

# Futch Family & Ministry Update

July-October 2020



In **July**, after several months of avoiding travel due to the COVID pandemic, I took a trip to Kalasin, a province in northeastern Thailand. My primary purpose was to visit our ministry partners there and to follow up on the small businesses that have been launched to support them. Though the gospel is advancing through the dedicated work of these men and women, more than 90% of the people in the province have never heard a clear presentation of the gospel. The small businesses not only allow these disciple-makers to support their families in the communities God has called them to serve in; they also open doors for ministry in the surrounding areas. By serving their communities, sharing the gospel, loving their neighbors and discipling young believers, these men and women are representing Jesus well and are rejoicing as they see Him transform the hearts of those they minister to.



Emily and a few of her friends planned and led Vacation Bible School for elementary school-aged kids, many of whom were unexpectedly “stranded” here for the summer because of COVID. The theme was “God with Us”.

Angie continues serving the Lord at Grace International School. After teaching 1st grade eleven years, this year she is serving as a classroom assistant for 2nd grade.





In **August**, I traveled to the southern Thai province Phang Nga to visit and encourage World Partners staff and catch up with friends from two different ministries whom I have trained in the past. After I shared a message at Share the Love of Christ Church, a young man named Rahm made the decision to follow Christ. His wife is a young believer who is being discipled by one of the ladies in the church. Rahm had been the focus of much prayer over the past months, so there was much rejoicing when he decided to follow Christ. Many others in the church were also encouraged and renewed in their walks with the Lord after our time together.

I led a team of senior parents who organized an overnight retreat for Emily's class near the start of the school year. Her class' theme is "exalt", so we explored how we can exalt Jesus in our personal lives and how they can do so together as a class. It was a blessing to see how God worked in their lives and to be part of celebrating this important year in the lives of Emily and her friends.



I am continuing to advise and train the ministry team at The Way Foundation in Chiang Rai who are doing a wonderful job making disciples among the Lahu in northern Thailand. My focus in July and August was helping them to strengthen their organizational paradigm to best accommodate their mission.

I am meeting monthly with a group of disciple-makers who serve in the Thai province of Lampang. We are exploring various aspects of effective discipleship, such as asking good questions, integrating Scripture into conversations, and how to lead by example. As these young people pour their lives into others, God is working through them to expand His kingdom in their midst.





In **September**, Family Connection Foundation's food relief program partnered with another foundation to provide food for 1000 families affected by disability who have been negatively impacted by COVID. We distributed food at four government facilities and were also able to visit some of the families at home and pray for them.

During a trip to the province of Ubon Ratchathani, I visited and encouraged the ministry team of Ban Pak Ping, a ministry for disadvantaged people led by World Partners staff. These young people are learning trades and how to follow Jesus. I also helped advise and evaluate a crisis pregnancy ministry in the same province called The Light Center. They do a wonderful job sharing the love of Jesus with the young ladies they serve while training them to care for their babies.



Though it is very disappointing for me not to be able to visit my network of disciple-makers in the nations surrounding Thailand, it has been such a blessing to hear how God is working in their midst. Even with often extreme COVID-related restrictions, these men and women continue to share the love of Jesus with their neighbors and train up those who believe to be disciples of Jesus. As pastors and churches have moved away from ministry focused on church organizational growth to true relational discipleship, they have seen the Lord bring many new people into His kingdom and seen their disciples make disciples who make disciples.



In **October**, my ministry partner, Pastor Ben, and I led a discipleship training workshop for ethnic Karen church leaders in the Om Koi district of Chiang Mai. I led three sessions, each modeling a different kind of learning. The first was a kinesthetic less about who a disciple of Jesus is and what a disciple does that only uses the hands. The second lesson was an interactive, inductive Bible study about how Jesus trained his disciples. The final lesson was about discipleship movement impediments, and we used one of my visual training tools for that. For me, the highlight of our time together was hearing the testimonies of three generations of disciples from the Thai Lampang Church who shared with the workshop attendees. Their stories of how they live as disciples and help others be disciples are such a testament of what God has done in that church over the past several years!



Angie and her partner, Cheryl, celebrate the 50th day of school in 2nd grade. Normally, the lower elementary school celebrates the 100th day, and they still hope to do that. But, with COVID, you never know what will happen, so they decided to do something to mark the 50th day milestone too.



My partner, Tim, and I visited a ministry in Bangkok that serves prisoners, ex-prisoners and their families. Our goal was to learn some of their excellent strategies and implement them in our projects. We were blessed to hear that 20% of the prisoners in the Bangkok area are now followers of Jesus!