

GOSPEL TO *Thailand*



The Hernandez Family Missionaries to Thailand

Dear Pastor

Thank you so much for taking time to look at this information packet.

We are the Hernandez family! I am Ahmet and my wife is Rachael. We have three precious children: A.J., Sarah, and Rachel. We both grew up in Pensacola, FL. I joined the Navy in 2001 and served for 5 years. The Navy took us to Charleston, SC, then Guam, and finally, Louisiana. In June 2008, God called us to the mission field. We were so excited! Two years later, God used Phillip and Lori Bassham to let us know our next place to call home will be Thailand!

We arrived in Thailand on December 11, 2014. It has been an amazing journey so far and we have enjoyed seeing God work mightily here. This packet contains information on what has happened since we arrived and updates our goals. It also contains more information about our family, what we believe, and our future plans for ministry here. Please contact me if you have any questions. I would be glad to answer them. Thank you again for taking time to review this packet.

Laboring Together

Ahmet Hernandez

GOAL PROGRESS REPORT

When we left for Thailand, we embarked on our journey having goals set for what we wanted accomplish during our first term. The Lord has been gracious to help us as we progress in each of these areas. Here is a list of our original goals as well as our progress in each area.

SHORT TERM GOALS

- Learn the language and culture - Truly this is a goal that will never be 100% met. Missionaries should always be increasing in their language skills as well as their cultural knowledge.
 - Language - Currently (August 2016) I am able to converse in Thai as well as teach Bible lessons and share the Gospel. My goal is to be able to preach a full 30-40 minute message in Thai by December 0f 2016. Rachael is at a conversational level as well, and the kids are still learning.
 - Culture - We have learned much since coming here. Books cannot fully explain the different nuances in a culture. The longer we live here, the more we come to know the reasons why certain things are done specific ways.
- Work with a veteran missionary - Ricky and Tammy Salmon have been such a tremendous help since arriving in Thailand. We currently have our visas through his foundation, and we are working together in the planting of Hua Mak Baptist Church. We are thankful for their friendship and wisdom. God has used them to help us transition to our new lives here.

LONG TERM GOALS

- See people saved and disciplined through evangelism - We know that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation, so in everything we do we point to Jesus Christ. Sometimes results can be slow to come, but we are called to faithfully plant and water, and God will give the increase.
 - Evangelism - We use many different kinds of outreach, but our primary and most successful has been teaching English for free. Currently we teach English for free 3 times a week. We first teach English for an hour, then we teach the Bible for half an hour. We also use English clubs for kids, community game night, and tract/invitation distribution at the market.

- Salvations - We have seen people come to faith in Thailand, and we were able to personally lead 2 young men right after the start of Hua Mak Baptist Church. These men had been coming to English for a while, so the seed was sown and watered often! We also have many others we continually pray for, that God would “open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins.”
- Discipleship - Discipleship is when we invest our lives in others as Jesus did with His disciples. I am able to spend time almost every day of the week with some young men, teaching them and helping them grow in grace and truth. It is encouraging to see them take initiative to help with whatever they can, invite others to church, and share the Gospel.
- Plant local, indigenous churches - I believe this is the goal of the majority of missionaries serving the Lord over seas. Hua Mak Baptist Church was started in June of 2016, and it is our prayer that God would raise up a local church that is self supporting, self governing, and self propagating. This is a long term goal, but for this to happen the foundation built should be one that is looking toward the church being indigenous. Already the church takes up weekly offerings, they clean the building themselves, and have a hand in the everyday activities of the church.
- Train nationals to lead the church - For a church to be indigenous, it needs national leadership. As I disciple these men, we are praying that God would raise one up to be the pastor. Through discipleship, Bible studies, and hands on experience, our prayer is that God will grow them to spiritual maturity, and use us to help equip them for the ministry.

LOOKING AHEAD

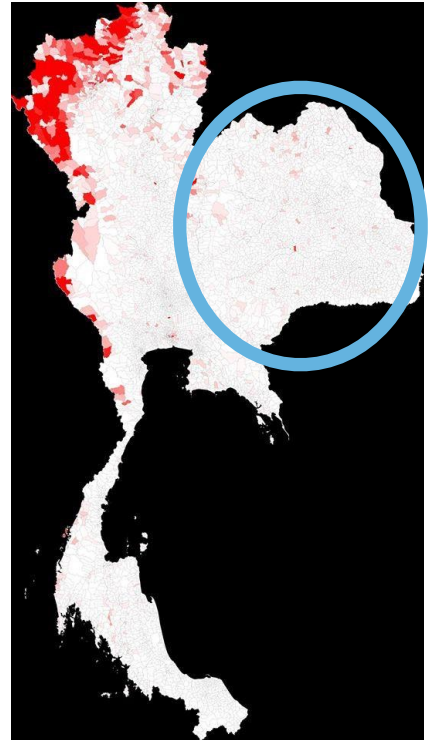
When we came to Thailand, I had some very specific plans laid out. I did not intend to start a church during our first term, but was going to help with another church plant. However, God had a different plan for us. One thing I have learned during deputation and our time in Thailand is flexibility. We must always be listening for that still small voice to guide and direct us. After prayerful consideration, we believe this is what the next few years will look like for us.

