



December 2014 News

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Look for us:



Gift Exchange

“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich.” II Cor. 8:9 NAS

There is something universally compelling about the Christmas story. Against all odds a Child is born to a virgin. He is born in obscurity, impoverished, without so much as a bed of His own. Yet, even in His birth, Heaven could not keep the secret. The sky was filled with the light of a very special star, a beacon of hope for all mankind; a beacon of light in a dark world; a beacon of love for the ages. The air was filled with angelic chorus's praising the name of this Most High God. The King of Glory, born in a manger, come to save His people from their sins. Come to bring peace on earth, good will towards men.

It was the ultimate Gift exchange. God, who IS Love, gave us His only Son, that through His life and through His death, mankind could find hope, peace and ultimate redemption. Why did our Savior have to die? Because, greater love has no man than this: that He would lay His life down for His friends.

Never in the history of the world had there been a God who had been born poor and lowly, risen to spiritual greatness and authority, and then, gently laid His life down for the sins of all mankind.

This was the ultimate Gift Exchange. Our lives for His. Our blessing for His poverty. Our wholeness from His brokenness. Our joy from His sorrow. Our belonging from His rejection. The ULTIMATE Gift exchange. Like no other, ever.

This Christmastide, as we look back through the years and remember the loves and faces we have enjoyed in our homes, whether groups of young folks on the blustery coast of the North Sea in Scotland, to our homes in Thailand, and the various missionaries and students and friends who have shared our table...and shared our love, to these most recent years and being blessed to celebrate once again with our own precious parents and siblings, nieces and nephews. All faces become clear and familiar in the lights of Christmas. The songs and the giving spirit are still the same.

The LOVE that came down that Christmas morning long ago, is the love that has brought all of those faces...and memories into our lives.



DEBBIE ECKER
Vice President
Firstlight International

He Gave All

Most of us love Christmas! It's a time with family, gift giving and receiving and for those of us who call Jesus our Savior, it's a time to be reminded of the most perfect, precious and sacrificial gift of all time...the birth of Christ our Lord.

However, it is so easy during this time of the year to be overwhelmed or to get caught up in the cultural trappings. I do! I love the snow, the cold, the smells, the fires in the fireplace, the children and grandkids getting all excited and being able to relax and have fun with friends and family.

This year make sure you take some time to think on the old cliché, "The Real Meaning of Christmas". Given the opportunity we want to share with those around us why we celebrate the birth of Christ. It's a perfect opportunity to ask the yet to be saved what they believe about Christmas and the birth of Christ. It's also a great way to steer conversations with friends, family and coworkers to what is really important during this time of year despite what appears to be "urgent" in our lives.

Church...the Good News never gets old and Christmastime is a time

when many are more willing to listen to your unique story!

I want to thank Dan and Deb for the work that they do that I get to be a part of and for the passion they share for the lost souls of Thailand who need the Good News. Because of them I get to share the impact and the passion rubs off just enough to get me excited to share the Good News with those who do not know Him in my world!

Merry Christmas everyone!



JAY DEEMS
Board Member
Firstlight International

With Heart Felt Thanks!



Thank you for helping to make 2014 a remarkable year. Your prayers and financial giving each month has brought forth a bountiful harvest of righteousness in places like: Thailand, Laos, Myanmar, and China.

With your help, the work of Firstlight International has prospered in the following areas this year:

- *75 plus children from fatherless homes in 6 locations being reached through Families Without Fathers (FWF).
- * Expended the network of 5 churches in Thailand.
- * Held 1 annual, 8 day eye care outreach: Over a 1,500 screened in multiple villages in main provinces in Thailand.
- * 250 total salvations in 5 locations this year.
- * 35 plus total water baptisms.
- * Multiple trainings of national workers in China, Laos & Myanmar.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Firstlight International, Firstlight Foundation in Thailand, Firstlight Area Teams, Firstlight Fellowship Church Network - Thailand, and on behalf of the many people in the place where we serve, thank you for helping to make all of this possible.

