

# Heart for Helena

## The Helena Project/Bostrom Mid-October Update

October 16, 2006

Dear friends,

*The great danger facing all of us... is not*

- *that we shall make an absolute failure of life, nor*
- *that we shall fall into outright viciousness, nor*
- *that we shall be terribly unhappy, nor*
- *that we shall feel life has no meaning at all—*

*not these things.*

*The danger is that we may*

- *fail to perceive life's greatest meaning,*
- *fall short of its highest good,*
- *miss its deepest and most abiding happiness,*
- *be unable to tender the most needed service,*
- *be unconscious of life ablaze (like this orange tinted aspen near Silverthorne, CO) with the light of the Presence of God—*
- *and be content to have it so –*

*that is the danger. That some day we may*

*wake up and find that we have been busy with husks and missed life itself. For life without God, to one who has known the richness and joy of life with Him (in Christ), is unthinkable, impossible. That is what one prays one's friends may be spared – satisfaction with a life that falls short of the best, that has in it no tingle or thrill that comes from a friendship with the Father [Phillips Brooks (1835-1893), single man, articulate and beloved pastor, author of "O Little Town of Bethlehem," *Sermons* [1878].*



Many of you must have prayed like Phillips Brooks for us! Amidst the ordinariness of life this past month, we have known "tingles and thrills" that come "from friendship with the Father."

Here's a quick review:

- What a delight to go on retreat (9/22, 23) with men from Skyview Presbyterian Church (Denver, CO) – to hear what God has been doing among them – giving them a deeper love of the gospel and their neighbors. On 9/24 I also preached to Skyview Pres.

- **9/24 PM** - What a joy to drive to Colorado Springs and to speak at the annual congregational meeting of Grace Presbyterian Church, the church where I first heard and believed the gospel – 48 years ago. How encouraging it is for us to be prayed for weekly in the pastoral prayer and to receive financial support from this church.
- **9/25-27** -While in Colorado Springs, some friends from many years ago - as well as some very new friends in my parents' neighborhood - told me of their desire to support the Helena Project. Thanks to them and thanks be to God.
- I very much enjoyed staying with my parents. Separated by miles for many years, it is simply good to be with them. As a 55 year old, it is good to understand more of who they are and to see God at work in their lives. We traveled out to Kiowa to visit Dad's lifetime friend, Ted. Next door to Ted's home is the church building my Dad's Dad, Louis, helped build. Here are the church and 1907 cornerstone.



- **9/27** - I picked up Via in Denver and we traveled on toward Lander, WY, for presbytery. Unexpectedly, our (third!) rental car needed an oil change. At a shop in Laramie, WY, I met a man who had come to faith in Christ at 55. When I told him we were going to plant a church in Helena – seeking to serve those who are disconnected from God and the church, he said he would pray that God would help us reach them.
- **9/29** - Rocky Mountain Presbytery approved Christian Cryder for ordination and Ryan Sutherland for licensure! What zeal these native Montanans (and their families) have had to complete seminary in Philadelphia and undertake fund raising as they prepare to plant a church in Missoula, Montana. Please pray for them. Christian has bought a home. Ryan is still completing fund raising (would you like to help him?).
- **9/29** - Via and I traveled on through the Tetons and Yellowstone on a fine fall afternoon. The second picture is an enlargement of the first – see the moose?!



- **9/29** - We arrived in Helena (without hitting any deer – we came close!) safe and sound at our kind hosts, TJ and Samara Lynde and their daughter, Scout, and son, William Henry. What great hospitality we enjoyed this whole trip.
- **9/30** - After a full day of house hunting, we were discouraged. We had not realized what a seller's market Helena was. Out of nearly a dozen homes we saw that long day, one or two had some possibilities – but not only were they beyond our price range but also they would have required significant work to make them functional for our purposes. Our realtor, Lynda, said she would try to help us find more – but, the market in our price range was very tight.
- **10/1** - We worshiped at the Vineyard. It was good to be with others who worship and seek to follow Christ. We enjoyed lunch with "Mr. Montana," Stan Lynde, well known for his Rick O'Shay cartoons many years ago. Then we decided to go to an open house for a home, 507 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue - for sale by owner. When we walked in this beautifully remodeled home, we thought: "This may be the one." It was built in 1907 (the same year my grandfather helped build the church in Kiowa!). The actress, Myrna Loy, lived in this home as a child. It was in the very neighborhood – close to down town - where we hoped to live. Recently, we had read in the *Helena Independent* there had been a community meeting called for this neighborhood. 170 residents came to the first meeting.
- By 5:30 PM, **10/2**, after looking at still more homes, we decided to make an offer on 507 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue. We asked the sellers to decide on our offer by 1 PM, 10/3.
- **10/3** they called to tell us they accepted our offer (we later discovered that 3 other couples had made offers). That left Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday free for me to negotiate financing. And we had a detailed walk-through the home with the seller. He and his family will be our neighbors. They are building a new house next door.
- **When we asked you to pray that all these matters could be accomplished in one trip, we were asking more than we knew. But, God is good. He heard your prayers.**



**507 5th Ave., Helena, Montana**

- **10/7** - We arrived back in NC. We had great weather for the thousands of miles we traveled – and safety too. By Sunday night, Noah, Jesse (who had a birthday while

we were away!) and Isaac rejoined us after staying with their oldest brother, Jared, and his family north of Atlanta.