PRESENT TIME UNTIL FURLOUGH

- Language - We will continue to learn Thai, but will transition to one on one instead of a large classroom setting.

- Hua Mak Baptist Church - We will continue to labor here. When we started Hua Mak Baptist Church, both Ricky and I did this knowing we would be going back for a furlough in a couple of years. Our prayer is that we can have a strong foundation of families and leaders in the church, and that the church will be able to continue with minimal missionary involvement. This sounds like an impossible goal, but I know God is able!
- Survey the Isan area - When we came to Thailand, our intention was to make our way to the northeastern part of the country, known as the Issan area. The majority of sub-districts in this area have no church of any type. We know this is where we eventually want to go, but we are not yet sure of the specific area. We plan to make some trips to look and pray about specific areas.

(The shade of red on the map is determined by the number of churches in a sub district. The northwest has many churches. The Isan area, circled in blue, has a majority of their subdistricts without churches, and few missionaries or churches trying to plant churches there.)



FURLOUGH

We plan to return home for a furlough before launching into our next work. This will be in 2018, but I am not yet sure of how many or which months. Some of the things we want to accomplish during furlough are:

- Report to our supporting churches
- Raise additional support to replace lost support
- Spend some time with our families and home church
- Investigate colleges with AJ (he will be 18 years old)

RETURN TO THAILAND

When we return, we plan on heading directly to the area we will be ministering. We want to get started as soon as possible, since it takes time to build up a rapport with the Thai people. It is a little easier in Bangkok because so many foreigners live here, However as you travel away from Bangkok, the presence of foreigners decreases drastically.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

EDUCATION

I studied and graduated from Grace Baptist Bible Institute, under the teaching of Dr. Tom Schreeder.

EXPERIENCE

My family has been privileged to serve God at Grace Baptist Church Zachary for five years. While there, we have served in many different capacities, including: leading the bus route, children's church, teaching different Sunday school classes, one on one personal discipleship, and many other areas. I spent two years as associate pastor and school administrator, which afforded me many opportunities to preach and teach the Word.

Since coming to Thailand, we have adjusted to a new culture and language. My wife and I can both speak/read Thai, and I am able to teach and share the Gospel in Thai. We started Hua Mak Baptist Church in June 2016, have seen people saved, baptized, and discipled.

PHILOSOPHY AND STRATEGY

A good missionary philosophy will be Scripturally based. The Great Commission is not only a commandment from Jesus, but He instructs us how we are to go about it.

- Teach - We are to share the gospel with every creature. A clear presentation is always important. However, the Thai people are taught different ideas of Heaven, God, Jesus, and spirits, which make it important that they understand what they are being told.
 - Literature - The majority of new Christians in Thailand are exposed to the gospel for the first time through literature distribution. This is a quick and effective way to spread much seed amongst so many lost.
 - Social Media - Facebook, Twitter, and Websites are options to reach a large group of people in big cities. Smartphones and wifi access are predominate in Thailand, making this a viable way to reach people.
- Baptize - Baptism is an act of obedience by a new believer. Baptism by immersion is an important step for new believers in that it is a public statement renouncing their old ways and affirming their commitment to Jesus. This is a particularly hard step for Thai people because renouncing their old ways (Buddhism) is seen by the Thai as a renouncement of their Thai heritage and culture.

- Teach - Once baptized, it is our desire to see new Christians grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18). Faced with rejection from within their culture, it is important to teach the Truth of the Word, to build upon the firm foundation of Christ.
- Train - It is important that new Christians are trained in the fundamentals of Christianity. A body of doctrinally sound believers leads to a strong church body. It is also vitally important to find and train the men that God would use to be the leaders of a church. 2 Timothy 2:2 charges us to commit these teachings to faithful men, that they may teach others also. This model of replication is important for a church to grow!
- Plant Churches - The local church is the instrument that Jesus uses to advance His Gospel around the world. He uses a local church as a conduit to pour out His grace to a lost and dying world. It is important to plant churches that will be able to become self supporting, self replicating, and indigenous. These churches act as the body of Christ to not only reach the country of Thailand, but to reach the world!

