



The Khmer Chronicle

The Cambodian Ministry Newsletter
of George and Shary Frahm

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A Mother Reminisces

**The woods are lovely, dark, and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.**

(Robert Frost)

In all of our lives there are milestones and memories that have great significance to each one of us. Oft times we come to realize and see how we, at points in our walk, have found ourselves living through our children and their accomplishments in one way or another ~ perhaps it is something we never had the opportunity to do or maybe it wasn't available at the time, a generational thing. I'm going to hand over the typing of this newsletter to George in a bit as we each walk down a certain timeline that has impacted and turned around our lives in ways we couldn't have forecasted. But first....

May 3rd marks a pivotal point in my life as on that day 15 years ago I stood with my Chinese friend Wendy and was baptized into God's family in front of our then home church family. What an amazing journey it has been from that moment forward. Never once regretted, more than once humbled and amazed.

Easter week just a while ago marked another significant marker for both George and myself. As I write this now, I look back 24 years ago and recall vividly the utter gripping 'mother stomach jumping' moment as our eldest daughter embarked on a journey that she, her classmates, and the school

community had prepared for over a year. I tear up writing this realizing now how that changed my very core, of which I didn't realize at the time. At that moment though, I had a mother's terror moment or two of 'letting go' scenario as I watched those young adults walk away to get on a plane heading to Novgorod, Russia to share Jesus. It was Easter week, and she would also celebrate her 18th birthday in her visa country.

Trust me, it was not a good feeling. My heart cried terribly as she walked away.

And yet, lives were definitely changed in that short term team journey. I know mine was.

It is now 24 years later since this God ordained and that blessed trip took place. We have moved into the 21st century. Most of the students on both sides of the pond are married and/or have moved on to other places to live and become active successful Christians in their own choices. And yet, in these 24 years the strings of relationships and friendships have remained tied and connected in many ways. Even a couple are on my Facebook page. Interestingly I have to translate their Russian along with other nationalities that have encircled our lives over the years thereafter ~ just to know how life is for them and how to pray for them, be it Indonesian, Chinese, Turkish, Japanese, Korean ~ to mention a few. Using the advancement of the digital age to connect world wide to share the gospel message and pray for one another has never been easier.

Remember though ~ This was our first personal experience with missions. In our minds now, nothing is better than getting personal with missions.



(Novgorod, Russia 1994)

Boots On The Ground

More appropriately, for us it is 'feet on the ground' just like Jesus did with his disciples over two thousand years ago. Until recently I had never measured how very small of an area Jesus and his disciples walked to share life and build relationships and an eternal focus for us as an example to follow today.

Our journey is not about mission tourism by any means. Doing missions half way around the world means more hours than one could imagine and more obstacles and boulders to climb over just because we agree to the "send me." Jesus didn't have it easy in missions by any means, so why would we ever think it would be for any of us as well. But it is heart changing. He changed many hearts in His lifetime as well.

A song comes to mind at this point, written by Don Schutte in 1981 with the following chorus words:

"Here I am Lord. Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart."

It is taken from Isaiah 6:8 where it says:

"Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying:
"Whom shall I send,
And who will go for Us?"
Then I said, "Here *am* I! Send me."

Preparation to go across the pond is more than just 'packing a bag.' It is a life changing chapter in each life of those who do it so we've been told time and time again, just like our Novgorod experience (and remember we didn't go ourselves).

Packing a bag may mean being a prayer warrior and encourager, a gatherer of detailed items and information, and an organizer for whatever is needed in the field, or for a team, just as this group who went to Russia. They (parents, interested others, and

spiritual staff) worked diligently alongside these students before they left the US. There were bible studies, everyone dug deep into anything and everything that was potentially a need or desire for the trip. God blessed these teens time and time again beyond any of our own thoughts and expectations. God led the way for sure.

