

Friends of Burma, Inc. Newsletter

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September 18, 2020

Congratulations to Saw Lah Eh Shee!



Friends of Burma provided scholarship for Saw Lah Eh Shee to study Master of Music, majoring in Instrumental Conducting at the Silliman University in Dumaguete City, Philippines. He is a faculty from Ko Tha Byu Seminary in Patheingyi and intends to serve there.

We are delighted to announce that Saw La Eh Shee graduated. However, challenges remain for him as he is stuck in Manila due to COVID-19 and is waiting for a relief flight to return to Myanmar. Once he gets back to Myanmar, he will have to quarantine for a total of 42 days. But, Saw Lah Eh Shee is not one to sit idle. He is working on a series of lecture-videos teaching music. He also plans to organize local composers and publish yearly choir books. Opening a music school is his ultimate goal. He is grateful to Friends of Burma “for being with me during difficult times.”

Praise God for YOU!

by Neil Sowards, President, FOB

I am grateful to all FOB partners for your gracious hearts and generous hands. One of the FOB’s programs that surprises and encourages me is the Christmas Gift program. I am surprised by the magnitude of impact these gifts have on people. I am encouraged by the

focus of giving shifting from the ritual to the necessity. Those who were asked to give also gained so much satisfaction and joy. So, please remember to continue to make this gift for this coming Christmas.

"Christmas this year is wonderful for me. I got a call from Saw Sweetie, who arranged your Santa Claus gifts for the less fortunate. I was very pleased to be a part of this program. I exchanged the \$50 to Myanmar kyats. There are so many people in need. But, I chose a young widow with two sons. I bought them warm clothes. We sat together praising God. I was so happy to see their faces light up with smiles as they received the gifts. I said the gift is from the Santa Claus. They said, "Thank you, Santa Claus, for the Christmas gifts." May the Lord shower His blessings upon you as always. Amen." ~ Chris

Report from Hinthada Karen Baptist Church Bible School (HKBBS)



*We praise the Lord for giving us good fellow-workers in His ministry. On behalf of our school, I express our deepest gratitude to FOB. Nearly every year, FOB purchased books for our library. For this 2020-2021 academic year, as soon as we received your donation, we went to Yangon and bought much needed Christian literature and theological books. Now, we have 2,401 books in English, 898 books in Karen, and 2,699 books in Burmese, magazines, and daily newspapers. We are gradually upgrading our library. Thank you for your kindness. We hope that you will continue to work with HKBBS in the future. May God be with you and bless you always! ~ **Tha Doh Paw,**
Principal*

Report from Kawthoolei Karen Baptist Bible School and College (KKBBS)



The world is struggling to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic. Likewise, this year has been a challenge for KKBBS community as we are in the face of this ongoing battle. Since the beginning of the year, the school had to hastily adjust to unexpected circumstances. Most of the students could not return home after graduation since the camp was on lockdown.

KKBBS reopened in July, later than usual, for 435 students. We had to limit the numbers of the new students compared to the previous years. Students from other camps, as well as inside Thailand and Burma, are restricted to enter Mae La Refugee Camp. As classes resume, we need many things. What tops our need is food; we can no longer depend on rations. There are many students and teachers who get no food supply from the camp and have to depend on support from others. Adjustment has been quite challenging for the teachers and students. We are challenged socially, politically, economically, physically and religiously. However, even in these darkest hours, God is with us. The lockdown has helped us to stay connected with God and one another. It also helps us to not contract the virus from outside. We could not imagine if only one person contracts the virus, as we do not have a good health care system

and thousands of people in the camp live together tightly in a very small area. However, it is quite challenging for people who have serious health issues, because they cannot leave the camp to see the doctor and go to the hospital.

In the midst of challenges, we found the presence of God nearest to us through the love and prayers of friends around the world, as we also pray for the world to be healed. We truly appreciate Friends of Burma for your faithful support in helping our KKBBSC whenever we are in need. Our prayer is that the Lord be with you and take care of you. Let us continue to pray for one another!