- This week we have been busy completing financing, insurance, inspection reports and other details regarding 507. I also met with our NC buyer and have agreed to make some improvements and have a termite treatment before closing. **Please pray that we can finish those well for her.** 10/27, we plan to close on 209 Depot. We hope to close on 507 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. on 10/30. Our buyer is willing to have us stay here until we can make arrangements for moving. **Please pray for those arrangements too.**

***Yes, it is possible that the next update will be written in Helena, Montana!***

As dusk fell the last night Via and I were in Helena, our host, TJ, and I climbed part way up Mt. Helena and prayed for this city. That was very good.

A year and a half ago, when Via and I had visited Helena for the Governor's Prayer Breakfast, we had climbed to the same place on Mt. Helena with Keith Johnson, a pastor in Helena for over two decades. Keith told us that, although many of the church plants in Helena had failed in recent years, he wanted to encourage us to come. That meant a lot.

This week, Keith called to welcome us. In this conversation, he went on to say that the significant growth that Helena has experienced in recent years is expected to accelerate. The population may double in the next ten years. **Pray that the gospel will thrive in this place – and in our nation.** At presbytery, once again, I heard that, in terms of numbers of people disconnected from the church, **the USA is the *third largest mission field in the world.*** **Pray that God would prosper the movement of the gospel – that those who know the good news of God in Jesus Christ will engage others with this word of hope.**

**Finally, a word about funds.** Including anticipated giving (\$309,000 over the next 5.5 years from people in Helena), pledges and gifts (including those reported to MNA and to us) for the Helena Project are at \$830,317 = 92%. We Bostroms are living with the understanding – now more than ever – that we are living on “Helena time.” **Pray that God would move those He wants to give to do so.** *Would you help us complete funding before we move?* Once again, would you pause and ask God about your financial partnership with us in the Helena Project? The remaining \$70,000 could be given by many people. This goal of just over \$1,000 a month could be met over the next 5.5 years:

- If 11 people give \$100/month; or
- If 21 people give \$50/month; or
- If 43 people give \$25/month (we are praying there are *many* of these).

If you want to participate in this way, please promptly fill out the pledge card below and mail or fax it to: Mission to North America: Attn: Michael Hutcheson: FAX: (678) 825-1224).

**And, a final “finally” for finances.** At presbytery in Lander, WY, I learned that, based on need, church planters are given the authority to raise money specified for a down payment. For example, Presbytery gave that authority to Christian Cryder and Ryan Sutherland.

During our house hunting trip, when I realized that housing would be significantly more in Helena, I contacted one of the men on presbytery's Mission to North America Committee. He offered to call a meeting of the committee. After looking at the numbers I gave him, **the committee suggested \$25,000 for a down payment and gave their approval.** On October 12,

the Mission to North America Committee (MNA) of the Rocky Mountain Presbytery (RMP) took this action:

Moved, Seconded, Carried (MSC): that the MNA Committee recommend to RMP that Steve Bostrom's call be amended to allow him to raise up to \$25,000 toward the down payment on a home in Helena, MT. In raising this down payment, Steve will be making a clear disclosure to his supporters what the funds will be used for.

Please realize that the whole Presbytery must give final authorization for this motion at its meeting in January.

**If you would like to help in funding our down payment on 507 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, it will require *prompt action*.** As I mentioned earlier, we are hoping to close by **10/30/06**. If MNA receives gifts specified for our down payment by 10/30/06, we will use them for that purpose – trusting that, in January, presbytery will approve MNA's motion. If we receive gifts specified for a down payment after 10/30/06, we will apply them to our principle. Our lender tells us we will incur significant charges if we refinance another down payment later. You can contact MNA at: **Mission to North America (MNA)**, 1700 N. Brown Road, Suite 101, Lawrenceville, GA 30043-8143, Phone: (678) 825 -1200, Fax: (678) 825-1201, Email: [mna@pcanet.org](mailto:mna@pcanet.org).

Thank you again for your partnership with us in the gospel,

Steve and Via



