



GARUNA MINISTRIES

A ministry of sharing the "grace, mercy and compassion" (Garuna) of Jesus in Thailand, Cambodia and surrounding countries.

GARUNA MINISTRIES | 11034 North 36th Street, Phoenix, AZ 85028 | www.garuna.org | info@garuna.org | Volume 22, Issue 2 | Fall 2022

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION (A New Address!)

"But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ." *Philippians 3:20*

📍 LOCATION: Leaving the USA For a Visit to Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Travel has resumed for Garuna USA staff as the first post-COVID trip in 2.5 years was completed in June. It was a wonderful time of visiting team members and students at all 9 Garuna Christian School sites, the 7 operating now and 2 more under construction. Garuna Thailand team members joined us in Cambodia, too as they spent time together with their brothers and sisters across the border, exchanging ministry ideas and joining in devotions, prayers, and encouragement!

📍 LOCATION: Garuna's Future LISA Training Center in Phnom Penh

Every trip has its surprises and aha moments, but this headlining news is really exciting! **While in Phnom Penh, a site was found for a new Garuna LISA training center.** Though Garuna was started in 2001 to train Bible students through its Luther Institute Southeast Asia (LISA) program, it was not a training site; it was a curriculum taught in locations throughout the region. There was no permanent "home". With growing interest in Bible study and leadership training, it seems to be time to settle into a "real location" which will be multi-purpose in design. **During the trip, a commitment was made to purchase 3 adjoining shophouses within a large residential/business development that is in the early stages of construction.**



A rendering of the new Garuna Luther Institute Southeast Asia (LISA) training center which will be completed by December 2022. The LISA shophouses are within the red box. **Would you like to contribute to this training project?** All gifts should be designated: LISA Training Center-Cambodia. (garuna.org)

Garuna was given the opportunity to design the floor plan within the center. The site plans include large and smaller classrooms to accommodate the need for Bible training in many settings, including a classroom space for seminars for the current 39 Cambodian students and for regional LISA leadership mentoring events. In addition, the space will be used for a new church plant, outreach events, reception, snack area/kitchen, translation offices, library, dorm spaces for LISA field work students, and a studio to produce on-line and distance education resources for pastors, deaconesses, lay leaders, Garuna Christian School teachers, and evangelists. **We thank God for his perfect timing and location! Funding Challenge: \$400,000 by Dec. 31, 2022.**

📍 LOCATION: A Rented Classroom in Phnom Penh for a LISA Training Class

In July, the current Cambodian LISA students met for 4 days for Garuna's Doctrine II class, part of the 4th year LISA Bible curriculum. The young church in Cambodia is excited to use Garuna's bible training program to prepare future workers. **Rather than send students overseas or leave their ministry for long periods of study, the LISA program is designed to bring students to a central location to study and then return to their ministry sites to put their new knowledge to good use.** The students were thrilled to learn of the new ministry center plans for future training.



Students in the LISA-Cambodia program met for their Doctrine II class this summer. Garuna was founded in 2001 to provide training in support of the developing churches in Thailand, Cambodia, Myanmar, Laos, Vietnam, and surrounding regions. The Garuna Christian Schools (GCS) were started in 2013. Now, the LISA program trains the GCS faculty, as well.



📍 LOCATION: Garuna's New Office in Phoenix, Arizona

It's been a whirlwind summer, so let's just add a move to that craziness. Garuna's office relocated in July to a location *just down the road*. Hopefully, you will have no problem with your correspondence to us as mail will be forwarded from the old address for a year.

Our new address: Garuna, 11034 North 36th Street, Phoenix, AZ 85028. We hope to hear from you!



11034 North 36th Street, Phoenix, AZ 85028

📍 LOCATION: Garuna Christian School #1 in Tbong Khmum, Cambodia

A common scene upon our arrival at each school was this "welcome home" greeting from the Garuna Kids attending each school. Heartwarming, for sure! It was a joy to see the students and the growth since our last visit in January 2020. At that time, the enrollment was 1,027. It has grown now to 1,321. **It is clear that God has blessed the work of Garuna's national leaders in Southeast Asia.** They are absolutely dedicated to God's mission.



The Garuna Kids are respectful, loving and kind. Please pray for their studies, their families, and their growing faith!

