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IMPORTANT MESSAGE ABOUT FED E-NEWS

We are changing the way we distribute the FED e-News. Soon it will go out only via Yahoo Groups. The old distribution method worked well in the beginning when there were few subscribers and the editor was 20 years younger! Now, with thousands of subscribers, the old system is both time-consuming and burdensome for me (nearing age 93) to send out the newsletter each week.

You already received one invitation to sign up to the FED e-News Yahoo group. We will send out one more round of invitations to join the Yahoo group. Please accept the invitation if you wish to continue to receive this newsletter. Alternately you or any interested party can join by sending an email to the following address: <fed-subscribe@yahooogroups.com>. If you are already receiving the newsletter via Yahoo groups, you need do nothing further. After the next round of invitations have been sent, the FED e-News will go out only to addresses that subscribed to the Yahoo Group.

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I. Reaching Buddhists in Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam

from an article in the current Adventist Review

By Michael W. Campbell

["Michael W. Campbell is an assistant professor at Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies in Silang, Cavite, Philippines.

His area of specialty is Adventist Studies."]

"One of the most challenging areas to share Jesus Christ is in the Buddhist countries of Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam. The growth of the Adventism in those countries came to a virtual standstill after the Vietnam conflict, which culminated in 1975, and with the totalitarian regime of Pol Pot in Cambodia in 1975 to 1979, which led to the infamous 'killing fields.'"

"During this time the work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church went underground; church members fled their countries or were evacuated, and many more simply disappeared.

"Today, the population is predominantly Buddhist. Each country has a slightly different flavor of Buddhism, with various Hindu influences. In each of these countries, the work of the Adventist Development and Relief Agency has brought humanitarian relief.

"Together Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia have a combined population of just over 100 million people. Today Adventism has a growing presence in each of these three countries.

"To aid in this growth the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, or AIIAS, located in the Philippines, partnered with the Adventist Church’s Southern Asia Union Mission ministerial department based in Singapore. For the second year in a row, they coordinated a series of Bible conferences for church workers in each of these countries. Working with the local mission officials, they determined the particular needs and challenges in each area.

"For countries that are largely Buddhists, a missiologist is sent each year to train the pastors in ways to reach Buddhists. This is especially difficult in countries like Laos where public evangelism cannot be conducted. Instead, church members share their faith through friendship.

"While religious persecution may still exist in some locales, it appears that the governments in each of these counties have become increasingly open to the work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. A trip by Adventist Church President
Ted N. C. Wilson to Vietnam helped to open doors in countries that have been considered some of the most difficult in the world for Adventist mission.

"While particular issues may differ, Adventist pastors in this part of the world have surprisingly similar challenges as church workers around the world. They are asked questions about the right person to marry, unclean food, or how to keep the Sabbath day holy. These Bible conferences are annual events to help train and equip pastors with Biblical tools and resources that are not readily available to them. One of the highlights of the conference is the question and answer period where pastors can ask questions about specific issues in the context of their areas.

**Buddhists**

"Reaching Buddhists for Jesus Christ is a formidable challenge. In a region of the world where public evangelism is typically not an option, such outreach takes place through personal friendships.

"While on our trip our team made a brief stop at the ancient ruins of Angkor Wat. My friend and colleague from AIIAS, Jim Park, walked up to a group of monks. He asked them why they came to this place. They replied that it was their day off. Within a few minutes they were huddled as they explained their Buddhist beliefs. Park went back that afternoon to visit his new friends at their monastery. He arrived with a bag of mangoes that he purchased for the monks. Now they invited him into their home. He gladly accepted their invitation to a visit as he recognized that this was an opportunity to share with them about his faith in God.

"At each of the Bible meetings with Adventist pastors, Park subsequently challenged the pastors: "How many have you ever visited a monk in their home?" Only a handful raised their hands, revealing that his question hit upon a very real problem. It is human nature to spend time with those whom we are the most similar.

"Adventists have thus done well at reaching other Christians, and even some remote mountain tribes, but for the church to significantly expand it is imperative that it develop an intentional mission strategy for reaching Buddhists. For this reason the General Conference established the Global Mission Center for East Asian Religions located in Bangkok, Thailand. Last year, the Center director, Greg Whitsett, participated in our round of Bible conferences. While much has been done, much more still remains yet to be done.

