



The Khmer Chronicle

The Cambodian Ministry Newsletter
for Immanuel Lutheran Church, Snor Village
Siem Reap Province, Cambodia
Winter 2023 (dry hot season here in Snor)
Volume 13 Edition 1-3



Immanuel Lutheran Church
Snor

I come before You today
And there's just one thing that I want to say
Thank you, Lord, Thank you, Lord

For all You've given to me
For all the blessings that I cannot see
Thank you, Lord, Thank you, Lord

With a grateful heart
With a song of praise
With an outstretched arm
I will bless Your name

Thank you, Lord
I just wanna thank you, Lord
Thank you, Lord
I just wanna thank you, Lord
Thank you, Lord

For all You've done in my life
You took my darkness and gave me Your light
Thank you, Lord, Thank you, Lord

You took my sin and my shame
You took my sickness and healed all my pain
Thank you, Lord, Thank you, Lord

With a grateful heart
With a song of praise
With an outstretched arm
I will bless Your name

And thank you, Lord
I just wanna thank you, Lord, thank you, Lord
Thank you, Lord

I just wanna thank you, Lord
Thank you, Lord.

This year, 2023, I am 74 years young. I have made it this far in life years, and today I write this newsletter from a country that many perhaps did not know its location, unless they did a google search. This country is not what I would call 'next door' by any means. But it is certainly beautiful.

We all have a story. God purposely made each one of us unique, just like each star in the sky. Mine is like none other, just like each of you who is reading this.

I am the daughter of European stock, part Irish, part Hungarian. Since my dad was born four days after his mom stood on Ellis Island, that sort of made us new kids on the block. His dad had been a game warden in the now Balaton National Park in his younger years. My mom's lineage were potato farmers in Ireland. European immigrants were common in those days. They formed the melting pot of the country then. Additionally, I was a mere 28 ounces when I was born. Clinically, I should have not survived in those days. I was an at risk premie for sure. For a long time. My first year I lived at the hospital.

Afterward, those first 18 years were not simple and easy by any means. But then, at age 18 I met

this nerd guy just a month after starting nursing school, and we shared a 53 year relationship. Life was not always easy, but it was full and complete. He came from German stock, the hard core stuff. It was good. It still is good. He left a dynamic legacy to build on. He showed me a lot of the world. He showed me his Jesus.

I returned to Cambodia in October. This is my 12th year here. My language skills are still very basic, sometimes scary, and they always will be. God love the people who have carried me along all these years in that area. I am not a linguistic honor student. Latin was my learned language, and the last time I looked, it was still dead with the Romans. Today as I write this, more folks here have a grasp of English as they want to learn it. I feel their struggle. I can be patient.

As I have heard this song at the beginning of the newsletter many times (are you humming with me yet?) I cannot imagine all of the blessings that my dear God has bestowed upon me all of these years. I am sure there are many I considered 'normal' stuff and yet they were 'extraordinary' because God was the originator of them. I've missed a few quite candidly.

So now, as I enter and proceed through this year of 2023, I would like to share with you how ministry has upended this girl's life once again, not that I had any defined plans humanly of what I was to do here in this tenure. I came totally on the faithful trust in my heavenly Father who knows me best. I have not been disappointed by any means. And I have been surprised more than once. He is the best teacher.

Ministry for us/me here has a changed format for the time being. Gone as yet are the teams that hailed from Singapore, New Zealand, Australia, Canada, and the US, who came and did medical clinics, vacation bible school weeks, eyeglass

clinics, or community teaching or development. Those teams were the core of barang who trekked the villages around Siem Reap to share their gifts and talents. They worked very hard each and every time. Samuel provided supervision, and translation for each of these teams. The communities loved those special times. That was his income base.

New rules have come forth post country lockdown here as well. While many NGO's have left in the last three years, those who remain have new 'rules' to abide by, and must show their value in the community. And there are new rules in the Religion and Culture section for all of us as well. Life goes on around that.

