

The Robelen Report

October 31, 2018

Dear prayer partners and supporting churches,

Whew! It is getting harder and harder to find time to update y'all on everything that is going on here in Farmville. God's work continues to progress with mixed parts excitement and challenge.

When I last wrote to y'all, we were gearing up for our second annual soul-winning outreach at the Five County Fair. I am thrilled to report that by God's grace, we saw eighteen people make professions of faith in Christ! Several others received assurance of salvation, and others were helped or challenged in other ways. We are still working to follow up on all who made decisions at the fair, and would appreciate your prayers that each one gets into a solid, Biblical church and grows in their relationship with Christ.

We have also had three new members join our church. Miss Annie and Knee-knee who we had just baptized as of the last letter both joined. Another lady named Judy also joined; she was saved and baptized in another church many years ago, but she wasn't in church when we knocked on her door; she is now in church faithfully and growing!

We have seen a three others make professions of faith in the last few weeks also. One is a teenager named Dakota who had been wandering by occasionally for months, but was finally ready to listen to the Gospel. We also had the privilege of leading to Christ a lady named Marie who we met when we knocked on her door during visitation. Thirdly, Judy's husband Dale was recently diagnosed with a serious breathing condition, and as I visited with him, he prayed to receive Christ also!

We have also been weathering storms both metaphorically and literally. For those who don't live nearby, a couple of weeks ago, Hurricane Michael blew through with much force and little warning. There was serious flooding in Farmville, and we had little warning to prepare for it. By God's grace, once again the church didn't flood enough to be a problem. The brick stairwell that goes down to street level once again took in a couple of feet of water and some water blew through the rear doors onto a concrete floor, but there was no real damage. In the meantime, the house where Betsy and I have been staying lost power for almost a week, but we were

able to camp out at the church where we had power, and we were able to move all of the food from the freezer at home to the church also— that was a huge blessing since Betsy has been storing up a number of prepared meals for when she has the baby.

A different kind of challenge has been the leaving of one of our core members. It saddens me that a lady who has grown up in the home of a Fundamental Baptist preacher and who has spent many years assisting churches in various capacities is now a hindrance rather than a help. She wasn't happy with the service schedule that the rest of the church settled on and then as her self-employed business picked up, her attendance for the Sunday PM service and Wednesday Prayer and Bible Study service became less faithful. When I had to ask her to step down from teaching Sunday School and playing the piano, she didn't take it well, and she has now left the church. While she is attending another church that preaches the Gospel, her example of slack faithfulness dragged down several families who knew her better than me since she has been established in this community for many years more than I have, and those families are not attending nearly as regularly as they were a few months before. Please pray that God would help her become the example that she ought to be and that others need to be and that these others would recover from the effects of her poor example.

Betsy's pregnancy continues to be a challenge. Generally, she is having more good days and fewer bad days than some months ago and her bad days aren't as bad either, but they still occur unpredictably, and she is having to minimize her activity greatly to avoid going into premature labor. We are in the home stretch with the pregnancy, though, and we trust that in a few weeks we will be holding a healthy baby as more and ample reward for the efforts and trials of the pregnancy. Please pray that the rest of the pregnancy and the childbirth will go well.

Finances for us personally and for the church are both a serious complication right now. The lower attendance at church compounds what were already slow offerings. By God's grace, we paid this month's rent and all of this month's bills, but we are seriously short for next month's rent. The van which has been such a big help is also currently unavailable for ministry due to failing an inspection for rear brake shoes being too worn. Until either we can pay for the brakes to be done or I can find time to figure out how to do them myself, we are picking people up with my car. We would appreciate your prayers that God would increase the church finances so that mundane financial issues wouldn't limit us from being our most effective in God's service.

Our most urgent prayer request would be for housing for Betsy and I. We have been staying at the parsonage of a church in Victoria, which is a little over half an hour away from Farmville. The church agreed that we could stay there because their pastor had his own house and did not need the parsonage. He has since resigned, and the church needs their parsonage for the search for a replacement pastor; they have asked us to be out of the parsonage by the end of November. We really need to be out of there and in Farmville before then, though, because we should be there before the baby is born. The midwife that we are using is based out of Charlottesville, and will not go past Farmville so far to get to Victoria. Furthermore, people need to see that as we publicly place Christ first and trust God to meet our needs, He is faithful to pro

vide as He has promised. This is complicated by the fact that our personal finances are going down as well. In the next few months, we are losing a substantial amount of our monthly support, and there is no way that we could pay for a place in Farmville right now. Please pray that God will increase our finances and provide the right place for us to stay. To a human mindset, it seems unreasonable to expect God to provide so much when we have so little, but what we ask is not difficult at all for Him, and we are where we are with the limited resources as hand because this is where He placed us. Therefore, we are expecting God to meet the needs for us to do what He has called us to do.

We trust that since we are where God has called us to be and doing what He has called us to do, He will soon meet our needs to enable us to go on, because; “Faithful is He that calleth you, Who also will do it”. At the same time, we appreciate each of your prayers, and trust that God records fruit to your account when your prayers become part of our provision.

In Christ,

Pastor Paul Robelen

Praises:

Great results from fair!
Other souls saved
Protection from hurricane
New church members

Prayer Requests:

Recovery from spider bites
A healthy pregnancy and delivery
Guidance and provision for dental work
Financial supply; both personal and church
A permanent home in Farmville