

November 2022

## This Journey...

Planes, Trains, Automobiles, Ferryboats and Funerals.



Dear Friends,

As a child I remember saying to my Dad, “**Dad, I wish it was the olden days!**” I thought it would be so great to travel everywhere by horseback, canoe and dogsled. And I still think so, but it could take a couple of years to cover the ground we have travelled in just the past month. And in the ‘olden days’ - if we survived the

river crossings, avalanches and assorted other normal catastrophes, we would probably decide to never do that again!

Lynn and I have just returned from **an epic three week journey** of visiting NAIM staff whom I supervise, in their various locations from New Mexico, up the length of Vancouver Island, to northern BC. I also attended some NAIM leadership meetings where I sit on our NAIM OC, (‘Operations Council’) and took a detour to visit a colleague and friend and her family in the hospital in Calgary. We travelled in planes, ferryboats and cars. We stayed with kind friends and family along the way, some decent motels, and - the other kind.

This travel was not without its’ hazards... while driving through northern Arizona in a blizzard my small rental car was almost demolished by a giant tumbleweed, but my reflexive prayer skills and some high speed swerving came into play, and God delivered me from an undignified end. (Can you just see the headlines? “Canadian killed by Tumbleweed in Arizona”)

It was a long, amazing trip, and while I’m road-weary, I’m also inspired and encouraged. **Our NAIM people whom we serve are loving, engaged and effective** in representing and communicating Jesus in different contexts. In some places there are wide open doors and in others, not so much.

In one case, the NAIM staff couple are hosting a weekly Bible study but no one can come except by invitation from the participants. Imagine that - an in-demand Bible study that is being kept only for the serious God-seekers. The mind boggles!

In another setting there are young First Nations believers and families growing strong and stepping into leadership. They’re joyful, wise, and exude the love of God. They demonstrate the healing touch of Jesus.

One of the repeated statements from staff is that they are involved in “too many funerals”. And yet one person said that while it’s not his favourite thing to conduct a funeral, it’s better than it was during Covid lockdown where many deaths went without a service or ceremony... and it felt as though that person’s existence went unrecognized. Now at least the person is remembered and honoured, and there is opportunity to reflect on our passage through this life and the message of redemption, regeneration and immortality promised through Jesus Christ.

Sadly, the NAIM staff person I visited in Calgary hospital, Sally Boerema, died last week.

**Sally was a good friend and mentor** during our years in (Pincher Creek) Alberta where we worked alongside her and her husband Mel. And so, this Saturday we get back in the vehicle and make the two-day drive to Pincher Creek for her wake and funeral. People from Piikani First Nation, Canada and the US will be there to honour her life of service and love for Jesus, and her love to all He brought into her path. I know it will be a powerful time together with her family and the family of God, and we will be reminded again of what it is really all about. To love Jesus Christ and share His love with others.

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**I think this is a profound way to step into the Christmas Advent season.** That even in our grief, to know that into this dark world God came as the Light of the world, to deliver us from sin, death and hell. To those who believe, He has reconciled us with Him, and delivers us into the Kingdom of light, joy and peace.

On this journey of life we have the honour of bearing the message that **our Creator wants us to be with Him for eternity and has provided the Way...** these truly are "Tidings of comfort and joy."

**We've moved** from Campbell River, BC 1338 km north to Chetwynd, BC where we are closer to grandkids! Our move was a crazy adventure full of God's provision and protection. We haven't quite transitioned yet as though we moved in August, we've only been 'home' for three weeks. Sometimes we can't remember where we live! We're loving life — especially being grandparents.



Thank you to our donors for your unwavering financial support of this ministry. If you would like to contribute, or join our team of donors, see the contact information below.

And thank you for praying for us - there are deadly tumbleweeds and stuff out there!

May you and your family enjoy the presence of Jesus in your Christmas celebrations.

Blessings,

*Brent & Lynn Austring*

### **Current Family News:**

Hunter is studying Forestry at Vancouver Island University, in Nanaimo, BC, and recently went surfing on the west coast of the Island and 'froze'.

Celeste is an RN in Abbotsford, BC and sometimes takes a contract 'travel nursing' in out-of-the-way parts of BC.

Ramsey & Stephanie, live in Chetwynd, BC and have almost 2 year old Ole, and a baby due in the new year.

Bayden & Melena are at their next RCMP posting in Faro, Yukon Territory with their two daughters Miliah, 3 years old and Selah, almost 1 year old.

To support this ministry financially, cheques should be made out to NAIM with **Project #219** in the memo line. Donations can also be made online at [www.naim.ca/donate](http://www.naim.ca/donate)