📍 LOCATION: Prey Veng, Cambodia (near the Vietnam border)

A highlight of the trip was to see the new location for Garuna Christian School #9 in Prey Veng. There was time to meet the neighbors, children, the pastor, and the deaconess. **They can't wait for the new school to be built and open for their village, expecting it will also expand their growing church ministry.** The hard title and building permissions were recently secured, so it won't be long now. Garuna Christian School #9 is being funded by a coalition of 9 very generous Omaha area churches and the students at Concordia Lutheran Schools of Omaha.



The rice field on the left, just a stone's throw from Vietnam, will soon be a school and growing Cambodia Lutheran Church site, led by a pastor and deaconess from Garuna's LISA Bible training program.

📍 LOCATION: Inside the Mini-Bus That Traveled Many Miles to See Garuna's School Sites

Travel in Cambodia takes some time and requires a lot of patience. Most days, the Garuna team left the hotel by 7 a.m. and often didn't return home until 7 p.m. due to the slow travel and more challenging roads to reach the schools. **The schools are located outside of the capital city in most every direction. The design is a hub-spoke model, with Phnom Penh serving as the home office and training site for the teams in Cambodia.** This travel time allowed for a lot of planning and catching up. The Cambodian team was soon repeating Chairman Jeff



Ehlers' quip at the end of each trip, "Take the rest of the day off!" as everyone headed for their homes or hotel rooms.

Traveling together gives ample opportunity for planning, discussion, and sharing.

📍 LOCATION: A Coffee Shop in Phnom Penh, Cambodia

The Garuna-Thailand team joined the Garuna-Cambodia team to share, encourage, collaborate, and brainstorm for future ministry ideas and projects. Both countries have a LISA program, which operates in ways conducive to their country situations. Ideas were shared about future school projects and LISA program delivery ideas throughout the southeast Asia region. It was wonderful to see the obvious feelings of appreciation and respect for their Asian co-workers.



It's wonderful to join with these strong Asian leaders to plan strategies to reach their own country and their neighboring regions for the Gospel.



📍 LOCATION: Outside the Garuna Christian School #3 Classroom in Kampot

A highlight of the trip was seeing the happy families of the Garuna Kid parents peering in during class time or Sunday School activities. Pastor Sopheab, the Bible teacher at this school shared, **“Garuna School has been a great blessing for the Lutheran Church and the community where I serve.**



Aren't parents really the same all over the world? They love seeing that their children are happy, safe, healthy, growing, learning, and involved in a great community. In this case, they are also happy to have Bible training, too.

I can teach the Word of God to the students every day. I visit the families in times of happiness and in times of difficulty. We share the love of God as we care for them, physically and spiritually. Parents are happy to see their children study at Garuna School, as they trust us to provide a good education for them. The church and the Garuna school ministry are effective ways to promote the light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the community. I pray that many more students will come to be baptized each year.”

📍 LOCATION: South Wisconsin & Michigan District LCMS Schools

These 2 LCMS districts adopted Garuna as their “Hearts for Jesus” chapel offering project for 2021-22. They worked together in support of the construction of a new classroom building at Garuna Christian School #1 in Tbong Khmum, Cambodia, which was completed this spring. **Now, the Garuna students are in their new classrooms, thanks to the BIG HEARTS of Lutheran Kids in WI and MI who raised over \$80,000!!** Each district more than doubled their original HFJ goal! In addition to these 2 districts, we’ve been blessed to recently partner with North WI District schools, Concordia Omaha Lutheran Schools, and Concordia International School Shanghai. In the coming 2022-23 school year, we are excited to partner with the Southern Illinois District schools, as well.



Lutheran kids in the USA are making a tremendous impact for the sake of the Gospel as they share with Garuna (Lutheran) Kids in Cambodia!

📍 LOCATION: Siem Reap, Cambodia



GCS #6: An additional classroom building is being constructed on this site due to the enrollment of 320+ students each day and nearly 200 for Sunday School! This is backbreaking work for the Cambodian construction team.

Two school building projects are underway in northern Cambodia: 1) An additional classroom at the growing Garuna Christian School (GCS) #6; and 2) An entire new school campus (GCS #8) a short distance away. **The additional classroom is needed to support an enrollment of 320+ Garuna Kids at GCS 6, and we pray for a similar enrollment at GCS #8!** Both projects are funded by Garuna’s missional partners at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church & School in Fremont, CA.



GCS #8: The Garuna team looks at the new perimeter wall and soil fill which are completed prior to the construction of the 8th school where there was previously a rice field.



