

Ridgley Update - April 2025

Dear Friends,

We wanted to send you a quick update about what is happening in our part of the world. Most people don't realize that the Northern Thai new year, known as "Songkran" is celebrated annually from the 13th-15th of April. It marks the Thai solar new year and is a time of water fights, parades and traditional rituals. Our city of Chiang Mai is the center of these activities and is overwhelmed with foreign and domestic tourists at this time. Although many of the rituals are Buddhist in origin, there is one that Christians practice and enjoy with their church family and friends. The ritual takes place with older people sitting in chairs and the younger people come and kneel before them and pour jasmine scented water over their hands. While they are doing this, they ask the older person to forgive them if they have offended them in any way or not shown the proper respect in the past year. They also ask that they would be blessed with good health and peaceful life. The older person will respond with speaking encouragement and blessing to the younger ones. In the Christian context, the older one will generally say a short blessing prayer as well. In the past I have felt somewhat uncomfortable in this setting because it is so unusual to western culture. This year, however, it all made sense to me in that it was an honorable and godly thing to do. I found myself tearing up and enjoying the privilege of participating in this God honoring ritual.



In a recent home group we were sharing with, a young man visited who had never been in a Christian setting like that before. He had attended because he was interested in one of the young ladies whose parents were involved 😊. As we were teaching out of the book of Colossians, the text naturally flowed into sharing the Gospel message. I felt the joy of the Lord rise up in me as I realized here was a 28 year old young man who was an engineer by profession, hearing the gospel message clearly for the first time in his life. Please pray for him. His name is Geer.

The new church plant that is about 4 hours north of us is doing well. The pastor and his wife are very active in doing home visitation and outreach. They are also holding regular Sunday services. The church here in town also sends a team monthly to teach and encourage the church planters and the new believers. Please pray that this new work will bear much fruit for the kingdom.



Personal Update: We have shared with some of you that I (Walter) have been struggling with Multiple Myeloma since August last year (diagnosed after a broken arm). I have had radiation treatments and am on several medications. Although we are receiving excellent medical care, I am having quite a bit of pain on a daily basis. This has limited the scope of some of my activities but with Jeannette's help, we are making adjustments and the doctors says I am showing improvements. A couple weeks ago I had a bout with pneumonia that put me in the hospital for 4 days but have since recovered. Thank you to all that lifted us up in prayer. This past year has been a rather difficult season for us but have taken comfort in knowing that we are in God's loving care and trusting for continued healing.

Please continue to pray for us as we continue to serve here in Southeast Asia. Thank you for your faithful support.

Blessings,
Walter & Jeannette