



Hello Again!

I hope everything is going well with you. I wanted to give you an update since I have now been in Thailand for a month. I already feel like a different person since I left the United States, and I thank the Lord for His hand on this trip.

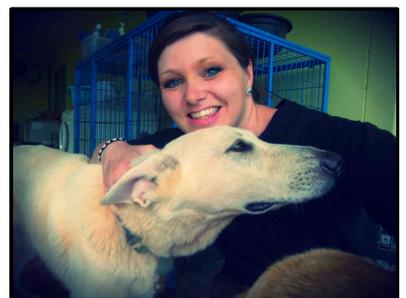
Tiffany and I started out with a two week trip to Italy. The team consisted of missionaries from a variety of different countries. For them, it was a retreat and a time of refreshment and connections. For many it was a much needed time away to rejuvenate, so they could continue their missionary work. Tiffany and I helped encourage some of the missionaries and specifically served in watching their kids.

Later, we heard reports that the parents felt very encouraged and blessed knowing that they could trust other people with their children. For us, it was a time to race the children around on childrens' bikes, to run around and to pull out the arts and crafts. It was good and fun. Some of the team confessed that their time in Italy felt like a necessity in order to face the trials and everyday obstacles that waited for them at their missionary homes. Many made new connections and instantly bonded as good dear friends.

For the last month, Tiffany and I have been in Thailand. To start, we've been getting used to farm life. Everyday we wake up for our breakfast and personal devotions and then start our chores around 7:30 am. At 7:30 am we feed and help take care of the cows and dogs. They have three cows, a milking cow and a calf. After we feed and take care of the cows and dogs, we then will take care of any extra work that needs to get done. This may involve horse care, dog care, yard or house care or other farm emergencies. The Hoar family has expressed at different times that they are thankful that Tiffany and I are here, both in serving in work and in our friendship with them. We've been thankful for both as well.

Thailand is a country that is swimming in Buddhism, and the amount of Christians in Thailand is extremely low. Many refer to Thailand as a missionary graveyard. However, there are stories of people getting saved. We are going to Teaching English with the Bible lessons that Ben Hoar leads. The family was told that the objectives were to teach English, for them to learn what is in the Bible and for us to be their friends. Very recently this beautiful family prayed to give their hearts to Jesus. The other day we had the opportunity to visit Nikeam and his grandmother. Nikeam wasn't properly nourished during his pregnancy and, as a result, is physically very weak. He cannot talk or walk, but he is very intelligent. Nikeam and his grandmother know about Jesus through God witnessing to them through their relationship with Ben Hoar. The grandmother now has her own Bible. While we were visiting them, we were able to bless this poor family financially, encourage them with words and love on Nikeam. I believe Nikeam laughed during our entire visit. In general, the Thai people are not drawn to event oriented outreaches, so whenever we run errands or are just out and about, there is evangelism, loving on others and meeting other people's needs.

This trip provides an opportunity for me to get a taste of missionary family life. Before this trip, the only exposure I had were short-term trips. I am not just getting adjusted to farm life, but am learning about evangelism within the everyday living environment. Though I am still learning the Thai language, I have learned that loving on them nonverbally is reaching them. A hug can make the difference.



More than anything, I would value your prayers for the missionaries in Thailand as well as the Thai people. Pray for great fruit and for the Gospel to explode in the village we are in and in other villages. The Gospel travels relationally and relationships are being made. I believe that God answers prayers and I'm asking you to pray for the missionaries, Thai people, for safety, good health, smooth travels and financial support. Just knowing that you will be praying will give me great excitement as I spend time here on the other side of the world. Beyond your prayers, if you are led to join me by financially supporting this mission, I would be grateful for that as well. For those who have already supported us and partnered with us, thank you!

Again, I hope things are going well for you. I'd love to hear an update on what's going on in your life if you have the time. I will definitely be praying for you. Thanks so much for taking the time to read this letter and if you have any questions, please let me know. Take care, and I hope to hear from you soon!

With Gratitude,

Elizabeth Shepard



Ruth, Susan, and me



Isaac, Ben, and Tiffany

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