

STICKY RICE MINISTRY

Lao Attached Field Newsletter

September 2015

The Birth of Luang Prabang Language Center



Luang Prabang Language Center Started to open its door to new students just in the last couple of weeks, 1 September 2015. Already it has attracted over 20 students who squished into the classroom each hour to learn English from Pastor Tong Thor, our Luang Prabang District pastor.

This building that sits on a 2,800 SQM block of land that was purchased with your donations in a miraculous way. Firstly, the house and land was available for sale in a ridiculously low price of \$45,000! A similar block of land, without a house on it, in the area is sold well over \$100,000. Even the land office could not believe the price we reported when we registered our land. They said it had to be much more than that. Now, with that price everybody else would have grabbed it on the first day it was made available for sale, but why nobody bought it? Instead, it gave us enough time, over a month, for you to send donations to us so we could buy it. It all happened because God wanted to secure this piece of land for His work in Luang Prabang. You see, the landlord believed that his house was built in an inauspicious structure. As a result bad things happened to his family. He offered to sell the house and land at a purchase price—the price when he bought and built it a few years ago. Even with that price no one was interested in buying a “haunted” block of land like that. When I first heard about this piece of land and house my first impression was that God must have reserved this one for us.

Secondly, I gave Pastor Tong Thor authority to negotiate for a purchase without a single dollar in hand. Well, you must have laughed at me and said in your heart that it is not a good business practice to buy a property worth \$45,000 without money in hand, right? To tell you the truth, I was scared myself. After giving an order to Pastor Tong Thor to negotiate I was startled with a reality of where to find the \$45,000. Then, God calmed me down whispering to me that He has money to pay for it in time. And that when money started coming in from all directions, mainly from your, my friends in Australia and United States of America, but also from Laos, Thailand, and Singapore. And most im-

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Over 20 students crowd in to study English at Luang Prabang English Center

portantly, I forgot that once we purchased the house we still needed to renovate it to make it usable. And even I have forgotten about the extra costs of renovation and water system the Master already had in mind what we needed to do. So, instead of giving \$45,000 God gave through you the total of \$59,193.44. With the extra funds you gave we were able to renovate the house, dug a deep well, installed a water system, and equipped the house with tables and benches for the language school. To you all who have given to the purchase of this property, thank you very much. You have partnered with the Master in the Business of saving souls. Now you can see how the business of saving souls starts. I will give you the breakdowns of expenses on the project once everything is finalized. There are still many things to do to get our property to be presentable. We still need to do the fence/wall around the property. Then, we need to do a parking space for motorbikes, bicycles, and cars. We will need to do up, concrete or tar seal, the access road, which is around 200 meters from the main road. We will need to put up shelters for our students during the rain while waiting for class to begin and during recess.



Students waiting for the next class are standing outside

It is only the beginning. Our school just started a couple of weeks ago. Already, more than 40 students came to study. Pastor Tong Thor said that students kept coming everyday as words of mouth spread about our school. In the meantime, Pastor Tong Thor is teaching two hours per day, from 4:30-6:30 pm. He will have to add more class times to this as the number of students increases. There is also a problem. You see, Pastor Tong Thor is our district pastor. He is responsible for many churches in Luang Prabang. He cannot possibly be at home every night to teach English. Although teaching English is part of his work, to attract young people to Jesus, but it is not right for him to neglect his pastoral ministry and focuses only on evangelism. So, what we need is English

teachers. But, where can we find Adventist English teachers? Because "only a duck can give birth to ducklings" we cannot and would not hire a non-Adventist teacher to teach at our school, even as a relief teacher.

The way to go is to recruit Lao Adventist English teachers. And we need many of them real soon. In Xieng Khouang Province, our first English Language Center that was opened in 2014, has more than 150 students already. The students are more than two teachers can handle. We need to add more teachers to that school too. Now, Luang Prabang English Language School has started. We will need more teachers for this school real soon. We will start an English Language School at our new rented office in Vientiane too. We will need English teachers for that school as well. What shall we do? Why are we creating all these problems for ourselves? We might think, "if we do not have teachers then don't start a language school. No school no problem, right?" But, the Lord keeps talking to me to "work while it is day, night is coming, when no one can work" (John 9:4).



Students peeping to learn English from outside



The lucky ones are inside enjoying every moment

There is no time to waste. We cannot just sit and wait for teachers to spring up like mushrooms. We need to purposely train them and train them fast. We have young people who completed their high school certificate in Laos, but we do not have funds to send them to study English at Asia-Pacific International University (AIU) because of the ESL barrier. Please pray for us, asking God to remove this superficial ESL mountain, so Lao students can be prepared for the service of the Master. Unlike other missions Lao Field does not have an English school to prepare our young people for AIU.

