

Prayer letter March 2013

*I will be with you always, even until the end of the world.
(Mat 28:20)*

An own house

‘Yes, you may rent the house for three years’ said our landlord over the phone call, the answer we were anxious waiting for. For one and a half year we have moved from place to place. Now it’s finally here: we have an own house again! The Lord has answered our prayers very quickly! Early December we came across a suitable house. There was still a lot to be done, so Mark enjoyed his role as a constructional engineer again. In February, he travelled by himself to Isaan to supervise the construction/fixing of the house. Anne-Marie remained in Lop Buri with the children and continued to study the language. However, at a slightly lower pace than before. Sometime this month, we hope to move as a family.

Baan Meng

The first part of the name of our new village will sound familiar to the ears of people from our hometown. (Baan is a very common surname in Rijssen!) We will have to get used to life in the countryside, in a village where there is no supermarket! Also, the older people speak a dialect, Isaan, where we are not yet familiar with. Fortunately, we will live close to another missionary couple, just 5 km away. Their children are about the same age as our children. Therefore, we will try to combine homeschooling. To get contacts in the village, we are planning to throw a housewarming party. This is very common in Thailand. It is a good opportunity to get to know people and share already something of the Gospel..



Prayer requests:

- Give thanks that we found a house
- We are thankful that we finished the first year of language study
- We are thankful for the good year we have had in Lop Buri
- Pray for good possibilities to get to know people in our village
- Pray that we will settle in quickly and will feel at home in Isaan
- Pray that we may find quickly someone to help us in language learning

A loving and respectful first year on the mission field!?!

‘Love and respect’, these were the topics of the workshops of the annual retreat with the Isaan team. This year it was all about marriage. It was refreshing to look together to our marriage again. Also it was good to be together as a team; to pray for one another and hear about each other’s plans.

Only a few weeks later, there was a retreat for all students in Lop Buri. Former students were also invited. They shared about their first year on the mission field. They told about the good and difficult

aspects of their work and gave advice. Very useful. The children had lots of fun at the children's programme and we enjoyed the contacts with fellow students. Overall, people experience this first year on the mission field as being stressful and hard. But we hope that, after all these workshops, we will have a loving and respectful first year on the mission field!

Monkeys on bikes, elephants and pig heads

Monkeys on bikes, elephants and pig heads. We have seen this all in Lop Buri during the month February. Together with all students and teachers of the language school we made a cultural trip along all the famous places of Lop Buri: the monkey temple and palace ruins of a former king. In the temple stood a big table with a variety of "delicious goodies": fruit, roasted chickens, pig heads... All this in order to appease the spirits. We also saw people who tried to predict their future by acting out all kinds of rituals. It is sad to see that so many people live in darkness. We also went to the ruins of a palace. Very interesting, Lop Buri has a few nice places! Two weeks later, the King Narai Festival was celebrated here: thousands of lights hung in the trees, elephants walked through the palace garden, there were all kinds of shows, including monkeys on bikes... We enjoyed it a lot!

And 2 more years to go...

'When did you come to Thailand?' 'How do I get from the language school to your house?' 'Tell me something about your family'. Some random questions of our first year exam. It was about all topics we learned along this first year of study. Mid February we both did our first year exam of the language study. This consisted of an oral and writing part. We are very pleased with this milestone, although we have two years of language study ahead of us. We can quite manage in everyday life, but it remains a challenge to speak Thai well. We're supposed to continue (part time) language study as soon as we find someone to help us

Struggle

Being a missionary, you stand on the frontline in a spiritual battle. Where God's Word is proclaimed or where great things are about to happen, the devil is also hard at work. Sometimes this is suddenly painfully clear. Our Isaan team has been opposed in different ways: disease, a miscarriage and a fatal accident (in Thailand) of the mother of a missionary. Awful things that happen. Yet we know that everything is in His Hands and He can use everything for the extension of His Kingdom and to the glory of His great Name. We wonder what will be ahead of us, now we enter the mission field. One thing is certain: Jesus is with us, even unto the end of this world.

In Him,

Mark & Anne-Marie, Celeste, Irene en David



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