

THE GUNDERSON JOURNEY

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#4

April 2005

Dear friends and family,

It is already April and the blossoms have been out on the trees for two months now here in Eugene! It is quite a bit different from where I grew up in North Dakota where they might see some blossoms at the end of April, if that. Needless to say we have enjoyed our first couple months here in a milder Eugene. Time with family, friends and our Church has been awesome! . . . Quite a few things have happened since we last wrote and we want to update you about them.

The beautiful Oregon coast north of Pacific City, Oregon.



TO STAY OR NOT TO STAY

For a while now, Sheila and I have been planning on staying here in Oregon until this upcoming August (2005) at which point we planned to complete the final 2 years of New Tribes Mission training, and then head to the mission field. However, when we arrived here in Eugene, we started to see the importance of involving our church leadership in this decision. We were questioning if we should lengthen our time here to more effectively build relationships and serve within our church. Therefore, we met with our elder board, and sought their input.

Since this is the church that Sheila grew up in, all of them knew her, but many of them had not met me, before. It allowed them to become acquainted with me. We presented them with many of the pros and cons of each possibility (going on in training August 2005 or waiting until Aug. 2006) and after they listened, some of them stated their thoughts and rationale for their recommendation. Their recommendation: That we should stay for one more year. The Lord used all of them to help us see that it would be wise for us to stay one extra year and get plugged into our church. It was tough decision to change plans, but one we trust the Lord with. . . . Since we are staying another year, we then had another decision we were faced with.

TO BUY OR NOT TO BUY

For the past year and a half we have been praying about the idea of buying a house. If we were an average American couple with our incomes as nurses, this would be an easy decision. But since we are planning on being long-term missionaries and giving up our nursing jobs, a lot of extra thought had to go into making the decision. The reason why we thought it would be good to buy a house is so that we would have a place to live when we come back to Eugene on our furloughs or in an emergency situation, and also when we retire we would have equity built up in a house. The difficult part of the decision is that when we are in the mission field we'll have to depend on having renters in the house to pay the mortgage each month. We plan to have a management company head that up.

This was another area that we talked to our church elder board about. We also sought counsel from many other people including family, rental management companies, and overseas missionaries who own homes. After much prayer and house searching, we have decided to purchase a home. The house is currently under construction and the closing date will be June 1st. This was a stressful decision and requires that we invest the majority of our savings into the

house as a down payment. But we believe that this is the right decision and the Lord has led us through it so far without a glitch. We keep praying that if this is not best that God will intervene and shut the door.



Our house under construction.

PRAAYER REQUESTS

1. Pray for wisdom in how we use this extra year towards church involvement.
2. For our own relationship that we would continue to grow in our walks with the Lord and that we'd keep learning and growing in the way we relate to each other. Marriage is awesome! It can also be so refining!