Birth of the Lao Adventist Academy?



Truly, it was a miracle that the Luang Prabang English Center and church was born. God provided funds through your sacrifice and generosity so that we could purchase the property and renovate the house and turned it into a school during the week and church on Sabbath. We named it the "Living Water English Center." Now we need an English medium Adventist Academy in Laos.

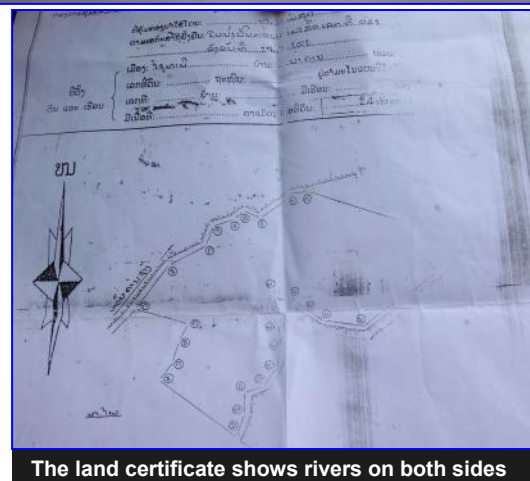
Would you like to be a channel of blessings to help us give birth to the first ever Lao Adventist Academy (LAA), the "Living Water Academy?" Indeed, this piece of land, 25 hectares in total, is surrounded by living waters. Would like to create a history? The Lord is calling on you to take part in this historic institution, giving birth to the Lao Adventist Academy. This piece of land is most suitable for establishing an 3 in 1 Adventist AAA: Adventist Academy, Adventist Agricultural school, and Adventist Health Promotion Center/farm. The land is located at the foot of the "Phou Khao Khouay" Biodiversity National Park.



The land sits on a by-pass road that joins the North and South Highway 13. It is 1.8 km (1 mile) from the main road, the north side connected to the national park, a large reservoir and river, and the south also connected to a river which forms the boundaries of the southern side. No location is better or more ideal than this

location. It is best for our Academy with agriculture emphasis and also for a resort or health promotion center.

Everything is perfect and ideal, except the price of the land. The owner wanted 200,000 baht (\$6,000) per hectare or \$150,000 for the whole piece. God has



The land certificate shows rivers on both sides

provided us with \$50,000 in hand ready to negotiate. We are going to the owner in faith. In the past, in business practice, no one has ever reduced 3 times the asking price. But, nevertheless, we will try. We also hope that you may want to invest in God's great institution like this one. The land is perfect for a boarding school as it sits in a quiet location and with a natural environment. It is perfect for agriculture because it has endless supply of clean water fresh from the mountains. It is best for a health promotion center as it sits on one of the most beautiful and best environmental locations in Laos.

So, if you can help us please quickly let us know so God can perform another miracle in Laos.

The Cost of Following Jesus (Maem's Misery)



Standing with her younger sister in front of their unfinished shop-house

Maem loves Jesus more than her own grandfather and now she is paying the price! Maem, her younger sister, and her mother all gave their lives to Jesus. Without the male breadwinner Maem's mother worked in the neighbour's farm to raise her two children. This kind of labour does not bring sufficient income to feed her family. Their house is on Maem's step-grandfather's land. And because they have accepted Jesus and became Christians her step-grandfather told them to leave his land. Where would they go? They could not afford to buy a piece of land, let alone building a house to live in.

Maem is still a teenager, but her childhood has been stolen from her. Because of her faith in Jesus she had to struggle to make ends meet. She has to take care of her mother and her little sister who still goes to school. But, God loves her and her family. A neighbour gave them a small piece of land near her house for them to pitch a house. So, Maem gathered all of her life-savings and started building this house. Well, it is not a house, but a hut rather. Maem's dream is to set up a beauty salon and live in it as well. As you can see, the shop-house is just a little bigger than a single garage or your backyard shed. But for Maem and her family they will just be glad to have a place to live. With \$500 and help from some male neighbours this is all she could go—to have a roof and posts standing, not even a cement slab yet. She does not even have equipment for her beauty salon! How could fulfil her dream of having a shop-house?

You see, one of many professions that will provide plenty of time with the same customers is a beautician. A beautician or for male, a barber, gets close contact with their customers for quite a length of time. Through long-term contact they can develop friendship that will lead to a perfect opportunity to share her faith in Jesus with her customers. Maem is already a leader of her little group of believers who are currently worshipping in her old house (see opposite).

Maem is from Pakchong District, Champasak Province, Southern Laos. She is from a Laven tribe. All the members of this group are females and related to each other. The older ladies are Maem's mother and her sisters. Their children also became Christians. Every Sabbath they hold worship services at Maem's house where she would normally lead out. What will happen if Maem moves out of her current house?