**Adventists and the Vietnam War**

"I was able to tour through these three countries recognizing the incredible destruction and loss of life that occurred, particularly during the 1960s up through the cessation of hostilities in 1975.

"While officially no bombing occurred in Laos, one does not have to go very far to find many bomb craters. While visiting Vietnam's Ho Chi Minh City, formerly named Saigon, I toured the War Museum dedicated to peace and the end of war. Nearby is the palace where the "war of reunification" finally ended.

"On Sabbath I had the serendipitous privilege of meeting Ralph S. Watts, who famously shared his story about God's providential leading during the Vietnam War conflict that resulted in the evacuation of more than 400 workers. As we posed for a picture in front of the Phu Nhuan Seventh-day Adventist Church located in Ho Chi Minh City, Watts commented that it was nearby that he was almost shot and killed while trying to carry out the evacuation order. Some Adventists chose to stay; others left. Either way he provided moral support.

"After church we visited Tran Cong Tan, who was a worker in the publishing work who chose to stay. Though his body is weak, Tan is the leader of the work of the Adventist Church in Vietnam. His body has fought cancer and he has lost a lot of weight since last year. Because of his faithfulness the denomination kept the church and mission property.

"Today the work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is growing," Watts said. Watts left with his son and a friend on a tour to see various development and relief projects. As the founding president of ADRA, he continues to keep close ties with many friends from the time when he served as union president and evacuated as many people as possible in the Communist takeover of 1975. He noted that the church gained official recognition from the government in 2008, opening a new era of opportunities for the church work to grow in Vietnam.

**Plans for the Future**

"Thanks to the Big Four program, a General Conference initiative coordinated through AIIAS, a team of professors and students will return to Indochina each year for the next five years.

"I don't know why in the past 12 years as a professor I have never made it to any of these countries," Park said. "This has been a neglected field."

"Each year Danson Ng, ministerial director of the Southern Asia Union Mission, has also committed to support this initiative. Food and logistical support for the initiative has been supplied by the union.

"'Training our workers is one of the most important tasks in helping to fulfill the gospel commission,' Ng said.
"AIIAS plays a strategic role as a General Conference institution that provides graduate training, particularly for pastors in this region of the world. In a place like Indochina, where very few pastors have any training, it's certainly our responsibility to go to them."

The day Lu Ya was born, 15 August 1995, his father left him and his mother to fend for themselves in the world alone. His mother tried hard to nurse him as well as to find food to feed the two of them. She had no land to cultivate and no relatives to help. It did not take long before she fell sick and died. Lu Ya was only 4 years old when his mother died, too young to understand what happened to him. And his wayward father was no where to be found.

With nowhere to go, his cousin, Xia Ser, took pity on him, so he took Lu Ya into his house and raised him up. His cousin is an Adventist. So, Lu Ya grew up believing in God. In 2001, as young as 6 years old, Lou Ya began to give his life to Jesus. He knew that only Jesus is faithful to him. He could not turn to his earthly father for help. He could not turn to his dead mother for help either. His cousin could help him a bit, but God only can help him. From then he determined in his mind to serve God.

I had a chance to get acquainted with Lu Ya early last year in 2014 when I visited his village in Xayaboury Province. Then, he went with us to visit Hmong members in remote villages. I remember that he got a car sick and vomited. So, I gave him my motion tablets that I kept with me. However, that was Damamine (drowsy tablet). So, Lou Y was sitting sleepy while we were worshipping in a house. Fortunately, it was on the ground floor, so he did not fall down when I preached too long.

After that, Lu Ya moved to live at the back of the Vientiane church among other 11 other SDA youth. They shared what they had and kept each other alive.

Lu Ya studied hard and last year 2014 he passed the National University exam to study Statistics. But, he had no money to study and had to forfeit his study. Lu Ya, then, joined the One Year in Mission (OYIM) team in Vientiane. He has demonstrated his passion for ministry. He is not shy to serve the community, clean the street, visit patients at hospital, and care for the less unfortunate like working with blind children.

