



**Taros Hope Lutheran Church
and School
Inaugural Newsletter
April 1, 2024
Vol. 1, Edition 1**

Won't You Be My Neighbor?

Just a few years ago, based in the US and Canada, was a simple man named Fred Rogers who had a TV program called 'Mr. Rogers Neighborhood.' With a TV in many homes around the world, he shared time with anyone who turned on their TV. He considered the space between the TV and whomever was there to be holy ground. From that point, he hoped that each of us realized that we are unique in the eyes of God. He lived and loved that passion to the end.

That was his calling as a pastor and motivational speaker, especially to children.

In Jesus, God continues to ask us this very question.

When the word became flesh, Jesus moved into the neighborhood. He

became one of us and is our forever neighbor now.

This is the inaugural newsletter of a new neighborhood, a new beginning, a new ministry.

Pastor Ravy has moved into the neighborhood. He is here to be a neighbor to those around him. To build a community, a church, an English school, a rock solid ministry of faith and love into the future, to share the heartbeat of Jesus.

This is his, Pastor Ravy's story to start with:

Pastor Ravy Van is an ordained Lutheran Minister through the Cambodia Lutheran Church, on September 10, 2017.

In 2010 Pastor Ravy joined Lutheran Hour Ministries. He was called on in

2017 for pastoral training and ordination. He was part of the first ever class of men to become Lutheran ministers in Cambodia.

On April 21, 2013 He married Srey Pov. They now have three children, Kaknika, Rayuth, and Piseth.

Learning to walk in the steps of our Savior at times may look like wandering. At times it may seem to be like going in circles. Yet, God always has a plan.

Let Us Continue.

In 2019 Pastor Ravy made the decision to return to his home town of Siem Reap, purchase a plot of land, and build a home.

This is also the area his parents live, and as culture strongly encourages one to do, he will be here now to care for his aging parents. They in turn, are active, praying, encouraging supporters from the ground up in this ministry.

And so a neighborhood is formed in His plan, here and now, and its name is Taros Village Hope Church and School.

For those of you who have not graced the grounds of this village, it is located about 30 minutes out of town heading out highway 6. It is nestled into the remoteness off a secondary road; a nest of homes scattered about on a

one lane dirt road that has single lanes and paths to the homes there. It is a marginal community, very common around the province. There is electricity, wells, and some sanitary facilities. It is a daily struggle to provide basic necessities (rice is now \$50 a large bag). Some families have members who labor in the city, some who travel to Thailand to work, or there is local recycling. Some make baskets to be sold to the tourist community in town. Life is tough.

Folks do not have vehicles. There are some motos. And some bicycles. The kids are scattered throughout the area for school, often traveling 4km distance back and forth each day.

As of this date, here at Taros there is a combined church and school enclosed foundation nestled in the overhang of the front porch area of Pastor Ravy's home.

Church services are held weekly with a mix of adults and teens and a sprinkling of littles coming to hear the message. There is an order of service to follow, bibles to use, and so much love flowing out of these new walls. There have already been seven baptisms. His talent of being a motivational speaker of the 'word' is the best here. Those who come, listen intently.



At this point I want to interject a personal point and opinion of what is going on around me. I am only a minute speck in this ministry picture, and yet from this vantage point I can report of the completeness of this neighborhood of love, faith, stability, and passion of the gospel message being proclaimed day in and day out. The flow of the words, examples, and animated presentation captivates the attention of the audience in hand. The love and transparency is obvious. While the woes of the community will always be with us, the opportunity to share eternal life and love permeates and flows from here and draw each person in when the correct time is there. God has a plan. Pastor Ravy is learning and showing each one of us that path.



Hope School now offers English class five evenings a week. Before and after self reading class learning times are in place. One hour of teaching for two classes is in place, using the 'GO' books as the basis for learning, interjecting independent topics sprinkled throughout the week. Class sizes are at about 22 and 15 respectively. Ages vary from age 7 into the 20's.

The students are consistent in their attendance, and their learning is contagious. They love to be challenged with competitive moments and collaborative games. At least once weekly there is a bible lesson and worksheets and / or paragraph writing to match. Pastor Ravy has recently played Peter, and told the Palm Sunday story both in Khmer and English for the students to hear.



Jesus is here to be our neighbor.
He lives here through each of us.
We are His hands and feet.

John 1:14

Statement of Faith Taros Hope
Lutheran Church

There is only one true God—the Triune God—who exists in Trinity with God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

God the Father is our maker and the creator of all things. By His word, all things were made, and we are His most beloved creation; we are closest to His heart. The Son is

Jesus Christ, who came to be born on earth as the perfect one to redeem all sinners. He came to find us, and He listened to the Father on our behalf.

Now, the Holy Spirit calls us and converts us to believe in Jesus Christ as our Savior, keeps us in the one true faith, and equips us to live out our faith. He is the inspiration in our heart's ears.

It is through faith in Jesus that we get the absolution of sins and timeless life —by accepting that He has liberated us from the responsibility, discipline, and force of transgression. Faith is God's work in our lives by the Holy Spirit; it doesn't come to us through anything we are prepared to do; however, through only how God helps us. We essentially get what is now being presented out of God's extraordinary love.

Since there is no way to acquire salvation, we don't do acts of kindness to be saved; benevolent acts are finished out of acclaim with thanks since we are saved.

Such acts of kindness are not restricted to just serving, but also focusing on what others need, respecting those in power, as well as our own promises and responsibilities. By and large, that means what is thought of by a quite a few people is to be great and right is also just.

It's not unexpected that Martin Luther communicated it along these lines: God needn't bother with our acts of kindness, however our neighbor does.

Knee Thoughts

Praise and prayers for each soul in this neighborhood to be touched and heard. Praise and prayers for sharing His love message to everyone sent our way.

Praise for a steady job for Pastor Ravy that provides an income as he serves Taros Village.

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

Thank you so much !



Family information:

Birthdays:

Ravy 10th June

Srey Pov 10th October

**Kaknika 3rd December
Rayuth 15th September
Piseth 10th December**

Anniversary 21st April

Facebook page:

**[https://web.facebook.com/
profile.php?id=61557170260272](https://web.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61557170260272)**

Email Address:

hopelutheranchurch4@gmail.com

Partnership info:

**Please contact Pastor Ravy at the
email address above for details at
this time.**

**At the time of this newsletter
posting, Pastor Ravy had been
awarded a single standing church
building on his current land, to be
used as the center for worship
services and activities.**

**Due to the generous early offer, the
church already has brown chairs.**

**There is a desire to include music in
the church services. Pastor Ravy
plays both the keyboard and the
guitar, and has a wonderful voice to
share as well.**

**In order to fulfill the above, there is
a need for partnerships for the
following items. Any amount is
welcomed. Please pray with us on**

**these desired items. Thank you so
very much.**

Speakers: \$600

Mixer: \$250

Microphone and stand:\$125

Keyboard: \$970.00