



LEGACY INSTITUTE

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Dear Friends and Fellow Laborers,

The fall festivals are here! The majority of feast goers in Thailand are students and teachers from Legacy Institute. The second largest group consists of refugees from Myanmar (Burma). In past years, sometimes we have been able to get permission for our refugee members to travel from border refugee camps to Chiang Mai for the Feast to meet with the Legacy students and staff, as well as any western visitors.

This year things are different. The recent change in government necessitates holding the Feast of Tabernacles at a site close to the border near one of the refugee camps where most of our refugee members live. We held the Passover and Spring Holy Days there with great success. It is much easier to bring them out of the border refugee camps when we do not transport them so far away from the border. The small mountain town where we meet is called Khun Yuam. It is a sleepy little village that is situated on the old World War II Japanese supply road from Chiang Mai into Burma. The people who live there are mostly Karén Hill Tribes and other tribal groups. The facilities are simple but clean; and the hotel is a teakwood building with hot water, western style toilets, and air conditioning units for any Western guests who find themselves uncomfortable in the tropical heat. Our refugee feast-goers like it because it is similar to what they are used to. It may come as a surprise to most Westerners, but the local COG members DO NOT like air conditioning! It makes them get sick. They prefer natural air and would rather use electric fans or even handheld fans to cool off. The evenings and nights can also be cool in the mountain climate.

I have asked Nathan Albright, one of our volunteer teachers, to organize activities for each day and help speak. We will hold the usual worship service every day for all eight days. Since the refugee brethren do not have regular Sabbath services, we will also use the Feast as an opportunity to provide daily Bible studies to feed their hunger for spiritual food. Translations will be provided by third-year students and graduates. Sermons will be given in English and translated into the Thai, Karén, and Burmese languages.

For those of us who speak and understand English, it is sometimes difficult to relate to those hungry for the spiritual food of God's Word who do not. Westerners readily have plenty of literature, sermon CDs, internet sermons and a host of booklets, magazines and materials to augment regular Sabbath services and Bible studies. The tribal people who live in the border areas of Thailand and in Burma do not. Even refugees who settle in a third country are better able to understand the true Gospel when they can read or hear it in their native languages.

I received an email from a young Karén Church member now living in London. Tiwah is the grandson of long-time Burma Pastor Saw Ley Bey (now deceased). Tiwah requested that we send him copies of the Annual Holy Day booklet which we had translated into the Karén language. Here is his letter below:

Uncle Leon,

I have received the booklets very well last Friday thank you very much. I have given these booklets to some Karen readers here which they wanted to know. The more the uncertainty of this world continues to erupt, the more people are getting to concern what is happening to their lives. As we see from recent natural disasters have destroyed many lives in many counties, whilst epidemic diseases continue to strike peoples' lives in Africa and Europe are facing financial crisis as well as the recession in the US. Moreover, many countries in middle east start their revolution fighting for freedom and against their governments, especially, war in Libya. Furthermore, tension are erupting between Israel and Turkey. These world events are just the beginning of the sorrow. We are really grateful to understand the mystery of the bible when many are still in the confusion.

Uncle Leon, I am really admired from what you are trying to help and teach people those who live in Thailand to understand God's way of life. I will continue to pray for your work and all brethren in Thailand. I wish one day God will allow me to travel back to Thailand and do his work.

Warm regards,

Tiwah

It is very encouraging to hear from young people who want to help preach the True Gospel to their own people. It makes all the hardship we encounter in this part of the world worthwhile. We are continuing our project of translating English Bible literature into the Burmese, and as possible, the Karén languages. The Apostle Paul said that people cannot understand the Gospel unless they can understand what is being preached to them.

Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me. I Corinthians 14:11

Literature and sermon CDs in another language open whole new doors for the preaching of the Gospel, even to refugees who now reside in the English speaking world. It is another important way of preaching the Gospel to the whole world.

VOLUNTEER TEACHER COMPLETING FIVE YEARS OF SERVICE IN THAILAND

Erika Pedersen will be completing her fifth year as a Legacy volunteer at the end of March 2012. We cannot overestimate Erika's contribution to the success of Legacy Foundation's Training Center as an institution; and her dedication to making a positive difference in the lives of underprivileged hill tribe youths from Thailand and Burma. While a volunteer at Legacy, Erika was able to complete a Master's degree in TOESL (*Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages*) at a well known international university program. With the additional training, she has been able to make an even more valuable contribution to our program by helping to increase the level of English language ability among the students of Legacy. Some have come to Legacy not speaking any English at all and leave able to give full 15 minute speeches entirely in the English language! This is due in no small part to the hard work and dedication of volunteer teachers like Erika.

I sent out a questionnaire to several recent veteran volunteer teachers. I think it is valuable to see the answers that Erika gave. It shows the spirit of those who come to Thailand to serve God.

Q: How long did you serve as a Legacy Volunteer?

It will be 5 years once my time is finished.

Q: What were your duties? If an Instructor, what did you teach?