CONTACT INFORMATION



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DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

THE SCRIPTURES

We believe that the Holy Bible (the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments) was written by men who were supernaturally inspired; that it is truth without any mixture of error and therefore is, and shall remain the only complete, and to the end of the age, final revelation of the will of God. We believe that God has divinely preserved His Word in the Authorized King James Version of the Bible. II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:19-21; Psalm 19:7-11; Psalm 12:6-7; Psalm 119:140.

CREATION

We believe the Genesis account of creation, and that what you believe about your origin will determine your philosophy of life. We believe creation was an instantaneous and miraculous act of God performed in six literal 24-hour days. We believe man was created in the image of God and all reproduction was “after his kind.” Genesis 1:1; Genesis 1:21, 24-27; Colossians 1:16-17; Job 26:7; Psalm 33:6-9; John 1:3.

TRINITY

We believe in one Triune God, eternally existing in three persons – Father, Son and Holy Spirit, each co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, co-equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections. Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19; Matthew 3:16-17; II Corinthians 13:14; John 14:10, 26; Philippians 2:6; I Corinthians 8:6; Colossians 2:9; John 10:30.

DEITY OF JESUS CHRIST

We believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, as demonstrated by His character, His miracles, His influence, His power to forgive sins and to set people free from Satan, according to the Holy Scriptures. Jesus Christ is revealed in the Holy Scriptures, as God manifested in the flesh because He claimed to be, died making this claim, and arose victorious over death. Matthew 26:63, 64; John 1:1; John 10:30; Hebrews 1:6-8; I John 5:20; Mark 14:61, 62.

VIRGIN BIRTH

We believe that Jesus Christ was conceived of the Holy Ghost in a miraculous manner; He was born of Mary, a virgin, as no other person was ever born or can ever be born of a woman. He is both the Son of God and God the Son. Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:27-35; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-25.

SUBSTITUTIONARY DEATH OF CHRIST

We believe that Jesus took the sinner's place, bore His sins through a substitutionary death for all mankind. Jesus satisfied the law, becoming our accepted substitute. His righteousness is imputed to us by faith and so we through Him are justified before God. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin. Isaiah 53:5; II Corinthians 5:21; I Peter 3:18; I John 1:7; Isaiah 53:10-12; Romans 3:25; Hebrews 9:12-28.

SALVATION BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH

We believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose precious blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of our sins. John 1:12; Ephesians 1:7, 2:8-10; I Peter 1:18-19; Acts 4:12; Romans 10:9-13; Titus 3:5-8.

HEAVEN AND HELL

We believe that Heaven and Hell are literal physical places. Heaven is a place of beauty and glory, just as Hell is a place of torment and punishment. Heaven is the final eternal dwelling place of the saved, and Hell is a place of eternal punishment of the unsaved. Matthew 6:20; Luke 10:20; John 14:2; Matthew 25:46; Luke 16:19-31; II Peter 2:4; Revelation 20:14-15; Matthew 25:41.

DEPRAVITY

Man is inherently wicked, corrupt, and all are under sin. We believe that man was created in the image of God but fell through sin, bringing not only physical death but also spiritual death, separation from God. Now all mankind is totally depraved, having inherited a sinful nature through Adam, bent toward sinning, and is sinful in thought, word, and deed. Romans 3:10-23; Romans 5:12-21; Romans 6:23; Psalm 14:3; Genesis 3:6-19; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Jeremiah 17:9; Genesis 6:5, 8:21.

HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person equal with God the Father and God the Son; that He was active in the creation; that He convicts, seals, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies, and helps the believer. Therefore these ministries of the Holy Spirit happen instantaneously to the believing sinner at salvation. We believe the sign gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as speaking in tongues and the gift of healing, were temporary. We believe that speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of baptism or filling of the Holy Spirit and that ultimate deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection, though God frequently chooses to answer the prayers of believers for physical healing. I Corinthians 1:22; 13:8; 14:21-22; 14:33; John 14:16-17; John 16:7-15; Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:19; Romans 8; John 15:26; Hebrews 2:3-4.

SEPARATION FROM THE WORLD

We believe that all the saved are called into a life of separation from all worldly and sinful practices. A person, once he has truly accepted Christ as Savior, is a new creation in Christ and should live a holy, consecrated life, in obedience to the command of God.

