

## **Chrestos Update 8: February 2005**

**Lord, you have been our refuge in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth you had ever formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting, you are God. So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom. Psalm 90: 1, 12**

### **Laos:**

We praise God that four prisoners were released and reunited with their families in Laos. Thank you for your prayers. One with a fifteen year prison sentence is now working for one of the prison staff. This gives him more freedom and relief from the harsh conditions within the prison.

### **Women's Retreat: December 2004**

Over eighty Khmu Christian women came for this first Women's Seminar. It was great to see some of them wearing their national dress. The three days were full of activity: praying, teaching, sharing, singing and appointing leaders from among the women for the different provinces in Laos. Pat had the privilege of helping with the teaching and drama.

### **Burma:**

The needs are great inside Burma and through Chrestos Mission we have supplied medicines to three of the clinics there. Also, we continue to support the Chrestos School-cum-Orphanage, with forty children, cared for by Auntie Htoo Htoo.

### **Thailand Border:**

**The Mei Lah Karen Refugee Camp** has become a closed camp, which means that the refugees have to remain inside the camp and can only go outside with special permission. Pastor Arthur and his wife Clasper with their family of eighty-six children were so pleased to see us arrive with Christmas presents from the children at a school in Hong Kong, who also pray for them and write to them. This is such a wonderful link between these two sets of children in such different environments.

**The Mei Rah Mo Karen Refugee Camp** is not so accessible as the Mei Lah Camp, and impossible to reach during the rainy season, but we have been able to deliver some food and clothes to them. We continue to visit the Karen refugee camps once a month to deliver tins of fish and other supplies. A big thank you to those who have so generously helped us to supply some of these needs.

### **Bible School in Mae Sariang:**

The students finished their first term at the end of October, and then returned to their villages to help with the rice harvest. They returned at the beginning of December, and went on outreach to over twenty Karen villages in the mountains, giving their Christian Concerts for about five hours nearly every evening, with singing, drama and preaching. Crowds gathered and listened intently.

At times, we were able to go with them and high up in one of the mountain villages one of the men said to us, "Thank you for coming to the mountain people." Then, we remembered that about twenty-five years ago, when Geoffrey was studying theology at Regent College in Vancouver, Pat went to speak at a women's group, where they lovingly prayed for us. Later, one of the women shared with Pat that first of all as she prayed she saw a mist before us. Then, when this had cleared, she saw us skipping with joy over mountains, but we were not alone because many young people were joining hands and skipping with us. We believed that this was from God, but the vision is always for the appointed time. When the man in the mountains thanked us for coming, we realized that the appointed time, God's time, had come for us to be working with the Karen, many who live in the mountain villages.

Another result of the outreach to the Karen villages is that many more young people would like to join us next term and we will have to extend our facilities to receive them. The present students will stay on for a further year and part of their training will be to help us care for the new students. Please pray as we consider with our Karen team what God's plans are for us in the expansion of the work.

**The ATOM [A Taste of Mission] Team visited us last October** from the UK, and stayed in Chiang Mai for a couple of nights, before traveling to Laos and Mae Sariang. While they were there, the owner of the hotel asked if we could arrange for the Christian Scriptures to be put in each room. We have been in touch with the Thai Gideons and so grateful that they have now put Thai/English New Testaments in the eighty rooms of the hotel.



**ATOM Team and Bible School visiting the First Karen Baptist Church in Thailand**



Thank you to all those who have enquired about our safety during the recent tsunami, that caused so much devastation in many countries. We are far from the affected areas, but we have been able to send a gift through Chrestos to help with the relief program.

**Chrestos Karen Team at Mae Sariang**

This Chrestos Update comes with our love and sincere thanks to each one of you, Geoffrey and Pat