I looked after the school. In the 5 years I was at the school I taught – English Reading and Writing 1, 2, and 3, Discussion 1, 2, and 3, Choir, Sports Class, Speech, Leadership, Journalism, Computer Office and Computer Design(for about a month), Bible 1 for one semester, Music Theory, and Piano

Q: Why did you decide to volunteer?

Because it seemed like a good way to learn and grow and help others.

Q: What do you think about Thailand?

Now, I love it.

Q: What is it like living in a foreign environment?

I had lived overseas before so it really wasn't very difficult coming to Thailand. I miss family and friends sometimes, but otherwise I haven't had many problems. I didn't really experience culture shock coming here. (I did when I lived in France so I have a pretty good idea what it's like.)

Q: Did you try to learn the Thai language?

A little – but I also studied teaching at Payap so that took precedence.

Q: What did you like best about the Thai culture?

I like the friendly people. I like the mai pen rai attitude¹ in some respects. (It's nice since I tend to take things too seriously.) I think people in Chiang Mai are very friendly. They like foreigners and like to hear us speak Thai – they're very encouraging that way. I like that Thai culture is so complicated that you can never quite put your finger on how it's different from the US but it just is. I also love Thai hospitality.

Q: What did you miss the most?

I missed my friends and family. I missed bread and other US foods until I found shops that supply me with most of what I crave. There's not much that I get at home that I can't get here except my mom's cooking – so I miss that!

Q: What was your best experience?

Well, I've got a few months left so I might have even better experiences, but I did really enjoy getting to travel around the area. However, the absolute highlights have been getting to know my students, being around when they and/or their family have needed help, and going to the camps. Those were the instances where I grew the most and felt like I was fulfilling my purpose here.

Q: What did the majority of the students want to learn?

English and Bible

Q: Was it easy or difficult to teach the Legacy students? Why do you think this was the case?

It is difficult sometimes to teach because English is the language of instruction and learning how to explain things so students will understand is a huge challenge. Keeping students motivated and encouraged can also be challenging. In addition, students are at such different levels, and they may not even know their native language completely in the 4 skill areas.

Q: Would you recommend the volunteer experience to others? Yes.

Why? *In the time I have been here I'm sure I've gained more than I've given. I've grown and learned so many things about myself and other people. I've learned about challenges and attitudes. I've learned more completely (but still not perfectly) that what we do on earth really shouldn't be for what is here on earth. Are we doing what God has called us to do? If yes, then He sees and the other things just aren't so important.*



¹ "Mai ben rai" means "never mind".

Erika not only taught all the classes she listed above, she also took care of the school during much of the time that I was sick in the hospital in Bangkok and my lengthy recovery once I returned to Chiang Mai. It was an extremely heavy load; teaching classes, working on a Master's program, and helping to administer the school, but somehow she did it all.

I envy all the youthful energy that comes to help at Legacy! I am doing well, but just do not have the energy levels I once had. I would like to chalk it up to the effects of the congestive heart failure and strokes, but Gloria reminds me that I am getting older, too.

We are going to miss Erika and all that experience, knowledge, and boundless energy. But, as I keep reminding each of our volunteers, "Someday you have to go back to the real world and get on with your life!" I am sure Erika will continue to make a contribution to Legacy by talking to other young people about her many adventures as a Legacy volunteer in Thailand. She will most certainly make a positive impact on the lives of others wherever she goes.

STUDENT OF THE MONTH

We have reinstituted the honor of "Student of the Month" at Legacy school. For September, the student who demonstrated the highest levels of academic achievement, character development, and work ethic was a first-year Karén student! His name is Bancha and he comes from a border refugee camp. His Karén name is "Wa" and he waited for many hours at a bus stop in the mountains, with his bag packed, ready to come to Legacy. The only problem was—I knew nothing about him! I learned about Bancha waiting patiently at the bus station while I was making preparations for the Passover this Spring at Khun Yuam. I got a phone call from Jack, a Karén COG member living in the U.S. He told me that he had received another phone call from Karén COG members in Oregon who had gotten a call from COG members in the Mae Rama Luang Refugee Camp in Thailand. They informed Jack that Wa was waiting at the bus station for someone to pick him up. Gloria jumped in the truck with Legacy volunteer, Austin Mangels and a Karén member, Saw Po Htoo—drove over the mountain roads, picked him up and got back in time for the Passover ceremony. There is never a dull moment at Legacy! It is amazing how the Karén COG grapevine works! They have their own "social network."

Bancha works hard and deserves the honor. Student of the Month is an honor given to any student of any year who shows that they have come to Legacy ready to work hard to develop themselves and honor the opportunity God has given them. We hope that, by reinstituting this honor, others will be inspired to also try their best.



The world continues to spiral downward toward the climax of events known in prophecy as the "Day of the Lord." Tiawah is right. Escalating disasters are causing people to wake up. I feel very sad for the Japanese people who seem to get hit time after time with natural disasters. A typhoon just hit them again and caused even more death and destruction. More earthquakes are showing up in many different places. The U.S. is engaged in seemingly endless wars. The wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya seem to be winding down, but new battlegrounds are forming in Syria, Yemen and other Middle Eastern countries.

