

# STICKY RICE MINISTRY

Lao Attached Field Newsletter

March-April 2015

## Pacific Island Pastors in Laos



It is not usual that the Laos Church members would see so many pastors from the Pacific Islands singing in their church. Yet, on Sabbath, 21 March 2015, the Vientiane Church members were blessed with the best gospel singers from the Pacific Islands. It was like listening to angels singing! It was a real memorable time to be able to worship together with these pastors. To most people it was their first time ever to see visitors from the Pacific countries.

Thank you Pastor Glenn Townend, the Trans-Pacific Union Mission President, and Pastor Leigh Rice, the Papua New Guinea Union President, for bringing their pastors to visit Laos. The church in Laos was also blessed with Pastor Townend's message. The message was really uplifting. Pastor Townend talked about Jesus healed the blind man at Bethsaida (Mark 8:22-26). He started with asking a question, "How much did the blind man have faith in Jesus?" What do you think? Did the blind man have faith in Jesus? At first, he didn't. You see, it was his friends who brought him to Jesus (verse 22). Then, it was his friends who begged Jesus to heal him (verse 22). Notice that Jesus did not heal him immediately, but took his hand and led him out of the village and started healing him (verse 23). Then, the blind man was not completely healed the first time. Why? Did Jesus make a mistake? Did Jesus lose His power? Or did the blind man lack his faith? It was after the blind man spoke up that he saw people who look like trees that Jesus was able to heal him completely. Then, Pastor Townend concluded that Jesus could take us from where we are to where He wants us to be. Whether we have no faith, little faith, some faith, or plenty of faith in Him, Jesus could take us from where we are to where He wants us to be. Another lesson we can learn from Pastor Townend's sermon was that we should be like the blind man's friends who lead our blind friend to Jesus and beg Him to heal our friend. Why don't we learn to become like that blind man's friends?

The Pacific Island pastors came to visit Laos on their Discipleship Tour. We thank Pastor Townend and Pastor Rice for arranging this visit. You have come to bless us. You have made us feel that we are not alone and forgotten. But, we have brothers and sisters around the world who are interested in us. You see, we, in Laos, always felt that we were alone and hardly anyone really cares about us. Not many people in the world know that we exist. Most people think that Laos is a province of Vietnam. People know about the Vietnam War which ended in 1973.

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*"I have compassion on the crowd, because they have been with me now three days and have nothing to eat.*

*And if I send them away hungry to their homes, they will faint on the way. And some of them have come from far away."*

*(Mark 8:2-3, ESV)*

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**Pacific Island Pastors at a church site in Luang Prabang**

But nobody knew about Laos that was also part of that War and had been bombed more than any country on the planet earth in human history. Over 3 million tons of bombs were dropped in Laos over the 30 years war, the country then with only 3 million people. So, one Lao person received “gifts” of 1 tons of bombs. Up to this day, 25% of the land in Laos is still unusable due to unexploded ordinances (UXOs).

So, the visit of the 19 pastors from the Pacific Islands was meaningful to us. We are happy that we are not isolated and forgotten. The pastors also visited several churches in Vientiane and Luang Prabang. They were also able to visit one of the most beautiful waterfalls in Luang Prabang.



While in Luang Prabang, in one morning, they also went to observe their fellow Buddhist holy men collecting alms. They said that there was much to learn from their Buddhist counterparts. One thing we can learn from our Buddhist counterparts is that they are committed to their religious duty. These holy men get up at 3-4 am and chant their mantras until 5 am. Then, they get ready to do the alms collection rounds. They often come out of the temples at 6:00 am and return at 7:00 am. Then, they have breakfast and resume their religious duties at the temples. They live modestly, depending totally on the offerings from their parishioners. Monks' belongings are strictly limited to 10 pieces, including their alms bowl and robes. So, there are not many left for them to possess. Indeed, our Buddhist counterparts do have many things worth learning from. I hope that our Pacific Island pastors did enjoy their trip to Laos and have learned some practical lessons for their ministry back in the Pacific Islands. God bless you all guys. We will keep your footprints in the sand of our hearts.

## **Will You Let them Study in the Rain? (Continued from page 3)**

chase of the Luang Prabang church/school property. We are now in the final stage of securing the document and have already paid 50 percent of the total price. Luang Prabang school will be a branch or an extension of the Xieng Khouang school since we have received government registration paper for this one already.

