

MoesGoes to Cambodia

JULY
2016

HOPE ANEW

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. - Jeremiah 29:11

Whenever anything comes to an end, we look for marks of achievement, things we can point to that highlight what we have accomplished or made a difference in. For my English students, this came at our end-of-term ceremony this past month, where classes showcased their skills (my phonics class did a thorough rendition of "Apples and Bananas" with all the vowel sounds!) and individuals were recognized for top marks in their studies (I'm pictured with my top students, above).



For me, a different type of ending has come. On July 8, I'll leave Kruos Village after almost a year of service here. As I prepare to leave, I find myself looking for those markers of success: students who speak better English, a more developed church community, quantifiable increases in agricultural yields or nutritional intake. But as I reflect, I'm finding these markers don't exist - at least not in the ways I'd have originally expected. Instead of seeing end marks, I'm seeing circles. Relationships that continue to heal, knowledge that continues to develop, a community that continues to flourish. These things existed before me and will exist after me - and I am just a marker in their own path to something greater.

This truth has been evident in the fact that this season has also been one of beginnings. My coworker and close friend SoThorng was married in the church's first official Christian ceremony (left), and farmers have begun the process of planting again. I think the best thing about life right now is that it is getting green again. It might be the end of something for me, but this place springs anew. The seasons have come full circle and the world continues to grow.

PRAYER REQUESTS

*For myself and fellow YAGMs around the world, that we find peace in our final moments in community and engage in meaningful and healthy transition home.

*For the future of the Lutheran Church of Cambodia as it continues to grow and develop in the coming years.

*For the friends and relationships we all value most deeply in our lives - that they may continue to shape us in ways wholesome and holy.





Photos (top to bottom): Daily Bread staff and participants; prayer before meals; our head chef Long Sol prepares lunch; a participant enjoys a nutritious, wholesome lunch.

photo credit: Stephanie Berkas

GIVE US OUR DAILY BREAD



photo credit: Stephanie Berkas

One of my favorite Kruos Village programs is Daily Bread, an ELCA World Hunger-supported project that provides 50+ local children from Kruos's neighboring village of Tueck Jehn with a nutritious and carefully balanced meal four days a week. Youth also receive classes in English education, sanitation and hygiene, and introductory bible study. This project's mission is to not only support the health and nutrition of these children, but also to alleviate families financially giving them peace of mind and opportunities for economic growth.



photo credit: Stephanie Berkas

THANK YOU

I'd like to express my gratitude to those that have sponsored a day of my year in Cambodia, especially those who have sponsored days in May, June, or July:

Angela & Doug Erickson	John Moes
Pam Johnson	Pat & Kathy O'Connor Family
Mark & Lisa Leutem	Bill & Carla Philips
Kurt & Kathe Mages	Buster & Helen Schneider
Jackie Moes	Mary & Pete Swanson
Jill Moes	Steve Weber

WHAT'S NEXT?

While you'll be hearing from me again this fall, you may be curious about what happens after I leave Kruos Village on July 8.

I will end my year with fellow ELCA volunteers in Phnom Penh and then plan to spend some time traveling around Southeast Asia before returning home in late August (just in time for the state fair!). I have accepted a short-term role with the Campaign for the ELCA, representing the church's various programs (including YAGM) to donors and congregations around the United States. I will be based in the Twin Cities, and hope to be able to see many of you and catch up!

There will be a new volunteer in Kruos Village this fall! If you'd like to continue to see what YAGMs like her are up to in the world, you can follow along via the YAGM Facebook page or on the ELCA YAGM website.



JESSICA MOES

follow along at:

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**KHMER WORDS
OF THE MONTH:**

ការចាប់ផ្តើម

Kar Chabphdaem
"The Beginning"