

# *Rev. and Mrs. Earl Koon*

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JUNE, 2020

DEAR PASTOR AND CHURCH,

WORDS CANNOT EXPRESS OUR GRATEFUL HEARTS FOR THE MANY YEARS WE HAVE BEEN FAITHFULLY SUPPORTED AS MISSIONARIES TO THE COUNTRY OF AUSTRALIA BY YOUR CHURCH. OUR HEARTS ARE HUMBLLED AS WE HAVE GLADLY GIVEN THE GREATER PORTION OF OUR LIVES AS HIS SERVANTS.

IN NOVEMBER, 1963, MY WIFE, JOYCE, MYSELF, AND THREE SMALL CHILDREN FOUNDED THE FUNDAMENTAL BAPTIST TEMPLE IN GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN. IN JUST OVER SEVEN YEARS, WE GREW TO OVER 300 IN ATTENDANCE, PURCHASED EIGHT ACRES, AND BUILT A BEAUTIFUL BRICK BUILDING. OUR GOAL WAS TO WIN SOULS, BAPTIZE THEM, AND GROUND THEM, IN THE WORD OF GOD. SOME CONTINUED ON TO FULL TIME SERVICE FOR THE LORD FROM THAT MINISTRY.

BUT BY 1971, I HAD A DEEP UNREST IN MY HEART. BOTH JOYCE AND I, HAVING BEEN TRAINED IN BIBLE COLLEGE FOR MISSIONS, KNEW GOD WAS NOW LEADING US TO GO AS MISSIONARIES TO AUSTRALIA. CHURCHES ACROSS AMERICA PLEDGED TO SUPPORT US. GOD MARVELOUSLY OPENED DOORS AND OUR FAMILY OF EIGHT ARRIVED IN JANUARY, 1974.

IN THE FIRST TWO YEARS WE BUILT UP THE YOUNG GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH IN A SUBURB OF MELBOURNE, AND TURNED THAT WORK OVER TO A FAITHFUL AUSTRALIAN MAN, AND HIS FAMILY, WHO CONTINUED FOR THE NEXT TWENTY YEARS AS THEIR PASTOR. NEXT WE RELOCATED ACROSS THE VAST MELBOURNE CITY TO FRANKSTON, AND FOUNDED THE BEREAN BAPTIST CHURCH. WE SAW COUNTLESS SOULS SAVED AND BAPTIZED, AND BUILT A COLONIAL STYLE MUD BRICK BUILDING. STONG BELIEVERS STILL KEEP IN CONTACT WITH US REGULARLY.

IN 1990 WE MOVED TO THE STATE OF QUEENSLAND AND RESCUED THE NEARLY DEAD CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH IN THE CITY OF IPSWICH. IN FOUR YEARS, OUR ATTENDANCE REACHED 100. MANY WERE SAVED AND BAPTIZED HERE AS WELL, AND SOME, AGAIN, WERE CALLED INTO FULL TIME MINISTRIES.

WE WERE ASKED TO CARE FOR A CHURCH IN BURLEIGH HEADS, QUEENSLAND, FOR A FURLOUGHING COUPLE. IT AGAIN WAS FRUITFUL. ONE YOUNG MAN LEFT TO GO TO BIBLE COLLEGE IN THE U.S., AND, WAS IN TIME, LED BY GOD TO MISSIONARY SERVICE ON THE ISLAND OF NAURU WITH HIS WIFE AND FAMILY.

IN 1995 WE FOUNDED THE FRIENDSHIP BAPTIST CHURCH IN OUR HOME. OVER TIME, WE PURCHASED NEARLY TWO ACRES, AND MOVED A BUILDING ON TO THE LAND IN MT. CROSBY, QUEENSLAND. WE DOUBLED THE SIZE, AND YEARS LATER, ADDED ANOTHER SECTION TO DOUBLE THE SIZE ONCE AGAIN. ONE COUPLE FROM OUR EARLIER MINISTRY AT CALVARY WERE SENT OUT BY OUR CONGREGATION TO THE ISLAND OF TASMANIA TO PLANT A CHURCH. ANOTHER FILIPINO MAN THAT HAD LED FRIENDSHIP BAPTIST CHURCH IN OUR ABSENCE WAS SENT BACK TO THE PHILIPPINES TO BE A ZEALOUS SOUL WINNER WITH HIS WIFE AND SON, EVEN GOING INTO REMOTE MOUNTAIN VILLAGES. FRIENDSHIP BAPTIST CHURCH REMAINS HIS SENDING CHURCH TO THIS DAY.

