

JIM AND EMI CIVALE — YOUR MISSIONARIES TO SAMOA

Testifying... repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. ACTS 20:21

PRAYER LETTER ~ SEPTEMBER 1, 2016

Dear Friends,

In some ways, it feels like the month of August flew by; in others, like it was one of the longest of my life. As you recall from last month's letter, Emi and I made an emergency trip to New Jersey due to my father having a stroke on July 22. He passed away two days later, before we arrived to the U.S. You can see a picture of my dear dad to the right. In his later years, he came to love cooking gourmet meals and hosting people at his home.



In retrospect, I see why the Lord had me book our round-trip tickets to be in the U.S. for the whole month of August. It allowed us to be with my Mom and to help with what turned out to be a monumental task in cleaning out my father's home and work offices. I guess I never realized what a hoarder my Dad was. He saved *everything!* We found hand-written cash disbursement journals from the 1960s, the deed to each house he lived in from before the time of my birth, bank statements from banks that closed before I was even in kindergarten, and so much more. My mom is the opposite, only saving that which is absolutely necessary. She is the most orderly and organized person you will ever meet. So, there were only two places Dad was allowed to fill up with all his stuff—the two areas my sister and I were tasked to clean out. I was told by Dad's office staff at work that he and *only* he knew where things were and that what appears as chaos to everyone else was actually orderly to him. My guess is that while there may be some degree of truth to their statement, they were likely being charitable. My sister who lives in England also stayed for the month, so she and I got to go through much of the process of cleaning up and organizing things for my mom together. As you might imagine, we shed more than a few tears, had more than a few laughs, and reminisced more than a few times in the process. It was so helpful and healing to go through that together with her and I thank God for that opportunity. I am so grateful that we were able to be there for my mom in that way. Please do keep my mom in prayer as the Lord prompts; I imagine that only those who have lost a spouse can relate to the road Mom will be traveling for some time.

Back in Samoa, our son Joe, missionary Jenn Scarfi, and the preachers-in-training kept things going in our absence. On August 14th, Samoa celebrated Father's Day. The ladies of the church held a special banquet on Saturday evening and on Sunday, the father's gave special testimonies and received a gift. This year, the gift was an umbrella. The school also continued in Emi's absence, wrapping up the third quarter on August 26. The fourth quarter will begin on September 12. While in the U.S., we were able to get graduation supplies and we received some donations of school books to send out for the new school year.

After speaking with our field director and pastor, **Emi and I have changed the dates of our upcoming furlough.** We were supposed to come up next March and stay until the end of the year, but we have changed our dates and will come up in December and do our furlough from January to October of 2017. The reason for this change is personal; we want to be with my mom to for her first Christmas without my dad.

2017 FURLOUGH

(REVISED DATES)

Our next furlough will be from **January to October 2017.**

Please let us know if you would like to have us in for a missions conference or meeting.

We would love to see you!

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As I close, I want to thank all of you who sent cards, flowers, and messages of sympathy, all who attended my dad's final services, and all who sent special gifts to help cover our emergency airfare costs. Naturally, we already sent individual acknowledgments for each gift, but we do want to say again how much love and support we felt during this time. May God bless you richly.

Your friends, *Jim & Emi Civale*

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