There is so much value in short term teams coming to see how life goes on elsewhere in God's world. Relationships get formed, love flows freely, and Jesus gets all the credit for starting it all.

We give our heartfelt thanks to God and these young people and their 'stamina' to set the bar and the example for so many around the world 24 years ago to do what was said in Isaiah 6:8. Good job!

Happy Khmer New Year

We want to wish each and every one of you Happy New Year, Khmer New Year that is. One of the things that can be very different when crossing cultures is the time of celebration of the new year.

In the United States, we celebrate what is known as the International new year. This celebration is based upon the orbit of the earth around the sun and is always midnight between December 31 and January 1.

Our Chinese friends celebrated the Chinese New Year on February 16, 2018. This is the year of the dog, one of the twelve animals of the Chinese zodiac. Each animal brings special blessings in the year that they reign and there are many celebrations among Chinese communities at this time. The Chinese New Year is based upon a lunar cycle and consequently seems to move about compared to the International New Year.

Our Jewish friends will celebrate Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year starting the evening of September 9 and end the evening of September 11. This new year supposedly happens on the anniversary of the creation of Adam and Eve, and their inauguration of humanity's role in God's world, but also has close ties to the economic or agricultural cycle in Israel.

Our Muslim friends celebrate the start of their new year on the first day of Muharram, which is the first month of the Islamic calendar. This calendar is also a lunar calendar and in 2018 will be celebrated on either

September 11 or 12, depending upon which country you are in.

The Hindu celebration of Diwali will be November 7, which is the 15th day of Kartik, the holiest month in the Hindu lunar calendar. So it is also tied to the moon's orbit around the earth.

The Khmer New Year is also a lunar new year, but is also tied to the change of seasons. Cambodia does not have the four seasons of the temperate zones, but only two. Winter, spring, summer, and autumn or fall is replaced by either hot and wet, or hot and dry. Khmer New Year occurs at the transition from the dry season to the wet season and is in the hottest and most humid time of the year.

The Khmer New Year occurs in April and this year is the 14th through the 16th. The 14th is referred to as Maha Sangkran and is taken from the Sanskrit, Maha Sankranti which means literally enter the new year. On this day, every family is expected to go to the Buddhist temple to pray and give thanks for the teachings of the Buddha. For good luck, Buddhist Cambodians wash their face with holy water in the morning, their torso at noon, and their feet in the evening.

The second day, the 15th this year, is a day of charity in which people are to remember the less fortunate. It is called Virak Vanabat, and is also the day that the Buddhists honor and worship their ancestors.

Vearak Loeng Sak is the third day of the new year and is the day that Buddhist again go to the temple with perfumed water to wash the statue of the Buddha and the elderly people of society. Washing the Buddha is supposed to wash away all bad actions and bring good luck, longevity, happiness, and prosperity. Washing parents and grandparents allows children to receive the best wishes of their parents and good advice on how to live the remainder of the year.

The Christian Church New Year begins approximately four weeks prior to Christmas which is December 25. This is the Advent season, a time of preparation. But, it is not a preparation for Christmas, but a preparation to receive the greatest gift of all, salvation by our belief in Jesus Christ as our savior. By this gift, all our sins are washed away and we receive God's gift of salvation won for us by Christ's death on the cross and resurrection which we also celebrate in April.

This is the message and good news we carry to the Khmer people as missionaries celebrating a new life rather than just a new year.

Knee Thoughts

- 1-Please pray for us and our involvement in God's ministry with Pastor Samuel in Siem Reap Cambodia.
- 2-Pray for yourselves, how to partner in effective ways such as being a prayer warrior, helper, a financial partner, or an advocate in your church community.
- 3-Please pray for the physical and financial health of Pastor Samuel, his family, and the Cambodian church.
4. Pray for clear direction as to our departure return to Cambodia in the not too distant future.
- 5-Pray for an easing of tensions as the day of the Cambodian national elections approaches and then a quick return to normalcy.



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