

DO THE MATH!

Ministry work is not easily **quantified**, but we thank God for his blessings that are **too numerous to count**. In the stories that follow you will see examples of God's grace that is being shared in so many ways with his people in Asia. It is a joy to see how excited the young Christian community is as they begin to grasp **how wide and long and high and deep** is the love of Christ and to know this love that surpasses knowledge (Eph 3:18-19). **No matter how you do the math**, all glory goes to God for loving His people around the world and for Garuna's partners in ministry...YOU!

"After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that **no one could count**, from every nation, tribe, people, and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb." Rev. 7:9

GARUNA'S MULTIPLICATIVE MINISTRY MODEL



Pastor Peter with his wife Ly Chhe, son Ly Meng, and daughter Ly Ma. Ly Chhe also serves as an Admin. Assistant with Garuna.

As Garuna's Director of Education and Bible training programs in Cambodia, Pastor Bun Phanna (Peter) keeps very busy. Peter is a wonderful leader and has an interesting story which he shared with us for this article. "I am a young first-generation Christian in a country where Christianity had to be almost entirely re-established after the Khmer Rouge regime attempted to eradicate all religion in 1975-79. **Therefore, a very large percentage of Lutheran Christians in Cambodia are the first in their families to become believers.** They are navigating what it means to be both Khmer and Christian, much like the early believers navigated being Jewish/Gentile and Christian."

Peter has served as Garuna's leader's for 9 years. **When asked about his greatest joy in ministry, he replied, "...seeing people growing in the Lord's Word and work**, visible through the 3 areas of Garuna's ministry foci: 1) The daily teaching and sharing at 11 Garuna Christian Schools; 2) the ministry of the Lutheran churches; and 3) Bible training through Garuna's Luther Institute-Cambodia (LI-C)." In his oversight of these programs and 77 staff, he said he has learned much about leadership from his various roles as a Bible instructor, vision setter, morale shaper, decision maker, and administrator. "I appreciate the leadership from Garuna Ministry (USA) that provided me with so much experience, direction, love, and care to keep me motivated in doing the Lord's ministry."

Peter loves Garuna's strategy of developing indigenous leaders. He shared, "This is possibly the most crucial aspect for long-term, sustainable growth in any mission field. **By training Cambodian nationals to be pastors, teachers, and leaders, Garuna directly addresses the need for multiplication rather than simply addition.** These indigenous leaders understand the local culture, language, and context far better than foreign missionaries ever could. They are equipped to evangelize, disciple, and plant new churches within their own communities."

Peter added, "Personally, **I believe that while individual conversions (additions) are foundational, ministry growth in Cambodia is best described as multiplicative**, a dynamic process of replication and expansion that reaches more communities and people groups. A key aspect of sustainable growth is training and empowering local Cambodian leaders through the LI-C Bible training and the work of the Garuna School teachers and pastors. **This hands-on, local leadership-driven approach is precisely why the growth is not merely additive but powerfully multiplicative, by God's grace and blessing.**"



"Trained local leaders are the primary agents for multiplying the ministry. They can train others, plant new congregations, and adapt ministry to the specific needs of different regions." (Pastor Peter)



TIME FLIES!

Garuna's adult Bible training program celebrated its 19th birthday with almost 300 Asian students currently involved in practical coursework. The Luther Institute SE Asia (LISA) non-residential, part-time program provides training for leaders without leaving home, allowing immediate application of the teachings in their church and communities. **Today, the 20 classes are taught in multiple formats by indigenous leaders who best understand their culture and language.** The picture shows a current LISA student who returns to his church and immediately shares the materials with his members...a great use of **time**!



TEACHER MATERIALS HAVE AN EXPONENTIAL IMPACT!

The 2,400 Cambodian students in the 11 Garuna Schools have a daily Bible lesson, using Bible storybooks from the Lutheran Heritage Foundation (LHF). LCMS teacher Tamie Worthington worked with Garuna to create a 3-year teacher guide to accompany this resource. They are translated into Khmer and requested by Thailand and Indonesia leaders. Thai Pastor Niran shared, **"This curriculum will be of great benefit to the teachers in Garuna Ministries and those serving in Sunday School at local churches."** Tamie's prayer is that "the Holy Spirit can work through these lessons to open the hearts and minds of the students and their families to the saving love Jesus has for each of them."



USA TEAM ADDITION

Garuna prioritizes staffing for the overseas mission field; but in the USA, there is a growing need for additional support by Content Developer, Liane Henkell. **Already working with Garuna, Liane will soon be giving more time to the ministry as she uses her creative gifts to benefit both the mission field and the USA partners!** She creates promo materials, training helps for our Asia teams, and helpful curriculum resources for use at USA school chapels, Sunday Schools, and VBS. Liane is ready and willing to share the Garuna mission stories with you!



A HIGH PERCENTAGE OF GARUNA'S TEAM TRAINED

Garuna employs 84 national workers in Asia. All are involved in weekly Bible study. Many have been trained in the LISA Bible program. **Along with their employment comes a commitment to the continuing education of these workers as they grow in skills and knowledge.** Workers are hired because of their willing hearts, but many without the additional training they desire. Garuna provides funding for GEDs, teacher certification courses, bachelor's degrees, master's degrees and DMin programs, all without having to move from their homes or ministries.



VBS: A CALCULATED SUCCESS!

Ministry partners from California traveled to Cambodia this summer to lead Gospel-centered VBS programs for Garuna students. **After much planning, a lot of energy, great music, and fun games, these events were a resounding success.**

Prince of Peace Pastor Tom Zelt and his Fremont, CA team attended the dedication of their 3rd Garuna School site before leading VBS at their 3 schools in Siem Reap.

