

## Merry Christmas! Praise to God for His Son Jesus Christ!

Dear Family in Christ,

Christmas is just a week away! Hard to get in the mood when it's 85°F and dry as a bone, but I had fun singing Christmas songs in a tduk tduk (a metal carriage mounted on a motor bike) with friends! The president of NMSI and two NMSI missionaries are visiting Cambodia during the holiday, so we are planning to go to Kirirom, a national forest in Kampong Speu province, for rest and relaxation. I am looking forward to their visit and to getting away for a few days.

Yesterday, at the Bible College, we set up a drip irrigation set using an old paint bucket and a kit from Chapin Living Waters Foundation (about \$12 for a kit) for 2 garden beds. The drip tape puts the water right where the plants need it, thereby using less water. It is the dry season now and we are talking about ways to conserve and efficiently use water. The students are working hard and the garden is looking better! We had a dedication of the garden to the Lord because I felt a burden that we needed to again acknowledge God and ask his blessing and wisdom over us as we tend what he has given us. Sopeat taught a class by herself a few weeks ago about Community Development and she did a great job. I continue to request prayers for flexibility in teaching and wisdom in relating to the students.

We are nearing the end of meeting with the church leaders and World Relief HOPE staff about vision, goals, activities and responsibilities for the moringa project. After this we can really begin implementing. Please pray for the people involved in this project, that they will experience success and that they will strive towards excellence in all aspects. They have all worked hard and given time to making this happen.

I was finally able to purchase a motor bike, both for use at work and personal use. Thank you to those who made this possible! This has taken a burden off Sopeat of using her moto for work related travel and given me more freedom to get around. I am learning to drive it and am beginning to feel more comfortable driving in the city. Driving in Phnom Penh can be a nightmare, so I would ask for prayers for safety.

This year has gone by so quickly! I continue to pray about what God would have me do after next December, whether to continue with what I am doing or to change focus. I need wisdom and vision and I want to listen and obey God's voice, not my own. Please pray that this next year would be a confirmation of what God would have me do next.

Living in developing countries brings you face to face with poverty in uncomfortable ways. Children asking for money when you are filling up at a gas station, mine victims who have lost legs begging for a living, children selling books to tourists to pay for their school fees, friends who cannot pay doctor's bills, families selling children to buy food. At times it feels wrong to give and wrong to say no. I have been struggling with how I respond and how I can respond better. Paul says we should give what we have decided in our hearts to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves when we give cheerfully (2 Cor. 9:7). I was struck the other day about how I can easily spend on one meal what it costs a family of 5 in Cambodia to eat for one day (some families have less than that), and asking what is my part in this and what is

God's? I remembered the story when Jesus fed the 5000 people. The disciples told Jesus the people were hungry and Jesus replied, "You give them something to eat." I am sure the disciples looked at him like he was mad, but then Jesus miraculously multiplied the bit of food they found. I think Christ wants us (me!) to be more engaged in helping people because he blesses those in need through our sacrifices, the sacrifices of an open, faithful heart, no matter how grand or insignificant those may seem.

Thank you so much for your prayers!!! It is always an encouragement to be reminded that, "Oh yeah, I am not alone in this!" I love hearing from you all and think about you often. Please let me know what things I can be bringing before the Lord for you.

Thank you also for your consistent financial support, or if you are praying about giving, because I could not be here without you! I pray as I learn to give more cheerfully, that you also may find joy in giving!

God's blessings this Christmas and New Year!

By His grace,

Holly

(Photos below)

Prayers Thoughts (from above and a few extra)

- #1 – That I can really invest in people's lives here
- Language learning
- Flexibility and wisdom in teaching
- Moringa project: for success and excellence!
- Safety while driving
- Plans for after my first 2 years here
- That I can be a cheerful giver
- For a close friend or mentor that I can talk with regularly
- Being away from family this Christmas

"I will give them an undivided heart and put a new spirit in them; I will remove from them their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh. Then they will follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. They will be my people, and I will be their God." Ezekiel 11:19-20



A blessing - Super Cub 70cc Moto



The rice harvest is starting!



Visiting my friend Melissa in Thailand



A goodbye at the airport



HOPE cell group students who attended the moringa training