

BORDER NEWS BORDER NEWS

NEWS FROM THE CHRIST CHURCH BORDER KAREN MINISTRY



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Thank you

We would like to wish our sponsors and friends of Karen Ministry a very happy Christmas and a blessed New Year!!!



We need your help!!!



The effect of COVID has left us with much less donations coming in. Furthermore, we are experiencing a rise in prices, and we are desperately short of funds!!! We are struggling to reach the levels of funds we had pre virus. Your contribution really matters to us. Every single donation counts!!!



Karen Visit: Reflection from the vicar of Christ Church Bangkok

Christ Church Bangkok has been actively supporting Christian ministry to the Karen people for over thirty years. So what a joy and privilege it was to travel to north west Thailand, very close to the border with Myanmar, several months ago, in order to visit both the Noh Bo Academy and the Mae La Refugee camp. It was so good to join with the 200 Karen students and staff at Noh Bo for a time of celebration. The singing, the worship and the preaching of the Word, all combined together for a joyful event, as we together gave God all the glory for His faithfulness and for what He has done. It was also a real delight to meet many of the 200 students and staff, and to see the great work that is being done.

Additionally, we were able to go into the Mae La Refugee Camp, the largest Karen refugee camp in Thailand, which is home to over 50,000 Karen people. We visited the three Christian kindergartens and the Christian orphanage that the church support there. The staff expressed their deep gratitude for the support that they had received, which had enabled these ministries to continue. A number of other such groups in the camp had to close during the pandemic and no longer function, but due to the faithfulness of those who have given, the Christian kindergartens and orphanage are continuing to thrive.

It was inspiring to see at first hand the impact that resourcing, praying and financially supporting these wonderful Karen people was having. It is making a significant impact on a people group that are marginalised, forgotten, isolated and who often have few friends. As it says in Proverbs 14:31, 'Whoever oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honours God.' Thank you for the way you have shown kindness to the needy and so honoured God.

Matthew Fitter
Vicar Christ Church Bangkok



Football : The students are practicing hard for the upcoming football tournament :



CCB KAREN MINISTRY MISSION

“To provide spiritual and practical support working towards a greater degree of self-reliance to the Karen community living in the Thai- Myanmar borders”

A Memorial Concert to Remember..... Held on the 8th of October 2022

Bangkok Music Society in collaboration with Christ Church Bangkok, raised funds for the Karen Ministry

It all fell into place accidentally as a fitting memorial. The sorrowful notes of a much-loved requiem, the grand, optimistic chords of a Milton ode on 'Life after death' set to music and a finishing hymn that raises the question and belief about all our futures when our time comes.

The Bangkok Music Society Choir had recently appointed a new music director, Margaret Young, from Lancashire in northern England. Reconvening from the long hiatus caused by the pandemic, those who remained in the choir called upon other choristers, whoever they were and wherever they came from, to "Come & Sing" for one half day – a three-hour rehearsal followed by the full performance. The main work was to be the introspective Requiem by Gabriel Fauré, followed by the more prospective promise of 'Heaven's Joy' (Blest Pair of Sirens), a regal-like chorale by the 19th Century British composer, Hubert Parry, who also set to music William Blake's poem, 'Jerusalem', (aka 'Heaven') that ended our concert. We ideally needed to use the pipe organ at Christ Church to make this music come alive.

When we at BMS heard about the death in June of our former President, Daphne Colwell (92), after a very long bedridden illness, we decided to dedicate our concert to her memory. Knowing Daphne had been a devout member of Christ Church in the past, the church willingly collaborated with us in this memorial event. Then, just one month before the concert, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II died. Both we and the church agreed to dedicate the event to her memory, as well. But only two days before the concert, we learned of the tragic massacre of 23 small children plus many others at a child-care centre in Isarn (NE Thailand). Our memorial reflected sadness in so many ways, but also hope in eventual salvation as we pursue our lives. Many present, both taking part and in our full-house audience, reflected on the true meaning of the music being performed.

