



Doing Good That Is Good™

The newsletter of FARMS International Formerly AGRICULTURAL EVANGELISM

Mien Program - Northern Thailand December 2006

Providing revolving entrepreneurial loans to poor Christian families – Galatians 6:10

Dear Special Friends,

GREETINGS IN JESUS! May the Lord bless and keep you as you walk in his light this season.

One of the highlights of my work is the chance to interview those you help through the ministry of FARMS International. Their stories are simply fascinating and encouraging. I would love to share them all with you, but this is impossible. So, as I am able, I share a few of these wonderful testimonies so that you too can thank the Lord Jesus for the blessing FARMS has been to so many. Following is the story of a family touched by God after having to flee their home in Laos. It is a wonderful account of God's faithfulness and of the people he used to bring this family out of darkness to a life filled with joy and hope. Yes, this is what Christmas is all about.

A great story:

Missionary Mike Phillips introduced me to Mong Ching as we entered her simple, well kept home in northern Thailand. Mong Ching is a very distinguished lady filled with pride and self worth. She was so eager to tell her story and as the morning went on, I understood why. Before me was a lady, now 73 years old, who traced her life back to the hills of Laos.



Mrs. Mong Ching

Forced by the raging and growing war of the early 70's, they fled their homeland and found their way to northern Thailand. Starting over is always difficult for refugees, and their situation was no exception.

Mong Ching shared her story with great enthusiasm. God saw this young family and the other Mien tribal people that were forced to resettle in Thailand. He had a plan, and his plan included a young missionary family with five children, the Callaways. He had sent them to northern Thailand to evangelize the Mien. Their

task was not easy. Primitive conditions were the norm. This was real pioneer missionary work. In the course of their outreach they met Mong Ching and her family. Her husband was a hopeless opium addict of 18 years, and not a likely candidate to receive the gospel. That did not deter the Callaways. Even though, the message of Christ did not seem to make sense to the animistic Mien, the message was shared again and again, until a breakthrough occurred. Mong Ching's husband accepted the Lord Jesus Christ! He was the first convert from the Mien tribe.



The late C.W. Callaway and wife Lois

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The Callaways ministered the Word to this "hopeless" opium addict and in 18 days, 18 years of addiction vanished. As Mrs. Ching retold the story she kept saying "Thank God, thank God, it was a miracle." She soon followed in accepting the Lord Jesus and as a couple they never looked back. They began helping the Callaways in their courageous outreach to the Mien. She recounted that when the trails



Mrs. Mong Ching telling her story.



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became too steep, that C.W. and Lois Calloway would hold on to the tail of their horse to make it up the hills. She also shared that during an outreach in a hostile new village, a man entered the meeting and fired a gun. The bullet went through the bamboo wall of the house Mong Ching was resting in and grazed her head. Strong opposition to the gospel was not uncommon.

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Tragedy struck Mr. and Mrs. Ching in the form of a fire that destroyed their home. They went to Callaways to see what they could do. They suggested they move in with



Mrs. Ching Showing some of her cross stitch

them to help with their family and ministry. This they did until they could build another home. Mong Ching and many other Mien women were excellent cross stitch embroiderers and Lois Calloway helped with small loans to get the ladies started in business. However, they had no way to market their products. Therefore, Lois took the problem to the Queen Mother of Thailand and received permission to start a retail outlet in Chiang Mai for the Mien women. Surprisingly, this was the start of the now famous Chiang Mai night market, a major tourist attraction in Thailand.

Mong's husband died about 4 years ago. Widowed, she now needed a way to provide for herself. Her family pro-



Mike Phillips with sample of fresh and dried rattan. The dried rattan is used in traditional Mien cooking. The product is exported to the USA.

vided some help, but it was not enough to sustain her. She contacted the FARMS committee and they helped her with a loan to process and export native cooking herbs. There was a ready market for all she could produce within the Mien community in America. When asked how she carries out the project, she laughed throwing back her head and said, "In my heart I am still young, but my body is a different story." She explained that she can no longer go to the for-



Mien woman in traditional dress



Mrs. Ching making a loan repayment to FARMS committee member, Suwang Sontawong

est to gather the rattan vines that she dries for export. She therefore, uses the loan to hire others to do the gathering. Packaging and postage are her other expenses. She can sell a kilo of dried herbs for about 600 baht (\$16). She is so thankful for the help that the FARMS committee has given her. I am sure it brings back good memories of her first such help from Lois Callaway. Her life story could fill a book, but even for this small glimpse I am thankful, and I am sure you are also.

Recently it was suggested that the Mien form their own FARMS committee. This has now been done, so do pray that the FARMS ministry to this dynamic Christian community grows and prospers.



FARMS loans help many Christian Mien with coffee projects



Mien worship service

Pies for the Poor!

A TRADITION THAT STARTED IN 1956 is still blessing mission work around the world. East Fallowfield U.M.C, Atlantic, Pennsylvania, set a record this year by baking 1,952 pies as a fund raiser for missions. This effort took 300 volunteers and involved fifteen committees. Just for fun, what would you

guess the ingredients totaled? The pies used about: 1,000 pounds of flour, 650 pounds of sugar, 400 pounds of Crisco, 10 pounds of salt, one pound

of cinnamon, 45 gallons of milk, 1,100 eggs, 180 pounds of black berries, 240 pounds of cherries, 10 bushels of apples and 50 pounds of coconut! Whew!

They write, "We thank you for being out there in the Mission Field, taking our Lord to his children who don't know about Him. It is an honor for us to have FARMS to support with the proceeds from our project!"





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Meet the board: Pastor Chris Hess

CHRIS HESS was born and raised in Duluth, Minnesota. He worked in Seattle for several years. In 1992 he was sent out as a missionary to Russia. There he met his wife, Morgan, who was from Rhode Island. After their marriage, they served another seven years in Moscow, Russia in a church planting ministry. Chris was instrumental in starting and pastoring a new fellowship.



In the summer of 2002, God called them to back to the USA to plant a new church in northern Minnesota - Calvary Chapel Bemidji.

They have been blessed with 4 growing boys pictured from left to right: Silas (5), Caleb (8), Luke (7), and Ben (5).

Chris has served on the board of trustees of FARMS for five years. We are very thankful for the insight he brings as a pastor and a missionary.



*Blessings in Jesus
to all of you!*

*May you have
a wonderful Christmas
and a Peace filled New Year.*

*Enebet "Emma" Davies,
Joe and Pat Richter,
and
Nathan McLaughlin.*

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