Perhaps some of you who missed out the opportunity to contribute towards the Luang Prabang church/school project now is your second chance to partner with Jesus in the business of saving the people of Laos. With so many needs around the world we can feel overwhelmed and think that our contribution may just be a drop in a bucket. Yet, in time, many drops can fill up the bucket. May God impress upon your mind how many drops you would like to put into His bucket for His children in Xieng Khouang.



**Having fund while waiting for class to begin**



**Dr Paul Buschenhofen having fun with kids**



**Dr Paul Buschenhofen and Eila having fun with students of outdoor class**





Outdoor classroom at Xieng Khouang Language School

## Will You Let Them Study in the Rain?



The rain is coming! In fact, it has already come. The day we visited Xieng Khouang Language Centre it already rained. It was freezing cold and wet. Yet, the weather did not stop eager students from coming to study English. Inside and outside of the house school are full of students, young and old, all wanting to learn English.

The inside classroom is packed with little children. They are waiting for their teacher. But, their teacher has to run between two classes, indoor and outdoor classes. What he does is that he would teach one class and then give exercises for them to do and then run to teach another class, back and forth like that. His wife teaches at another class in the kitchen classroom. His mother looks after their two kids. His sister, although being student herself, sometimes has to serve as a teacher aid.

Sensed the need to bring the good news to this city, Lao Attached Field (LAF) purchased an unfinished house here in Xieng Khouang in 2014. Then, we converted the house into a house and school. Chi Her and his wife were assigned to run the school and Chi Her also serves as the district pastor of Xieng Khouang. They started the school in June 2014. Now there are more than 130 students and the house class-

rooms are not big enough to accommodate them all. So, the outdoor classroom was created. But, the rain is coming. When the rain comes the children cannot possibly study in the outdoor classroom. They will get wet.

We are facing a dilemma. One option is that we can close down the outdoor classroom and expel some students. We don't want to do that. Because it is our Adventist philosophy to make our education available to all children. And these children really want to learn. It is not possible to selectively expel some students. My heart will ache if I were to do that. So, I prefer another option—that is to build a two-classroom school immediately. In fact, by faith, we have already begun the construction of this school.

Now, it is your chance to fulfil the dreams of these little children to learn English by helping us finish the construction of the school before the rainy season starts later in May. We only have less than two months to go. This two-classroom school is going to be 6x9 meter building. Divided into two classrooms with dimension of 4.5x6 m each. It is estimated that it will cost around \$10,000.

When compared with what the school can do to impact the lives of hundreds of students and their parents that is not too much, right? But, we cannot do it alone. In 2014 LAF has invested \$42,000 in the initial building and land already. LAF does not have the \$10,000 in hand at the moment. Besides, we only charge students a price of an ice-cream or \$4.00 per month. Even as low as it is, not all students can afford to pay. The little income we received from the tuition fees were spent on buying books, making tables and chairs, and teaching materials, including computers and cd players.

Would you help us again? I know that you have just helped us secure a church property in Luang Prabang. We are truly grateful. Words cannot be sufficient to express our gratitude to your contributions toward the pur-

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No more space inside the house of worship

## House Church Overcrowded

In the past, whenever I visited Phonmany Village Church, Nam Bak District, Luang Prabang, Northern Laos, it was not on Sabbath. So I did not know how crowded it was during worship services. This Sabbath, 28 March 2015, I was able to see with my own eyes how packed they are in a small house during worship time. So packed that some were not able to get in and had to stay outside.



Today, they also planned to have a baptism. There were 18 people who were baptised at a river nearby. The youngest person is 14 years old and the oldest one 90 years old. They were transported to the baptismal site on a truck owned by the village chief who in the past used to persecute our members and was strongly against the church. But today he was a believer and is preparing for baptism. How did he change from being a persecutor to a believer will be very interesting to know. I have not been able to interview him yet. Next time, I will bring his story to you. Please pray for him to grow in faith and that God will use him to reach out more people in his village.



The atmosphere was just like the time of Jesus. People brought their children and sick people to us to pray and lay hands on them. They come with sickness like fever, tiredness, stomach ache, headache, and even deafness for us to heal.

There are many children. In fact, there are more children than adults. Among people usually have many children. Children are their security as there is no state social security system.

