

IN PARTNERSHIP

June 2019



Tien and Sang's home in Binh Phuoc



Health, Hygiene and Hope

Imagine waking up in a house without a toilet. Not only is there no toilet, but no fresh flowing water, toilet paper, soap or hand towel. Where would you go?

Vietnam has seen huge progress in improved water supplies and access to sanitation. But, it is still a major challenge for some communities to access basic toilet and hygiene facilities. For many living in rural Vietnam, the only option is to go to the toilet in open bushland. This puts their health and safety at risk.

Human waste has serious consequences for water quality and food safety. Open defecation also makes girls, women and people affected by disability more vulnerable to physical violence.

In Vietnam, over five million people are affected by disability. More than three quarters of those people also live in rural areas. This means they miss out on the benefits of economic development offered in more populated cities. This was the case for Tien and her son Sang,* who is deaf and dumb.

Global Mission Partners (GMP) works with these disadvantaged communities to help them improve their sanitation, safety, health and dignity. This happens in partnership

with the Binh Phuoc Association for the Disabled the Poor and Orphans (BPADPO).

Before BPADPO heard of Tien and Sang's situation, they were living in a run-down house with no working toilet. They had no access to basic hygiene facilities in their area. This meant that they were forced to use open spaces instead of a toilet, even though they are vulnerable due to age and disability.

Tien and Sang only have a small amount of income from a disability pension, and from selling some of their garden produce. It was not enough to cover their basic expenses, such as food and electricity. This means house upkeep and repairs were even more out of reach.

Because of support from people like you, BPADPO provided Tien and Sang with a pedestal latrine and septic tank. They were able to have their floor replaced, and build new raised roofing.

Tien was overjoyed with the repairs and additions to her home. It means that they no longer need to huddle in one corner of the house when it rains. And they do not have to leave the safety and privacy of their home to use a toilet.

Tien and Sang are not the only people who benefit from improvements like these. In areas where people have reliable access to toilets, soap and safe clean water, health is greatly improved. Drinking water is not contaminated with human waste. This means serious diseases such as cholera, dysentery, typhoid and polio decrease.

With your support, disadvantaged communities can have their dignity, safety and health restored! You can help provide them not only with toilets, but also hope for a better future.

** The names of individuals in this story have been changed to protect their privacy.*

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News & Events



MID-YEAR APPEAL

Globally, 2.3 billion people do not have access to decent toilets. Having sanitation within reach is not only a necessity. It's also a human right for every person. It is even more important for people with a disability. Your tax deductible gift this end of financial year will restore hope and dignity, through life-changing sanitation projects! Give before 30 June.

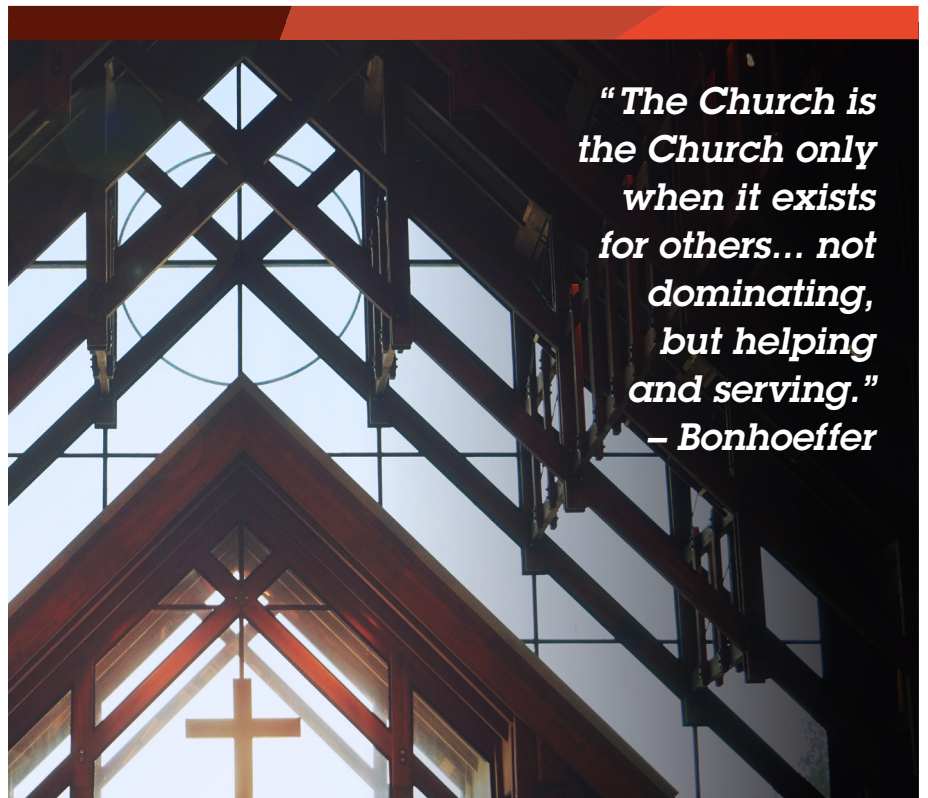
www.gmp.org.au/mid-year-appeal



NAIDOC Week 7-14 July

This year's theme is 'Voice. Treaty. Truth. Let's work together for a shared future'. This seeks to encourage all Australians to recognise the desire of Indigenous Australians to have a fair role and voice in decision making in our wonderful country so that we can all move forward together.

