

# PALSROKS' POSTINGS



Russ & Sherry



Ryan, Robyn, Carin, Tamara



Luna Rose, Johanna, Evan, Amos, Damien

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## Think Globally; Act Locally

Increasingly we realize that the world is at our door. Without much effort, we find that the news from the other side of the world reaches into our homes; the influence of the debt of far-away nations enters our investment accounts; the dictators' falls demand our government's response. And the plight of the widow, orphan and immigrant call out for our care. So we say that we must think globally and act locally.

Isn't that the central message of Christmas? God thought globally-saw the need of the world and it continued to move His Heart. So he acted locally by inserting His Son into history, into Bethlehem, into Mary. Yet that incarnation act will ripple across the pond of history until it reaches the end of the world. God is on a globally redemptive mission.

As we think globally, suddenly we feel small. The immensity of enmity, rebellion, poverty is overwhelming-of what significance are our miniscule acts? Frankly on their own merit, they are not worth much. However when deposited into God's account, he compounds their interest and unites them into one gigantic mission thrust. Through the local actions of countless often nameless people, His church and kingdom have spread across history and the world.

So your attendance at worship, financial gift to His work, service to your neighbor in the name of Christ are extremely crucial contributions to the welfare of God's world. Your regular work, building a family, caring for a friend, creation of something beautiful, support of righteousness and justice in your nation are combined by God with millions of other actions to build and sustain His Kingdom. In this way, we are the extension of Christmas.

Such thoughts help me when I think of how small I feel in the midst of the gigantic mission task. In 2007 when I began the EurAsia ministry for CRWM, we were active in 11 countries. Currently we have personnel or projects or plans in 22 countries. In each country, we have at least 1 or 2 partners, some of whom are small but many of which have thousands of people at work in God's Kingdom. God takes our feeble efforts, unites them with His, and there is growth.

During the year I strive to inform you of my global work but at Christmas I add more personal notes. Sherry and I have settled into our home in Fremont, MI and travel from there. It will become our retirement space. My dad, age 94, is now in a nursing home and suffering from dementia, his faithful service ended. I find his mental decline to be very sad.

Our oldest daughter Tamara continues to reside in Nashville where she has constructed a stable life of cleaning work, church activity, friendships, and enjoyment of the music industry. Robyn still lives in Muncie, Indiana, currently directs interns and does counseling at Ball State while also co-owning a large private practice call "Still Waters", parents her 2 children, and is in the midst of a divorce (much pain). Carin calls Burlington, Vermont home, has added Luna Rose to her 2 sons, teaches art in a local school and does wedding photography, and is involved in her local church. Ryan is in his second year in Beijing, China where he gives leadership to the embassy's work for American citizens-been in prisons, mental hospitals, morgues, boardrooms, and multiple others places where trouble lurks.

One advantage to engaging in international ministry from a local office is that we can start to take root in a community, connect personally with CRWM Grand Rapids staff, and find our place with our family. After serving the church both far and near, Sherry and I are enjoying the more settled feeling. But having committed myself to the ordained ministry when I was young and spending 20 years in preparation and then 40 years as an ordained clergyman, the idea of eventually retiring is very hard for me. I know that there is much else that I can do, but it feels like a deep loss to let go.

Once again thank you for joining us in this ministry-couldn't do it without you. May God use you in your small way to spread His love both globally and locally and may you find enjoyment in His service.



Have a Blessed Christmas,

Russ and Sherry Palsrok