I don't know and cannot think that far. However, as for Maem, she will just be glad to have a roof over her head and some equipment to start her beauty salon to make a living to feed her and her family.

"Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me." (Matthew 10:37, ESV)



Maem leading out in worship during our visit

A friend of mine, who travelled together, gave her \$100 toward finishing her shop house. Although it was not much, Maem was so grateful. When asked how much would she need to finish her house? She told me \$400. Well, she really thought like a child. How could \$400 finish that house? \$400 would just give her a few doors and window frames, but surely it could not finish the house.

My guesstimate, after finishing so many projects, is that she would need at least \$3,000 to complete the house/hut and another \$1,000 to get her beauty salon equipment. Her beauty salon has to look presentable to attract customers and as a worship place and it must attract worshippers too.

So, if you think you can help this poor young lady get out of her misery and able to stand on her own feet and to help her in her efforts to witness for Jesus with her customers please let me know. I think it is a good way to make your money work for the Lord by investing in this young lady's shop house. You will not just save her life, but her family, and many more who will be added to the Kingdom of God through her diligent and dedicated work of witnessing and leading in the worship of the true God. You can lend it to her without interest. When she is able to repay we can use that money to help others in similar need.

Thank you for your sympathy over this poor young lady who has sacrificed much for her faith.

Last Training at Vientiane Church



The current Vientiane Church will soon become a history. Built in 1973 to accommodate up to the maximum 100 members Vientiane SDA Church, the largest church in Laos, can no longer accommodate the increasing number of worshippers, now surpassing 200 and increasing at an alarming speed. Just last month 22 were added to this church through baptism. LAF needs to build a bigger church to accommodate more city members. It plans to build a multipurpose 5 storey building that will house a 500 seating capacity church, a language school, an LAF office, ADRA Laos office, training, conference, and meeting rooms, health food restaurant and store, and underground carpark. Once complete it will tower alongside with the Booyong Bank making it an important landmark to the inner city of Vientiane. With its location and its visibility the new Vientiane SDA Church will stand preaching the everlasting gospel message 24/7 all year round.

LAF has more than 40 lay pastors serving in various locations in 14 out of total 18 provinces of Laos. Each year, LAF holds training for its lay pastors 4 times. This training, conducted between 14 and 17 September 2015, was the last training held at this church. As of 25 October 2015 the church building will be dismantled to give way to the new building construction. The church members will be scattered to worship in several smaller locations and homes. The office will be relocated to a rented building. The young people who sleep behind the current church building will also be relocated to the newly completed youth hostel that was built by fund donated by our special friends in Australia in honour and memory of their late father.

The next two years, LAF will try to raise funds to contribute to the costs of the new multipurpose church building. LAF needs \$80,000 in total. It has started raising funds from its total membership of 1,300, most of whom live under poverty line of \$1.25 per day. Nevertheless, it is quietly confident that God will provide sufficient funds to complete His multipurpose church building in Laos. This is the historic church building in Laos which will be recorded in the history of the Laos church. If you feel that you would like to part of the history of the Laos church please let us know. We will provide the information how you can send funds to us.



Training translated from Lao to Hmong dialect



The training focuses on the important doctrines such as the Mission of the church, the Sabbath and Sunday, and the Great Controversy. The lay pastors are commissioned to preach the everlasting gospel message and to make disciples. Please pray for us.

Our Thunwa's Progress



Thunwa as of 5 September 2015



Thunwa's 4 year old sister proudly cuddling her brother with tenderly love and care

As of 5 September 2015, our efforts in helping Thunwa, a baby born with a cleft palate, to gain weight has yielded good progress. He has now gained 6.4 kg. Although it is quite a while for him to go to have an operation to repair his palate but the time is getting closer.

We would like to thank all of you who have donated money to help Thunwa. Special thanks go to Asia-Pacific International University Pathfinder club for taking time to raise funds for Thunwa. In deed, all of you deserve special thanks.

Thunwa's mother is always thankful to God and her Christian brothers and sisters who care for her baby boy and her family. She shared with me in tears of appreciation the other day, saying that she really does not know how to thank God enough for His love and care. Here, at church, people love her and her baby more than her own extended family members. She also brought a neighbour to church with her that day. She told her that here she has found true love. That lady who came with her



Thunwa as in August 2015 when he had 6 kg



Thunwa receiving milk through a special bottle

has been attending church regularly since.

"So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith."

(Galatians 6:10, ESV)

We thank God for your generous donations towards helping Thunwa. Thunwa will be grateful. When he grows up we will tell him about what you have done for him.