



Maraats in Thailand

September 2018



Dear Faithful Partners and Friends,

Greetings and blessings to each one from my family to yours. Since our March Newsletter, we experienced the hand of Almighty God guiding our ways, providing our needs, opening doors by renewing our missionary visas, and protecting in all our travels. What an awesome God we serve!

Finally, after two months of searching for a house in March and April, we found one affordable to our monthly budget. The house is bigger compared to our house before at the same cost. Moving all our belongings took us days and so many trips using our pickup. Sorting and arranging our belongings was a big challenge. We found out that in our 10 years of living in Thailand we accumulated so much, and many were unnecessary. We are enjoying our current house and have used it to host Bible studies and fellowships. We accommodated many visitors in our few months of living in this house. Thank you, Friends, for praying and giving. Praise God for answering so many prayers.

As Verna and I were settling into our new house, we had to prepare for the 4th Southeast Asia Grace Conference (SEAGC) held in Chiang Mai, Thailand on May 24-28, 2018. Maraats and Killions had spent countless hours of praying, planning, organizing for the conference. Hosting an international conference was not an easy load to carry. It was only by God's grace that we were able to do it. We appreciated the work of Tim and Judy Heath, our Thai members and some others for the success of the 4th SEAGC. That was a remarkable achievement!



There were 199 registered delegates coming from 16 countries: U.S.A., Canada, Spain, Dubai, South Africa, Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Myanmar, Timor-Leste, and Thailand. The 4th SEAGC was packed with many activities. One of the purposes of SEAGC is to increase commitment and involvement for mission among Grace Churches in Southeast Asia. We have heard a testimony from one of the delegates on how God has used the conference to open his eyes about mission. Prior to attending SEAGC, he was very skeptical about foreign mission. His reasoning was why go when there are still so many unsaved souls in his home country. However, as he heard the testimonies of selected believers from foreign countries during the early part of the conference, he was convicted. As he went back to his hotel room, he told us that he was in tears and repented. If missionaries did not go to unreached foreign countries, many people would not have a chance to hear the gospel and be saved. His story really gives value to why we must have mission conferences. We have heard of several people who have the same story. Others testified they were convinced to get more involved in foreign missions because of SEAGC. May God raise up more missionaries. May God raise up many people who will partner in praying and giving (Matthew 9:37-38).

Andrea and Josiah, together with Grace LaVier from Indianapolis, arrived in time for the 4th Southeast Asia Grace Conference and were able to help out. Our house was full of people since some stayed with us before and after the conference. It was a bit chaotic with 10 people staying in our house, but we so enjoyed the fun of having visitors. It was a privilege to host people who are sacrificing themselves for the cause of mission.

After the Conference, we had to prepare for our trip to the Philippines. Genesis was invited to teach for GTCM (Grace Theological Center for Mission) held at IGBI-Ozamiz Campus, Mindanao, Southern Philippines. GTCM was created to train missionaries for Southeast Asia, and has produced missionaries who are now serving in Cambodia, Myanmar, Laos, East Timor and Vietnam.

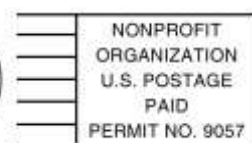


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Maraat

UPDATE



They are willing to go to the regions beyond. Please pray for open doors to the unreached.

GTCM is intensive training for two months for those who have intentionally expressed their desire to become missionaries. Almost all were already pastors/teachers who have worked with TCM-Philippines for several years. Genesis taught *Culture and Mission* for one week—whole morning and afternoon—in July. We were greatly encouraged by seeing the 12 missionary trainees' desire to become missionaries. Some left a secure job because of wanting to go to the regions beyond. We had the privilege of taking part in GTCM's Graduation Exercises held on July 29. Many pastors, leaders and members from nearby churches came to witness the Graduation

We returned to Thailand first week of August from our one-month trip to the Philippines. While in the Philippines we visited Genesis' parents. His mom just celebrated her 89th birthday. Praise God his father is doing well at soon to be 89 years old. Josiah went with us to the Philippines while Andrea went back to Grand Rapids last week of June. She works during summer while preparing for her final year at Calvin College. She has to make lesson plans for her practice teaching. Lord willing, she will graduate next year in May. Genesis will soon finish his Master of Arts. He is intending to march for graduation at Cornerstone University, Grand Rapids, MI in May 2019 after 6 years of modular classes.

Our ministries are progressing little by little here in Thailand. We see new people coming to our church on Sundays. The Killions have continued the ministry while we were away. They revived the home fellowship at Kilik Luang village with new people coming. We have resumed the fellowship at our new house, and are intentionally praying to open a new ministry in the town of Joe and Tammee, a place with more than 3000 houses, but not a single Christian church in the area. We are waiting for the right time to begin. Pray that Joe will grow more since he just recently trusted Jesus as his savior. We will appreciate your prayers that God will open a door for us to plant a new church in the town of Joe and Tammee.

September 24, Verna and I will celebrate our silver wedding anniversary. We have served as TCM missionaries for 26 years now. There were hard times, but the good outweighs the bad beyond measure. We are indebted to God's faithfulness and to all of you who stood with us faithfully. Beloved, we surely thank you for partnering with us through praying and giving!

Your co-laborers in the gospel,

Genesis, Verna, Andrea and Josiah Maraas (Romans 1:16)

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