Romans 12:1-2; I John 2:15-17; II Corinthians 6:14-18; I Peter 2:9; I Peter 1:14-16; II Corinthians 5:17; II Timothy 2:19.

RAPTURE & THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

We believe in that “blessed hope,” the personal, imminent return of Christ who will rapture His church prior to the seven-year tribulation period. At the end of the Tribulation, Christ will personally and visibly return, with His saints, to establish His earthly Messianic Kingdom which was promised to the nation of Israel. Psalm 89:3-4; Daniel 2:31-45; Zechariah 14:4-11; I Thessalonians 1:10; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:13; Revelation 3:10; 19:11-16; 20:1-6.

BAPTISM & THE LORD’S SUPPER

We believe there are two ordinances of the local church: Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. Scriptural baptism is total immersion in water, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, administered by the authority of a New Testament Church and is prerequisite to church membership and participation in the Lord’s Supper. The Lord’s Supper is a memorial ordinance of the local church members. The members of this local church, by the sacred use of unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine (grape juice), are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ. This is a local church ordinance. Non-church members do not participate. I Corinthians 11:17-34; Acts 8:38; Mark 1:9-10; Acts 2:41-42; 19:1-7; Matthew 28:19; Romans 6:3-5; Matthew 26:26-30; Matthew 3:16; I Peter 3:21.

SATAN

We believe in the personality of Satan; that he is the god of this world, blinding “the minds of them which believe not.” We believe that Satan was once holy, and enjoyed heavenly honors; but through pride and ambition to be as the Almighty, fell and drew after him a host of angels. Satan is the author of all false religions, of apostasy, and the ruler of the powers of darkness. However, he is destined to final defeat at the hands of God’s own Son, and to judgment of an eternal justice in Hell, a place prepared for him and his angels. Matthew 4:2-11; Revelation 20:1-3; II Corinthians 4:3-4; I Peter 5:8; Revelation 20:10; Isaiah 14:12-17; Matthew 25:41; Job 1:6-7; John 8:44; Revelation 12:3-12.

RESURRECTION

We believe in the bodily resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and that He arose bodily the third day from the tomb according to the Scriptures, and ascended bodily into Heaven. Through His resurrection a sure hope of immortality and everlasting life is given to all who have been saved by His grace. He is now seated at the right hand of God as our “Mediator,

Merciful, and Faithful High Priest, and Advocate.” John 20:1-29; I Corinthians 15:12-28; Luke 24:1-7; Hebrews 9:24; 7:25; Romans 8:34; I John 2:1-2; Acts 1:9-10.

ETERNAL SECURITY

We believe in the eternal security of all those who have placed their faith and trust in Jesus Christ for their salvation. When a person is saved (born again) they receive everlasting life, which cannot be taken away. God’s children are kept by the power of God through faith unto eternal salvation and sealed unto the day of redemption. John 10:27-30; I Peter 1:5; Ephesians 4:30; Romans 8:35-39; John 5:24; Philippians 1:6; John 6:37-40; John 3:16; I John 5:10-13; Romans 8:1-2; 14-17.

MISSIONS

We believe that the Great Commission to evangelize the world was given to the church by our risen Lord and that this evangelization is the mission of the church. The Great Commission was given to the local church that was commanded to “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.” Christ commanded His church to “teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; John 20:21; Acts 1:8.

SANCTIFICATION

We believe that sanctification is a personal separation from things that are unclean to things that are holy, clean, and sacred; that it is a progressive work begun at regeneration; that it is carried on in the hearts of the believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. The sanctification of the believer will be complete at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Then, and only then will we be sanctified wholly: body, soul and spirit. I Thessalonians 5:23; 4:1-10; I Corinthians 6:11; II Peter 3:18; II Corinthians 3:18; II Thessalonians 2:13; Romans 8:5; 12:1-2.

LOCAL CHURCH

We believe that a scriptural church is a local visible assembly of baptized believers, covenanted together under New Testament law for the purpose of carrying out the Great Commission, with an unbroken history from the personal ministry of Jesus on earth to this present day; that this church is a self-governed independent body having Christ as the head, the Holy Spirit for its guide, and the Bible as the only rule of faith and practice. The only scriptural officers of the church are the pastor and deacons. The two ordinances of the local church are Baptism and Lord’s Supper. On all matters of membership, of policy, of government, of discipline, of benevolence, etc., the will of the local church is final. Mark 16:15; Ephesians 1:22-23; I Timothy 3; Titus 1; Acts 20:17-20; Ephesians 3:21; Acts 13:1-4; 15:19-31; 20:28; Romans 16:1; I Corinthians 3:9; 5:4-7; I Peter 5:1-4.