IT WAS OUR DEEPEST DELIGHT TO SEE A TEEN AGED YOUNG MAN FROM OUR WORK AT CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH, NOW PLANTING A NEW WORK IN THE OUTBACK COUNTRY TOWN OF MILLMERRAN, QUEENSLAND. WE ALSO HAD A PART IN ORDAINING A PASTOR IN THE MOUNTAIN AREA OF STANTHORPE, QUEENSLAND WHO IS CONTINUING TO REACH HIS AREA FOR THE LORD.

*"He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again  
with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." Psalm 126:6*

THE YEARS OF OUR LIVES HAVE NOT BEEN WITHOUT DIFFICULTIES: SAYING GOOD BYE TO OUR CHILDREN, PARENTS, AND FAMILY MEMBERS, SICKNESS, CAR WRECKS, MEDICAL OPERATIONS IN AUSTRALIA AND IN AMERICA; AND THERE HAVE BEEN TIMES OF DISCOURAGEMENT AND EXTREME FATIGUE. BUT GOD IS FAITHFUL AND HAS ALLOWED US TO SEE PASTORS AND MISSIONARIES CALLED TO SERVE HIM. HOW WE REJOICE OVER THESE TROPHIES!

WE WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH YOU, THAT DURING THE TIMES WE HAVE BEEN RESIDENT IN THE UNITED STATES, DUE TO MEDICAL ISSUES, WE HAVE BEEN ACTIVE IN THE LORD'S SERVICE. I HAVE LED THE MUSIC IN OUR HOME CHURCH, WITH JOYCE PLAYING THE PIANO. WE HAVE LED FOLKS TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST, AND DISCIPLED SOME OF THEM. I HAVE TAUGHT AN ADULT BIBLE CLASS WHILE BEING RESTRICTED IN A WHEEL CHAIR. FOR NEARLY TWO YEARS, WE WERE FAITHFUL TO HELP PLANT A NEW CHURCH IN SPRINGDALE, ARKANSAS, EVEN THOUGH WE WERE BOTH CONFINED TO WALKERS. WE HAVE FILLED THE PULPIT FOR SOME CHURCH SERVICES. UNTIL RECENTLY, WE HAVE MINISTERED IN A LOCAL NURSING HOME ONE WEEK OF THE MONTH. THE VIRUS PRECAUTIONS HAVE CLOSED THAT DOOR TEMPORARILY. ALSO, HERE IN OUR HOME CHURCH, I HAVE ENJOYED LAWN MOWING, WEEKLY, UNTIL YOUNGER MEN HAVE REPLACED ME. WE HAVE BEEN HONORED TO SERVE, AND GIVE ALL GLORY TO GOD!

GOD HAS A PLAN FOR EACH OF OUR LIVES. WE HAVE COME TO DEEPLY LOVE THE AUSTRALIAN COUNTRY AND IT'S PEOPLE. OUR HEARTS ARE HUNGRY TO HEAR OF THEIR STRENGTH IN THE LORD. HOWEVER, GOD HAS FINALLY ENDED OUR TRAVEL BACK TO THIS GREAT LAND. IN MAY OF 2019, ON OUR RETURN IN A 28 HOUR TRIP HOME, JOYCE DEVELOPED BLOOD CLOTS IN HER LEFT LEG WHICH HAD MOVED TO THE TWO MAIN ARTERIES OF HER LUNGS. UPON DIAGNOSIS IN THE EMERGENCY ROOM, WE WERE TOLD THAT SHE WAS "LUCKY" TO BE ALIVE, FOR SIMILAR PATIENTS DID NOT MAKE IT. WE COUNTED IT ALL GOD'S DIVINE PROTECTION IN SPARING HER LIFE. OUR DOCTOR WARNED US THEN THAT FUTURE LONG DISTANT AIR-LINE TRAVEL WAS VERY RISKY; THAT SHE COULD VERY WELL HAVE A RECURRENCE OF THIS CONDITION ON SIMILAR FLIGHTS.

