



GIMS *in* CAMBODIA

DEAR CITY LIGHT FAMILY,

Our First Christmas

Approaching our first Christmas in Cambodia, I (Carol) found myself wondering what kind of experience it would be. I certainly didn't expect to see so many Christmas trees, decorations, and lights all around Phnom Penh. After some investigating, I realized Christmas was a marketing opportunity for businesses and most people didn't know the correlation between Christmas and Jesus.

Each day, I pass by thousands of shrines known as spirit houses. They are in each home and place of business. Offerings are made to appease the spirits/gods and to ward off evil. Spirit houses are also resting places for recently deceased ancestors who are waiting to be reincarnated. If you strive to live a good, righteous life, you will be born into a better situation in your next life. If you fail, you will be born into a worse situation.

The beauty of the gospel gripped my heart again. Instead of requiring gifts in exchange for blessing and protection, God came down from heaven to give me a gift. His love, His blessing, His peace, His protection, His promise to give me hope and a future, His forgiveness, His salvation... are all freely given to me in Christ Jesus. What good news this is!

Pastor's Retreat

In January each year, the pastors of our church plants take a break from their busy lives to go on a retreat together. This time of spiritual recharging is much needed. The life of a Khmer pastor is not easy. Most are bi-vocational, balancing the responsibility of planting churches and caring for the flock while providing for their families. Many of their wives also run small businesses to make ends meet while raising children and actively serving in ministry.

These retreats provide a safe space for Khmer pastors to address these challenges and open up about topics that are hard to talk about like burnout and marriage struggles. Our retreat speaker, Missionary Richey Goodrich, spoke about the importance of having spiritual friendships and accountability. Richie encouraged the pastors to continue meeting together and to share openly about their struggles. He also taught about marriage and the danger of neglecting family for ministry.

We thank God for this year's retreat. It was a healing time and ultimately a testimony of God's faithfulness. Ten years ago, there were only about 4 pastors in our ministry according to our team leader. But this year, over 70 people were in attendance at our Pastors' Retreat comprised of 2 generations of believers. The church is growing in Cambodia. Praise God!

WE CONTINUE TO ASK FOR YOUR PRAYERS.



Pray for our Khmer Pastors.

Pray that God will continue to sustain them as they lead their ministries. Pray for God's provision for their physical needs. Pray for spiritual protection over their marriages.

We praise God for providing!

We are now in a good place with our support account. We are in awe of God's faithfulness and have a continued desire to be good stewards of the support we have received.

Please pray for an upcoming ministry event in February.

MTW Workplace Ministries is sending a team from the US and John is helping them organize an event called Business Essentials Seminar in Phnom Penh. Pray that this 5-day event will equip and bless the Khmer Christian business owners in attendance.

Please pray for John and Carol as they start learning with new Khmer language tutors. John will focus on reading the Khmer Bible with his tutor and Carol will focus on speaking. Please pray for Carol who has been feeling discouraged with her progress.



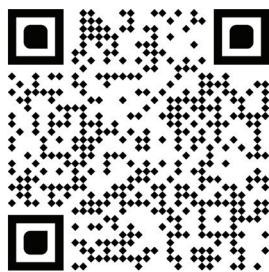
GIM'S FIRST CHRISTMAS



PASTOR'S RETREAT

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WINTER UPDATE

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