

May 2008

Dear Friends,

It is with sorrow but peace that I write this newsletter instead of my father to inform you that the Lord took him back in the early hours of May 12. My father was 80 years old, and until three months ago pursued without fail the preaching of the Gospel to Armenia.

It was a blessing to be with him in these last days in the company of my mother and my brother, Eric, who was able to be here for the last ten days of his life. My father's witness to the faithfulness of the Lord strengthened us as we watched him die. He was grateful to his family and caregivers, but most of all grateful to the Lord in whom he now rests. Praise be to God that "we do not grieve like the rest of men who have no hope." And, as a friend writes in a letter of sympathy, we are assured that my father "is now in that glorious presence to hear the Lord say, 'Well done, good and faithful servant.'"

It is with these words in mind that I also write to you who have been such faithful partners in this ministry to let you know that we met as a committee on the day of my father's funeral to renew our commitment to continue the crucial work to Armenia. We did so to honor his memory, knowing that is what he would most wish for, and also because in reading the letters and e-mails that have been pouring in from Armenia, we cannot turn our heads away from a people and a country so thirsty for the Gospel.

Here are some excerpts of letters received:

"In Rev. Aaron Kayayan, whose memory will always live in our hearts, the Armenian people have lost a knight of spiritual renewal and a great intellectual...His passing is a great loss for Armenia, the Armenians of Artsakh, the Armenian Church, his loved ones and friends...As a Christian leader, the Rev. has left a luminous path in this earthly life. We will continue to rightly pursue the ministry which he founded."

Our co-workers in Armenia write the following: *"We have received many condolences from different churches, public officials, and readers and listeners of the ministry. In their letters, it was mentioned the great undeniable role Rev. Kayayan had in the spiritual revival and education of Armenians."*

The former President of Armenia, Levon Ter-Petrossian has also written to express his sympathy to our family. Through intermediaries, it seems, he had requested on three separate occasions copies of the book on Islam and had distributed these to friends and relatives.

And so, remembering the words of my father's January newsletter, we follow both an order received and a gift given by our Lord above and we heed the Lord's call, that work must follow proclamation.

The Lord granted that my father almost finish the book on John Calvin, a project close to his heart, before he passed away. This work is being finalized and will be published as planned in the next several months. We have in mind to print 3,000 copies to be distributed in Armenia and in the diaspora so that the great Reformer can be known in Armenia. In the meantime, the following books are ready for publication: *Christology* and *The Knowledge of God*.

The broadcasts have started to be re-run and there are enough messages to last for several years. Two issues of the quarterly magazine are pending which will ensure that it runs until 2009. As you know, Reformed Faith and Life has started to reach the Armenian Diaspora in Russia, something that with the help of our Armenian colleagues we wish to expand. We plan on reprinting the past issues of the quarterly to be distributed in Russia to start, as well as to continue to distribute the books and messages on cds. We also wish to develop a website which would enable the messages and literature in Armenian to be downloaded, another way to broaden the field.

The full committee will hold its annual meeting in October to discuss how to continue the ministry of Reformed Faith and Life to Armenians.

I ask for your prayers at this time. For our family, especially for my mother who shared not only a life but a ministry (to Africa) with my father, for our spiritual family all over the world who grieves my father's passing, and for the Armenian people in whom the seeds of the Gospel have been planted.

Your support and shared vision to spread the Reformed faith to the small, ancient land of Armenia have made this ministry possible. We ask that you will continue your support as you have done so faithfully over the years, that the seeds of the Gospel may grow and spread, and that you will rejoice as we do in seeing God work in the lives and hearts of the Armenian people.

"In Christ," as Paul reminds us, "we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others." And so, together, "with the different gifts according to the grace given to us," let us work for His glory, not for ourselves, look toward Heaven, not toward earth, not because we are perfect but because we have been renewed in Christ and we humbly desire to respond in service.

In Christ,

Alix Kayayan-Kragt
Secretary, Reformed Faith and Life