WITH THIS KNOWLEDGE, AND THE GREAT NEWS THAT I AM NOW 80 YEARS OLD, AND JOYCE WILL BE 82 IN ONE MONTH, WE ARE SUBMITTING OUR STATUS TO "RETIRED". WE HAVE BEEN HONORED AND BLESSED TO BRING THE LIFE CHANGING GOSPEL TO OUR "OTHER" BELOVED COUNTRY FOR ALL OF THESE YEARS. WE WILL CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO FILL OUR PLACE, AND SERVE IN WHATEVER OPPORTUNITIES THAT COME OUR WAY. PRAISE GOD, HE HAS GIVEN US HEALTH FOR THE MOST PART; EVERY DAY IT IS WONDERFUL TO BE ALIVE, AND TO SHARE GOD'S GOODNESS WITH OTHERS.

THANK YOU AGAIN FROM THE BOTTOM OF OUR HEARTS FOR YOUR PRAYERS AND SUPPORT OVER NEARLY 50 YEARS. IF YOUR CHURCH, BY THE GRACE OF GOD, CAN CONTINUE TO HELP US EVEN IN A REDUCED FINANCIAL WAY, WE WOULD BE VERY APPRECIATIVE. WE HAVE SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS, BUT OVER TIME, AND FOR VARIOUS REASONS, WE HAVE LOST SOME CHURCH'S BACKING.

IN THE HARVEST TOGETHER,



EARL AND JOYCE KOON



Pastor and Church Family,

We humbly thank you for partnering with Earl and Joyce Koon for these many years. It is amazing to reflect on their years of dedicated service to the Lord and the rich heritage that will continue to follow them.

Unfortunately, the time has now come to change their "status" to retired. Although filled with mixed emotions, this is a necessary decision due to their age and health limitations. While they are joyful to have given many years to their beloved Australia, they are heartbroken to no longer return again.

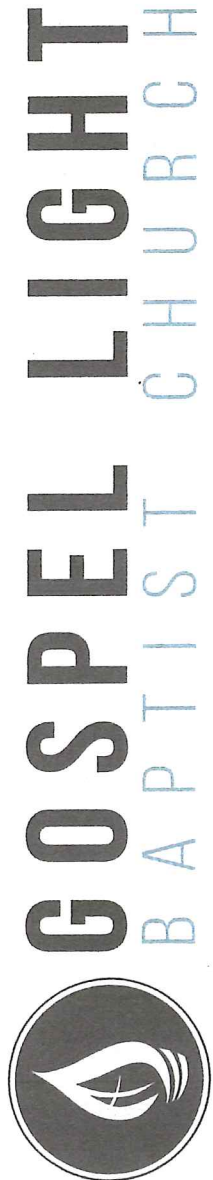
I would ask that you would do a couple of things for them in honor of their years of service to the Lord:

1. Pray for them! Transitions are a difficult part of life and this will be a challenging time for the Koon's as they still have a great desire to serve in ministry. Pray that God would give them direction and opportunities to serve.
2. Honor them. Perhaps you could write them a note and or make a brief phone call expressing your appreciation for them and their faithfulness.
3. Consider ongoing support. Even at a reduced rate, every little bit will help sustain them in their golden years. Our church will continue to support them at 50%.

Thank you again for faithful support of the Koon's over the years. We pray fruit will abound to your account.

God bless you,

Pastor Noel Cwenar



## Olsen Clinic

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Friday, July 19, 2019

**RE: Koon, Joyce; DOB: 07/11/1938**

To whom it may concern,

On her last flight from Australia to the United States Mrs. Koon developed DVT and a pulmonary embolis. Because of this she is at high risk for a recurrence with prolonged lack of movement on similar flights. My recommendation is that she no longer fly to Australia.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Olsen MD", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mark Olsen MD