

The journey from L.A. to Huay Malai village included a 14 hour flight to Shang Hai, a 4 hour layover, a delay on the airplane of about an hour, and then a 4 hour flight to Bangkok. Then, a taxi ride to the Christian Guesthouse, meeting up with Sharon's friend Pee Chee and a 6 hour drive from Bangkok to Huay Malai village. Lets just say it was quite the trip and anyone interested in attempting it should be ready for the long haul!

-Getting settled at the Kwai River Christian Hospital and our new home. When we arrived at the River Kwai Christian Hospital we were greeted by Dr. Jen and his wife Elizabeth and their three daughters. They had us over for dinner and showed us our apartment, which is right next to theirs and Dr. Jennifer and her husbands place. All of the hospital staff live directly behind or around the hospital, making the community very tight knit.

-Elizabeth took me to Thursday Market in the morning. The large open market only comes to the village on Thursdays. Elizabeth shared with me that we will go early in the morning to make sure that the meat is not sitting out in the sun too long, and to be back before the men need to get to the hospital. It is difficult to bring the kids because we walk there and need to carry all of the groceries (for the whole week) back. Dr. Jen and Elizabeth cooked our meals for us for the first two days, and then we were set loose to try things out on our own. Rachel and Ryan both cooked a meal that was edible and didn't get anyone sick...so thats a victory! haha

-We have been exploring the village, saying Hello (Sa wa dee Ka) and Thank you (Kap kun Ka), smiling, and bowing a lot

-Ryan has completed his first 4 days at the hospital. He has mostly been shadowing and getting to know how the hospital works. The doctors have had him use the chaplain for translating in order to see his own patients a few times. Ryan is hoping to eventually have his own exam room for outpatients and his own assigned inpatients to see with the chaplain. He is also praying for opportunities to share the gospel and pray with patients.

-News from Sharon--Our missionary friend Sharon was in the hospital for mnuemonia and then was called to Burma to do some ministry that could not be delayed further. So, unfortunately we will not be able to see her during our time here! This is a huge change in the plan, and Sharon shared that she feels the Lord wants her to "get out of the way" so that the Lord will make His plans known to us without her trying to do it herself. This made us a little nervous, but we are trusting that the Lord knows what he is doing and will lead the way.

-The hospital received a grant to do a bakery project. Dr. Jennifer's husband, Joe, is heading that up and brings us daily deliveries of various baked goods. The proceeds of the baked goods go toward funding the Safehouse.

- Ryan took the weekend off to spend time with us as a family. We went to the larger town down the mountain called Sangklaburi with Dr. Jennifer, Joe and the kids to get groceries and have some delicious Thai food

- Sunday Church was eye opening to see the fruit of the ministries in the village. The service was translated in Thai and Karen. There was a lot of music, which is a very important part of the culture here. The youth, young children, and adults all sang in groups, solos, and as a whole church body. It was beautiful.

-We connected with Pawlulu and her students in the afternoon on Sunday. Ryan stayed with her and her family when he was in Thailand 7 years ago. She was so happy to see him and meet us. She invited us to stay for

devotions, fellowship, and dinner with her students. She also invited Rachel to come on Monday to see the training center where they teach the students English, computers, and "management skills."

-On Sunday evening we were invited to join the missionary weekly fellowship time. This is a dinner, prayer time, devotion, and fellowship that is all in English and is specifically for the missionaries in the village to help build into and encourage them. It was great to make more connections and meet some of the teachers who invited me to come see their classes during the week.

-I was able to go meet some of the students at two different English classes. One of the missionaries, Beth, and Pawlulu asked that I come 4 days a week to assist teaching the evening classes. I will start that tonight. Right now there isn't much structure for the younger students. I am going to try to teach English in the context of children's Bible stories. Please keep that in your prayers!

Other Potential ministry opportunities/projects:

- making bean bags for babies in the incubator
- talking to Pawlulu about opportunities to serve at the Safehouse
- helping with "orphanage" children who we hear singing at night

Prayer Requests:

- For Ryan to gain the trust of the doctors here so he can see patients independently with a translator rather than shadowing only
- Opportunities for Ryan to share the gospel or pray with patients
- That we would be an encouragement to Dr. Jen and Dr. Jennifer and their families who have both recently moved here for fulltime longterm ministry
- For the Lord to open up opportunities for fellowship, ministry, and outreach for Rachel
- For Abigail and Daniel to continue to adjust to the time change, difference in culture, difference in food, and the heat

More to come later--

much love!

Rachel, Ryan, Abigail and Daniel

Pictures from Thailand Week 1



Abigail with our driver Pee Chee when we stopped for lunch on our drive from Bangkok to Huay Malai



Waterfall at our lunch stop on the way to Huay Malai



Delicious chicken and sticky rice--our first meal in Thailand



The views were beautiful on our drive!



There is a large lake at the bottom of the mountain where the village is. The lake has a community of people that live in huts on the water (below).



The front of the hospital where Ryan is working



Abigail and Dr. Jen's daughter Zadi getting to know each other



Abigail sitting with the children at church on Sunday



The main street in Huay Malai



The children from the village sang at church



Church



Riding in a sidecar to visit with Pawlulu and her students



Pawlulu and her daughter. Pawlulu and her husband Nando started the Safehouse which takes in refugees who need extra help with self-care and rehabilitation. She is involved in many areas of ministry and outreach to the Karen people.



Pawlulu invited us to stay to fellowship and have dinner with her and the students after a time of sharing from the pastor. This was our first Karen meal.



Tu Lu Wah runs the girls home which is a shelter for Karen women and their children. She offered to hold Daniel so we could eat!



Abigail and Daniel with new friends from the village



Every Sunday evening, the missionaries in the village get together to fellowship, pray, and do devotions in English. The group currently includes the doctors from the hospital, and teachers from the Christian school and Calvary Chapel training center as well as their families



Dr. Jen's three daughters, Dr. Jennifer's son, and Abigail. All the missionary children hanging out together during fellowship time!



The training center. Rachel had the opportunity to meet two groups of students who are learning English at the center. They practiced introducing themselves and

sharing about their interests. Most of the students shared that they were from Karen State in Myanmar, and are currently living in the nearby refugee camp. Rachel is hoping to meet with this group regularly during our stay.