

David and Diane Ford

Missionaries to Thailand

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1 Thessalonians 5:24—“Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will dot it.”

Hello everyone, we are finishing our first year here in Thailand! The year actually went very fast, We will try and summarize as much as we can without making this too long. We first want to thank everyone who was praying for us this last year, we needed it. We had anticipated and were told by many what our first year would be like but it doesn't always mean we understand & are ready for it until we go through it. We did have our struggles as most everyone does and God has been gracious with us and allowed us to come out of it stronger. We did miss our kids that are back in the US as well as our friends and our home church. Thailand is becoming more and more our home though. God has brought people into our lives and we have made friends here as well. We thank the Lord for our colleagues, Ken & Alice Cole, who are veteran missionaries that moved to Thailand the summer before we moved here. They have helped us in unbelievable ways in our transition here. they have a heart for God and have made us feel very comfortable and they love our kids as well.

We have been trying to learn Thai. Let me stress trying, which in my interpretation does not imply success. Diane is doing much better than I am, does this surprise anyone? I didn't think so. I would have to say that this is by far the hardest thing that I have ever tried to do. We will continue to try and learn and pray that God will give us wisdom and patience. The kids are taking a language class once a week right now so they are also learning.

Alyssa, Anna & Drew all had a good first full year of school here in Thailand. They all got involved in school activities and made friends at school. Alyssa played soccer & basketball as well as singing in the choir. Anna and Drew were both on the school swim team and did other activities as well.

Two of our 4 kids in the US, yes we have 4 now because we have a new son-in-law as of April 14, 2006, were able to come and visit us this summer. Holly came with a small group and they were able to help up in Chiang Rai with ESL classes. It was great to be able to see her but the time was way too short. Right now we have Josh and his fiancée Brittany Page out here with us. We got to hear Josh preach at Pastor Kiatisaks church here in Bangkok this last Sunday. He has preached before in the US but this was the first time we got to hear him. If he is a chip off the old block it would be in the area of looks, his mothers thankfully. He did a great job and before he preached, we got to hear Josh and Brittany sing while he played the guitar, also a great job. After December 15 of this year we will have 5 kids in the US. That's all I know of so far, stay tuned.. OK, I have to say this one, after the middle of January 2007 sometime we will also have 1 grand child. Yes, we can proudly say we will be grand parents already. Probably the youngest grandparents ever. Remember we will still have a 7, 9 & 16 year old at home.

God is allowing us to be involved in a very exciting ministry opportunity. He is allowing us to partner with a wonderful church from the US, Woodside Bible Church, and a Godly Akha

tribal pastor, Pastor John Phanthawit. I was able to set up a trip for Woodside back in March. They were interested in starting a ministry in Thailand to help keep children out of the sex trade. I arranged to have our group go up to Chiang Rai, in the northern part of Thailand to meet Pastor John and hear his story. Through that meeting a partnership has begun to blossom. Pastor John has had a dream for over 11 years to open an orphanage for the Akha children. We are currently in the process of starting a foundation called Akha Light Foundation. Once this is done we will start the process of helping to build this dream that Pastor John has had and God is leading. Not only will this orphanage eventually house up to 100 Akha children it will also have a training center on the grounds. This training center will allow the Akha to learn different trades and have skills to help them support themselves. On the grounds there will be rice fields, other crops grown, fruit trees and a fish pond which the kids will help work so they will have these skills that are usually taught by their parents. This will also allow the orphanage to be able to supply all or most of its own food and bring in additional monies for paying operating expenses. This whole project was the idea of the Akha & will be run solely by the Akha people, which is exactly what we have prayed for and are trying to do. The best part is that these kids will hear the word of God everyday from the time they arrive until they graduate from High school. This is the goal of GAP, to take national pastors who have ideas of how to reach their people for Christ and help them in anyway we can. God has unbelievably brought Woodside Bible Church and guided them to Pastor John. both want to serve God and help however God directs them. Please pray that we will all have wisdom as we go forward in this endeavor. Thank you again for all your prayers & support.

Prayer Requests: 1. Due to cost of living increases & increases in medical costs we are now \$404.79 short in our monthly support needs.

2. We have a large team from our home church coming July 21st for a ministry trip. Pray for safety, health and to be effective in ministry.

3. Partnership between ABWE/GAP, Woodside Bible Church & Akha Tribals up in Chiang Rai, Thailand. Forming the “Akha Light Foundation” and the orphanage.