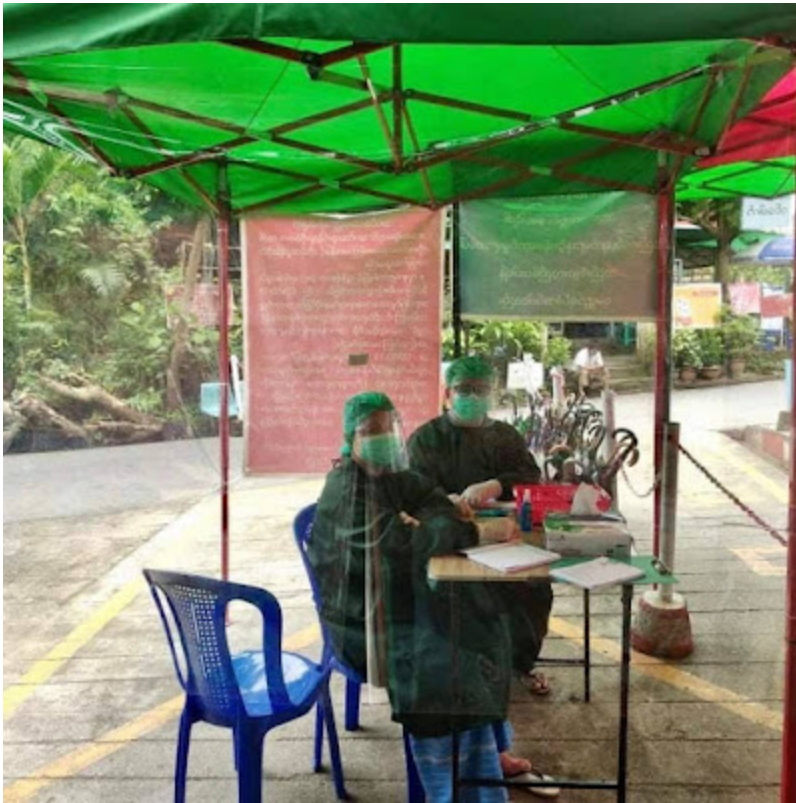
Welcome to the Team, Dr. Fom Men!



We offer our heart-felt gratitude to Russ Kadoe for faithfully serving FOB for eight years as our representative in Myanmar. His excellent contribution was instrumental for our success. FOB was blessed with a new representative. Dr. Fom Men has a keen heart to serve and bless others. Moreover, Dr. Fom Men came with a high caliber of education, a Doctor of Ministry degree from Central Theological Seminary and Myanmar Institute of Theology. Moreover, Dr. Fom Men's husband, Rev. Dr. Thomas Cung Bik, serves at Myanmar Institute of Theology as an associate professor. They have an eight-year-old son, Amos, and a six-year-old daughter, Lydia.

Thank You, KBC Hospital Staff!

COVID-19 puts many U.S. hospitals, healthcare workers, and resources under tremendous strain that has never been experienced before. Imagine running an already cramped-hospital in areas with vulnerable populations, fragile healthcare systems, and scarce resources! That is what KBC Hospital is facing these days. In May, KBC hospital took drastic steps for safety



measures. They instituted a safety plan, conducted drills, and acquired or hand-made PPEs. The picture below is a standing infrared thermometer. While preparing the best they can, KBC Hospital staff understands their protection comes from the Lord. They continue to march on with the theme they always follow, "We Treat, God Heals." Recently, there was a patient who accidentally swallowed battery acid liquid, which shut down her internal organs. She was on the brink of death and no other hospital was able to accept her

as a patient free of charge. KBC Hospital was able to treat her quickly using the funds from FOB, which saved her life. Now, she needs to be transferred to a government hospital that offers a higher level of care and KBC Hospital is supporting her through that. This patient is slowly recovering. Together, we are serving our neighbors. Praise be to God!





Report from Myanmar Institute of Theology (MIT)

Greetings from (MIT)! Your contribution is so precious for MIT community. It has reached us when we are badly in need of help for the building to accommodate our growing student body and to offer a healthy environment. Kindly continue to pray for us and help us continuously with the fundraising for the building until we complete it. ~ *Rev. Dr. Samuel Ngun Ling, President*

Report from Akha Baptist Bible School

I hope you are in good health and happy in the serving the Lord. We are happy and healthy by God's grace. Thank you so much for your donation, which we used to provide eye glasses for 16 students. The gift of seeing is a very precious gift and we are grateful. ~ *Naw Nor Mi, Principal*

Eyeglasses were also provided for students from Wa Baptist Bible School and Hinthada Karen Baptist Bible School. We were informed the cost for eyeglasses has drastically increased.

ZOE Women Empowerment Program



The Myanmar government has allowed 130 Mro families from the conflict area of Yakhaing State to temporarily resettle in Hlegoo township, 30 miles North of Yangon, as migrant workers. ZOE has been working with the Mros community to meet both short-term emergency needs as well as long-term income opportunities. As the migrant workers are willing to put their various weaving skills to work, ZOE has started an income generating program with them to earn sustainable income. We were delighted to meet some of the emergency needs and also buy eye glasses for them. Zoe conveyed their heart-felt thanks for the funding we provided for their capacity development initiatives. We look forward to hearing more information about this wonderful ministry in the next newsletter.

Greetings from KBC Orphanage Care Shelters

Peace, joy, and good health to our partners in Christ! This has been a very difficult season for us just as it is for others. While schools are closed and we have concerns for the health of our children, we are trying our best to keep them active and engaged in health habits and learning activities. Each day, what keeps us busy are: Bible study, sewing, wood-chopping, crafting, gardening, music, animals, and much more. So far, everyone is healthy. All first through ninth-grade students are promoted to the next grade. We have three students who matriculated. Please remember us in your prayers. Knowing you are with us and supporting us really is encouraging. We are thinking of you during this difficult time and praying for strength for you.













Relief and Rehabilitation Committee for Chin IDPs (RRCCI)



The Relief and Rehabilitation Committee for Chin IDPs (RRCCI) serves war victims with donations and charities received from national and international organizations, individual donors, and religious organizations. Areas the RRCCI serves are: shelters, food and clothing, transportation and medical assistance, women and children support, and education.