Altogether nearly 60 multinational voices joined the chorus and the glorious sounds of the organ, played by BMS accompanist Morakot Cherdchoo-ngarm, complemented perfectly while Jenny Key, one of four Christ Church members joining the chorus, provided salient trumpet embellishments.

Everyone stood to join in the finale, the popular English hymn, "Jerusalem".

BMS believes we should not sing just for our own pleasure but also to spread hope and joy to others who do cannot share in the blessings we take for granted. That is why we are delighted to share this occasion to focus attention on those to whom Christ Church give ministry. A memorial concert remembers those who have passed away but we know those who gave service in their lifetime would wish that funds raised in their memory should be used where it can do the most good. Members of our choir and those who came to hear us sing have generously given their token which we are delighted to pass on, in full, to Christ Church for your work with the Karen people in remote border areas. We are so pleased that this wonderful work was illustrated in a short slideshow during our concert, enabling those people to be included in what we do.

Finally, we deeply thank the vicar, Rev. Matthew, the church committee and all administrative staff and volunteers who made us so warmly welcome and introduced us to your inspiring outreach work with the Karen people. There is absolutely no doubt that all our members, as well as the many who joined us for the day, will long remember this communal experience in your spiritual surroundings. We long for the day when we can "Come & Sing" in your church again!

Contacts: www.Bangkokmusicsociety.com



**We would like to Thank
Bangkok Music Society for
their contribution to the
Karen Ministry!!!**



Fund raising event at Noh Bo –working towards our strategic development

Target: As part of our 5-10 year strategic plan for Karen ministry, moving towards a greater sustainability, self-sufficiency and self reliance. Noh Bo was set a target to raise 20% of their total operation cost locally.

With this in mind the students together with the teachers and parents had a fund raising activity on the 12th of November 2022 between 10am -3pm. Each class with their respective teachers were responsible for different items, events and activities for the fundraiser. The students sold variety of snacks they had made such as rice noodles sticky rice and banana packed in banana leaf, local sausages, fruit juice, meat balls, other local dishes and also handmade crafts items including flower garlands. Like most funfairs there was music, singing and local games. The grand finale was the Football competition between the classes in the afternoon .

Local residents and parents were sold coupons voucher sold to use at the event and we are so proud of this initiative by the Noh Bo Students and teachers. They raised around 8000 THB including donation.



Australian AID and sustainability update!!!

The Australian Anglican Church have continued to support Noh Bo with some of the sustainability projects to enable the student to learn new skills and fundamentally promote self-reliance.



Growing vegetables!



Chicken, pigs & fish farming!



Thinking about Volunteering in Noh Bo!!! :

What's volunteering like? It can be fun, hard work, exciting, challenging, uncomfortable, stimulating, tiring, invigorating. It can encourage you to learn new skills, try different food, take you out of your comfort zone, introduce you to a whole new culture and make you re think your own, spark relationships that can last a lifetime and cause you to change the way you dress!

Is volunteering with KMB at Noh Bo like this? Yes, all these things, but much, much more because this is Christians volunteering to help at a Christian School so there is a whole other dimension to be considered. As a friend said "Cultural sensitivity is at the top of priorities if volunteers understand that what they are doing as volunteers, meets the Biblical criteria of servanthood. Identification with the people, and all that is done, needs to be done in the context of witness to Jesus' death and resurrection. It is so easy for volunteering to become good work, without a Biblical overtone, and then folk want their own cultural comforts to be part of the deal. Western volunteers may have to shed their western views of what is comfortable in order to show that they have come as volunteers to serve, not just to have a "local experience" that gives the volunteers satisfaction. As a Christian mission ALL that is done needs to be based around this. Does this sound heavy handed and dry - NO! NO! NO! If we are willing it can be an additional adventure when God leads, guides and teaches us and sticks with us throughout. When all around is different, HE never changes. Malachi 3:6 and Hebrews 13:8 both tell us this.