With 18 more people added to the group today the house church can no longer hold all of them during worship time. There is an urgent need to build a proper church building for these people. The Darwin SDA Church members in Australia have purchased a plot of land for this group already. The members have also contributed by putting up fences around the property. They are also in the process of getting timber to build their church. But they will need financial help to get it finished. Here is Laos, our rural church building is typically built with a dimension of 8x12 m and usually cost around \$15,000. If you would like to help please let us know.



Praying for the sick



Pastor Bounprany (LAF President) and Pastor Song Lee (Local Church Pastor) baptizing people in a nearby canal

What a joy to see so many people accepting the Lord as their personal Savior. Now, it is time to help them build a church. It's your chance again to be part of God's mission in Laos.





Go where there is no road

## The Miracle Rock (Part II)

You must have still remembered my last report about the “Miracle Rock” that stopped Pastor Bounprany’s vehicle so that he had to stay overnight at the village chief’s house who happened to be a Christian and used to study Adventist Correspondence lessons. Well, on Sunday, March 29, 2015, we visited the village again.

The road to the village, 40 km from Luang Prabang City to the South towards Xayaboury Province, but on the other side of the Mekong River. So, we had to take the ferry. Fortunately for us, the road was just graded a week before our trip. It was like someone had prepared the way for us, like John the Baptist prepared the Way for the Lord.

We drove on the newly graded dirt road relatively at ease, considered a couple days earlier the road was so rough and bumpy that we suspected that some of our internal organs must have been moved to the wrong side of our bodies. Although, we have not visited a doctor to find out about that yet.



Pr Bounprany pointing at the “miracle rock” that stopped his car during his last trip

When we got there the miracle rock was still there as if it wants to remind us that we just need to follow the lead of the Spirit. We arrived at the house of the chief just in time for the divine worship. The people were already waiting to see us. They were glad to see us and welcome us into the house of worship.



As we entered we were introduced to the members there as visitors from Vientiane. We worshipped with them and took part in the holy communion service with them. Pastor Bounprany shared the Word of God with them on the Ten Commandments. He also emphasized the blessings of keeping the Sabbath.



Pr Bounprany prays for the people



Partaking of the Holy Communion

These are 29 families of the Church of Christ members who are worshipping in the chief’s house. The chief, however, used to be an Adventist. In the village there are 99 families. Some families are Evangelical church members and some are Lutherans. All of these people are of Khmu tribe, the second largest tribe in Laos. All of them are Christians. Yet, they have kept their faith alive amidst difficulties. The only 5 Lowland Lao families are Buddhists.

Please pray for these people that they may have deeper relationship with the Lord. They are like sheep without a shepherd. LAF will provide 50 Lao bibles to this group in our next visit in May. They have not been given permission to build their church as yet. Please continue to pray for them.





Pathfinders and Adventurers Investiture in Vientiane

## Lao Youth on the Move

Yes, Lao Youth is on the Move. On Sabbath, March 28, 2015, at the Vientiane City Church over 50 Pathfinders and 20 Adventurers celebrated their commitments to Jesus as the youth and the future of the church in Laos.



It was an awesome experience. Consider the Lao Church is relatively a very young church. Two years ago, it had only ONE ordained minister. Now, the Laos SDA Church has 5 ordained ministers, 4 organized churches, and well over 40 companies and house churches, with 1,260 members and growing fast.

It is recognized that for the church to have a bright future there is a need to invest in building up capacity and infrastructure. These 70 or so young people are our future. More importantly, these young people have come from different ethnic backgrounds. Laos is blessed with at least 149 ethnics. Most major ethnics are represented here in the Vientiane SDA Church. There are the Lao, Khmu, Hmong, Ta-Oy, Lawen, Ya hern, Tai Dam, Tai Phuan, and more represented among these young people.

## Contact Us

You can write to us or give us a call for more information about our work and other mission projects.

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These are the people who will carry the gospel to all corners of Laos. They are the foot soldiers of Jesus Christ who will fight the spiritual battle with Satan. All we need to do is to train and equip them with the sword of the Spirit.



Please remember this infant mission field, Lao Attached Field, in your prayers. If you feel like sponsoring some to do further study, to equip them for future service of God, please let us know. And if you or your church would like to have a mission project in Laos please also do let us know. There are just too many exciting things happening here in Laos. Are you ready to experience great things with us?