

HyeRan and David Kim-Cragg write from Korea

Letter #16

Report for November 2007

In Korea November was a month of politics. Presidential candidates have been gearing up for a December election. In the midst of this there were two very significant events on the political scene. The first was that a Samsung lawyer turned whistle blower accused the company of having a huge bribery fund which it has used to buy the support of everyone up to the top prosecutor of the country. For safety he has turned to the Korean Council of Catholic Bishops for protection. To everyone's disappointment the president responded weakly and allowed the country's implicated prosecutor to lead the investigation. In other news the meetings between North and South Korea military and government officials continue at a very high level. The National Council of Churches in Korea (NCCCK) and our partner church the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK) are very encouraged by these events and are continuing to press for better relationships between the two countries.

At a meeting of overseas personnel this month we had representatives from the USA, Philippines, Switzerland and Canada. We shared stories about working and living in Korea, the many ups and downs of serving the church in a country not our own. Many of the members of our group are doing very special work with foreign women, migrant workers and peace education. Internationally we are all concerned about the continuing injustices and violence in the Philippines.

For our part November has been just too busy. On top of school responsibilities which reached their peak this month HyeRan continues working on papers and presentations for other groups. She helped lead an ecumenical workshop on the topic of sexuality for a group of women representing 10 different Asian countries. She was also an interpreter at a high level meeting of the World Student Christian Federation.

Of the groups David led this semester one was dedicated to learning global ecumenical worship music. In November our group shared four of the songs we had learned at Friday chapel. All concerned seemed to enjoy the experience and hopefully ties of compassion and solidarity were strengthened with the countries whose songs we sang.

Noah and Hannah are bundling up to go to school these days. The morning temperature hovers around 0 C. They continue to accompany us to many things and they are real troopers.

The Kim-Craggs have volunteered to lead Mission Trip to Canada this winter. This will be our second. It is a lot of work and it comes at a time when there are many other things to do but we have been encouraged by our participants in Korea and in Canada. We look forward to bringing a group who will both learn about Canada and teach about Korea and that we will all realize that in God's world we are not alone.