Join us at IMA in celebrating NAIDOC week this year in your church and community! There's heaps you can do including running a church service using our new Church Resource Kit, or join with a NAIDOC week event in your local area: www.naidoc.org.au/get-involved/naidoc-week-events



*"The Church is the Church only when it exists for others... not dominating, but helping and serving."
– Bonhoeffer*

Generosity at the Heart of the Church

Generosity is at the heart of what it means to be follower of Jesus. Jesus' ultimate act of generosity is his giving his life for us all. This gift brings forgiveness and new life.

Following the resurrection is another gift; the gift of his Spirit. This is a promise made and kept, and is gift for the purpose of witness and to enable the growth of the church.

The Holy Spirit brings other gifts – all of which are available for use in the growth and development of the church. The church community gains much from this gift and its outworking. In Ephesians the ministry that results from the gift – apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher – is for the whole body, that we might be fully what God can see us as being. We are the recipients of much generosity and this is in itself encouraging and transforming.

The history of the word 'generosity' links it to having a 'noble spirit or being of noble birth'. Christian generosity could be a sign of the nobility of our rebirth in Jesus. In the gift of the Spirit our sense of who we are is transformed and the outworking of this is the

transformation of our self and all that we do and stand for. The new life we are promised covers our spiritual, relational, family and material life.

To be generous is to have such a spirit affirming that that all we have is from God and is God's. All we have is for God's use and purpose. Sometimes it is expressed in our use of time, availability, hospitality and money. The signs of grace and personal blessing are seen in how we use these wonderful elements for the sake of others.

William Temple said, "The Church is the only society that exists for the benefit of those who are not its members"; and Bonhoeffer "The Church is the Church only when it exists for others...not dominating, but helping and serving. It must tell men of every calling what it means to live for Christ; to exist for others."

The church is an expression of God's generosity and we are called to be its generous body. May God bless us all, as we are generous.

*John Gilmore,
Executive Officer*



SPOTLIGHT

The Free Languages Teaching Program at Samut Songkhram Evangelism Center. Sourced from Samut Songkhram Evangelism Center website

Ministering to Marginalised People in Thailand

When they started their evangelism centre, Thaug Myint and Yu Mar Lar were sometimes the only people attending the Sunday church service. But, with time and faith, their ministry was able to reach out and touch the marginalised community around them.

Samut Songkhram in Western Thailand is home to thousands of migrant workers. This includes many Mon — a minority group that have traditionally lived north of Myanmar, and sought safety in parts of Thailand.

Mon people are subject to discrimination and have limited access to employment. It can take three Mon family members working sixty hours a week just to make an average wage. This can leave many people with few options. It also makes it easy for them to become exploited as workers.

Language can also create problems in Samut Songkhram. Mon people are disregarded because of their language, culture and ethnicity. It is difficult for them to communicate with authorities, or go to hospital when they are sick. Thaug Myint and his wife, Yu Mar Lar, saw these

problems and wanted to meet the needs of their community. They started The Samut Songkhram Evangelism Centre in 2017.

Global Mission Partners' International Church Partnership program is beginning to support this exciting new outreach. It is the first of its kind among the Mon people in this area. It reflects a deep commitment of the Church of Christ in Thailand to stand in solidarity with marginalised people.

At the centre, migrants living in the area are able to learn not only Thai, but English, Myanmar and Mon languages. The centre assists with contact between migrant workers and authorities or hospitals. They also offer remedial massage, and prayer for healing. In everything they do, it is Thaug Myint and Yu Mar Lar's passion to share the gospel.

The Sunday service they host started out small, but it soon started to grow. New believers came seeking out a community. Others joined because they were interested in knowing more about God. The centre is now also used for weekly Bible studies, fasting and praying.

Thaug Myint and Yu Mar Lar have also expanded their ministries to prison inmates. Many of them are Mon people, or other migrant workers, who are frequently persecuted. The Myanmar Christian Prison Ministry in Thailand (MCPMT) is part of the evangelism centre's mission. They visit inmates once a month to provide company and share the gospel.

Thaug Myint and Yu Mar Lar want to see more activities taking place at the evangelism center this year. They hope to have an even bigger impact on the Samut Songkhram area. With your partnership they can spread their reach even further, and keep ministering to the marginalised people around them.



Prasit Tongtuswattana at the opening of The Samut Songkhram Evangelism Center Sourced from the Samut Songkhram Evangelism Center website



embody Mission Conversation at York Street Church of Christ Ballarat, May 2019



embody Mission Conversations

Mission is our participation in God's ongoing and unfolding plan for restitution, reconciliation, and redemption locally, nationally and globally. If that sounds like a lot to grapple with...that's because it is. The *missio Dei* (mission of God) is as broad as God is broad, and as specific as God is specific in relationships with individual people.

embody Mission Conversations are spaces we're making for young people and leaders of young people to explore some of these ideas. At the end of May in Victoria, we gathered with young everyday missionaries in local churches in Ballarat and Mt Evelyn. We chatted to them about local mission, the

ways we can see God at work in our neighbourhood, and the ways that we can partner in mission.

We were blessed to have the input of Brad Coath who, with his family, has been embedded in his neighbourhood with Urban Neighbours of Hope (UNOH) for many years. With Brad and everyone else there, we explored discernment, planning, and practices both spiritual and practical that will sustain us as we follow God into the neighbourhood.

Other Mission Conversations will be happening in Victoria and New South Wales throughout the year.



Connect with embody

All the information about embody Mission Conversations goes up on our social media channels, so follow @embodyau on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to see the details as soon as they go out.



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Above: embody Mission Conversation at Discovery Church, May 2019