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August 2020

Our family was booked to fly to the US on August 10 for a 2-month long furlough. However, our flights were cancelled and our tickets refunded, as the borders of Thailand remain firmly closed to protect from Covid-19. Even if we were to find a way to fly to the States this month, we suspect that it will be quite some time before our return would be possible. We are counting the blessings of a quiet season of continued ministry in a place where we are able to function almost normally, but we are definitely disappointed to miss this opportunity for time with family. All of our living grandparents are in their early 90's. We count every opportunity to spend time with them a double blessing because each of them has a strong Christian testimony of faith.

This sentiment was underscored by the passing away of Alisa's grandfather, Dr. Roland Rasmussen, on August 12. He was a good man who served God faithfully for many years in Canoga Park, CA. Losing those we love is a poignant reminder of the greater glory that waits when we see Jesus.



Left: Alisa with her grandfather, Dr. Roland Rasmussen.

Right: Dr. Roland Rasmussen directly behind me on the night of my ordination.

This Sunday we announced the send-off service for Luka Chermue, our partner in ministry for the past 5 and a half years of church planting work. He has been an indescribable blessing since May of 2015, but we have always known that God was leading him to start a church himself. After nearly three years of working together, God blessed Luka with a wonderful life partner in Amie, formerly a single missionary partner with us. This couple is incredibly dedicated to Christ, and to the work of caring for the local church. Luka believes the next step is to focus on the completion of his bachelor's degree in Pastoral Theology, which he will do at the New Life Baptist Church in Chiang Mai, under Pastor Mike Frederick. As a missionary who has served faithfully for many years after retiring from the Air Force, Pastor Mike has been an incredible mentor for me ever since we arrived in Thailand, and I believe that Luke will benefit greatly from his time at NLBC.

Of course we will miss Luka and Amie, and their faithful and dedicated service. At the same time, we are thrilled for our church to see the process of sending for the second time in our short 5 years. In the case of Luka, as was the case with Jeff and several young men who went to start a church in July of 2017, our church has seen only a portion of God's work in their lives. We lay no claim to the ministry that God is doing in and through them. I just feel grateful that the Lord has used them to help in the founding of this church, and that the believers here have the opportunity to witness the process of growing, stretching, and sending that Christ does in his church. Luka and Amie have

done a great job of involving growing members in the various ministries they have overseen, preparing for a smooth transition as our church continues to equip members to do ministry.



It turns out that the cancellation of our tickets was all in God's timing, as we continue to come out of the pandemic shutdown, and prepare for a season of transition and growth in Cornerstone Baptist Church of Lamphun, Thailand. As I think about what I am most excited about, and what I am praying the most about, here's what comes to mind:

- Two brand new single believers, "Pey" and "Noot" have both hit major speed bumps in the infancy of their faith. There are no real surprises here, as they face intense spiritual warfare with opposition from family members and workplaces. We simply pray with hopeful anticipation that their faith will be strengthened and they will regain momentum in their newly founded spiritual walks.
- Another young family has been visiting faithfully for a few months now. "Tam" and "Wii" have two little boys, aged 4 and 1. This young wife has a salvation testimony from her youth, and her husband has been very engaged in our services, intently considering the meaning of the gospel. Would you pray for Tam to be saved? Also pray for Alisa as she seeks to mentor Wii through the challenges of renewing her relationship to Christ while praying for the salvation of her husband, and raising two young and very energetic boys!
- I have long dreamed of and prayed for a church with great spiritual depth and knowledge throughout the body. This fall we are seeing prayers

answered as an encouraging number of members are enrolled in classes such as New Testament Survey, Church History, and the Life of Christ. Our church is thankful for the partnership of like-minded churches, as these three classes will each be taught by pastors well suited to each subject.

Thank you all again for your faithful prayer. With each of the months that pass on the mission field, I become more experientially convinced in my core that God is listening to your prayers and enacting grace in the lives of people here because you are praying.

Thanks as well for your faithful financial support, empowering our family to establish this local church, reach lost people with the gospel, and raise up leaders in Thailand. I assure you that we appreciate your generosity and do everything we can to faithfully steward the resources God has entrusted to our ministry.

For the Gospel,
Jonathan and Alisa



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