



Greeting from Cambodia!

For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago. — Ephesians 2:10

We have included a lot of people we have known quite some time with a lot of new ones that are all part of our lives on this email. Some are business relationships and some are personal but you are all friends that have impacted our lives so we wanted to share what is going on in our lives.

After a lot of prayer and consideration, Christy and I felt God calling us to the mission field back in June of last year. That calling culminated with us partnering with Mission of Christ Network and accepting a position in Sihanoukville, Cambodia working with Stronghold Cambodia in which our mission is to empower Cambodian communities for positive change through Christian care and learning. We arrived in Sihanoukville on December 15th to work as volunteers teaching ESL and ministering to children and their families.

Our first two months have been incredible. The children are so loving and eager to learn English and about Jesus. This became particularly evident by the impact we saw the children having on their parents during the Christmas program our kids put on. The fact that when Pastor Jesse asked the parents the meaning of Christmas and they answered correctly shows again the way to adults is through the children. Cambodia is 95% Buddhist but our understanding is there are not a great amount that are devout, this opens up a huge opportunity. The Cambodian culture is about relationship so things take time and love.

January was a great month of class and getting to learn the children better. I have to say they have already stole our hearts with their love and compassion. We have around 80ish total students including the 2 evening classes that are for the high school age students.

February has been an extremely busy month as we had a mission team from St. John's Ellisville that was here for a little over a week. What a blessing they were as we had great fellowship. They put on a Sunday School training for churches across the area, a parent training class for the parents of our students and vacation bible school for our kids at the beach.

Another great opportunity is all the neighborhood kids that come over to Stronghold to play on the playground equipment. We are greeted everyday with hugs and kisses. These kids learn the songs we sing by just watching the Stronghold kids.

This has been far greater than anything we could have imagined, there are a lot of needs here and a lot of opportunities. A large percentage of the families we work with live in tin huts with make shift wood floors, they shower outside and have to boil unsanitary water to drink. They make \$8-10 a day and have to support their families. This is made even more difficult as a result of the changing demographics and dynamics here in Sihanoukville. Chinese investors are buying up property and buildings and building large Casino's and living quarters. The price for property and rents are going sky high. As an example, we looked at some property that was little over 26,000 square feet that was priced at \$1,200,000.

God is up to something big here in Cambodia but as we all know the devil will do everything he can to thwart it. We ask for your prayers and support as we continue to seek God's will in building his kingdom.

Prayer requests:

Stability of our lease at Stronghold.

Overall effects of the Khmer people with the changes happening.

Communal living, not letting the devil use it to disrupt.

Possible land or building search.

God's will for the future of Stronghold.

On-line Tax-Deductible Donations graciously received at:

www.missionofchrist.org/service/cooper/



Or mail a check to:

Mission of Christ Network

PO Box 533

Concordia, MO 64020

(Cooper/Cambodia on Memo line)