FOB received these words of gratitude from Salai Isaac Khen, Chairperson of RRCCI Central Committee, *"It is very heartening when we received a gift from you that allows us to help the IDPs, who need and deserve our love and help. We cannot tell you how much we appreciate your donation for this lifesaving work. It is only with financial contributions from generous donors like you that we can commit to assisting the IDPs by providing services mentioned above. We especially need funds this month for IDPs camp in Hmawbi, Yangon Division since we have to buy rice for them. It was touching and joyful to see the smiles on the faces of those who were helped by your donation. Your donation has helped us provide the needs for our people who are suffering. Your support has strengthened us to press forward."*

Lightning for Learning: Running the Race of Life to Love!

The Team completed five virtual 5K races and a half-marathon this summer, with prayer and supplication for the students, their teachers, all the orphan mothers, and for all our 70-plus sponsor families across the USA.

We want to report to you that university students from Kwe Lwe and Phu Saw Bu orphanages continue to study diligently with online courses due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Approximately 10 returning students are engaged in various studies, including business, seminary, teaching credentialing, geography, nurse aide schooling and more. All of them participate in some form

of service to their community. Their dedication, diligence and service are so heartwarming and inspirational. We thank The Lord for their well-being and role modeling to their little brothers and sisters. A huge thank you also goes to Naw Magnolia for her labor of love!

Thank you for giving the gift of education to these amazing students! Please pray for the eventual need for widespread computer technology for their education.



Daily Devotionals: Karen Stories for God's Glory

FOB, in partnership with Karen Baptist Churches in the USA, is supporting efforts to publish daily devotionals that capture Karen journeys and resiliencies, and most of all, their faith in God, for the purpose of witnessing Christ's love. The devotionals will be in Karen and English

languages. Please pray for this project and support this effort. Here is a story from the Karen devotionals.

THE NEW CANAAN

"Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given." John 1:16 NIV

Sometimes, we lack understanding even after God has already answered our prayer. When we were in the refugee camp, we prayed, "Father, have you abandoned us in this foreign land? As you heard the cries of the Israelites in Egypt, please hear our pleading, take us out of this camp and send us back to our own country." God listened to our prayers and sent us to a developed country, where milk and honey flows. This is the New Canaan God prepared for our Karen people.

One day, a mother called me, "Teacher, my daughter heard from the doctor that her father has cancer and has only a few days to live. She said that, "If this God doesn't listen to my prayer and my father dies, I can no longer worship Him." This mother asked me to encourage her children. I visited the family and prayed with them.

A week after the father was buried, the mother invited us for a prayer service in her house. She spoke, "I thank God for sending me to the New Canaan. When I was in Burma, the Burmese soldiers murdered my father and I never got a chance to see his grave. Here, we could bury my husband with dignity upon his death. When I was in the refugee camp, we only had rice and pickled fish. We had to feed our children clear rice soup, and we couldn't even afford to buy salt to flavor it. Here, we get to have milk and honey abundantly. When we were in our country, we had to work in the field under the hot sun and in the pouring rain just to get a few morsels of food. Harvest time arrived, but the enemy came and burned them all. Here, I work in a meat processing plant. I am tired, but comparing my life then with what it is now is like experiencing the difference between night and day. That is why I told my kids, there is no way we can abandon God. The greatest worry for me is that I might forget His grace, lest He puts me back where I was." This mother's testimony encouraged all who heard her and I believe it will inspire you too.

Needs List -- Please pray for these needs and give as you can!

- Christmas gift (\$50/gift)
- Daily Devotionals (\$30/day)
- Eye glasses (\$40/pair)
- Scholarships (\$500/student) for KBTS Liberal Arts students, BARS Liberal Arts students,
- Pwo Karen Seminary students, Nyaungleben Bible School students.
- MIT Building for a growing body of students
- Women Microcredit Self Help groups (\$300/group)

KKBBSC

- Food for students
- Support for teachers (\$75/mo./teacher)
- Sponsor evangelistic teams (\$100-\$500/team)
- Medical supplies
- Scholarship for two DMin students, KKBBSC faculty members (any amount)

KBC Hospital

- Patient monitor (\$1,000)
- Patient monitor & defibrillator (\$10,000)
- Emergency trolley + instruments (\$1,000)
- Portable pulse oximeter (\$1,000)
- FAST/V. Scan portable ultrasound (\$10,000)
- Ventilator (\$10,000)

KBC Orphanage Shelters

- Support for orphans (\$360/child/yr.)

Please pray for FOB Annual Meeting on October 24, 2020. Most FOB board members will attend via Zoom.

Your support of full amount or any portion would be a blessing. For more information, please visit us at <http://friendsofburma.org>. Please write a check payable to Friends of Burma. Please consider including FOB in your will.

FOB, tax ID 20-5572384, is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, and all donations are tax-deductible.

This newsletter is prepared by Adam Maung and Tansy Kadoe.

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