

Laos

Establishing the Church in Luang Prabang

Luang Prabang is located in the north-central part of Laos. It is the old capital of Laos and the fourth largest city in the country, situated about 300 kilometers away from the capital Vientiane. It is the transportation center of Upper Laos Region. The city's international airport has direct flights to neighboring countries, and the national highway connects Luang Prabang with Vang Vieng, Vientiane, Muang Sai and some Cambodian cities. The Mowan Railway connects it with Vientiane and with China's Kunming and other cities. There is also a public university in Luang Prabang.

A year ago, after much prayer and seeking before the Lord, a family and two sisters received the burden to emigrate from the capital Vientiane to Luang Prabang for the propagation of the Lord's testimony. In a year's time, despite the raging pandemic and an externally difficult environment, the brothers and sisters faithfully labored through much prayer and fellowship in one accord, until they experienced a breakthrough and participated in the move of the Holy Spirit. They contacted a local full-time sister's relatives and gained one of the families. A home meeting was established with the family and they became a strong testimony for the Lord.

As for the campus work, although it was not easy to spread the gospel due to the pandemic, the saints nevertheless set aside two days every week to contact people on campus by faith. As they went out steadfastly, the Lord brought to them some gospel friends who were open for contact.

After a year of propagation and preparation, the church in Luang Prabang had its first bread-breaking meeting on April 24 of this year. The saints invited the brothers and sisters from Vientiane to witness the establishment of the church with them. On that day, more than 30 saints and ten gospel contacts, who were all students, joined the physical meeting, while saints who could not be present physically participated online, to witness such a glorious moment together. In the meeting, the brothers and sisters sang hymns to praise the Lord. They broke the bread to remember the Lord while singing: "There is one Body in this universe, and we express it here on earth." Then some local saints testified of the grace they had received from the Lord over the past year, followed by brothers from Thailand and Taiwan who gave strengthening



Bread-breaking meeting of the church in Luang Prabang

fellowships regarding the establishment of the church in Luang Prabang.

The establishment of the church in Luang Prabang is a great advance of the Lord's testimony in Laos. May the Lord continue to bless His testimony in Luang Prabang that it would grow increasingly stronger and brighter. At present, there are four local churches in Laos. The number of saints on the list is about 290, with the average number attending the Lord's Day meeting being around 150. There is an urgent need for shepherding. May the Lord perfect the saints to grow in life and exercise their organic function that the Body of Christ might be built up and expanded.



The saints in Luang Prabang

The Translation Work and the Pursuit of the Ministry

Currently there are four saints serving to translate the ministry into Lao, and some full-timers participate in the proofreading. The ministry titles that have been translated and are available to the saints include the following: the first two volumes of "Shepherding Materials," "Lessons for New Believers," "The Knowledge of Life," "The Experience of Life," "Twelve Baskets Full," "Authority and Submission," etc. The Rhema books have been translated and are now being proofread. The saints have also done a preliminary translation of the verses and footnotes of the Recovery Version of the New Testament to meet the needs of shepherding and the day-to-day church life.



Bread-breaking meeting of the church in Vientiane

Regarding the saints' enjoyment of the ministry, in 2017 the brothers brought up the matter of entering into the flow of the 7 annual conferences and trainings. Several saints received the burden and began to translate those messages from Thai to Lao for the saints to get into as morning revival material. Initially, due to various reasons, some saints could not keep up. But the brothers persistently promoted the word and got into the messages together with the saints and had morning revival with them. Thank the Lord! Eventually the saints went from "not being open" to "being full of enjoyment"! For a period of time due to the pandemic, the saints could not come together for morning revival. But this actually resulted in a great progress in the saints' practices of morning revival in small groups. Unable to meet physically, the

saints got into online morning revival groups of 3 to 5 according to the time of their convenience and have had richer and deeper enjoyment of the Lord's word. Through the practice of morning revival, the saints have been brought into fuller knowledge of the truth and deeper contact with the Lord and are more apt to speak the word of the Lord in the meetings.

Please pray for the literature work in Laos that the Rhema books would be proofread and published in June of this year. May the Lord also bless the translation, proofreading and publication of all the other ministry materials for the saints to receive timely and rich supply, that the churches may be constituted with the Triune God through the New Testament ministry to be the golden lampstands shining as the testimony of Jesus.

Sri Lanka

Update on Ministry Translation

The official languages in Sri Lanka are Sinhala and Tamil, and English is widely used for education, scientific, and commercial purposes. As far as ministry translation is concerned, we mainly focus on the Sinhala translation and obtain materials in Tamil from India. Currently, there are 3 saints serving full-time on the translation of the Sinhala New Testament Recovery Version, 2 saints serving part-time for the translation of the ministry books and conference and training outlines for the churches, and 5 saints doing the HWMR translation. Ten ministry book titles, the Life-study of John, the first volume of the Life-study of Luke, and the first volume of the Life-study of Genesis, as well as some materials related to the gospel, shepherding and training have already been translated. The translation of the New Testament Recovery Version began officially on May 1, 2021, and the team has completed the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, including the verses, the footnotes, and the outlines. The entire translation project is scheduled to finish in five years. Two hundred hymns have also been translated into Sinhala, with 150 of them recorded on CDs. An audiobook of the Life-study of John was also released.



Rhema Distribution

Beginning in June of last year, with the help of Rhema co-workers serving in the United States and India, we began to advertise the Sinhala Rhema books on Facebook. In only half a year, 45,721 readers browsed our Facebook page. Among them, 30 expressed that they liked our page very much, and 1,413 posted comments, yet most comments were negative due to Sri Lanka being a predominantly Buddhist country. However, what was very encouraging to us is that 2,651 people gave us their complete contact information via Facebook to subscribe to our publications.

Currently there are 2,565 Rhema subscribers. A service team was formed in order to take care of these readers. Moreover, in February of last year, we received from India 1,000 copies of the first volume of the Rhema booklets in Tamil and 200 copies have been distributed. The churches in Sri Lanka also printed 200 copies of each of the 7 Sinhala Rhema books for distribution.

The Full-time Training

Currently there are 4 saints in Sri Lanka who completed the two-year full-time training. One of them serves on Sinhalese Bible translation, two serve full-time with the trainees and young people in the church, and one takes a job while continuing to be active in the church services. Due to the pandemic, all the trainees who were in the full-time training in Batam, Indonesia, returned home and continued their training courses online. Presently there are 7 saints participating in this online training in Colombo. Please pray that the Lord will release more young people to be trained to become useful vessels to the Lord.



Prayer burdens

1. Pray for the stabilization of the political and economic situation, particularly that the government would be able to deal with the economic crisis. Pray for the saints who are in need during this time of crisis and for many college students to be open to the gospel and to the shepherding of the saints at such a time of drastic change.
2. Pray for the seven full-time trainees to be healthy and strong and therefore able to meet the requirements of the training to be trained as useful vessels in the Lord's hand.
3. Pray for the translation of the Sinhala Recovery Version Bible and the printing of the Gospel of Matthew.
4. Pray for Rhema's online distribution that more readers could be gained through the advertisement on Facebook; pray also for the new service group for the caring of the 2,565 Rhema subscribers who are seeking.