



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 24, Issue 1 | Spring 2024

Mission MOMENTUM...Because of Easter!

"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8



The joyful season of Easter leads us to the powerful season of Pentecost. Because Jesus rose from the dead and promises eternal life to those who believe, we want to share this message all over the world. **Garuna Ministries is blessed with a team of amazing Southeast Asian Christians who are sharing the resurrection promise throughout the world, with power from the Holy Spirit given at Pentecost.** Read more about those activities in this issue!



MOMENTUM

"The quality that keeps something (**Garuna Ministries**) developing or making progress after it has started (**2001**): the force (**God's blessing and power**) that keeps an object moving (**ministry activities, people, and programs**)."

MISSION MOMENTUM is what Garuna Ministries is experiencing right now. This slightly altered definition above seems to describe God's blessing in ministry at this time. There are pressing needs, amazing opportunities, and open doors that the Gospel of Christ is meeting in coordination with generous USA partners and great national ministry teams.

IN MOTION

TEACHER AIDE PROGRAM - YEAR 1

What happens when 49 Cambodian teens are given the opportunity serve as teacher aides at their former Garuna Christian School? Amazing things! They mentor and assist the younger students. **They begin to see themselves as future leaders in their country – and as future Garuna teachers.** They remain connected to a Christian community and meet for Bible study. They help lead Sunday School activities. And, they are given an opportunity to continue their secondary education while remaining connected to Garuna Christian Schools.



This pilot project will continue in the new year as 63 more aides will be selected to join the original 49. These youth will be selected from the Garuna graduates who complete their 6th grade year at each of the 9 schools. Garuna purchases uniforms and school supplies for their continuing education, but **they want to be aides because they love their schools and their communities, and they find joy in serving.** These young Christians are future leaders in their church and country...please pray for them!





MISSION MOMENTUM

9 BAPTISMS AT THE CHRISTMAS PARTY

Christmas outreach events at each Garuna Christian School are always amazing, but when GCS #5 sent photos of their party and it included the baptisms of 7 students, a teacher and her toddler, it doesn't get much more exciting than that! Their daily Bible classes are taught by teachers who have received Garuna's LISA training.



MISSION MOMENTUM

LUTHER INSTITUTE SE ASIA (LISA) CENTERS OPENING! Garuna's LISA building in Phnom Penh, Cambodia is fully opened and being used. The fall 2023 campaign goal to fund a similar center in Chiang Mai, Thailand was reached, thanks to Garuna's amazing donors! 2024 is the year for this project to gain traction as a land-holding entity is established and a center is completed. Pastors Roger Theimer and Greg Griffith from King of Kings Church in Omaha, NE enjoy time in the new Luther Institute-Cambodia (LI-C) lobby with Omaha's GCS #9 Principal Sao Em and Vice Principal Ek Samean during a recent visit to dedicate their new school.



MISSION MOMENTUM

THAILAND TEAM SCHOOL VISITS

Music and movement activities combined with a Gospel message are received very positively by Thai students in the government schools. You can see and feel the burst of excitement during the music, guitar, art, and English/Chinese lessons taught by the Garuna Thailand team. Positive and trusted relationships between school leaders and the team lead to an increasing number of invitations for outreach! What a boost this is to the Gospel proclamation in Thailand!



MISSION MOMENTUM

STUDENT EXIT INTERVIEWS

When Garuna Kids finish their 6th grade year at one of the 9 schools, what outcomes are seen? Last year's graduates noted higher grades on the annual government exams, Garuna teachers' care and love shown to them, and a new understanding of what Jesus has done because of his love for them and others. There was a direct correlation between those who had been enrolled at GCS a longer period of time, with 8 of 10 graduates saying they now love and trust in Jesus!





MISSION MOMENTUM

35 STUDENTS COMPLETE LISA COURSEWORK
 An energetic and excited group of 35 Cambodian Luther Institute SE Asia Bible students recently received certificates for their training. The program has varying levels of completion based on ministry needs – lay persons, evangelists, teachers, deaconesses, and pastors. This non-residential program allows students to continue ministry while studying.



