

Reflections from Bangkok

Please pray for:

- The future of the work in my slum. Once I leave, Christy will need a roommate in order to continue living and serving there. Please pray that one of the women considering joining our team would feel excited to invest in this community that is dear to both our hearts.
- My health as my heart arrhythmia has been flaring up recently and made it hard to do much.
- The beginning of a Bible study or worship gathering with Yut and others.

By Sara Stephens

May 2009

On the hottest day of the year, leaders pull off a successful event

Women in Phothong have put on activities for their kids in the past, but as far as I know this was the most thought-out and best attended event in the community. They decided on a goal (an activity for kids over summer break that is both fun and educational), determined important qualities for success (a ratio of 1 adult to 6 kids, clear rules, using English in some way, well-publicized within the community, etc.), and delegated among themselves who would do or contribute what.

On April 5, even though it was over 100 degrees for most of the day, women in Phothong led an all-day event for the kids. In the morning were games and English-learning activities for the 3 to 5 year-olds, and in the afternoon was a drug-awareness event for 6 to 12 year-olds. Christy and I played supporting roles, but the primary leadership and materials came from

within the community.

There were games, lessons about the effects of drugs on the body, a skit about different ways to say “no” to drugs, and ice cream at the end. They had to make some adjustments due to the heat (most of the afternoon activities we moved outside and altered a bit) but the day was declared a success. Women are growing in their ability to plan and work together, seeing the potential impact they can make as a team.

Gop leading activities for the younger kids



Seeds planted for youth development activities, evangelistic Bible study in Phothong

In February and March, my teammate Resty led an English program with a handful of teenagers in our community. These weekly meetings and the celebration at the end helped us build closer relationships with these youth and their parents. Two of the kids, Joy and Seng, will be a part of our foundation’s youth development

program and we look forward to more opportunities of investing in them to be youth leaders within the community.

I have continued to spend time with Yut and she is still seeking after Jesus. She frequently comes to my house to ask questions and learn about God. One day she even asked us, “when are you guys going to plant a church here?” saying she would come if we had one. We decided we’ll start meeting together more formally, studying Scripture together and hopefully if others want to join, growing into a worship gathering. Yut has just recently started a new job with inconsistent time off, but once she has a regular day off we will begin meeting regularly on that day. Pray for the Holy Spirit to move in these times!



English lessons for some of the teenagers in our slum

May 2009

Continuing the work of missions from California

This fall will mark the end of my five-year term in Bangkok, and I will move back to the States. After taking a few months to rest and reconnect with family, friends and churches, I will move down to the Los Angeles area to continue working with Servant Partners from there.



Though I feel called back to America, I have not lost my

A picture taken recently of me in my bedroom, by members of InterVarsity's 2100 team

passion to work for the poor and against poverty. For this next season in my life I am excited to continue supporting SP's work among the poor internationally, and to also continue living and serving incarnationally among the poor in Pomona, CA.

My new role, beginning in February, will involve:

- Helping to prepare and train future missionaries to the urban poor before they leave for the field
- Administrative assistance for our executive director
- Roles within the communications department such as publishing our bi-monthly international staff newsletter
- Community organizing work alongside a church ministering in Pomona, a lower-income part of East LA

Pray for increased partnership in my next chapter of service!

In my new role I will continue to rely on a team of supporters for my living and ministry expenses. In many ways I will still be a missionary, reaching out to my Latino neighbors, as well as helping to send new workers internationally. Because Bangkok is a very inexpensive place to live, my budget has been quite small; I will need to more than double my support level in order to serve in Pomona.

I have appreciated those of you who have supported me financially and through prayer these past 5 years. Pray that God would provide for me, and please consider whether he might be leading you to be a part of this. Please also feel

free to pass this newsletter along to anyone you know who may be interested in supporting this kind of ministry. Thanks so much!

Below is my new monthly budget:

Personal— salary (before taxes), health insurance, retirement = \$2,267

Ministry expense account— transportation, materials, trainings/conferences = \$205

SP administration (12%) and taxes = \$554

TOTAL= \$3,052/mo.

CURRENT SUPPORT= \$1,342/mo.

TOTAL STILL NEEDED = \$1,710/mo.

Please pray for:

- The youth development program starting in our foundation, that youth leaders would be raised up and excited to serve their communities.
- Three new young adult interns from our church network: Yuey, Mo and Dtam. Pray that this will be a year of character growth and fruitful ministry.

To Donate: If you'd like to give once or monthly, please visit <http://servantpartners.org/give.php> or send a check to:

Servant Partners
1550 E. Elizabeth St., Suite U-12A
Pasadena, CA 91104

Please make the check out to Servant Partners and indicate my name in the memo line. Thanks!

Coming up:

- Our team will take a contemplative retreat together, led by my teammate Michelle and myself, June 3-6 in the River Kwai area of Thailand.

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