



August 2014 News

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Look for us:



Life Matters

**“ ... for in Him we live and move and have our being,”
 Acts 17:28a NKJ**

From the initial joining of two tiny cells to the first miraculous cry of a newborn; from the joys and laughter of toddlerhood to the excitement of the first day of school. Sporting events attended and school concerts enjoyed. The pride of high school graduation.

Then young adulthood with its many challenges and opportunities. Careers chosen, life partners chosen, and babies welcomed: the circle of life continues. Weighty responsibilities, life changing decisions. Moving. Sometimes houses, sometimes towns. Sometimes states, sometimes even countries. The only certain thing is that everything changes. Decades passing, the years whirling by like a revolving door...so fast, we can barely focus on all that we are passing.

Yet, life matters. To the One who sees it all, from that first Divine Breath breathed into our mothers' wombs, to the last rattling breath on our death beds. Life matters. This is the heartbeat of the Gospel, that not one breath we take, not one tear we shed, goes unnoticed by the One Who created us.

No other world religion has at the helm this loving, concerned, involved with both hands on Creator/Father God. Abba we are told to call Him:

Daddy. He calls us His sons and daughters.

Jesus taught us to pray: Our Father.

He is the God Who Sees, He is the God Who Hears. He is the God Who Knows and the God Who Cares. He is our God. Jesus told us that even the very hairs on our heads were numbered.

Life matters. In the midst of our fleeting seasons it is good to pause. To reflect. To acknowledge Him in all our ways, so that He can keep our paths straight, as He promised He would. When we are lost, He knows how to find us. When we are overwhelmed, He knows how to come along side. When our hearts are broken, He knows how to draw near, and pour in His peace, that passes all of our understanding. Life matters. Our life matters. To Him.

Let us fill our lives with worship, prayer, service, kindness, and people to love. In this way, we bring glory to the Father, and let our lights shine in a dark and uncaring world. Thank you, Lord, that one of the defining points of our existence ... is that life matters.



DEBBIE ECKER
 Vice President
 Firstlight International



Thais Come To Christ In Nong Bua Lam Phu, Thailand

During a regional gathering of the Firstlight Fellowship Church Network - Thailand, Pastor Chan Wit (right) prays with a young Thai man (left) to receive Jesus into his heart for the first time. PTL!

Last month, two days were set aside for revival type services for the local communities in the main district of Nong Bua Lam Phu. Not just for those who came to the church building, but as several evangelistic teams were sent out two by two, to preach the gospel, and to pray for those who were sick, **thirteen others came to Christ that day also! Oh Happy Day!**

You, too, can rejoice with us! Working together as a Team, we are bringing Christ into rural areas of Thailand where there is very little or no gospel witness in their communities. You, too, have a part in the harvest that is coming forth.

Thank you doing your part in prayer and in finance. Your contribution does make a difference.

It's All about Him

I remember a time in the late 1980's and early 1990's when I was an elder in a church outside Chicago. I was in my 30's and I believed I had what was necessary to be an elder of a small independent church, according to Titus chapter one and chapter two.

As a group of men, we often found ourselves trying to find our way on how best to function more properly as a group of elders, according to the scriptures. There were times we shined with the Glory of the Lord and other times when we just could not seem to get anything right. It was a learning experience for everyone in the group - especially for me.

I can now look back on this time in my life and realize I was being tested in the fire of leadership. All of us were doing what we believed was the right thing despite the consequences. All of us were trying to follow God and the scriptures. But as you know... it can get a little messy in relationships, with "problem people" more acutely when people with problems are involved.

Nevertheless, it was a time when strong bonds were forged and strengthened while others were broken, hopefully only for a time. To this day some of my fellow elders during that time look back on this time as having no redeeming value. On the other hand, I received grace from those whom I hurt, love from those I offended, and strength from God, who taught me many valuable lessons. The most important being: *"It is not about us, it's all about Him"*.

So the next time you find yourself being tested or in a difficult relationship, try and step back for a moment. Realize that it's not about your comfort, your correctness or your need to win. Our lives need to be about Christ. It is He who has called us to serve Him and to spread the Good News. It needs to be all about Him!



JAY DEEMS
Board Member
Firstlight International



Reaching Children For Christ

Located in a small village of Khong Pho, in northeast Thailand, children like these are gathering weekly to learn about Jesus and God's great love. The Lord has given us a tremendous opportunity to reach children for Christ in places like these.