MISSION MOMENTUM

DEDICATION OF GCS #8 & #9
 Visitors from supporting congregations in Omaha, NE and Fremont, CA were able to join in their recent Garuna school dedications in Cambodia. The energy and excitement were seen and heard as students danced, village officials spoke, ribbons were cut, parents cheered, everyone ate, and ALL were blessed to know that 500 new students will be learning about Jesus! Please pray that God's powerful and mighty Spirit moves in the hearts and minds of these Cambodian families.



MISSION MOMENTUM

“SUPER GOAL” SUNDAY IN SCOTTSDALE, AZ!
 Super Bowl Sunday was the kickoff for the Desert Foothills Lutheran Church (DFLC) campaign to build Garuna Christian School #10 in Kampong Chhnang, Cambodia. This province is known for its clay pots, and DFLC members are motivated to help shape the lives of Cambodian students by sharing Jesus with them. There is tremendous enthusiasm for the project, with results being announced after Easter.



MISSION MOMENTUM

VBS RESOURCES BOOST MISSIONAL THINKING!
 The Garuna Kids want to be part of your summer programming or 2024-25 school chapels! Materials have been developed to add a missional component to any of your activities and are designed to be used in conjunction with CPH or Group Publishing VBS materials. For free resources, email liane@garuna.org.





FROM THE CHAIRMAN: EASTER JOY – PENTECOST PROCLAMATION!

“He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay.”
Matthew 28:6

Dear Friends in Christ,

“Why are you doing this?” is a common question from people in southeast Asia and the USA. The real question in their minds is, **“What is your motivation? What are you getting out of this?”** These are fun questions to answer.

Easter is the reason Garuna exists. Sharing the Good News of forgiveness and eternal life through our schools, outreach projects, and LISA Bible training is motivated by the resurrection of Jesus! As more and more people hear about the love Jesus has for all, they in turn want to tell others. People in all parts of the world want to share the resurrection message because it brings peace, joy, and hope!

“Are you getting anything out of this?” YES! We receive great joy when we witness the Holy Spirit working through Christ’s Gospel to create faith in human hearts and change lives. It is a miracle! The miracle of the resurrection and God’s gracious gift of the Holy Spirit create faith to encourage and enable us to be HIS witnesses.

“How does Garuna keep growing?” This growth is only by God’s grace (garuna), His blessing, and the work of His Holy Spirit. Your partnership in Christ is essential. It is a joy and privilege to work with you in this exciting ministry. We are so thankful that there is great openness to the Good News in a region where so few know Him. The Holy Spirit is at work through His Word and through His faith-filled servants there who are incredibly dedicated to His service.

To God be the Glory...
Great things He is doing!

Sincerely in Christ,

Rev. Dr. Jeff Ehlers
Chairman
Garuna Ministries



Children rejoicing in the love of Jesus!

*Because
HE
lives*



MOMENTOUS

GENEROSITY OPTIONS



Thanks for sending your gifts to fund Garuna ministry Projects in SE Asia



Pastors Ryan Brons, Greg Griffith, and Tim Nordquist enjoyed meeting the Garuna Kids on their recent trip to Cambodia. “The Omaha church(es) came together as one...(it) was just the spark that was needed to unify churches to share the light of the world to all the world.”

– Pastor Greg Griffith,
King of Kings Church, Omaha



- **Gifts of Stock** – Garuna can receive gifts of appreciated stock.
- **Donor Advised Funds** – Garuna welcomes gifts from your donor advised funds.
- **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.

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.

For more information on making gifts, please call (602) 765-7613 or email us at jeff@garuna.org.

Rev. Dr. Tom Zelt leads a prayer over the land that is to be the site of GCS #11. This will be the 3rd Garuna Christian School built by Prince of Peace Lutheran Church (Fremont, CA).



*WE ARE SO
blessed*

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

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 giving options?

- **IRA Charitable Rollovers or IRA RMD’s** can provide an opportunity for stewards over the age of 70½ 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!

