

NEWSLETTER: FRIENDS OF BURMA, INC.

SPRING EDITION, MAY 2022

Dear friends, we hope you all are doing well by the grace of the Lord. It has been more than two years since the pandemic began and we pray that it will be over soon. We mourn with those who lost their family members and loved ones during the pandemic and rejoice with those whose lives are spared. We pray for the people of Ukraine, the people of Burma who are living through the civil war, and all those who are suffering around the world. In this season of our life, we found that the Lord is our sure hope and strength. Isaiah 40:31 said “Yet those who wait for the Lord will gain new strength; they will mount up with wings like eagles, they will run and not get tired, they will walk and not become weary”. We thank you for partnering with us to bring hope and healing to the people of Burma. Your generous gifts and prayers are greatly appreciated.

Our new board member, Eh Moo Hmun, shares why she supports Friends of Burma

My name is Eh Moo Hmun, daughter of Wallace Hmun and Dorothy Thaw Hmun. My family and I are first generation immigrants to the United States from Myanmar since 1987. I've found meaning in life by giving back to the communities I encounter during my travel adventures but the people of Burma, especially the children, have a special place in my heart. In the past several years, I've been seeking opportunities to contribute to causes in Myanmar, even beyond my financial contributions. I feel blessed to have the opportunity to visit Myanmar twice now since 2011 and visiting the orphanages there and serving the poor and the needy have been both rewarding and humbling experiences. I've been a donor of Friends of Burma for several years now, I've had the opportunity to learn about the positive impact the organization has in Myanmar. As a FOB board member as of 2021, I've witnessed the commitment of the leaders and volunteers even more. The opportunity to read the heartwarming stories of how the prayers and donations have made a difference in the lives of those in need encourages me to continue serving on the Board of Directors and financially support the organization for years to come.

SPRING IS HERE AND WE ARE FILLED WITH HOPE AS WE LOOK FORWARD TO WHAT THE LORD WILL DO FOR THE PEOPLE OF BURMA. WE ALSO WOULD LIKE TO UPDATE YOU ON WHAT THE LORD HAS DONE THROUGH FRIENDS OF BURMA WITH YOUR GENEROUS GIFTS.

Christmas Gift

We received \$50 Christmas gifts from each donor, a total of 75 donors, and they were distributed to leaders in Myanmar to be given to those who are in need. Not only did the recipients fill with thankfulness, but it also gave joy to the leaders who are distributing the gifts. They sent their heartfelt thanks and prayed for all who contributed.

Your gift was a blessing to a widow



FOB's Christmas gift was given to those who were in need of financial assistance. A widow, who is taking care of her 10-year-old daughter, her elderly mother, and two other boys who left their homes for the wars in their village and currently are living with her was one of the recipients. She is running a small tailoring shop to support her family. With the pandemic and the coup, her business was not doing so well. She is basically trying to make ends meet by the little money she can make from tailoring and some food rations shared by a church she's going to. She was so surprised to receive the gift as she didn't expect anyone would bring such a gift to her. She said she was thankful to the Lord and to FOB for the gift.

Your gift was a blessing to an elderly grandmother



Ms. S., a minister gave the Christmas gift to Mrs. M., an 81-year-old grandmother, from a village. Mrs. M. lived with one of her grandchildren who works as a daily laborer. Most of the time she is alone at the house. She was very happy and smiling when she received the Christmas gift. It meant a lot to her since she is poor and lived on the support of her grandson. The gift was a lot of help in her time of difficulty.

Your gift was a blessing to a gentleman with visual impairment

Ms. A. distributed the gift to Mr. S., a 73-year-old man who used to work as a security guard at a church in Yangon. His one eye got severe visual impairment due to a traumatic injury at work before he became a church security guard. Afterward, he worked as a faithful servant of God as a church security guard for almost 11 years until his both eyes were almost completely blind due to optic nerve damages. As a church member, Ms. A. has witnessed his dedication and his dutiful performance throughout those years. Currently he is living with his brother's family since he is a single older man without any income. Ms. A. had a chance to go and visit his home and gave the Christmas love gift in person. She could clearly see his joy over his face, and she was sure that this Christmas sharing will benefit him financially, physically, spiritually, and emotionally.



Your gift was a blessing to 35 impoverished families



Mr. H., Mr. O., and Mr. S., as a team, purchased different items and packed them into 35 bags (each bag has items such as cooking oil, canned fish, noodles, eggs, soap, toothpaste, some cookies, small cakes, and masks). In the early morning of December 11, they drove around the Insein township and visited dumpsters where the needy were collecting plastic bottles and other reusable items. Since they unexpectedly received the Christmas gifts, they were very happy and grateful, and their happy faces made the team very happy.

