



April 1, 2016

Dear friends,

We greet you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. It has been a very busy year for us in Thailand and also back in Calgary where we call home. We thank God for His grace and mercy to give us strength to continue this ministry. We would like to thank our partner congregations for your prayers and support, including First Mennonite Church of Saskatoon, Carman Mennonite Church of Manitoba, Mennonite Women Canada, and our home congregation Trinity Mennonite Church of Calgary, our brothers and sisters at the Lao Mennonite Conference churches, as well as our friends and family.

Last year, in partnership with two local families, we started Menno Nursery, an income generation ministry in a different neighborhood. We have now closed that first nursery location and moved most of the supplies and materials to the church where we continue to provide a nursery service in our church neighborhood. Now other families have joined us and we plan to start Menno Nursery again here at the church.



During February 13-28, 2016 we hosted a learning tour of 10 people, eight from our home church and two from BC. Lead by Hugo and Doreen Neufeld, there was also Kim Froese, Rose Krahn, Peter and Irene Kroger, Paul and Vila Phomsouvanh, and Ernie and Erna Wedel, Doreen's sister and brother in-law from BC. The team

did not do as much physical work as anticipated, but they were a real encouragement and gave us much wisdom and knowledge. Ernie especially gave us many tips on building construction and agriculture. We took the team into Laos to visit with the local believers in Muang Pin, Savannakhet Province. After that we went south to the city of Pakse to tour a water filter factory being done by Eastern Mennonite Mission. On the way out we went to the village where Tom was born on the west side of MeKong River across from the busy city of Pakse. Back in Thailand we took the team to a village south west of Khon Kaen in the province of Korat to fellowship with the house church for which the team had raised funds to help with a building construction project. There we met with the head of the



village and got permission to walk through the village visiting and praying for people. We also had a time of worship with them and were all blessed by the different style of worship. We saw a piece of land which we hope God will give to us to build Menno Camp for Maliwan Mennonite Church in Khon Kaen. We also took the team to visit a brand new Asian Hmong Bible Seminary in Udo Thani Province. It was a very good experience for us to host such a team as this. We learned many things along the way including getting across the border with a large group of people, eating together, visiting, and sometimes I had to make an executive decision on what to do or what kind of place to eat. We give thanks to our Lord for traveling mercy, and many good things during this trip. Except for a few stomach problems, the tour participants said it was a good learning tour. "Praise the Lord, For His mercy endures forever." 2 Chronicles 20:21 b and c.

Please pray for us as we will continue to build relationships with the Thai Isaan people in order to establish a strong church community, make disciples, and help people with income generation. Many people here focus on teaching their children to sing the national anthem, to praise the head of the state, and to practice religious chanting. Please pray for us as we teach to praise God and build a strong community of faith.

Beginning in April we will have six children, ranging from three to five years old coming to live at our Menno Nursery at our church. Please pray for a smooth transition. Pray for the two families who live with us also at the church to have patience with the kids as they will do this ministry with us. Please pray for our teacher and also childcare worker who is our Thai pastor's daughter. She will look after, and teach the children while we are in Canada for our Canadian Ministry. Her name is Gee. Pray for our ministry team, including, Amp and Naming, Benz, Toul, and Mrs. Mali who owned the church property and supports this work. And please pray for us as we are getting ready to come back to Canada in the beginning of May.

Since we came to Khon Kaen, four people have been baptized here in Maliwan church. One couple and two ladies. Their name are Grit and Na, Pi Toon, and Auntie Chavee. About 45 people (35 adults and 10 children) come to our church each week. In our second term we hope that Menno Nursery will be open and fully functioning at our church location. Our next big thing came to us as a surprise from the Lord. It is a water bottle business. A family who is now living and working with us at the church owned a piece of land about half an





hour from the city that has plenty of water. We are looking at developing a water bottle company as an income generation ministry for members of the church and the neighborhood. While our main goal is to make disciples and spread the good news, we also invited our partner churches and our friends who have expertise in this field, to invest with us either with finances or other practical assistance. We hope this kind of business project will be a blessing to people here, and maybe an opportunity to build relationships between Thailand and Canada as well.

“And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.” Mathew 24:14. Please pray with us that all the people living in Thailand and Canada will have the opportunity to experience the good news.

We are very thankful for what God is doing through this ministry here in Thailand. And again thank you to everyone for partnering with our family. Please note our Email address and web site below if you want to be in touch. We would love to hear from you.

May the Lord richly bless you and your family,

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom & Christine Poovong', written in a cursive style.

Tom & Christine Poovong

Witness Workers in Thailand

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