Garuna Christian School students are thrilled to receive new backpacks, uniforms, and school supplies at the start of each school year.

LOCATION: Weston, Wisconsin

Andrew Hulke is a natural with the Garuna Kids. On June 15, 2022, he started his ministry with Garuna, the same day he boarded a flight to start his Cambodia journey.



A Note from Andrew Hulke

Thank you to everyone who reached out with prayer and support as I continue to transition into my new role as Assistant Director of Education for Garuna. It was a blessing to travel to Cambodia in June. I met many amazing people and had the opportunity to see all the Garuna schools! God is doing incredible things in Cambodia! **As part of my job, I will be living in central Wisconsin and traveling to schools and churches, partnering with them to continue to spread the gospel to the people of Cambodia and Southeast Asia.** I am blessed to be part of such a wonderful ministry. Please continue to pray for this ministry and the hearts of the people of Cambodia. **If you are interested in a visit to your church or school, please contact me** (andrew@garuna.org) or give me a call (906-869-7550).



From the Chairman

Dear Friends in Christ,

"But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ..." Philippians 3:20

Greetings to you in the name of Jesus, whose return we 'eagerly await'. Isn't that living by faith? We are waiting for our Savior to return. This is the clear promise of God's Word. **This same Jesus, who died for us and conquered death, will return to take us to our eternal home – to our true place of 'citizenship'.**

This life is temporary and sometimes it doesn't feel like home – or at least, not our 'permanent' home. We need that sense of eternity, don't

we? When we know that Jesus is preparing a place by His grace, this love is a tremendous motivation for us to share that Good News with others – until He returns.

We are so thankful for your dedication to bringing this Gospel message to so many people in so many locations in Southeast Asia.

As you can see in this newsletter, God is truly opening doors, and He is blessing the sharing of this life saving and life changing message of forgiveness and promise of heaven. The fields are ripe for harvest.

We do eagerly wait for Jesus to return, and we look forward to what He is preparing for us. But while we wait, it is not an inactive waiting, but an active time of making this message known.

Sincerely in Christ,
Rev. Dr. Jeff Ehlers, Chairman
Garuna Ministries

"Heaven is Our Home" Generosity Options

NEW FUNDING OPPORTUNITY! LISA Building Project

Goal: \$400,000 (Funds are being collected through December 2022. We invite you to join us!)

Where Needed Most – Any amount is greatly appreciated!

Garuna Ministry Sponsorship Options

- Garuna Kids (K-grade 6): \$30/month
- Bible/LISA Student: \$50/month
- Garuna Teacher: \$100/month

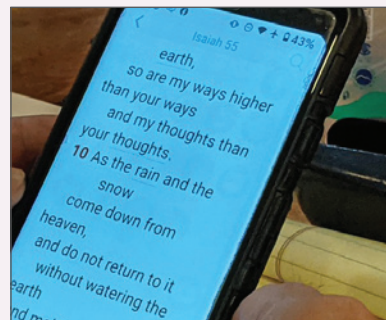
Have you considered these ways to support Garuna Ministries?

- **IRA Charitable Rollovers or IRA RMD's** can provide an opportunity for stewards over the age of 72 to make gifts to Garuna from their IRAs directly with no income taxes due on the rolled over or donated funds.
- **Employee Match** – Ask your employer if this option exists for you!
- **Gifts of Stock** – Garuna can receive gifts of appreciated stock.
- **Estate Planning** – Have you considered leaving a legacy gift for Garuna as a part of your estate planning?
- **Endowment Fund Gift** – Helps us plan for the future!

- **Thrivent Choice** – Garuna partners with Thrivent Financial and is eligible to receive Thrivent Choice Dollars.
- **Amazon Smile** – Please consider Garuna as your charity of choice as you shop online with Amazon! (smile.amazon.com) **Christmas is coming!**

If you are led to donate, your check may be made **payable to Garuna**. Gifts may be mailed to **Garuna at 11034 North 36th Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85028**. You may also donate online by visiting our secure online giving page at **www.garuna.org**. Your gift is tax-deductible as allowable by law. The Garuna Foundation is a 501-c-3 nonprofit (EIN number: 86-1037570). Garuna will mail a gift receipt to the address you provide. Thank you in advance for your partnership in prayer and

financial support. Contact us at info@garuna.org if you have any additional questions.



LOCATION: Heaven and Earth
We are blessed by our heavenly Father to be a blessing to others around the world.

