

Truth B-P Church

Report of missions trip to Cambodia

(26 to 29 Dec 2009)

by Joanne Loo

Day 1, 26th December (Saturday)

By His mercies, despite experiencing a delay caused by baggage problems at the Singapore airport, we arrived safely in Phnom Penh at about nine in the morning, warmly welcomed by Pr Sopheak. Thank God for the new, beautiful and comfortable van He provided for us. The nearly-four-hour drive to Kampot from Phnom Penh was bumpy, to say the least but God saw us through.

After lunch at Kampot, we checked into the guesthouse. After a short rest, we went home visitation in Bilome, a small village about 20 minutes away from the Kampot church. There we joined the children for their children's meeting, sitting on sackcloths. We could easily see the joyful faces of the children as they sang the action songs all well-memorised. What touched our hearts was that the preachers had done such an excellent job training three of the older children to lead in singspiration and in prayer! After the singing, Pr Sopheak gave a Christmas message.

Although we could not understand what the children were singing about, we readily identified with the melody of some of the songs. It was a real blessing to be able to see the wonder of God working in a foreign land. Although we are of different nationalities, we are all connected by the love of God and the common faith in Him.



After the children's meeting, we visited some homes to encourage the families to attend the Christmas Service the following day. Then we proceeded to visit the Kampot church at its new location. There we had a scrumptious dinner of fish, vegetables and chicken soup, all prepared by the preachers and some helpers including children. More enjoyable was to be able to fellowship with both Pr Sopheak and Pr Rotha and their families at our first dinner in Cambodia.

Day 2, 27th December (Sunday)

Morning devotion was led by Pastor Dennis. We were reminded of 2 Corinthians 2:15 that we are to be unto God a sweet savour of Christ. After that, we practised our presentation item ("Joy to the World") for the Christmas Service.

After breakfast, we went to the Kampot church for the Praise and Thanksgiving Service to remember God's goodness and faithfulness in the past two years that He had led True Gospel Bible-Presbyterian Church. The Service was well attended by at least 30 adults, excluding the Singapore team. Although this was not the regular attendance, we saw the effort made by the preachers to keep their doors opened to their neighbours. At the Service, we also witnessed 4 adult baptisms and 2 transfers of membership. Following the baptism, Lord's Supper was conducted.



Came evening, we returned to the church for the Christmas Service. But before that we had a big celebration feast. It looked as if we were attending an outdoor wedding dinner! We lost count of how tables the church hosted for the people that evening. Although the meal at each table was only some curry chicken, noodles and bread, everyone ate to his heart's content.

After the feast, the service (chaired by Pr Sopheak) began. Pastor Dennis gave the Christmas message while Pr Rotha interpreted. There were many special items after the message. A short skit on the birth of Jesus was put up and some song items were presented. At the end of the Service, each child received a Christmas gift happily. Seeing their happy faces made us happy as well.

Day 3, 28th December (Monday)

Morning devotion was led by Pr John Loo. He exhorted us to be like the missionaries in the book of Acts, visiting our co-labourers in the missions field to encourage them and to pray for them. After breakfast, we left to visit Pr John Saray at Sihanoukville which is about 2 hours' drive from Kampot. We thank God for this new outreach at Sihanoukville. Through

some photos pasted on the board, we saw how Pr John Saray laboured with his wife Lydia to bring God's Word to the children there. Pr John Saray has a piece of land in the vicinity, next to a primary school. He is praying for the Lord to show him the way in the near future to develop the land and build a church to reach out to the people there. We thank God for his vision and faith in God. After our visitation with Pr John Saray, we visited Pr Sopheak's parents at their restaurant on the beach. There we had lunch and then journeyed to Phnom Penh. We arrived just before dusk. We had our dinner, did some shopping and then went back to the guesthouse to rest.



Day 4, 29th December (Tuesday)

Bro Eric led in the morning devotion. He encouraged us to trust in God when doing missions. After breakfast, we made our way to the airport for our flight home. Thank God for journey mercies throughout our trip in Cambodia.

Reflections:

Our fellowship with the Cambodian brethren at Kampot and Sihanoukville was very sweet as they received us warmly. We were updated on the events and activities of the Kampot church. This will certainly help us to pray for them more specifically. One new prayer item is the Bible School which they started in 2009. There are 6 students. The 3 preachers will be the teachers in this new school. They desire to provide sound Christian Education to the youths so as to build them up in their faith and that they will serve the Lord.

This was my first trip to Cambodia and I enjoyed it because I got to fellowship with other like-minded brethren and to learn more about the way other people serve in their local churches. The love for others, and the willingness to serve others without murmuring or complaints were clearly seen in their youths. I recall how the Cambodian girls (who helped out during the Christmas Service dinner) stood around us throughout the dinner always alert and ready to serve us.

This trip has certainly allowed me to discover how God works mysteriously for His own glory and pleasure. I have personally experienced many wonderful lessons from God. Let us pray that God will work in His own time and according to His own will for the churches in Kampot and Sihanoukville. May God's people there continue to serve Him fervently and to grow in Him.

+++++