

Chang Chronicles

~ October 2012 ~



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

No, life isn't always okay. A friend of ours wrote in a recent email that from looking at our photos, we seem to be doing okay. If our lives were a mini-series, then this update is another series about the power of God at work in lives that are not always okay. The reality is that it isn't easy to hear about a sick or dying friend back home and not be able to comfort them there, to hear your own child ask where our "real" home will be, or to wonder when you will be able to move from "surviving" to "thriving" in a new culture.

This isn't meant to be a depressing update though. On the contrary, it's meant to be an uplifting one to emphasize that "*we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us*" (2 Cor 4:7). No, it's not a new theme, but the following are new stories to testify to God's power and to answered prayers.

Work Permit & Visas: Upon receiving our dependency visa letter for Lila and the boys, we were informed that we cannot actually receive the visas without a work permit. This was a new policy change. Since work permits can take a while, we were quite frustrated because we knew that once Lila and the boys' current visas expire at the beginning of November, then they would need to leave the country for new visas. This meant additional time and money. Yet after a couple weeks, we received word that we can pick-up Dave's work permit and the families' dependency visas all in the same day on October 17th.

Vehicle in Thailand: It's never easy to raise additional funds beyond your set support figure, yet we needed to do so in order to have the money to purchase a car to use in Thailand. Another challenge is the fact that taxes on car purchases can be as high as 40-50%, and therefore prices for vehicles in general tend to be higher here. Yet within 4 months, we have been able to raise sufficient funds. Since purchasing the car, we have already been able to help other missionaries and provide rides for local Thai Christians to and from church as well.

Our Children: Our younger son had been struggling a bit with his behavior, and the Lord helped us realize that he needed to undergo homeschooling a bit different from his older brother. He simply needed more one-on-one attention and security through more "mommy time." Since then, he has been doing much better. Both Caleb and Caden also had the opportunity to attend a homeschool conference this month.

Condo in Chicago: The renter of our condo in the Chicago area had stopped renting at the beginning of September. We were quite worried about continued mortgage payments without rent money coming in. Yet at the beginning of this month, God has provided another renter.

Praise God for answered prayers! We do not always know how or when God will answer, yet we know that His power is more than sufficient. We continue to cherish your prayers for us!

Gazing heavenward ~ *Dave, Lila, Caleb, & Caden*

Prayer Requests:

1. **Language & Culture Studies** – Pray that we may finish well here in Lopburi, and continue to live out the gospel before our Thai teachers.
2. **Thai Church & English Teaching** – Pray that we may continue to serve and encourage the body of Christ at Phrasiri Church, and to serve the community through English teaching.
3. **Relationships in the Community** – This is still a struggle at times, but pray that we may continue to build on the relationships we have made already. Pray also that we may learn how to build relationships with Thais better so that we may be Christ's witnesses in our community & neighborhood.
4. **South Thailand** – Pray for this harvest field and for our preparations in moving there.

Upcoming Schedule:

- Oct. 17th – Pick-up work permit & dependency visas in Bangkok
- Oct 29th – One-year anniversary of leaving US
- Dec. 8th – Level 1 language exam for Dave
- Dec. 15th – Level 1 language exam for Lila
- Dec. 22nd – Leave Lopburi, Thailand
- Dec 23rd to Jan 7th – Visit Dave's parents in Taiwan for the holidays (another answered prayer because a good friend of Dave's parents wanted to pay for this expense)
- Jan. 9th – Arrive in South Thailand



A recent photo of Bangkok taken during our field trip to survey OMF ministry work there

Caleb & Caden's Corner:

(Photos from August, September, & October)

With our preparation to move to South Thailand, Caleb recently asked us, *"Where are we going to live forever?"* We answered, *"Hmm, well, we're going to live in heaven forever, but nothing's really forever here on earth (except God, His Word, and souls of people)."* This really challenged us to think about how to answer Caleb & Caden's questions in a nurturing yet biblical way as they themselves continue to process their experience living in the mission field and their identity.



~ Family photo taken at Phrasiri Church ~



~ Caleb & Caden at the Coconut Factory during our cultural field trip to Amphawa ~



~ Caleb & Caden with visiting staff members from our OMF International US homeside office ~



~ Caleb & Caden in Sunday School with other Thai kids at Phrasiri Church ~



~ Caleb & Caden at OMF International's Homeschool Conference (Oct. 8th to 13th) ~