

THE GOOD TIMES

Dear friends,

Once again we have to beg your pardon for an overdue update. Please bear with us as we work on getting our foursome act together. Your friendship and support has been a tremendous encouragement to us, so keeping in touch with all of you remains a very high priority. Despite our now rather irregular prayer letter, we have received many e-mails of well wishes as well as verbal regards conveyed through our family members in church. Thank you so much for thinking of us even when we're so far away.

In this update, we'd like to focus on our family life for which there is much to give thanks. With the arrival of our newest member, Chloe, life is a lot more hectic now. There are days when 'chaotic' might be a more appropriate description but by God's grace, even those times are a joyful chaos.

SNIPPETS FROM PC WORLD

Chloe is now coming to 10 months old and we are thankful for God's watchful care over her since birth. She started life as a tiny infant, weighing a mere 2.49 kg. Now she is a cheery bouncy baby of over 8 kg, very inquisitive and very mobile. These last two traits mean lots of hard work for Papa and Mama. Her day consists of crawling around the flat opening drawers, pulling books from shelves, picking specks off the carpet and if no one is looking, tasting to see what they are. On more adventurous days, she'd try to leap off the bed or bash her head against a table corner, just for kicks. So even though our flat is rather small, Chloe still manages to work up a sweat, for us. When Chloe is awake, which these days is getting more often than the grownups would like, we need to have eyes on the back of our heads.

This stage is rather hard work, as any parent with a 10-month-old baby can testify. But it also has its rewarding and heart-warming moments. She is now more interactive than ever before. She has a cheeky laughter, can make a really funny monkey face and is able to employ them at appropriate moments to draw laughs from us. She recognizes our voices and even associates some sounds to our presence. For example, she jumps up very excitedly (even from sleep) when Phoebe comes home from school and says, 'Hello! Anybody there?!' Or when the door opens and clicks shut, she quickly crawls to see who just stepped in. She can wave when we say 'hello' or 'good bye'. She smiles when she sees three of us and is always very interested to be part of what we are doing. Already she knows us as the 'significant others' in her life.

Having a new baby reminds us of the wonder of God's creation. Each person is made unique and special in his/her own way, according to God's purpose and design. Even for such a little person as Chloe, she has personality traits that are exclusively hers. For us, this is something especially important to remember because she is the second child and it is so easy to say or think, 'Why can't you be more like Phoebe?' or 'Phoebe would never do that.' Such thinking is not only hurting but also disrespectful of her individuality and uniqueness. Please pray that God will help us be godly parents, loving and accepting our children for who they are.

Phoebe entered a new era in August - she started Primary 1 or what they call it here, 'Big School'. In the Scottish system, children start P1 at four and a half or five instead of our usual

seven. She turns five this November but here in Edinburgh, our little scholar is off to Big School!

In our previous prayer letters, we often included accounts of how God provided for Phoebe and helped her faith grow. Because of His tremendous goodness, we always had a story or two to share and now without exception, we have yet another of such to tell.

Phoebe's primary school is Mannafields Christian School. It is a private school that operates based on Christian principles but is open to children of all faiths. The school does not receive any financial help from the State and depends entirely on school fees and donations from well wishers.

Phoebe's composite class for P1 to 3 is made up of six children with ages ranging from four and a half to seven. Her teacher is Mrs Motimer whom Phoebe loved from Day 1. The curriculum is based on the National Curriculum requirements but is fitted to Christian themes planned by the teachers. Last term the theme was 'God is our Provider'. The children had to memorise an appropriate verse from the Bible each week and the Bible story they focused on was Exodus - How God provided for the Israelites. This term's theme is 'God is Peace'. So besides just learning Language and Numbers in school, Phoebe is also learning more about God. In her words, 'it's like Sunday School everyday!'

On our own, we would not have thought of sending her to a private Christian school. In fact she already had a place in the State-run school just across the road from our flat. But God presented this unexpected opportunity in a rather interesting way. Phoebe and Edwin met a lady at a playground one day and she happened to be a Board member at Mannafields. She invited them to attend the school graduation ceremony. One thing led to another and before summer was over, Phoebe had a place in the school! Although the school is not doing well financially, indeed, they are almost always in the red, the Board decided to waive the school fees for Phoebe. We were so grateful for their kind consideration of our financial circumstances. Phoebe herself knows how blessed she is. A big part of her nightly prayers is giving thanks for her school.

As a way of showing her appreciation, she decided that for her birthday this year, she will not be asking for presents but a cash gift, so that she can accumulate the red packets and then present the whole sum to the school. So for those of you who would like to get her a birthday present, could you consider a hong bao instead? Please do not feel you have to do this, or to give more than you would spend on a present. The main point of this exercise is for her to learn to be thankful and to give unto others as they have given to her.

We are deeply moved and heartened by how God is looking after our children. Even in the smallest things, He has provided the best for both of Phoebe and Chloe. Indeed God watches over His own.

EDWIN'S RESEARCH

As with many things in life, prolonged research of the kind Edwin is undergoing has its own cycle. In year one, his learning curve and productivity was very high despite his road accident. Now that he's more than half way into his second year, things have tapered off somewhat and there are times when he feels that he's progressing like a snail. To him, the life of a scholar is analogous to tracking from one place to another. There are times when the direction is clear and the path is relatively straight and level. At other times, it's an exhaustingly steep climb

where every little step requires so much energy. Still there are other occasions when detours have to be taken before one could resume the original path or when bearings need to be taken and the journey comes to a complete halt for a while. The important thing is to persevere and press on. Having family by his side, an encouraging supervisor, and a spiritually nurturing church are great helps. He's grateful to God for every progress made no matter how small.

CONTINUING PRAYER CONCERNS

- Pray for our general safety and health over the winter months (Dec 06-Mar 07): (a) Angela brings Chloe to Phoebe's school every Tues to Thurs to help supervise the children during their morning break (10:30-10:45am). Her responsibility involves ensuring the general safety of the children at the playground. (b) Edwin will be travelling to London for a conference on 5-6 December. Pray for safety and a fruitful conference.
- Edwin's progress - Thank God for work done so far. Pray for good understanding of the material he's handling, inspiration to write as he works through them, and perseverance in all that he's doing.
- Funding - pray that the current short-fall will be made up in due time. If you would like to have more details of our current financial situation, please write to us personally.

Thank you for your friendship, concern, support and partnership in service.

Blessings,

Edwin, Angela, Phoebe & Chloe Tay



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If you wish to support us financially please address all cheques to 'Edwin Tay Ed Min' and send it to the address below. * If gifts are for Phoebe, please specify behind cheques 'Phoebe's School Fund' or pass hong bao directly to our family members in church. Thank you.

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