

# STICKY RICE MINISTRY

Lao Attached Field Newsletter

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## WHAT SDA EDUCATION CAN DO



What can Seventh-day Adventist Education do to help the Lao people? In order to understand how SDA Education can change the Lao people's lives we should look back into history. The above photo was taken in 1958 at an SDA Church in Luang Namtha, northern Laos. Teacher Sang Nuan is teaching 12 Hmong boys how to read and write for the first time in their lives. These boys were recruited from the villages by Pastor Dick Hall in an attempt to help them learn how to read and write. And their teacher, Sang Nuan, was not even a Seventh-day Adventist.

You see, when the Halls arrived in Luang Namtha, northern Laos, in 1957 they did not speak the Local language. How could they share the gospel with the people? They went up to the villages with a translator and offered education to young boys who never saw a book in their lives. Education was not attractive to the people since they did not see the need for it. All they needed was able bodies to help cultivate the land. Providentially, pastor Dick Hall was able to persuade 12 young boys to come to their school. He then hired a Lao teacher and she began teaching them how to read and write.

The Halls toiled for only 3.5 years and the Indochina War forced them to evacuate. They left behind their very young-in-faith members like sheep without a shepherd. Who would have imagined that the very short time these boys were exposed to the SDA education and the love and care of the Halls they would later have achieved high positions in life.

One of the 12 boys, later continued his study in Thailand and later became the first Lao SDA church pastor. And in 1969 he built the first SDA Church of Laos at Nam Yawn Village, near Houay Say, Bokeo Province. He also became the first Hmong missionary who brought the gospel message to the Hmong people in Thailand. This

*"Train up a child in the way  
he should go, and when he  
is old he will not depart  
from it."*

*(Proverbs 22:6, NKJV)*

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In this photo there are a university president, a registrar, a nurse, a mission president, and teachers

boy is Pastor Nhou (pictured below).



Pastor Nhou pastored this church until 1973 when he too was forced to leave the country and took residence in Thailand.

Although losing that little school in Luang Namtha the Halls and Pastor Mun Lansri (the then translator to the Halls) did not give up, but brought their classroom over to the border town of Chiang Khong, Thailand. Among their first batch of students

came marvellous results. I have personally met and had the privilege in working alongside with these people. At least, one who came out of that little school, later became a nurse and a university president. Another also later became a very successful teacher, pastor, and even mission president. Yet another person from that little school later became a registrar of the university I served, too. Others later became teachers and workers for the Adventist Mission in Thailand and Laos.

As of now, there is no SDA school in Laos. God willing, we hope to establish the first Adventist school in Laos real soon. A 24 hectare piece of land has been purchased at the cost of \$150,000 (pictured below), and we still owe \$50,000.



The Living Water Academy land near Vientiane, Laos

Just imagine what a full school with committed Adventist teachers can do to the future of young Lao students. If a one classroom school with a non-Adventist teacher and 12 students could make such a difference in the work of God's church in Thailand and Laos, just imagine a full school with committed Adventist teachers can do. Coupled with spiritual enrichment during worship ser-





A worship service at the Halls' house church in Luang Namtha circa 1959

vices, even though it was only 3.5 years that the Halls spent preaching the gospel in Laos it was enough to keep the Adventist faith alive until the resumption of the Adventist work in 1990s. More than 30 years without a shepherd, yet the young sheep were able to survive. That is what Adventist education able to do to the young boys who had come to study under the guidance of Pastor Dick Hall then.

After nearly four decades of exile the Adventist message came back to Laos again. This time, everything had to begin from scratch again. We thank God when a young man, by the name of Bounprany Vannady, accepted Jesus in Vientiane and was sent to study theology at Mission College, Thailand. A new beginning occurred after he graduated and came back to Laos to lead the church as its president in 2016. For several years he was the only college graduate SDA pastor in Laos.



Pastor Bounprany presented a bible to a Buddhist monk

Later, we see the Adventist education continues to change and produce more young Lao people to serve God in Laos. If it were

not the Adventist education there wouldn't be any Lao pastors serving in Laos today. But, as of now, there are 10 college graduate pastors serving in Laos and 8 more are being trained.

"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6, NKJV). However, according to the wisdom of the Lord it is best to train up people when they are still very young. For this reason, there is a real and urgent need to establish a Lao Adventist Academy in Laos. The Lao Attached Field (LAF) has purchased a piece of land (above picture). It has begun to develop it by making a 6 m wide road into it. The length of the road is 900 metres.



6x900 m access road to Lao Adventist Academy

This school will take a model after Mrs Ellen G White's counsel. That means it will include a vocational and missionary training school, agriculture, farming, and animal husbandry. We cannot do it alone. We need your support. You can support us with prayers or provide scholarships for our young people to go and study to become teachers at our school or volunteer yourself to come and help us. Thank you and God bless.



# BUILDING GOD'S HOUSES IN LAOS



The Namthouam SDA Church, Nam Bark District, Luang Prabang, dedicated to the Lord on 25 March 2017

In 2017, Lao Attached Field undergoes construction of 6 churches in Laos. Above is **(1) the Namthouam church** which was begun the construction in December 2016 and finished in February 2017. We would like to thank our generous donors from Canada who also visited and gave their blessing to the church on the opening ceremony, too. A church like this costs around USD15,000 to build. The Namthouam church is for our Hmong believers.

