



# The Khmer Chronicle

The Cambodian Ministry Newsletter  
of George and Shary Frahm  
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## *The Longing for Community*

*Being in the US for a few months longer this time has provided more opportunities to envision what we as Americans consider important in our daily lives. (reverse culturing is interesting). As you all well know, we are also in the process of setting up a new home in a new community and downsizing, which has allowed us an even larger group of people to watch and consider from a community perspectives. Mind you, we are seeing all of this from a very 'western' mindset so to speak, but it has come with some very definite conclusions.*

*It appears to us that everyone longs for community, the ability to commune in the way that fits their lifestyle and interest. I see it on Facebook and in our own family. It could be in the form of a biking group of young families doing outings together, a youth church group working in the community, volunteers who reach out to new immigrants on a regular basis, ladies who quilt together, men who are a part of a golf or racquetball team, or even those who neighbor around the campfire pit in a backyard with the family next door. I am sure that each one of us has some 'common' area that we really are gripped to be a part of. This list could be ongoing.*

*In a book entitled "The Art of Neighboring" authors Pathak and Runyon talk about times gone by when people knew their neighbors and had an intimate community. They talked to them, had cook-outs with them, and went to church with them. Yet now in our time of unprecedented mobility, increasing isolationism, changes in the landscape around us, and online*

*networking, it's hard to make lasting connections with those who live right outside our front door.*

*Times have definitely changed from when we were kids at home till now.*

*In a comparison perspective with our friends and their communities in Cambodia though, the idea of community takes on a different agenda. Things like mobility outside the community and online networking hasn't brought them to the 21<sup>st</sup> century of our world as yet. They are increasing isolated from the 'city' environment so to speak (which in Phnom Penh is very modern), and continue to lag behind in a survival sort of way. It is heart-wrenching to us to see families in dysfunctional situations because they cannot survive, feed their families, and make up that lost time to be in the 21<sup>st</sup> century at the pace they are going.*

*Typical of a remote community could be a tiny church being encouraged by a tiny group of believers with a barefoot type of pastor who is 'learning' on the job to be one when he is able to gain some solid biblical instruction. He must find ways to feed and clothe his family and meet their daily needs along the way, so maybe he is lucky enough to raise crickets to sell, have a table of goods to sell outside his house to locals or people passing through, or even more so to be a tuk tuk or moto driver for hire.*

*Outside of his little church may be a small community of perhaps 100 people or so who are probably all raising rice to feed their families, and perhaps selling vegetables on the road, or whatever they can to scratch out a meager income. What usually happens when there are*

*no income sources is that the young adult people leave the community and travel to areas where they can find work such as a garment factory, construction, or farm that has fertile soil to raise food. Many times they have to travel to Thailand or Vietnam to do this.*

*Oftentimes couples will leave together for extended periods of time leaving behind with the elder folk all of the children in their family for the grandparents or a surrogate figure to raise. While I can not substantiate what part of the income would return to the family in the village if any, we do understand that frequently what will happen is that more babies will be born and brought back to be raised, increasing the burden of the local family to feed and meet daily needs.*

*So community here is much more basic to survival than what we would or could imagine here by and large. But it is community in either place and hence the reason we have been asked to return to work with the local communities to encourage them and to share the skill ideas and project planning to grow their communities to a solid foundation to prosper.*

*People are impacted and changed when we as individuals are willing to cross to their side of the road and experience life where they live. It's building sustainable communities where Jesus is Lord and is shown at the ground level. It grows the community and the church into eternity.*

*Community is communing together. In both cases, both here and there, it is the point that we are willing to meet in the middle and experience life together for the betterment of everyone.*

### **Rice Banks**

*One of the ways to grow a community together there is in the form of a rice bank. You say, what is a rice bank? Well, see the photo here where Deaconess Neak Mao and Pastor Vannarith are*

*standing in front of a rice-storage facility. As part of the stewardship in Cambodia we are working together to establish a sustainable self-supported ministry based on solid biblical stewardship teachings and creative initiatives. By focusing on stewardship, local congregations are encouraged to seek out new opportunities to enhance their outreach with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and human care.*

*In one community in southern Cambodia, Deaconess Neak Mao was able to start a rice granary. During the harvest season when the price for rice is low, the congregation purchases and stores as much rice as resources allow. Members of the church who own small rice farms donate a portion of their rice as a part of their contribution to the storehouse of the Lord. When drought season arrives and the price of grain is very high, the congregation takes two steps: first it gives some of the rice to poor families in need of food, and to the elderly who cannot work anymore. Secondly, it sells the remaining rice to the public, which helps raise funds to maintain the congregation's ministry.*

*The church is committed to becoming self-sustainable. The church encourages pastors and deaconesses to apply sound biblical stewardship principles. Rather than giving a man a fish for the day as the proverb goes, the communities are being taught how to fish for a lifetime to benefit the church members, congregations, and community.*



Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. It is written:

“They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor; their righteousness endures forever.”

Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord’s people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else.

And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you.

2 Corinthians 9:6-14

“Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.”

Malachi 3:10

### Knee Thoughts



Praise for our Jesus and His love and salvation for each of us.

Prayers for the Cambodian church to share the Good News.

Prayers for more to follow Christ's last command seen in Matthew 28:18-20.

Praise for an absolutely gorgeous summer with family and friends while in the US.

Prayers for a safe delivery for our newest grandchild in the next fortnight and for her mom already in love with her.

## Contact Information

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**\*\*\*Did you get our prayer card in your mailbox? If not, and you would like one, please let us know and we can get one out to you. We appreciate our mighty prayer warriors along this journey working together with us to glorify Him.\*\*\***

## Partnership in the Gospel

Partnership with Global Lutheran Outreach means that your prayers, encouragement, and financial support are fully recognized and counted. We welcome your continued attention and love to God's work in Cambodia. Thank you so much!



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(Please write check to 'Global Lutheran Outreach' with 'Frahm-Cambodia' in the memo line)

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(Click on 'give' on the right side of the page which will take you to the giving page. We are near the bottom of the page).

**\*\*Global Lutheran Outreach website is under construction. We will keep you abreast with changes in our newsletters as they occur.\*\***