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Changing Seasons

Today was a day of firsts that caught me a little off guard. Nothing bad, but it required me to change the way I was thinking. I woke up to snow - yes snow (even though it had been 80 degrees on Tuesday. I wore my puffy winter coat for the first time since last spring. I gave in and switched on my heat. And after thinking about writing you for the past couple of months I finally created some space to write to my dear friends.

It seems like just yesterday the trees were budding and the flowers were blooming, and yet the leaves on the trees are changing colors, continuing to remind me of God's amazing creativity and how creation glows with His glory.

Summer was the start of a new season and some new routines for me. On June first, I started taking classes 3-4 times a week at a small local gym. Talk about a change of thinking. I have never in my life have liked exercise (or even gym class), yet somehow I've found myself getting up at 6 a.m. in the morning to get to the gym to workout at 7 a.m. There are few "good" excuses available that early in the morning (I've only succumb to the "I'm too tired" excuse once in the past four months), I've not given myself a choice when the alarm goes off, it has been non-negotiable to get out of bed, and I'm actually doing it. I can't say it is getting any easier to get up (especially now that it is dark and cold in the morning), but this has shown me I'm stronger and more self-disciplined that I thought. I look at it as an investment in my health and my future.



I've had three opportunities this summer to spend time with my family in Michigan. This has been especially meaningful as my dad finished up his radiation treatment for prostate cancer (so proud of you Dad!). At the end of June my niece Heather got married to Michael and our family grew. In August my dad, siblings and their spouse did a long week-end away in southwestern Michigan. And on September 7 my Dad turned 85. We surprised him with an 85th birthday party a few days later. The older I get the more I value the time I'm able to spend with my family, they are indeed a blessing to me.

God continues to be faithful to use me to support, facilitate, and encourage the ministries of others. Sadly, June brought the closing of The Palm Branch Home Outlet in Florida, there were just too many challenges and after about 15-months in business we had exhausted our capital and just were not able to make ends meet. This was hard to let go, but it had to happen. It is hard to let go of something that I've invested so much time and energy trying to make it work, but ultimately I don't own or control anything I do, I'm just able to steward what God gives me to steward for the time He gives me to steward it.

August brought the arrival of a family of refugees into my life. (Thank you to all who prayed and who contributed to assisting Afghani refugees back in the fall of 2021.) After escaping the country in late summer 2021, the family finally made it to Minnesota almost a year later. I can't begin to grasp the trauma and anxiety they have been through with the danger and the unknowns of the past year. Yet they are so resilient, they amaze me. Their new life here is just beginning as they set up house, learn English, get a bank account, find a job, get a car, and develop relationships in a new/different culture. Please keep this dear family in your prayers, that God will give them grace and strength for each day.

Okay, now for some news! I'm ready to travel again, and will be traveling out of the U.S. for the first time since I was in China in January 2020 (before the world and society turned life upside down). I will be going to Turkey and Croatia for two weeks at

the end of November and beginning of December. This will be a three pronged trip leaving on Turkey Day (aka Thanksgiving) for Turkey, going to visit workers I support in central Turkey for the weekend. Then traveling for a couple of days to visit a GHI project in Zagreb and seeing the work they are doing with Ukrainian refugees. Finally I return to western Turkey to join a team of 35 for eight days. The goal of this entire trip is relationship building. I am so looking forward to getting away from my computer and focusing my attention on people. While I'm good with numbers and details and I like technology (most of the time), I'm so ready to leave my computer and email and Zoom and Excel and Quickbooks and all of my other responsibilities totally behind for 17 days. Yes, you heard me right, I will NOT be bringing my computer with me. Please pray for my preparations for this trip, I'm out of practice. Please pray that I will prepare my heart and that my time traveling and away will be a blessing to those I encounter. I will write more in early November for additional specific prayers.



Thank you for your prayers and continued faithful support.

Blessings! Get out and enjoy God's creation - be it the changing colors of the leaves or the snow ;)

Love and Blessings, Jill

P.s. If you would like to sow into my ministry work please consider a special gift or joining my monthly support team. The easiest way to give is online at www.globalhz.org/globalcapacities/donate (other giving options are listed on that page as well.)




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