

From the Heart (expanded edition)...Living in a Paradox (by Debbie)

Happy New Year! We hope your year is off to a good start! Usually in our prayer letters, we highlight ways that we see God working in or through our ministry. This month, we want to vary from that slightly and fill you in a little about what God is doing in our lives personally. Ministry is all about life-change...seeing God change people's lives. And our lives are some of those being changed!

As we have mentioned in several of our prayer letters, we are in the process of trying to adopt a baby here in the States. This adoption process is changing us in that it is making us more and more dependent on the Lord. In fact, recently, I spent some extended time with the Lord and was journaling about what I am feeling and experiencing as we wait on God's timing for this adoption.

I came to realize that I feel like I am living in a paradox of sorts. On one hand, we could be matched with a birth family at any time, so we want to keep our schedule open to be able to accommodate becoming parents. But, at the same time, we still need to live our lives and make plans.

For example, I am planning a potential trip to Egypt in February to do some team building with our Egyptian AIA staff & volunteers. But, if we get selected by a birth mom and the baby was to be due during that time, the trip would need to be cancelled. So, do I plan the trip or not? These are the kinds of questions I am asking God.

We mention this so that you can understand some of the challenges that we are facing at this point in our lives. We are recognizing that we

must completely trust in God for His timing and His provision for our family.

To update you on where we are at in the adoption process...our home study was completed in mid-November, but we are still waiting on our official foster care license from the State of Ohio.

However, our adoption agency has begun giving us the opportunity to have our profile read by birth moms who desire to make an adoption plan for their baby. Our profile has already been considered by two birth moms who decided to match with other families. However, being part of these birth mom readings has brought us face to face with the fact that we could be matched at any time and that all of this is totally in God's hands.

Ultimately, as I mentioned earlier, our faith in the Lord is being tested and strengthened. We ask you to keep praying that God will give us wisdom as we make decisions. Pray also that He will provide the child He wants for us in His timing and that He will give us peace and patience in the process of waiting.

Par•a•dox /par-uh-doks/ noun

A situation, person, or thing that combines contradictory features or qualities.



We enjoyed spending time with Debbie's family over Christmas break.

2015 AIA Special Events

Super Bowl Breakfast

Friday, January 30, 2015, 8 a.m.
JW Marriott Desert Ridge Resort & Spa,
Phoenix, AZ

Legends of the Hardwood Breakfast

Saturday, April 4, 2015
Indiana Convention Center
Indianapolis, IN

Night of Champions

Saturday, May 16, 2015
Schindler Banquet Center, Xenia, OH

We would love for you to attend any of these events. If you are interested in attending, please let us know.

Good News Updates

As we mentioned in a previous prayer letter, Ed was coaching eight students who were raising support to serve with AIA overseas on a Short Term International Project (a.k.a. STINT). You may remember in September we reported that three of them completed their ministry partner development and are serving in Puerto Rico and East Asia. We are excited to announce that two more of the STINTers completed their support-raising and will be leaving for South Africa in the next few weeks.

We have been diligently praying for God to raise up an individual to take over Debbie's role as the Challenge Course Director. It looks like God may be answering this prayer through a young man who is starting the application process to join AIA. He is interested in becoming the next Challenge Course Director. Please pray for God's direction and leading with this candidate.

Praises

- ❖ God has provided the support needed by the STINTers Ed was coaching. They will soon be headed to South Africa.
- ❖ God has raised up over 80 people to serve as volunteers at the Super Bowl Breakfast

Prayer Requests

- ❖ Safe travel for Ed and Debbie as we drive to and from Phoenix to help with the Super Bowl Breakfast (Jan 24 -Feb 6)
- ❖ More ticket/table sales for The Super Bowl Breakfast; we are trusting God for a sell-out crowd
- ❖ God's protection over Peyton Manning (2015 Bart Starr Award Recipient) and all the other NFL athletes and coaches who will be part of the program.
- ❖ For God to be glorified through the Super Bowl Breakfast
- ❖ All logistical aspects of the Super Bowl Breakfast to go smoothly
- ❖ Discernment & clear communication for Debbie as she coordinates the volunteers at the Breakfast
- ❖ For God to speak through each person who talks at the SBB
- ❖ That God will use the SBB event to draw people into a new or deeper relationship with Christ

On The Road Again

As I am writing this Ed and I are on our way to Phoenix to assist with the Super Bowl Breakfast. We are driving a van full of supplies needed for the Breakfast. While in Phoenix, we will both be helping with various needs for this event take place.

My main role is to be the volunteer coordinator, which means that I will give direction to more than 80 volunteers who help with the Breakfast. Ed will be filling in where needed as well as building relationships with potential ministry partners who are coming for a donor event being hosted by AIA in conjunction with the Super Bowl Breakfast. During Super Bowl Weekend we will both be drivers to transport these potential donors to various events. (No, we do not get to go to the Super Bowl ☺).

One of the highlights of the Super Bowl Breakfast is the presentation of the Bart Starr Award to an NFL athlete voted on by his peers as a man who with outstanding character on and off the field. This year's winner is Peyton Manning (Denver Broncos Quarterback). While we are pleased to present this award to Peyton and he is excited to receive it, we are unsure of where Peyton stands spiritually speaking. Pray that God will use this event to draw Peyton into a deeper walk with Christ.

Following our week in Phoenix, I will travel to Palm Springs to attend the annual Association of Challenge Course Technology Conference from February 5-8, while Ed drives the supplies back to Ohio.