

Nobleford Christian Reformed Church

newsletter ~ March 1, 2024

Greetings from Faye Yu,

Please thank the church for the thoughtful Christmas card. It is so encouraging. I moved to Lao mid November. I was able to go back to the US for Christmas with the family, and now I am back in Laos. For the next 5 months I will be based in northern Laos- in a town called Muang Mai. I can walk from one end of town to the other in 10 minutes. This area is very close to China and Vietnam (30km away). It is one of the poorest areas in Laos with trafficking and drug usage increasing.

Update:

1. I moved up in the northern province about 3 weeks ago. We had a few days to set up my room in the guesthouse (this is where I will live for the next few months). Then we had a week of training with the staff and then went into the villages for 4 days of data collection. The 5- year project will be ending in June, so we needed to do a final evaluation to understand the impact of the project, areas that were the most helpful to the community and areas for improvement. We needed to assess the status of each village and whether or not those villages are at a point where they can continue to improve on their own or if they will need further assistance. This information will help us develop the proposal for the next five years. **(Pray for that we will be able to develop a good plan and proposal for the next phase of the project (this is what I will be focused on the next few months). Pray that the Government will approve of the plan and allow us to continue to work in these communities). There are still many activities that need to be done to finish this current phase. I think the staff are tired. Please pray that their work will proceed smoothly.)**
2. Pictures of some of the villages that we stayed at. Because it took over 2+ hours to get here, it is not possible to drive back to a place with a guesthouses. We slept in the homes of the people in the community. We brought some food to cook and share with the host families. The host family also shared their food with us. Almost every night we slept in a different village because during the day we conducted interviews and collected data. We stayed in 3 different villages and each village was a different people group. Some of them spoke Lao, many could only speak their local language. This made the interviews a bit more challenging. While walking through the village (Transect walk), I noticed lots of deforestation and bare ground. Since many of these villages are build on the side of a hill, during the rain season, run-offs and mudslides will become more and more of a problem.



3. My knee is swollen again. There is fluid in my left knee which makes walking more difficult. I had to come back to the capital Vientiane to get medical care. **Please pray that the physios will be able to identify what is causing the swelling and help me to recover quickly. There is so much to do up north and being away is a problem.**
4. **Please pray that we will identify a good translator for me.** Only one person up north speaks English. The other staff do not. If I don't have a good translator, it will be hard to work with the team up north. Since it is a remote area, it has been hard to find someone with good enough English willing to work up north. A Lao person who speaks English can easily get a good job with good pay and they don't need to work in remote areas.

We are not sure if the Government will approve the next project. We don't know if they will tell us to move to another district. Drug abuse continues to be a huge challenge for the communities. Opium is grown in this area (Golden Triangle). Meth is very cheap. Some women have started to take Meth because they have so much work to do to support the family, and they take Meth to stay awake and have the energy to work. The people really struggle here. So pray for them. The staff work in very challenging situations, spend days sleeping in the villages and traveling hours on motorbikes to get there. There is so much need.

I really do appreciate your prayers. Please thank the church for me.

hugs, Faye

World Renew

Thank you for Walking Alongside World Renew - Thank you for joining World Renew and Canadian Foodgrains Bank's mission to end global hunger. Through your gifts, you extend Christ's hope and love to vulnerable families in food crisis in countries where World Renew works around the world. If you would like to learn more about how World Renew is answering God's call for justice and mercy, please visit: worldrenew.ca

ReFrame Ministries

Kids Corner: Living a Holy Life - Check out this week's kids' devotion at www.kidscorner.net. Have you ever wanted to do something that you knew wasn't right? We all wrestle with sin, but we need to take personal responsibility. We can't blame Satan for our poor behavior (Ephesians 6:11-17). Check out all the great content at kidscorner.net, like KC's Lent and Easter Collection.

Groundwork: The Shame Of The Cross - As we seek to comprehend the fullness of Jesus' sacrifice, we need to revisit the shame of the cross. Join Groundwork as we study Isaiah 53:1-3, Philippians 2:5-8, Genesis 2:25, Genesis 3:7-10, Hebrews 12:1-3, and 1 Peter 2:4-6 to examine the relationship between sin and shame and unpack why Jesus' experience of shame was necessary for our salvation. Listen now at GroundworkOnline.com and subscribe to Groundwork's weekly emails for future episodes.

Thrive

Thrive Faith Formation Tip - Most of us are not naturally good listeners, and that can affect our relationship with God. Practice "listening prayer" this week. Find a quiet spot, calm your mind, and invite God to speak to your heart. Learn more at crcna.org/FaithPracticesProject

Calvin University

Festival of Faith And Writing - The Calvin Center for Faith and Writing invites you to attend the Festival of Faith & Writing, April 11-13, on the campus of Calvin University. The Festival features over 70 speakers, including plenary speakers Anthony Doerr, Yaa Gyasi, and Tracy K. Smith. Visit our website to see our full roster of fabulous speakers, purchase tickets, or to learn more. Questions? Reach out to ccfw@calvin.edu.

Other

ART in Orvieto - Join the Institute for Christian Studies in Italy for their summer residency, ART in Orvieto! ART in Orvieto is an advanced summer studies program in art, religion, and theology located in Orvieto, Italy - a magnificent hill town 90 minutes north of Rome. The program offers an ecumenical exploration of Christian understandings of the arts through a three-week residency designed for practicing artists, art teachers, graduate students, and other adult learners interested in engaging the intersection of art, religion, and theology. Financial aid is also available for graduate students, K-12 school teachers, and professional artists. Visit icscanada.edu/art-in-orvieto to learn more, or email recruitment-coordinator@icscanada.edu to learn more - applications are due March 31, 2024 so don't delay!