Dan & Debbie Ecker

Top Stories - *The Follow Up Process Continues ...*

Last month we shared with you that close to 200 Thais came to Christ in multiple villages in two main provinces during eye care screening outreaches for evangelism with Dr. George Rooney and His Servants Ministries (HSM). Outreaches like these take place annually and it is proving to be an effective platform for church planting in Thailand.

Right now our Firstlight Area Teams in Khon Kaen and in Seka, are involved in the follow up on those who have accepted Christ. Home visits are taking place to distribute blankets and Bibles in each location.

During each of these initial visits the process of discipleship begins. Right from the start new believers learn the importance of prayer, scripture reading, fellowship with others, and about sharing their faith. Water baptisms are sure to follow as the decision to follow Christ becomes more real. Please pray!



Top Stories - *New Cells Being Planted ...*

This particular group meets at a Thai elementary school in Khon Kaen, Thailand. This is where they met Christ during the eye care screening outreach for evangelism with Dr. George Rooney, HSM. Now they are 'having church' at this location each week. Over the past three weeks the response has been amazing!

Most of these come from a poor village area set up right next to the rail way line. We now have the opportunity of bringing the good news of Jesus into that area in a greater way. Through these types of 'cell' or 'home church' type meetings many more can hear the Gospel. As the cooler weather hits Thailand, the blankets they received are an added blessing from the Lord. Ask the Lord to send forth His Spirit in a mighty way upon each and everyone!



ThaiLights: Looking Unto Jesus!

I have always enjoyed this time of year during Christmas and New Year. For us life slows down some while we take time to be together as a Family and do things that are fun. For me it's time to be in the woods hunting deer, tying flies for trout, and going steelhead fishing with my brothers. Debbie and I, too, enjoy decorating the house, setting up the Christmas tree, preparing and eating home cooked meals. Yum! Josiah, too, is always with us during this time of year and that makes it even more special.

As I think back on the previous year, I am thankful for the many things that took place and for the countless number of blessings I

received. I am in awe when I think about the lives of those who we've impacted through the work of Firstlight International this year.

I think of the the children and families from fatherless homes being reached. For the lost souls that have come to Christ this year. For the leaders that have been trained in places like China, and Myanmar. For the growth of the churches that is taking place. Praise God!

Blessed by an amazing team of national people that I get to lead, we have made some major progress this year. You, too, have had a significant part of bringing lasting change to people and places of the world that

have very little or no gospel witness in their communities. Through the work of Firstlight, the Kingdom is advancing.

Looking ahead our eyes are on Jesus! The Lord's plans for us in 2015 are great. We are believing the promise of a preferred future of His Kingdom coming to earth as it is in Heaven in every place we go.

Let's get ready for 2015. Happy, Faith Filled New Year!



DAN ECKER
President
Firstlight International

On A Personal Note



As this year draws to a close, we are ever thankful for all of you who have stood with us, prayed for us and given so kindly to the ministry of Firstlight. It is in awe that we look back upon a year that was FILLED, FILLED, FILLED, with wonderful times. So much outreach! So many reached with the gospel. But also, precious times, in our lives, to be with our families, and with our son, Josiah. Dan was able to spend a few days in his precious woods behind his mother's house, and to go fishing with his older brothers. I was able to visit my family as well as hosting dear friends from all over in our home. By the time you all read this, Dan will be heading out for one last trip this year, to Myanmar again, with Chuck Lenhart. He will get back home just in time for Christmas, as will Josiah come in round about the same time. We are really looking forward to a few weeks together, doing familiar things. Well, really, our greatest gift we often say, is just being under the same roof for two weeks in a row. I am sure many of you with grown children can relate to that. We pray an awesomely blessed Christmas season to all of you and your beloveds, from our family. We are so grateful for that wonderful Gift that Father sent to us so long ago...the Gift that makes us all family.



DEBBIE ECKER
Vice President
Firstlight International

Prayer Points

“You have crowned the year with Your bounty, And Your paths drip with fatness.” Psalm 65:11 NAS

Please pray for:

1. Myanmar Dec.10-20th: Zomi national missionary mobilization movement Myanmar.
2. For new cells to be planted among those who have come to Christ. (see pg.3)
3. Strong finish to 2014 - poised for growth in 2015.
4. Divine favor, abundant provision and lasting fruit.