Is this age related do you ask? Well in the Bible, God managed to use Abraham at 99 and Samuel as a young boy, all ages in between and a few older and younger. Because he is always consistent and trustworthy (as above), if we are to take him at his word, he can still use any age. Remember he looks not at outward appearances but at the heart, (1 Samuel 16:7) we are told when David was anointed king, by that same grown-up Samuel years after he was first used by God.

Since NBA started in 1991, there has been a steady stream of volunteers who have come to serve. Many have been well prepared by the essential mission sending agencies CMS, YWAM, Crosslinks and Interserve to name but a few. Some have served for one, two or three years, some for a semester, some for months, others have come as part of a team for just a week or two with experienced leaders. It's easy to discount these brief trips, but short-term mission can lead to long-term mission. As I write, two of the short-termers from 2013 are now fully trained and setting out on a long term placement in another country in January.

If God is calling you to serve, be challenged and apply to go!

Please email us on administrator@christchurchbangkok.org if you are interested in *volunteering* in Noh Bo!!!



What your donations can do

The work of our Karen Ministry continues, and we have a full budget for 2021. Your contributions are greatly appreciated. Here is a picture of how your donations can help.

Mae La Camp Support for a Nursery

School student	1,600 baht per year
Support for a nursery school teacher	6,000 baht per year
Nursery School food supplement	2,200 baht per month
Caring for an orphanage child	5,120 baht per year

Noh Bo Academy Students and Staff

Day Student	8,000 baht per term
Boarding Students	12,000 baht per year
Teachers (13, including Principal)	Average salary 3,500 baht (\$75) per month
Staff (1 office – 3 cooks - 2 supervisors)	Average salary 2,500 baht (\$46) per month

Noh Bo Food and Nourishment

The largest portion of the budget is food - essential in a boarding school for refugees. We need 65 large bags of rice each month for 10 months, at about 850 baht per bag.

The school also spends about 46,000 baht a month on fresh produce, giving an annual food bill of approximately 927,500 baht (\$31,000).

Education Materials

Each year supplies of paper, exercise books, text books, pens, markers, etc. are 40,000 baht (\$1,333). Arts, crafts and sewing materials are extras and depends on special donations

Uniforms

Noh Bo students take great pride in their uniform.

Annual cost for students is	18,000 baht (\$600)
Teachers uniforms per year	9,000 baht (\$300)
Sport kits per year	10,350 baht (\$350)

Utilities

Electricity approx 4,700 baht (\$156) per month
 Gas bottles at 300 baht (\$6) per month.
 Water at 300 baht (\$6) per month
 Internet provision is expensive – 2,675 baht (\$93) per month



Health and Wellness

Toiletries for students cost about 40,000 baht (\$1,333) a year.
 Medicines, dental and hospital bills average 3,000 baht (\$100) per month.
 Blankets are needed in the cool season – 100 baht each for 100 students – 10,000 baht (\$333)

HOW TO MAKE A DONATION:



HOW ARE WE
MANAGING OUR
FUNDS?

We are focusing on the students' essential needs and making cutbacks wherever possible. We are also growing our own vegetables to reduce food cost & holding fundraising events to raise money....

HOW TO MAKE A DONATION:

Cheques made out in foreign currency attract very high transfer fees in Thailand (\$60).

Cheques in Thai Baht are no problem.

Electronic transfer is best!

Please email us on accounts@christchurchbangkok.org to let us know when you make a payment, so that we can ensure that it arrives and issue a receipt.

Bank Account for Karen (New) A/C:

Siam Commercial Bank

A/C Name: Christ Church English

Branch: CP Tower

A/C No: 168-225-876-6

A/C Tape: Saving A/C

SWIFT code: SICOTHBK

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!!!

Your continued prayers and financial support are needed more than ever! We send a heartfelt 'thank you' for the past efforts and hopefully, for your future support, as we struggle to reach the levels of funds we had pre virus.