

SEPTEMBER 2014

# The Roes in China



Dear friends,

It may not feel like it, but it's now less than 12 weeks until Christmas! For some that will bring a sense of terror and for others, complete joy (trust us, we know people who get excited for the next Christmas as soon as we get to Boxing day the year before!), but for us it signals the start of a busy period in our calendar as the School of Frontier Missions begins here in Zigong. We will both be involved in different ways, James staffing the school directly and Emily involved in teaching and inputting into some of the student's lives. We would really appreciate you praying for us over these next few months as it is going to be a tad busy (a complete understatement!). Read on for more about what exactly will be going on, what we've been up to this month and the things we'd appreciate your prayers for.

With our love in Him,

*James, Emily + Josie*

The Street - Our dear friend with a very bruised face from where part of her roof fell in and hit her on her face whilst she was in bed.



## Visiting the brothel street

Down the winding narrow street are many doorways, some aglow with the pink lights of prostitution, but many more are just the houses and shops of the families that live there. One day as we walked down the street praying, we saw a tiny old lady struggling to hang her washing on the makeshift line outside her door. I stopped to help her, she said she found it hard to see the line as her eyesight was bad. We stopped to talk with her as we have done many times since, we take her food and check that she is ok, and slowly we are piecing together the story of her life as she shares more with us. She is 87 years old, a widow for the past 12 years and she now lives in this house that the government provides for her. She receives 200rmb (£20/\$35) a month from the government and out of this she pays 50rmb for her house which is in a terrible state of disrepair. Like many other old people in a similar situation, she has to collect plastic bottles out of the rubbish bins to sell for recycling just to have enough money to live. It is really heartbreaking. When we visited her recently her face was completely bruised and swollen down one side with a cut on her head. She told us that a piece of the broken roof had fallen on her as she slept, causing this injury, and that when it rains she has to put up an umbrella over her head when she sleeps to stop the rain falling on her inside her house. We have really felt moved to help her, so we have been to the government office to ask them to fix her house, we are praying they will do this, but it hasn't happened yet. We are also praying for GOD'S wisdom on how best to help her. We shared with her about the special place she has in GOD'S heart and that HE cares for her and is sad that she has to live this way. We shared with her that we really felt GOD led us to her so that we can help her in some way. Ideally we would love her to live somewhere warm and safe, but we are not sure if she would want to move, we are trying to find the best solution for her, to do what she wants and offer as much help as she is willing to receive. She

shared with us that she felt no one has ever helped her and she has had to look after herself the best she could, so she is finding it hard to accept our help. But we just feel so compelled to show her love, and she loves the hugs and kisses we give her when we say good bye. Please join with us in prayer for her, we want to see her live out her days in the way an 87 year old should, in safety, warm, well fed and cared for. Knowing she is loved and precious to GOD.

## Great news for the boys

We recently heard that the two young lads with Down's Syndrome who live at the Old people's home have been accepted into a Special Need's school during the week and so will only be staying at the Home at weekends now. This is definitely an answer to prayer as they really did need more stability in their living conditions as staying with vulnerable older residents was not appropriate for them at this time.

## Church at the old people's home

As we've continued to visit the old people's home on Tuesday afternoons, God has been speaking to us about holding a simple church service there each week. We recently met one of the members of staff there who is a Christian. She hasn't been a Christian for long but she has been praying for ways to reach out to more of the residents with God's love. When she met us she told us that we seemed like an answer to her prayers and that together, we could help bring God's love to that place. It will be very flexible at the moment as we work out how long people are able to engage for (many residents have associated learning difficulties, health issues or dementia), so it is very much a work in progress, but one that we are taking very seriously. To be able to reach those who aren't being reached by anyone else is a big undertaking, but we trust that God will use us and that we will be able to serve the people there and help them to encounter God.



Talking with one of the women inside one of the brothels



An answer to prayer- the boys have been accepted into a special needs school in the week



We are hoping to start a church at the old people's home, much to the delight of the one Christian member of staff who has been praying for how to reach out to the residents!

## School of Frontier Missions and the Foundations Course

On October 5th, 10 students from 3 different countries (China, Australia and Egypt) will be starting a 12 week training school about how to be effective cross cultural missionary workers. Topics on the school include Frontier Pioneering, Church Planting and discipleship, cross cultural adaptation and simple healthcare training but to name a few. James will be involved in the day to day running of the school (as a staff member), and will be responsible for doing on on ones with students, school accounts (which he is very excited about with his colour coded spreadsheets- geek!) and is also teaching for a week on the school. Although not staffing the school per se, Emily will be involved with doing one on ones with one of the students (who is also pregnant) and is teaching a week on the topic of healthcare and generally being James' constant support when things get tough (which inevitably they will). This is going to be our busiest 3 months in China yet, as alongside that Emily will also be running a 10 week Foundations course for members of local house churches which will take place one evening per week at our house as well as our responsibilities on the team with ministry and leadership etc, so all that being said, we would really appreciate you praying for us! We know that God can increase our physical capacity when times are busy, however, it will really be your prayers that will help us through this time. In particular, for us as a

married couple and as a family, for Josie during this time and also for the students (both of the SOFM and FC) that they would really be inspired and grow during this time- Thanks so much!

### In other news...

James has been meeting up with a young guy called Jeff who is very close to becoming a Christian. He told James about how he had been feeling God with him, especially as he shoulders a lot of pressure from family/ school about his application for University in the next 6 months. Please do pray for him, he is a great young guy and God is obviously at work in his life.

Everything is going really well with baby number 2, Emily's morning sickness has stopped now (hooray!) and so we are back to eating Chinese dishes (which Em went off for a while). We have a 20 week scan coming up this month so we are very excited for that, however we're not going to find out if it's a boy or girl until we meet them, besides, it's fun to keep everyone guessing!

Josie is also doing really well, she is growing taller and now has a mop of hair!! She continues to be very popular, waving and blowing kisses to everyone as she walks around. She is saying a few words now, both Chinese and English, she says Mama and Baba (daddy in Chinese), daddy in English, in fact, almost everything is daddy! She also says pees (please), yum, wow!, yeah and āyí (aunty in Chinese!) She is also growing some molars and eyeteeth which are a little troublesome at night!



Jeff, James and John. John has been helping to translate the gospel message for Jeff.



Josie is developing a love for books, she reads them now instead of eating them!

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## Please Pray For:

- For health and wellbeing for the four of us, especially for Emily and baby in the second trimester
- For Josie as she has more teeth coming through
- For SOFM and Foundations Course and everything related to them (see above)
- For our families at home
- For Jeff as he makes the decision to follow God in his life
- For Em as she continues to study Chinese at University each morning during the week
- For the old lady, that we can find the best solution for her

**Thank you** for your continued love and support, we really couldn't do it without you.