When asked what do you want to do in the future, Lu Ya said confidently that he wants to serve God as a pastor. But, there is one problem. Because of his hard life, Lu Ya is a short boy. When he stands behind a pulpit, his church members won’t see him there. So, when asked if he would consider study to be a treasurer of the church, after all we need a treasurer too, he said that any position, as long as it’s serving God, is fine with him. I like the attitude of this boy. He just wants to serve God. Position or pay is not his concern. So, we would love to send Lu Ya to study to become a future treasurer at our university where I am a lecturer, Asia-Pacific International University (AIU), in Thailand.

But, there is one problem, the church does not subsidize or consider giving scholarships to students who study English as a Second Language (ESL). Currently, Lu Ya studies English at our English Language School in Vientiane 4 hours a week (Monday-Thursday). He is in Beginner 2 class. An average ESL student at AIU, who studies 8 hours per day, 5 days a week, takes about 2 years to advance to college program. That is 40 hours per week or 10 times more than Lu Ya’s. So, if we do our mathematics correctly it would take Lu Ya 20 years before he can enter AIU. This situation applies to all Lao students because they were not born speaking English.

II. A Book on Dick and Jean Hall

Dennis Dean Tidwell <deantidwell@yahoo.com> June 15:

Jungle Pilot: Memoirs of Dick and Jean Hall, by Trenee Zweigle, RN

"Amazing and shocking true stories of a military man who became a missionary jungle pilot. You will be astonished at each obstacle he and his wife encountered in the jungle, and how they stayed alive through prayer in all situations. Many close encounters with both humor and danger, but God protected them from all potential disasters. A must read book!"

--Available at Amazon for $14.95. http://amzn.to/1QwpJgc ~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~ III, Religious Persecution in China from Signs Watch Newsletter

The Texas-based China Aid Association (CAA) reports that religious persecution in China increased dramatically in 2014 over 2013, most of it against Christians. During 2013 there were 143 cases of persecution, while 572 cases were reported in 2014-an increase of exactly 300 percent. In 2013, 7,424 religious people were affected by this persecution, compared to 17,884 in 2014. In 2013, 54 church leaders were detained, compared to 449 in 2014.
And 12 people were sentenced for activity related to their faith in 2013, compared to 1,274 in 2014. CAA said that "the increase in government-sanctioned persecution against religious practitioners and human rights lawyers and advocates reflects the overall political transformation that is occurring within the Communist Party in China, namely, an orchestrated effort to consolidate power and suppress dissent." -Christian Headlines

Projected Growth of world religions from 2010 to 2050

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<th>Religion</th>
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<td>Muslims</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Hindus</td>
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<td>Other religions</td>
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IV. SULADS Story: "Bible Partners"

By: Daniel Añosa, Slong Literacy Center, Ned, Lake Sebu, South Cotabato

Slong Literacy Center is one of the schools operated by SULADS (Socio-Economic Uplift, Literacy, Anthropological, and Developmental Services). This is located at Ned, Lake Sebu, South Cotabato where we have to walk for 2 hours to reach the school. People there are of the T’boli tribe. I found it hard to teach them at first because I could not understand their language. But by God’s grace, after 3 months of stay, I am now able to understand the dialect though I could only speak a little.

In that village I met a newly wed couple named Kagawad Johnny and Shiela Tungkay. At first I was shy to talk with them because I heard some rumors that this Kagawad was strict. But as time went by, I noticed that Kagawad was not as I expected him to be. He was the opposite of what others have said about him. Every time I called for a meeting and bayanihan for the school’s progress, this person was always present and very supportive with our mission. At this time, they were our partners in conducting Bible studies with the brethren who wanted to know God’s grace and love. With their help, last September 6, 2014, sixteen individuals accepted Christ as their personal Savior through baptism.

Right now, Bible studies are still on-going in the village and Kagawad is consistent with his help. Our main goal is to build a church building since the old church is too small to accommodate the new church members especially during fellowship. The roofing area has plenty of holes or should I say the church is near collapse.

We hope that through God’s grace and your financial support, this plan of building a church will succeed. Also, through all of our prayers, these individuals will not change and fail to be generous in helping us spread the gospel.

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