The UN recognition of Palestine as a sovereign member nation will bring more conflict in the Middle East and drag the entire world into the endless rivalry between the sons of Jacob and the sons of Ishmael and Esau. One-time friends of Israel are now enemies. For example, both Egypt and Turkey were at one time friends. Now they are friends no longer! It is getting hotter and hotter, and the world is closer to the brink. The world needs to hear the Gospel. More and more ears are being unstopped. Now is the time for the Church of God to increase its efforts to spread the Gospel message ever further and further afield. Prophecy tells us that many will be converted and emerge to glory out of the Great Tribulation at the very end.

After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God forever and ever. Amen. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. Revelation 7:9-17

How are they going to come out? How will they hear the Gospel message? Many of these will have already heard the Gospel message because of the preaching of the Church of God just BEFORE the Great Tribulation. When they begin to feel the full impact of the persecutions of the soon coming Beast Power, they will remember the message(s) they had received and repent. Not all repent as soon as they hear the

message like they did when they heard the preaching of Peter². For some it takes time—sometimes years! But unless the Gospel is preached to them, they have NOTHING to help them come to salvation! We need to renew our efforts to give them a chance when God decides the time has come.

How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? Romans 10:14

I keep repeating myself in almost every letter. Our job is not over yet. The greatest and most important part of the job we have been given is NOW! There are still millions who need to hear the Gospel of the Kingdom. The Book of Life is not filled up yet! The various Churches of God MUST renew our efforts to complete the job Jesus the Christ and soon coming King gave us.

UPDATE ON COG BRETHREN IN MYANMAR AND THE FLOODED REFUGEE CAMP

The fighting along the China border in northern Myanmar continues. I asked our deacon in Yangon (Rangoon) to check on our brethren. Since the telephone system is not working because of the fighting, it is difficult for him to get any news. But he says that he has, as yet, heard no reports of any of our brethren being harmed. He is still trying to get messages into them. The fighting seems to have stopped for awhile, with now only small skirmishes taking place. I will let you know as soon as I hear anything further. Please continue to pray for them.

Saw Po Htoo has returned to the refugee camp to help rebuild his house that was washed away in the flooding. One of our Legacy staff who speaks Karén got a telephone call from him just before he went inside the camp. The road in and out is now treacherous because the rains have washed out the roads in several places. Again, we are waiting for more news. Please continue to pray for Po Htoo and his family.



Donations to Legacy are way down. This is due mainly to the economic crisis now overwhelming the U.S.A. America is turning its back on the Covenant. The result is that the blessings promised to Abraham's covenant children³ are being taken away.

² Acts 2

³ The Covenant Promises went from Abraham to Isaac; then from Isaac to Jacob (Israel), with the Firstborn portion going to the sons of Joseph (Ephraim and Manasseh.) America is mainly the children of Manasseh's firstborn son, Machir (the Ha Machir or sons of Machir) who were brought up by Joseph (see Genesis 50:23) and later taken away by Assyria to the Caucasus. They eventually migrated into Western Europe and the British Isles.

U.S. economy is going down and therefore, those who donate to Legacy are struggling. Legacy supporters are financially affected. Some have lost jobs and homes—not because they have done anything wrong—but because the economy is so bad. This comes at a time when increased numbers of Karén refugees in the camps want to come to the Feast and learn more about God’s laws and way of life.

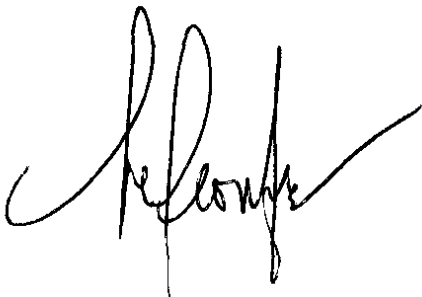
The Feast is for the local Karen refugee members and others from the camps first. Khun Yuam in the mountains is the best location based on the present circumstances. But Legacy still has to pay for all the expenses for both Karén refugees, interested new people, and the Legacy students who want to attend.

I decided to give our students a choice this year. I told them that they could choose to go home during the festival break to visit their families, or they could go to the Feast in the mountains. I thought few would go to the Feast as they come from the mountains and would not be excited about going back into the mountains for a religious festival. Imagine my surprise when ALL OF THEM decided they would not go home, but would keep the Feast instead! I was genuinely surprised and encouraged at the same time! Only three of our students presently are baptized Sabbath keepers, yet they all wanted to go.

Please remember this situation in your prayers. And, if you have set aside any Festival Tithe to help less fortunate brethren, please remember those meeting in Khun Yuam, Thailand. Also, please pray that we can get all our local brethren gathered together successfully without government interference.

May God be with all of you and bless you during the upcoming Feast days.

In Jesus’ Righteous and Holy Name,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Leon Sexton', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke at the end.

T. Leon Sexton

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