Sitting on straw mats spread out over the dirt floor of one of the Firstlight Fellowship house churches that is being planted there, they listen intently to bible stories and lessons about life. Often times this is done through games and competition. Rewards or candy prizes are given to those who know the answer (*if they were paying attention*) or to the team who has gained the most points wins! Songs, too, are used to convey a message or themes about God which creates a wonderful opportunity for His word to be sown into their little lives. Our hope is that one day there will be a mighty harvest of righteousness.

You see, we want these kids and many others to have the opportunity to come to know Jesus and His great love for them. **Join us each month as we serve together in God's plan to save the lost.**

Thailand / Laos

Thailand: Just this past month, I was with our Firstlight Area Teams in Seka, Nong Bua Lam Phu, and Khon Kaen. The network of Firstlight Fellowship Churches are doing well. In each location there is growth. New project staff are being added to care for kids through Families Without Fathers (FWF) and in overall operations. Regular trainings are taking places in Seka, and in Khon Kaen as new cells are being planted there. Plans for Dr. George Rooney eye care teams are coming together for September.

Laos: As part of the E5 Project for Laos, Tony Foster and I have been working on a plan to put a interlocking brick project for church planting to help support national church planters. This month five from Laos will be trained in Thailand on how to make and market bricks as a business platform for church planting. Equipment purchases are being made this month also. We are most excited and yet equally humbled by these amazing opportunities to advance the kingdom in this region.



DAN ECKER
President
Firstlight International

Featured Quotes

Quote Section:

* Prayer is finding out what God wants to do, then asking Him to do it. – Graham Cooke

* The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is now. – Chinese Proverb

Featured Trivia

Did You Know?

Dan & Debbie have been married for 27 years. Dan is 52 years old, his birthday is November 12th. Deb's birthday is August 23rd. Josiah birthday is April 7th. He is 23 years old. Dan and Debbie have been in Thailand for 15 years. Firstlight Foundation in Thailand was started in 2007. It is 7 years old. Debbie has been in full time ministry for 30 years. Dan for 27 years. They have been to 5 continents and have ministered in more than 20 countries.

E5 Project - Kingdom Relationships

Discipleship is up close and personal. You must get close to the person that you disciple. If you can make disciples you will plant a church. However, we cannot do it alone. We need Kingdom Relationships.

Paul often spoke highly of his team and called them his fellow laborers, his co-workers. Developing a lasting bond of friendship was the method he chose. This commitment to relationships is how Jesus built His church. It is obvious that they were more than just mere employees; they were his friends whom he could rely on. The effectiveness of the ministry of the Apostle Paul was largely due to the fact that he was an effective team

builder. Paul multiplied himself by helping those who served him grow to the next level. These men and women were not only his workers, they were his ministry partners. This is how he planted churches.

I thank God for the Kingdom Relationship with Dan and Debbie Ecker, the Firstlight Area Teams and Firstlight Fellowship Churches in Thailand. The scriptures teach us that two are always better than one. We are better because of the Kingdom of God relationships that God honors us with.

Another Kingdom Relationship that I am thankful for is the one I

have with Nott in Boklua, in northern Thailand. It is the Kingdom Relationship that has formed our partnership to see 56 villages reached with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Coming up in November of this year, Dan and I will be working with Nott and others to bring in medical and evangelistic teams into the Boklua area in our efforts of church planting there.



TONY FOSTER
Church Planter
E5 Project

Featured Article

On A Personal Note



We are loving our summer in Pennsylvania! After his trip to Thailand, earlier this month, Dan plans spending some time fishing with his brothers, his nephews, and Josiah! Yes! Josiah will be coming in for a visit, later this month from Seattle, and we are so excited! There can be no other feeling so great, than the three of us, under the same roof, however briefly that may be. Dan was out there (in Seattle) in late June to help Josiah get settled into a new living situation. Josiah has stayed in Seattle for the summer for work, but his employers were kind enough to allow him a week to come and see his folks. Also, this month is my father, Jim Graham's 85th birthday. No small landmark, that, and we are looking forward to celebrating his special day with him. We have also been so blessed to spend time with dear friends, times in prayer and worship, times in meals shared and fellowship. During times like these, God is refilling our tanks, and He often uses the love and fellowship of others to do that. Thank you, all for your continued prayer and financial giving each month. We are blessed by your partnership is so many ways.

Kingdom Blessings as we put Him first in all that we do.



DEBBIE ECKER
Vice President
Firstlight International

Featured Item

Prayer Points

“ You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.” Ps. 16:11

Please pray for:

1. Thailand during this time of political change.
2. For ALL Firstlight Projects, Area Teams & Churches: People - Places: Open Doors, Divine Favor, Lasting Fruit.
3. For God's abundant provision for Firstlight International during the 3rd quarter of 2014.