Your gift was a blessing to a family with financial need for medical care

“My name is K. T. There are six members in my family. My father took any available job to feed our family. But after the Covid and political crisis, he cannot find any regular work. My mother and I sold water, but because of the situation in our country, people can no longer buy water from us. So we are struggling for our daily food. In this difficult time, my mother accidentally stepped on a nail, but we would not take her to the hospital right away due to lack of money. But slowly the wound of her right foot became worse. My mother also has other health problems. We went to Yangon General Hospital for treatment, but there are not enough doctors there, and we have been there for a month. In order to attend the hospital, we borrowed money with an interest rate of 30 kyats. In this time of physically and mentally being very tired and stressed, we are thankful to God for this Christmas gift. We are very happy to receive it and pray that God will bless the donors richly.”



In addition to the Christmas gifts, many were also helped by your generous gifts

Repairing a Well (Pump) in Dalah: Our representative from Burma gave the donation money to a pastor to be used for repairing a well. The old tank could not be used anymore which caused water problems in the community. This poor community could not afford a new tank and repair the pump. Our representative believed that this would help not only the people there but also to witness God's love to neighbors who are non-Christians.

Providing food for the suffering villagers

With your donation, we were able to help the needy and the suffering villagers who fled from their village in Chin State. They were accused of being associated with revolutionaries called Chin Defense Force and put in prison by the military. They were so happy since they could buy rice with your donation. One of them said you were God's hand from far away to feed them when they were hungry.



Providing the staple food for those in need

Pandemic in the past few years and the ongoing conflict with the military rulers has caused many people in Burma to be in a very dire situation. We distributed 80 bags of rice to the needy in three places in Yangon.



We were able to distribute face masks to those who are in need during the pandemic including one of the child care centers located in the delta area.



Lightning for learning

Mr. and Mrs. W. organized, and fund raised for Lightning for Learning program. It has 60 US donors to provide higher education scholarships for the Phu Saw Bu and Kwe Lwe(Paradise) Delta orphanages(child care centers). In 2021, due to COVID-19, school closures, and the military coup, donations were provided to 13 child care centers, for their nutritional support and needs, through fund raising with 2 Half Marathons, matching, and their Tech fund.

Empowering women through Self-help groups

Rev. G. is the coordinator of Self-help groups that empower women by teaching them various skills or encouraging them to use their skills for income generation. They work with Mros in a displaced community through Indigenous Women Group in Hle Gu Township. They provide food for them as well as working with them to find a market for their crafts. Since many of the Mro women are good at weaving clothing and other personal items, the skilled ones can generate income in that manner. Pictured: Samurana Women's Group (right)



Hope Vocational Skill Training Center

Through the support of FOB, Rev Gaw's team provided materials for Mro women related to weaving. They also bought their products and tailored or embroidered them at Hope vocational skill training center into various types of bags for ladies and men. These finished products are then sold to the community.



Raising Chickens



Self help groups doing weaving in two ways



Eve Farm

Eve Farm was initially supported by Dr. Neil Sowards in 2008 and it became a three -acre -farm which produces several fruits such as Guavas, Pomelos, Lemons, Limes, Pineapples, Bananas, Mangoes and Jackfruits. The income from Eve farm is used for supporting students at Hope Center. They also have two brick ponds for raising Earthworms for organic fertilizers at Eve farm.

Eyeglasses for the seminary students



With your generous gifts, we were able to provide eyeglasses for the seminary students who are in need of eyeglasses. They all are very thankful for your gift.

One of the students wrote, "I would like to send my gratitude to you all that you arrange special program for us who have poor eyesight. As you contribute your blessing, I wish you that may God abundantly shower His blessing upon you".

Providing resources for dining hall construction



Your gift has provided the resources required for the blind school for their dining hall construction.

Providing resources for church community hall construction



One of the FOB supporters provided finance for community hall construction of a Baptist church for its 125-anniversary celebration.

How about a Legacy Gift in support of Friends of Burma?

A legacy gift (also called a planned giving) can help Friends of Burma establish long-term sustainability and provide you a way to show your support now for the people of Burma. Did you know,

“Fewer than 6 percent of Americans include a charitable bequest in their will or estate plan—but one in three say they would consider doing so if asked. In one survey, only 17 percent of donors who said they were open to a conversation about legacy giving had been invited to have such a conversation by their favorite charity.”

We are asking. Would you like to help Friends of Burma establish long-term sustainability? You can add Friends of Burma to your estate plan, your will, or make Friends of Burma the beneficiary of your life insurance. There are many options and Friends of Burma, Board Member, Dr. John Gravley would be happy to assist you in setting up a planned giving option for Friends of Burma.

Areas of support for planned giving: orphan support, medical support, education support

Let your legacy support others for years to come.

WISH LIST

1. Donations to Matthew 25 Love and KBC Hospital for COVID-19 prevention practices and equipment.
2. \$17 each for prescription glasses for students at various Seminaries and Bible Schools.
3. \$300 for a microcredit or Self Help group.
4. To provide food or medical care for the vulnerable families (any amount is welcome)
5. \$360 for children centers per child. (We welcome lesser amounts and will combine them)

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This newsletter was compiled by Eh Moo Hmun and Naw May P. Cartee. Please notify us if you wish to be on the emailing list and feel free to pass along the printed copy or email version of this newsletter. Please visit our website to view all other information that could not be included in this newsletter.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13

Thank you all for reading and please keep the people of Burma in your prayer.

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