

Electronic JOLLY Treatment



JOLLY vt [*< earlier jot, to jog*] 1. to shake up or jar, as with a bumpy ride 2. to shock or surprise vi To move along in a bumpy manner n. 1. a sudden jerk, bump, etc. 2. a shock or surprise 3. A stimulating reminder about our ministry in Muslim South-east Asia. *jollingly adv. jollity*

Dec 2018

DEC

14: Nathan's 3-week break begins.

19: C in Bangkok for 1 day.

25: Happy BD!

JAN

Nothing! (so far...).

PRaise

1. The 2018 has been a good year.

2. That Michaela continues to do well back there, and Nathan had a good first semester here.

3. For progress made in establishing home-based work rhythms (particularly since the beginning of October).

3. For having secured funding for the football-based initiatives.

PRayer

1. Pray for us all, as we spend our first Christmas apart as a family. We are feeling the distance. :-<=

2. Pray for wisdom about how we spend Nathan's 3-week school break around Christmas. We're looking forward to religious reflection,

physical rest, and partying. Sadly, some screen-time also seems unavoidable.

3. Pray for Chris, who'll be in Bangkok on the 19th. There are a number of issues that need to be dealt with, and the only way appears to be face-to-face communication.

4. Pray for the team in South Thailand. Some families are changing schools, and homes. In 2019, new team members will arrive, all of whom will need to be formed, trained, mentored, and encouraged.

It's hard to believe, but the year is all but over! We have no idea about what 2018 has been like for you. How high were the mountaintops? How long, deep, dark, and depressing were its valleys? What conundrums have you cracked? What mysteries are you more mellow about? What parts of your life have you learnt to do differently? 2018 has been a good year for us. We woke up on January 1, in the barn on our friends' farm which served as our New Zealand home-base for 12 months. We loved living in such close proximity to our mates, their mates, and the range of folks that they offered hospitality to. We enjoyed continuing to materialise our gratitude to payers and prayers by cooking Thai food when connecting with individual supporters, and sending churches. Although Chris did most of the travelling and speaking in NZ, Sandra was Nathan's homeschool Sergeant Major. Nathan didn't find everything about living in New Zealand particularly easy. That's the bad news. The good news is that he was spared from the sadness that Mum and Dad felt after leaving the farm, and NZ.

We returned to North Thailand, mid-July. Nathan had only negligible teething problems fitting back into school. He continues to do well, with the (not surprising) exception of English. Lest we forget, "Cs get degrees." He has a small circle of mates, none of whom are particularly interested in competing with alpha-males. When people ask us how the kids are doing, we often find ourselves commenting that there is "always something to worry about". While this may be true, there's also many things to be thankful for. Michaela has completed her first year of university, and has shifted into a new flat. She decided to do some summer school courses, and Chris' mum will join her for Christmas.

Sandra has settled into a good daily/weekly routines. This includes dealing with a range of administrative tasks (over email), connecting with colleagues (over the phone), and quietly serving in a number of practical ways (with rolled up sleeves). August and September were very full for Chris. Since October, he has occasionally been away, but only for a few days at a time. He's still working on both a productive/sustainable daily/weekly rhythms, and how to get things done at his new (university) workplace. While incredibly warm and welcoming, his new boss appears almost impossible to communicate with electronically. His personal assistant is not much better. While we're yet to try carrier pigeons, at least face-to-face communication works. Too bad he lives in Bangkok.

We continue to support a range of initiatives and individuals in South Thailand. One of the big news items from the last month, is that their football project (that will write to you about sometime next year) has secured funding from the Australian Embassy in Bangkok. While Chris was still leading the team, he worked closely with one of the team to establish a Thailand branch of an organisation which has been engaging Muslim communities elsewhere in the region through football/soccer. They train coaches, players, and organize leagues/competitions (where none exist). With the help of local religious leaders, they address a range of social and religious issues at football camps, clinics, and competitions. Although the Thailand branch was officially established a couple of years ago, this funding will make it possible for them to go to the next level. We don't want to misrepresent/overemphasise the role we have played. We're just trying to do a passable Barnabas imitation. You might recall our rave that Paul-like people often need practitioners like Barnabas who are happy to disappear after he doing what he did best, namely introduce, invite, advocate, and encourage. A few months back, we mentioned some encouraging developments in our initiative to recruit and relocate Indonesians in South Thailand. We're still not able to make credible claims about when this will begin to happen, so keep praying...

In 10 days, it will be time for the big end-of-year birthday bash. Hard to believe! We are planning to reflect on the crazy Christmas story with local mates, food, and music. We love revisiting this first chapter in God's campaign to establish his kingdom on earth (as it is in

heaven). Who would have thought that local thugs and far-away rulers could be dethroned by the rag-tag cast of mis-fits and dis-respectable. “Peace on Earth” & “Glory to God!”