For me, since I am a grand 74 years young, I am still under the umbrella of getting a year visa as a retired person here. Many European germanic guys in the area are enjoying their warm sunny days drinking coffee and chatting away for that very reason. I didn't have to do all the extra paperwork this time, and they didn't either.

Ministry on the ground has not really changed overall as we continue to share the good news, but in the new model for us here in the villages, we are adding projects of community development to sustain the future of those in the targeted areas where we have a footprint, mainly Snor and the surrounding communes.

Since it is important to maintain a clear example of accepting new national policies as they are formed without question, our goal is to build up the community from within. In those interactions we are able to witness as well. We are working with partners with special talents to make this a reality. In the near future, Sophana and I could be moving out to Snor to start this new chapter. There we will start/work on an animal husbandry and garden of vegetables and fruits in a plot of

land behind the church. There is dirt to haul in, a pond to dig, and a well to dig....plus a building for the animals to be out of the sun as well. During those times when I am out, I will not have internet access. Stay tuned as this unfolds and more will be shared at that time. When the projects are huge, things are slow to move at points of the journey.

In town Pastor Samuel is restarting his tuk tuk tour business, under the name of 'Praise the Lord Tuk Tuk Services'. Both tuk tuks have been serviced, and the little one 'Glory' has a new, much needed moto, to get us around. They are ready to move on out now. Both are red. Come visit us sometime in the near future! We can show you a few things that aren't in tourist books.

In the interim, as the serviced upgrades were done at our transportation duo, we have been diligently visiting each temple on his tour lists (there are 4 at the moment), doing a photo shoot, and learning the 'lingo' attached to this part of the world. I had no idea what a colonette or a balustrade was, but I do now. I also can look at the intricate carved figures that are still intact or have been restored, and give them a name or an era, or a religion context. Something like that. It has been quite a journey to accomplish this. Many of you may also know it came with a hiccup when I tripped at Neak Pean one day and did a number on my left hip. It still reminds me of its dynamic roundabout nature at times.

This business is meant to supply Pastor Samuel with an income to support his family and the church. Futuristically, we are looking into a community program a couple days a week in the village where those folks too would be able to share their daily life with others who come to visit, and sell their wares, such as palm sugar products, woven baskets, etc. and woodenware.

And as blessing would have it as well, there is another new law on the books that you must be licensed to have 'any' business in this country, and it means taking a set of classes, getting a certificate, and paying the big bucks. Samuel has that all in order already, as the funeral association of Siem Reap financed the whole conference for him to attend (food, lodging, class cost). Quite timely, do you think? So glad he was the appointed leader for the group just then.

And as we await the finishing touches on travel brochures, posters, and flyers, we move on around all of this new chapter till it comes to a completion of planning phases. Each person involved here is a plus to make this a reality.

Visitors From Next Door And Across the Pond

During the month of December, the Immanuel Snor Church welcomed eight visitors over the Christmas and New Year time. Adding into the season of a community meal, Christmas gifts (ever purchase and wrap 250 gifts with a set number for boys and girls, by ages?), and a Christmas program, these eight hearty souls jumped right in to help and then enjoy the activities that was our yearly norm with the community. There were no dull moments by any means, but lots of singing, laughing, khmer dancing, and fabulous home cooked local foods, and a wonderful Christmas service for all. The outdoor steel canopied area was well used and appreciated, keeping the sun rays at bay, and the coolness of that many people in the area much easier. Of those, four were from Bangkok, and four from the US. Since they already knew each other (adults) that was an added bonus. They hadn't seen each other for 22 years, and five kids later.



Knee Thoughts

Praise for a year long visa and a year long free Angkor complex pass for the temples.

Please pray for the continued good health for the people of Cambodia, especially Pastor Samuel and his family and God's ministry there.

A huge prayer of thanks for my continued good health and a miraculous healing of my left hip. WhoHoo!

Prayer for favorable government rulings that would encourage the spread of Christianity in Cambodia.

Prayers for the journey ahead with many spinning plates of service.

Thank you so much !

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West Entrance Angkor Wat



Full tuk tuk bus ie 'Praise the Lord'

