

OF TRUMBULL'S
CHRISTMAS LETTERS,
THE ELEVENTH,
DECEMBER, 1968

1 Barnet Avenue,
Overport,
DURBAN, Natal.
South Africa.

Dear Friends,

These annual occasions of looking backwards always remind us of how much our present and future is dependent upon - and rooted in - the past. As the ploughman looks backward to determine how straight his furrow is. And the helmsman to check if he has steered a straight course. So too, this time of celebrating the birth of our Lord can be an opportunity for each of us to assess our spiritual life of a year ago and to compare it to our spiritual standing today.

Our Christmas prayer for you, this year, is that you allow the Ultimate Programmer to take even more control of your life this coming year than you did the previous one. For truly, He who was born in Bethlehem, is the only one who can place your life in the orbit that God has planned for it.

The most significant event of our family life here in South Africa was the return of PAM to us in August. She graduated from high school (matriculated) in June, spent July visiting and packing and spent part of August on her trip here. She travelled by herself and stopped to visit and sightsee in London, Geneva, Accra and Johannesburg. You can well imagine our joy and pride in welcoming back our very matured 18 year old after a year's separation. She started her nursing course on the 1st of October and after a month's training, is settling into the routine and loving it immensely. PAM is taking her nurses training at F. tabeni ("on top of the hill" in Zulu) Hospital just 2 miles from our house and is allowed to spend two nights a week at home. So far she has done well in her course and we trust that her maturity will allow her to cope with the complete $3\frac{3}{4}$ years course.

GINGER has taken a new interest in her seventh grade (Standard 5) schoolwork and competes for second or third place in her class. She asked to start taking piano lessons again and does her practising without too much prodding. This has been her year for the most growth in our family and she is becoming quite the young lady. Like all our children, she needed orthodontia work and now has a mouthful of braces. All on her own she decided to study First Aid and, by herself, found out where she could do so. Once a week she goes downtown by bus to the Red Cross hall for her course. Reading is still the greatest spare time interest of our alert and cheerful twelve year old. She was enthralled by Pam's return and terribly interested in all the "goings on" of an older sister.

MIKE turned 16 this year and "buzz bikes" are his main interest in life. In South Africa one can't drive a buzz bike until 16 years of age. Before his 16th birthday he bought two old 50 cc buzz bikes (you have to be 18 to ride anything more than 50 cc) and stripped them both completely down and rebuilt one bike out of the better parts. With the addition of some new parts, lots of chrome plating, six or more "final" assemblies and much help from interested friends he has a "cool" looking and running bike. We are proud to say that he hasn't neglected his school work and also stands second or third on his tenth grade (standard 8) Class. But after his studying is done, we rarely see him as he is either out in the garage working on his own or other chap's bikes or off riding. He has some ambitious trips planned and we are still negotiating a compromise. His resultant need for cash forces him to do all odd jobs around the house.

Our 20 year old University sophomore, DAVID, has switched universities and is now studying at a branch of Indiana University in Jeffersonville, Ind. 47130 (529 E. Maple.) He again spent the summer as a mission speaker and counsellor at our United Church of Christ summer camps and thoroughly enjoyed his experiences. He is continuing studies towards elementary teaching. In order to be able to commute from his various part time jobs and his classes he bought a car. After a serious accident in which the car was a write off and he came out unscathed (no other car or persons were involved) he was able to get another car and go right ahead with his studies and jobs. We are mighty proud of him. Our pride is in the fact that he has not sought high paying jobs during the summers or school years but instead has chosen jobs of service and lower pay.

P.T.O.

Currently, we are discussing plans with him about his possible return to South Africa in early 1969 to finish his undergraduate work in this country.

MARGE has taken on a new role this past year. For the first time in our seven years in South Africa we have a full time servant so that Marge has been freed of some household duties. She has become fully immersed in adult literacy training. She is in on the ground floor of this particular program, which is based on the Frank Laubach method commonly known as "Each one - Teach one". She has just about completed her University of Virginia correspondence course as a trainer of teachers. (The actual teachers of the illiterates will be persons from the various language groups in this country, who also speak English, and are all trained in English). The illiterates themselves will be taught by persons from their own "mother" tongue and culture. MARGE'S work will be in teaching the teachers how to teach. She has participated in several of the first courses for future teachers. At the same time much work has to be done in preparing simple written materials for the students and, as always, much time is taken up with speaking to various groups in order to raise money and to interest others in becoming trainers or to help out with office work, etc. MARGE is tremendously enthused about her new found work and therefore is a great "saleswoman" for this vitally needed work.

Our servant, LYDIA NDLOVU, is an African (Zulu speaking) girl of 20 years. She had worked for some neighbours on our first term and was a friend of Pam. LYDIA came to see us when she saw that we had returned and expressed a concern to continue her schooling. She had left school after the second grade (class B) to go to work in white (European) homes. She goes to school two hours every evening and Matge helps her with her studies in the day time. LYDIA has been a rewarding and wonderful addition to our family. We only hope that she will benefit as much as we have from our life together. Her cheery disposition and her open and trusting character has done much to enrich our lives.

My daily work continues much as before. The merger, last year, of all Congregational Churches in Southern Africa has brought together Africans, Coloureds and Whites (Europeans). So that where before my work was principally with Africans, I now have much more contact with Coloureds and Whites. In this strange and troubled land it is imperative that the church must provide the opportunities for the different races to come to know each other on another basis than a master-servant relationship. For too long, the church here - as in the United States - has failed to practise what it preached: THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN. Only recently have the churches here begun to speak out against the blasphemy of "apartheid" - or "seperate development" or "seperate freedom" - call it what you like. It remains to be seen what action the church will take but the first step of standing up and speaking out has finally been taken. And for that, we are truly grateful.

As always, our special thanks go to those of you who continue to uphold us in your prayers. Without those prayers we could not carry on. Our thanks also to those of you who take time from busy lives to write to us. Do forgive us when we fail to answer your letters. And please don't stop writing! Letters are a real joy in our lives. And we are really sorry that we don't find time to answer them all personally.

Much, much love from us all,

HOWARD, MARGE, DAVID, PAM, MIKE & GINGER.