

MISSIONS 2010

History

As many here at RiverCity would be aware, as a congregation we have been supporting, through our mission's giving, the Karen and Lahu tribes in South East Asia. Our contact with these tribal groups has been predominately through the Doi Saket base of Asian Tribal Ministries (ATM) and a Lahu leader called Ps Yawla who works with the Pentecostal Assemblies of Tribes (PAOT).

The Karen.

A.T.M. predominately works with this people group, providing Bible training as well as every day education and skills to students at their base in Doi Saket, some 30 kms. outside of Chiang Mai in Northern Thailand. It also gives relief to the Karen inside Burma known as Internally Displaced People (IDP); these are people who have escaped from the Burmese after their villages have been destroyed, but cannot cross into the Thailand refugee camps so they have to remain inside Burma. Over the years we have been able to provide funds to assist in the purchase of tarps for temporary shelter, food, basic medicines, mosquito nets etc.. In more recent years A.T.M. was assisted in establishing orphanages for the children who have been left without parents through their Children of the Border fund, another area we regularly support.

The Lahu.

The work of PAOT through Ps Yawla mainly centre's on evangelism both in Thailand and the surrounding countries. They regularly send teams into Cambodia, Vietnam, Burma, and Laos. Through PAOT we also support the training of pastors inside of China; in recent times we have been able to help PAOT establish some self sufficiency projects such as coffee growing, fish farming and pig raising. PAOT also is involved in building orphanages and other care facilities for people at risk.



Lahu Orphanage being built →



← Rescued girls shelter



Lahu Baptism



Candidates on Thai/
Burmese river being
baptised.



Lahu congregation at
baptism service.

OUR RECENT TRIP APRIL 5TH TO APRIL 17TH.

Our recent trip to Thailand involved working alongside ATM and PAOT. The following points highlight some of the activities we were involved with in the 10 days we were in Thailand:

- 🌀 We visited the orphanage being built on the Lahu site that will care for up to 20 Lahu children who have lost their parents through disease, war and divorce (many parents when they remarry refuse to care for children from a previous relationship and so the children end up as orphans).
- 🌀 This is under the supervision of Ps Yawla. We were able to contribute another AUD\$2000 toward the completion of this building. It needs a further AUD\$1500 to finish the structure.
- 🌀 Ps Yawla also took us to the site where he is building a refuge for the girls who have been rescued from prostitution. This is on a beautiful piece of land and will provide the much needed protection these girls require and give them an opportunity to be healed from the abuse inflicted on them. We were able to provide a further AUD\$1000 toward the building costs but much more is needed. We will be raiding our account in the next week to see this project finished and put to use.
- 🌀 From Thursday night, to Friday and Saturday we were involved in preaching and teaching at the pastor/leaders' conference at ATM.
- 🌀 Sunday ordination and leadership transfer service at ATM. We ordained 15 tribal pastors who had completed their Bible training and were involved in planting churches among their people. Included in this group were Karena and Angela, who work at the Doi Saket base. Karena was also officially appointed the base director at Doi Saket, with Angela set aside as her assistant. This means that Karena has taken full charge of Doi Saket and is responsible for the staff as they train and equip the students, the future development of the base, as well as the associated outreach ministries and programmes the students are involved in (church planting, Children of the Border ...).
- 🌀 Doi Saket Base planning meeting – developing a Master Plan for the base site. This has been an area neglected for many years so it was a thrill to be involved in hearing the vision Karena has for Doi Saket and be a part of that planning process. We will hear more of this in the near future.
- 🌀 We were able to contribute AUD\$2000 to the Doi Saket base for their bible training work among the Karen students.

- 🌀 Andrew and Tim travelled to Mae Sot (Thai/Burmese border) for a few days to visit orphanages and refugee camps on Thai side. They were able to bless many children with the toys they bought.
- 🌀 Recycling business – another reason for our trip was to check out the possibility of establishing a business that would be able to fund some of the ministries we have currently been supporting. So while the ‘boys’ were away I (Ps Peter) was able to meet with Ps Yawla and one of his congregational members who has been involved in some recycling to discuss the potential of such a venture. I was also able to have discussions with a Christian business man who has established similar businesses in the past. All parties are currently pursuing what area/s in recycling would be worthwhile pursuing. Please keep this in your prayers as it would be a wonderful way to generate income for the workers as well as fund other projects.
- 🌀 Finally, we had some time talking with Ps Timothy, which was again rewarding. His focus remains resolutely on the Karen State inside Burma, working for the peace and security of the Karen people. For this reason alone it was necessary for him to hand the leadership of the ATM base over to Karenni, his daughter. Timothy and Rebecca now will take on a supportive role for Karenni as she works to fulfill the vision the Doi Saket base was established on. For Ps Timothy his is tiring and difficult work as he deals with a military junta that cannot be trusted even to keep the promises they make. Despite this, significant progress has been made within the Karen State; also United Nations officials have come alongside as well as a number of embassies who want to work alongside the Peace Council.
- 🌀 As a team we were blessed one night to have dinner with the leadership of the Peace Council for the Karen, as well as the delegate from the Kachin tribal group, a Colonel James. These are godly older men who value prayer and the Word of God. Remember them in your prayers along with Timothy as they stand up for righteousness and peace for their people.

THANK YOU

Thank you to all those who prayed for us while we were away. We believe we fulfilled the objectives of this trip and are looking forward to seeing what the Lord will do over the next few months in the areas He has called us to support. Thank you too to those who have faithfully given to mission work in Thailand over the years, and particularly toward this trip.

GIVING TO MISSIONS “JERUSALEM TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH”.

Churches are only able to operate through the giving of the people who attend them. We do this through our tithes and offerings. Your giving pays for staff, building costs, running costs, equipment, events etc. For this reason the Scriptures encourage us to be systematic in our giving, bringing it on “the first day of the week”. In other words God expects us to be giving people. This specific area in our giving is our “Jerusalem” that is referred to in the Great Commission (Acts 1:8). We still must minister by giving into the “ends of the earth”.

When we give to missions we are giving into “the ends of the earth”.

Many people spend well in excess of \$10 a week on coffees, going to the movies, or out to dinner so it would be difficult to defend the argument we have nothing extra to give when speaking to the Lord – it really is a matter of priority. The secret to giving is to do it regularly, to be consistent in your giving, rather than trying to come up with one big offering – most of us would not be in a position to give a \$500 in one offering, yet by putting aside the amount of \$10 per week towards missions you will have given \$520 in one year; increase that to \$20 per week adds up to \$1040. In this way orphanages can be built and homes for girls at risk can be run. This is what makes Christianity real, not just to others, but also for us.

If you haven't got a mission's collection pot then ask for one today and make a commitment in your giving.

Remember, a snow flake on its own seems pretty insignificant, but get enough of them together and they can stop traffic.