

THE SARVERS

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Our Address til July!
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HAPPY SONGKRAAN!



Hello! once again from the other side of the globe. As usual, much has gone on since we last wrote to you. Here in Thailand, we've just come through yet another busy holiday season, this one known as Songkran. Songkran is to Thais what Christmas is to most families back in America (and much of the Western world). It's the time of year when bosses give their employees a few extra days off to go back home and visit with all of their relatives. Everyone gets excited, everybody plans ahead, and every person seems to have that extra bit of cheer to share.

Songkran is an ancient tradition that falls every year on April 13-15. There are festivals, parades, and fairs throughout the country, as well as beautiful ceremonies to honor parents and elders in the community. This is done by pouring perfumed water over their hands and offering blessings for the future. Throughout the generations, another tradition has also developed from this ritual, as Songkran happens to take place during the hottest part of the year (well over 100°F). For 3 to 10 days, depending on your region, businesses and schools will close so crowds can gather on the streets for what is perhaps the world's largest water fight!

As you can see in the photos above, families and friends stand ready with giant basins of water (often chilled with loads of ice), buckets, huge water guns, and hoses, ready to soak whoever walks or rides by! Many also smear a talc paste on other's faces as well when saying "sawatdii pii mai," as Songkran also marks the beginning of the Thai new year, according to ancient calendars. It was a joy for us to be a part of the celebrations with our Thai friends for the very first time! If you'd like to know more, please check out Sara's blog for a 3-day breakdown of Songkran and more photos of the action.

Everyday life in Thailand



Market food on rice.



Elephants on the street.



Daily prayer for those who worship idols and spirits.



Becoming friends with the people in our community.

We are continuing to learn...

... more about ourselves, more about the Thai language, and more about God's call on our lives here in Thailand.

Our time in Singapore was quite beneficial as we were able to get some needed rest and spend some time encouraging other missionaries who are just now coming to the field. It was a wonderful time of fellowship, training, and getting to know the heart of OMF as a truly international organization.

We have also been studying Thai full-time for 9 months now, and it is amazing to see just how far we have come. Your prayers have helped enabled us to be good learners, and we will soon be finished with our first year of study. We are each wrapping up our seventh module, having only two more to go. Our plan is to complete the year one exam in early July before moving on to our next ministry location.

At this time, we are looking to work with a Thai church on the North side of Bangkok, though firm details have not yet been set into place. This church

family was established a number of years ago, is completely led by a Thai pastor, and is now beginning to feel the call into planting other churches. This is where we come into the picture.

The church is situated among 7 major universities, and currently has no active outreach on any of the campuses. Our desire is to help the church engage the youth culture which surrounds them, as we see such great potential for young people in Thailand to experience Christ in new ways. As we seek to help this group of believers step into fresh areas of outreach and church planting, we will learn more of what it means to work in the context of Thai leadership, continue broadening our knowledge of the Thai language, and use what we have to encourage this body in carrying out the vision for reaching their community.

Please pray with us as we work figure out all of the details necessary to begin this new season on ministry for us here in Thailand. The next couple of months will surely be busy, but also very exciting!

POINTS FOR PRAYER

- ✦ **Praise** God for fellowship with new missionaries and refreshment in Singapore.
- ✦ **Praise** God that we have received Brook's Thai work permit, and are now "officially" living in Thailand!
- ✦ **Praise** God for the amount of language He has enabled us to learn.
- ✦ Pray for wisdom in our **next steps**, including ministry opportunities, the search for housing and language tutors, and truly beginning our life of ministry in Thailand.
- ✦ Pray for peace in the **current political unrest** in Thailand, and an end to protests in Bangkok.
- ✦ Pray for Thailand's 64 million people, of which most are **held in bondage** by Thai folk Buddhism, animistic beliefs, and spirit worship.
- ✦ Pray for our **Thai language helpers** and their families.
- ✦ Pray for us and **our families** as we continue life apart from each other.

Ways to Get Involved

1. **PRAY!** - Remember to lift us up during our first term in Thailand!
2. **SEND!** - Please make checks payable to:
Churches of God, General Conference - PO Box 926 Findlay, OH 45839
Designate gifts for CC 2762 - Michael and Sara Sarver Support
or visit <http://www.cggc.org/CCMSarver.htm> to give online!
3. **KEEP IN TOUCH!** -

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"Flat Stanley" came to visit all the way from Akron, IN for the month of April.