This encouragement and activity meant the world to the teachers, staff, students, and their families! The California team also included Garuna Board members Dave Hemker & Scott Falk and his family.



PERIMETER MINISTRIES THAT WORK

Garuna Kids-Thailand is a ministry that responds to the opportunities and needs in northern Thailand and along the borders of Myanmar and Laos. New guitar, English, and craft classes have recently been added to expand the reach of Garuna's Thailand outreach team. **Government schools are asking for visits at their schools and these visits include the sharing of the Gospel with hilltribe groups.** Garuna's new local part-time staff are being trained by the leaders in Thailand to share with their local villagers.



TWO NEW SCHOOLS FILLED TO CAPACITY

In June, the newest Garuna Christian School (#11) was dedicated in Siem Reap, Cambodia with members of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church (Fremont, CA) in attendance. **Within days, the school was filled to capacity, with more than 300 students enrolled – and still more desiring to come.** The same story held true following the January 2025 dedication of GCS #10! What an amazing blessing to see children and families lining up to hear about Jesus and desiring a good education.



TAKING AWAY SOME OF THE BURDEN

Last March, an earthquake in Myanmar caused extensive damage in a country of existing poverty and need. Garuna's partners in this region quickly moved to meet the needs of the most desperate by using generous funds shared by Garuna donors to buy supplies for those left with nothing. Rice, oil, noodles, water, mats, mosquito nets, medicine, blankets, hygiene supplies, and canned fish were distributed. **Even more important, the Gospel was shared and 44 expressed new faith and trust in Jesus.**



FROM THE CHAIRMAN:

Dear Friends in Christ,

Did you like to study math in school? According to a Google (AI) search, “58% of Americans say they liked studying math in grades K-12” and 95% of U.S. adults think math is very or somewhat important for work...” Are you surprised by these percentages? In the USA we often think about numbers, such as our age,

friends, income, social media followers, profits/losses, blood pressure.

The Bible reminds us that God created the world in an orderly, loving, and amazing way. The most recent world population is now over 8,000,000,000. This number matters to God. Each number represents a person loved by God. Consider these meaningful numbers for our ministry:

1 – We have but one life – Hebrews 9:27

1 – We have only one who can and does save us – Jesus the Christ
– Acts 4:12

1 – Jesus died once for all – Hebrews 9:28

2 – He will come a second time to take us to be with Him in paradise
– Hebrews 9:28

2 – The percentage of people in SE Asia who know Jesus

12 – Garuna is building its 12th Christian School in Cambodia

82 – National Garuna staff in SE Asia

300 – LISA Bible students in SE Asia

2,380 – Children in the Garuna Christian School system in Cambodia

“After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands.”
(Revelation 7:9)

Multitudes More than can be counted (in eternity)

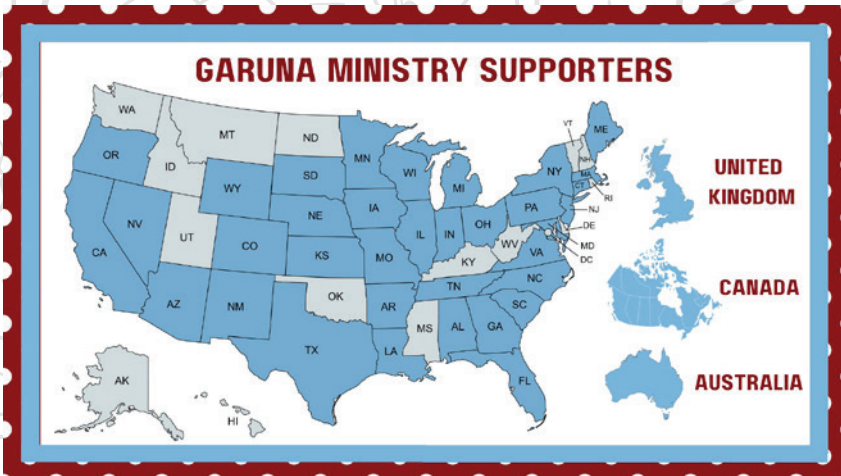
Every From **every** nation, tribe, and language group

One Praising our **One** God; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit!

You We are very thankful for **you**, your prayers, and very generous financial support.

May God continue to bless our shared ministry in SE Asia so that the **“number” of precious people who trust in Jesus will grow and grow by God’s grace.**

Rev. Dr. Jeff Ehlers, Chairman – Garuna Ministries



DIVISION OR UNITY?

Immanuel Lutheran School students in Columbus, NE met and exceeded their third quarter chapel goal to sponsor four Garuna Kids in Cambodia. Two of their students went to a basketball game at nearby St. John’s Lutheran School where they noticed a sign indicating St. John’s was also supporting Garuna. The young ones were upset. **“St. John’s stole our chapel project!”** We love that the students cared so much about their project! **We value each of our donors who come from 35 states and 3 foreign countries!**

“MEASURED” GENEROSITY OPTIONS

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

- **“Where Needed Most” gifts**
- **Sponsoring Garuna Kids, Garuna Teachers, LISA Bible students**
- **IRA Charitable Rollovers or IRA RMD’s** can provide an opportunity for stewards over the age of 70-1/2 to make gifts to Garuna from their IRAs directly with no income taxes due on the rolled over or donated funds.
- **Gifts of Appreciated Stock** – We can help you with this!
- **Donor Advised Funds** – Garuna welcomes gifts from your donor advised funds.
- **Employee Match** – Ask your employer if this option exists for you.
- **Estate Planning** – Have you considered Garuna in your estate planning?

- **Endowment Fund Gift** – Helps us plan for the future.

- **Thrivent Choice** – Garuna 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

