

Live a life filled with love.  
EPHESIANS 5:2 NLT

January 13, 2019

Peng-an, dear Friends of the Taiwanese Christian Church Council of North America,

I trust you had a very blessed and joyous time of celebrating the birth of our Lord Jesus with family, the church community and friends during this special time of the year and have begun the New Year with great hope and anticipation of all the Lord has planned for you throughout 2019. How we praise and thank him for his goodness and faithfulness which is seen and experienced in so many beautiful ways.

Thank you so very much for your letter of concern, support and encouragement and also for the love gift which I received last month. It is so very kind of you to remember the Estell family in such a meaningful way. We consider it a great privilege to have lived and served in Taiwan for those many years. My late husband, William H. Estell, first left for Taiwan in October, 1958, just months after having graduated from Western Theological Seminary in Holland, MI. I arrived in July, 1971, and we were married in August, 1974. Bill was called home in April, 1990. The Reformed Church in America, our sending denomination, encouraged me to seek God's will as to my future. It was evident that his plan was for me to continue working with the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan at Yu-Shan Theological College and Seminary in Hualien. What a blessing and joy this was until my retirement in the fall of 2013! Even though I am not living there, I continue to keep in contact with former staff and students of Yu-Shan, members of my Bible study classes and former and present prisoners whom I taught an English Bible class in the Hualien Prison. Even though I am not there in person, they all continue to be in my prayers and heart. Friendships are so precious and valued.

Now that I have "passed" the five-year mark since retirement, many ask whether I have adjusted and how life is going. Adjustment is a life-long process, I think, but it has been good because I know that many were praying for me and also there for me. Filling my time has also not been a problem; in fact, I tend to have the problem of having too many opportunities for service. Basically, I tend to be involved with the more elderly, volunteering at a local nursing home, working at the reception desk, visiting residents and leading a monthly hymn sing. In other retirement homes, I often play the piano for the Sunday afternoon vesper service or speak. These days I will begin a Bible study for residents in another facility. Praise the Lord for all the open doors to reach lives for him or to encourage people in their work with him. To help fill my time, I visit a number of elderly in their homes and often drive them to appointments, to the grocery store or out for a meal—definitely NOT good for my waist line! The fellowship is rich and so precious as we talk about how God is working in our lives, praying together and reading his Word. When time permits, I also have people in to share a meal or just a cup of coffee.

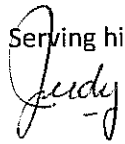
My family is all doing fine. This year my oldest daughter was married in a small, family service and is presently trying to find a job in her husband's hometown, Peoria, IL. She had been a music teacher and band director for nearly 20 years in another area so it is not so easy. My second daughter graduated from Western Seminary, exactly 60 years after her father did, was ordained in the RCA in July and is presently in a 13-month CPE, Clinical Pastoral Education, program in a hospital in Saginaw, MI. The other five are all holding their same jobs. Of course, the nine grandchildren, ranging in ages from nine to 25, are a joy but I don't see them often enough since none of them live in Michigan.

Again, thank you so very much for the love gift and kind words of encouragement. May our great God bless you in unexpected and beautiful ways throughout this coming year. As I so often say, even though we don't know what the future holds, we KNOW who holds the future. What a blessing! Praise the Lord!

In another couple of weeks, the Lunar New Year will be celebrated. I usually put up some of my decorations for this time of the year. How I miss those special times, especially the New Year's cake, nian gau! May you have a wonderful New Year, too. Enjoy the time with your family. I imagine some of you will be traveling home to spend time with your parents and greater family. May God grant you traveling mercies.

Thank you again!

Serving him together,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Judy".A handwritten mark or signature consisting of a loop followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.