

December 5th, 2024

Dear Praying Friends,

Baptism Service

Several weeks ago, we baptized 7 new converts. It is always a blessing to see people desiring to follow the Lord in obedience! Because I know that many of you pray for specific names mentioned in our letters, I wanted to mention that among the individuals who were baptized were the two ladies I talked about in our last prayer letter (Ming Samun and Nana). We also had two other adult ladies baptized who were both brought to church and led to Christ by our church members. Then in addition we had 3 children baptized (one the half-sister of one of our members, a boy whose mother is a church member, and a boy whose grandmother is a church member). As always, each person's salvation story represents many hours of patient teaching of the Gospel and a variety of different people playing a role in the process. One added blessing of this baptism service was that I got to train several church members on how to teach a new convert about the next step of baptism. For a couple of them, it was their first time to ever take on that responsibility, and I pray it will only be the first of many more to come.

Faithful Men

In November we had our 5th annual Faithful Men conference, and just like the first 4 years, it was a great and challenging time with our men. For many months, we had intended to be in a larger facility by the time this year's conference rolled around, and thus we were planning to invite some new churches and we were praying for an increase in the number of attendees. As the conference dates grew closer, God had not yet led us to a bigger place and so we put off inviting the new churches for one more year; however, that did not dampen the spirit of the conference at all! We had a full building, excellent preaching, energetic singing, and encouraging fellowship. I thank God for the great spirit of cooperation and friendship among the various missionaries and national pastors who come and participate in our conference.

Updates From Previous Letter

In my last letter, I asked for prayer for two specific situations, so I want to give you an update for those who have been praying. First of all, as I mentioned in the above paragraph, we've been praying for a new and bigger facility. Although I had not mentioned this in a prayer letter, I had also recently told several of our churches in other correspondence that we were considering a church merge with another church that was in need of a pastor. That looked promising for a few weeks, but eventually it became clear that it was not going to be feasible. So God has closed that particular door, but we are still very much in need of a bigger place to meet. We have been looking and praying, but haven't found anything yet. I would like to ask you to make this a matter of prayer, and I will keep you posted when there are any changes to the situation.

Secondly, in my last letter, I asked for prayer for a course I am preparing on personal evangelism, which will be taught in another missionary's Bible institute. I previously told you that the course would be taught beginning in January; however, that course has now been postponed until the Fall. Please continue to pray for me as I prepare that course, that it will be instrumental in training God's people to bring many to Christ.

Special Prayer Request

As I close this letter, I would like to share one final prayer request. This one doesn't have to do with our ministry directly, but another good church (Mt. Calvary Baptist Church) on the outskirts of Phnom Penh. The pastor and his family have recently had to return to the US to care for the wife's mother, who has cancer. The church desires to carry on, but they desperately need a pastor. I have been filling their pulpit on Sunday nights for many months, but we are praying for a permanent pastor for them. Churches are too few and far between in this needy country to let one close down without a fight. Please pray with me about this.

We have a busy December planned, and we appreciate your prayers on our behalf. We trust each of you will enjoy a wonderful season of joy and peace as we celebrate the birth of our dear Savior.

Sincerely,

Stephen Benefield
Phnom Penh