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TRAINING LEADERS IN ASIA

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Covid-19 in Thailand



Last month was a busy month and we received the same question many times: "How can you do so much in Thailand amidst Covid-19?" We know it seems odd that we're able to gather so freely while in the United States everything is so locked down, so we wanted to explain the Covid-19 situation in Thailand to give you all a better understanding of our freedoms and restrictions.

Thailand is ranked in the top ten among the countries with the highest Covid-19 recovery index, so this means that Covid-19 is almost completely contained in Thailand and we are one of the safest countries in the entire world. We have almost no local transmissions and anyone entering Thailand has a mandatory two-week quarantine in a government hotel to ensure that anyone entering the country does not have Covid-19. This policy has benefits and drawbacks.

The benefits are that because Covid-19 is not spreading in Thailand we have freedom to gather for church, seminary work, homeschool co-op, and youth events. The government still requires masks to be worn, temperatures to be taken, and our names recorded before entering public buildings, but we are able to gather. This is a huge blessing because it means we are still able to minister to others in Thailand.

The drawbacks are that because Thailand is locked down tightly to ensure Covid-19 does not enter the country, Greg can't leave Thailand or he won't be able to return, hence why he can only teach classes online or within Thailand. It also doesn't look likely that we'll be able to furlough in the summer of 2021 as planned because it doesn't appear these restrictions will be lifted anytime soon.

Thank you so much for your love and care for our family! We feel very safe taking our kids with us to church and various events, and we're keeping ourselves informed as to the state of Covid-19 in Thailand and around the world. We feel so blessed to live in a country that's relatively safe during this time of pandemic.

Visa Update

Praise the Lord this month we received our 1-year visas! It is very difficult to get visas to enter Thailand in the midst of the global pandemic, so receiving our visas is a huge gift from God that we do not take for granted. Thank you for praying for us and rejoicing with us over these six beautiful visas that allows us to live and serve in Thailand until at least November 2021!



"Navigating Through Fear and the Pandemic" Webinar

Online Seminar:
Navigating Through Fear
and the Pandemic

5 November 2020
7:30-9:30 pm
(Thailand Time)

Speaker:
Brandon Hirth
Professor of Counseling

Join us on Facebook Live!
<https://www.facebook.com/CornerstoneABTS/live>

Asia Biblical
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Cornerstone University

This month Greg did the behind the scenes work to make ABTS's first webinar happen! Brandon Hirth will be arriving in Chiang Mai to be ABTS's new Professor of Counseling as soon as Thailand opens its borders. In the meantime Brandon put together an excellent 1-hour presentation on "Navigating Through Fear and the Pandemic" and then answered questions the students were writing live on Facebook as he spoke. Greg was in charge of promoting the event, making sure the live feed broadcast properly, and facilitating the question and answer time behind the scenes. **Over the past month over 1500 pastors and leaders across Asia have already viewed it!** If you would like to watch Brandon's presentation, click the below link. We're grateful

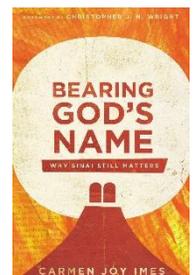
Greg was able to be part of this special time of training leaders in Asia in how to properly respond to the pandemic.

[Click here to view the webinar](#)

Book Review

Greg wrote a book review in the newest ABTS Beacon newsletter on a book he uses when teaching Old Testament class. It's a great book for anyone interested in the story and theology of the Old Testament.

[Click to Read Book Review](#)



Campfire Cookout



This month we had our 3rd annual Campfire Cookout! This event is beginning to gain a reputation in town and this year we had a record 80 teens attend! Greg grilled 180 hotdogs (all were eaten of course) and led campfire worship. Rachel helped the teens make s'mores (many were trying them for the first time). We had a fun time of games and chatting with the teens. It was a blessing to see our youth group teens connecting with other teens in the city, and our prayer is that teens who do not regularly attend youth group will see the joy of being connected with a church.

Christmas Outreaches



This Christmas we have two special projects that we're looking forward to! First, a local school for very poor children (pictured left) is in need of 40 boxes of colored pencils and we would like to bless these sweet kids with new pencils for Christmas. The children are primarily from Hill Tribes and have difficult backgrounds. Several of the fathers are incarcerated. The school provides scholarships for most of the children, but there's not very much money left for things like colored pencils. We are friends with a single mother whose daughter attends this school.

Second, a local home for children with disabilities is in need of some Christmas cheer, so we're planning to bless the 10 kids in the home with Christmas stockings filled with bubbles, play-doh, crayons, and treats.

The total cost for both of these projects will be around \$500. If you would be willing to help cover some of the costs of these special Christmas projects please send the funds via PayPal to GregVruggink@gmail.com. Thank you for partnering with us so we can bless others this Christmas!



Praises and Prayer Requests

Thank you so much for praising God with us and praying for our needs. Please email us with any prayer requests you have so that we can be praying for you as well!

- 1) Praise the Lord we received our 1-year visas this month so we can continue to live and serve in Thailand!
- 2) Praise the Lord Greg was able to help behind the scenes to make ABTS's first webinar happen on "Navigating Through Fear and the Pandemic" and that over 1500 pastors and leaders across Asia have viewed it!
- 3) Praise the Lord for two opportunities to bless children in need this Christmas! Please pray we will be able to raise the funds needed to accomplish these two projects.

Thank you so much for all of your love and support!

Greg + Rachel