Wangjing Church have begun a new church plant in Wukesong (the south-west corner of Beijing). Pray that God will bless this work and grow their church.

Also this week, 15 brothers and sisters from Haidian and Wangjing traveled to Sichuan (central China) to host a spiritual retreat in order to minister to the children and families who were affected by the 2008 earthquake.



Our Work in Shanghai

The best news that we have to share with you this month is that we decided to stay in Shanghai next year. Back in February we thought we would certainly be moving back to the States this summer because we thought Caleb was going to have all kinds of medical needs. But Caleb is perfectly and miraculously healthy. Thank you for your prayers. And thank God for His mercy.

In May we also found a house church. They are a great group (about 12-15 members), spiritually very mature. Relationally, very



tight. Most of the believers in the group became Christians through other churches and/or *China Now* missionaries (the organization that originally brought me to China in 2003). The leaders have asked us to help equip them in the areas of evangelism and leadership (e.g., teaching and preaching). The church used to be led by a couple from South Africa who recently moved to the States to lead a church in Wyoming. Pray that God will use Julia and me to build this church and plant other house churches in this city.



May 30 (my birthday)

mer. Pray that God will continue to draw them to Himself. And pray that the Spirit would introduce us to more students whose hearts are open and ready to hear the gospel.



Julia and I are leading a marriage class for 3 Christian couples from a local house church. This ministry is very rewarding. There is a great need for family building ministries, but very few resources in China. The picture to the left is a couple we provided premarital counseling for last year. I had the honor of walking the bride down the aisle.



The Rodriguez Family

My parents returned to Malibu at the end of April. Martin and Erin moved back to the States at the end of June. Martin will be the minister of the Hollywood Church of Christ. We are really sad to see our family leave. This was the most difficult year of our lives, and it would have been so much harder without our family here. The good news is that Meredith is staying in Shanghai to continue studying Mandarin.



Baby Caleb



Recently, Caleb begun creeping across the floor, cruising (i.e., moving around whilst holding onto the furniture), and saying "mama" discriminately. He also cut his first tooth just yesterday!



Thank you for your love and prayers and support. May God bless and keep you all!

In Him,
Marcus and Julia

The Lord your God is with you, He is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing! ~ **Zephaniah 3:17**