## 2. Na Ang Church, Chomphet District, Luang Prabang



Commissioned in January 2017 and funded by a generous donor from California, this church is for the Khmu believers. Currently, there are 31 families and almost 200 people waiting to move in to worship in there. My fear is that by the time it is completed it will be fully packed again.



Therefore, the plan is to purchase the piece of land in front of the current church building for further expansion. LAF has already purchased a piece of land 12x15 m by the side of the church to build a kitchen and dinning hall for church members during fellowship lunch. This church will also serve as a mother church for 5 other house churches in nearby villages. LAF wishes to thank our friend in California who has sacrificed his personal money to advance the kingdom of God in Laos by building this church.

## 3. Na Ouan Church, Luang Prabang District

This is a 'wedding ring' church! It is called a wedding ring church because a couple had decided to swap their wedding rings with this church. Instead of buying wedding rings and receiving wedding gifts they asked their family and friends to give towards the construction of this church. And they were able to raise \$15,000 for this church.





The Na Ouan church is for Hmong believers. It sits on the road to the famous Kuang Si Waterfalls at km 14 and is a stopover for tourists going to the waterfalls. The photos were taken on March 11 when Pacific Islands mission presidents visited and also added their blessings to the church in a special prayer.



20 South Pacific Islands union/mission presidents visit Na Ouan

#### 4. Jiang Say Church, Ba Chiang District, Champasak



Jiang Say church is the first SDA church for the Ya Hern or Nyahon tribe of southern Laos. According to the Joshua Project there is still no known Christian among the Nyahon tribe. However, the Adventist Church is about to finish its first church building for this special tribe.

The church is built on the land donated by the late pastor Kham-pasong Khammuenlook and his wife. Both of them have since passed away, leaving behind 9 daughters. The church is just 12 km from Pakse City Center and just less than 1 km from the main highway. LAF will also build a pastor's residence and a language classroom at this property to aid the preaching of the gospel among the Nyahon people. Please pray for us as we take the gospel to the Nyahon people and other tribes in Laos.

#### 5. Wat Luang Church, Pak Song District, Champasak



Wat Luang Church is the first SDA church for the Ta Oy tribe of southern Laos. As I am writing this story, the Adventist church is in the process of purchasing a piece of land, 30x50 m with the access road of 6x70 m, on this hill. Our treasurer, Elder Saisana, is probably sitting next to the land owner bargaining for the right price at the moment.

This church grows despite insults and persecutions. Its leader and members have endured a lot of threats, insults, and persecutions. We thank God for a donor in Portland, USA, who gave towards to purchasing and building of this church. However, we still need more funds to complete this church. Please remember us in your prayers.

#### 6. Jutsun or Pakse City Church, Champasak



This church was built by donations from Adventist Southeast Asia Projects (ASAP) in early 2000s. Later, it was forced to close its doors to worshippers in 2007. Since then, this church has been empty and its members disappeared.

In order to revive this church LAF plans to build a language school by renovating the ground floor into 4 classrooms. We will also have to purchase additional land at the back and on the side to build a toilet block for students and an apartment for teachers. The land by the side of the church is for future development. We plan to build a 3 storey school building with carpark at the ground floor.

This church is for the people of Pakse City, who are mainly Buddhists. Pakse is a growing city with economic and strategic significance. The SDA church in Pakse is situated within 1 km of Pakse National University which has thousands of students ready to hear the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ. Please pray for us. Thank you.



# PACIFIC ISLAND PRESIDENTS VISIT LAOS



Pacific Islands union/mission presidents came to visit Laos between 9 and 14 March 2017. Led by Pastor Leigh Rice, South Pacific Division Discipleship director, 20 union and mission presidents throughout the South Pacific Islands came to visit Laos for the first time ever in the history of the Lao church.

Laos, once an unknown country to the Pacific Island nations, now has a special place in the hearts of these presidents. This visit took them to Luang Prabang, the UNESCO World Heritage City, and Xieng Khouang, the birth place of Lao ancestors. Taking photos with the stone jars, containers of our ancestral bones, there were much to learn from them. Some presidents even claimed to have rare opportunities of interviewing our ancestors in those stone jars. They will no longer be the same after visiting the Plain of Jars for sure. What tools did they use to carve the rocks into stone jars that weigh several tons and how did they transport them from the nearby mountains 30 km away to this plain? The presidents still could not tell even after the interviews with our ancestors. Or they had no interviews, I think.

The highlight, however, was not the visit to the Plain of Jars, but rather a visit to Namthip Savan language Centre that left deep scars of memory in the hearts of these presidents. You see, Laos ranks number 24 on the World Watch List of Persecution of Christians. Xieng Khouang used to be one of the most restricted provinces. Not any more. Since December 2014 LAF sent in a local missionary couple to establish a language center in Xieng Khouang. Within two years they were able to make friends with the locals and through their language school many souls have been added to the Kingdom of God.

The Pacific Islands presidents returned home with many unimaginable impressions. They made a history—that is worth recording—that once upon a time 20 presidents from the South Pacific Islands came to visit Laos. Lao Attached Field feels honoured with their visit. Most importantly Laos was blessed and will be blessed even more with their prayers and support. Thank you for coming to visit us in Laos. God bless you all.



Presidents pose for a group photo with our missionary couple



Presidents singing at church service in Luang Prabang



On the way back, one president had a severe knee problem and was in terrible pain while sitting. So God had to send them another bus with sleeping berths. And you can judge for yourself how happy these presidents were with this sleeping bus. Wow!!!!