



Faith, Hope, and Love
Global Ministries

Ministry along the Thai-Myanmar border

Part 1 of 3

April Enewsletter



Presenting awards to KHTS students before delivering the "Charge to the Graduates"

Dear Timothy C.,

Words sometimes fail me when I try to adequately portray the needs and suffering of our brothers and sisters in Christ, especially those who live in Myanmar and along the Thai-Myanmar border. But I can attest to this without any equivocation: Amid so much disaster and hardship, God is at work among the Christians in Southeast Asia in some amazingly beautiful ways. And, despite the overwhelming nature of the problems and obstacles, God is using Faith, Hope, and Love Global Ministries to provide highly valued teaching and life-sustaining ministry to the people there.

By now, you have surely heard the news and possibly seen the heart-wrenching photos and videos of [earthquake victims in Myanmar](#). On top of all the other unimaginable hardships the people have had to endure since the military coup

over four years go, on March 28, some 3600 people were killed due to a 7.7 magnitude earthquake. The country has plunged even further into chaos and utter dysfunction. [20 million](#) (of a total population of around 55 million) are in need of humanitarian aid, and over [3.5 million](#) are hiding from military aggression in Internally Displaced People (IDP) camps or in the jungles. Meanwhile, despite promises of a cease fire in the aftermath of the earthquake, the junta [continues to drop bombs](#) on villages, killing men, women, and children indiscriminately, nearly every day.



Collapsed pagoda following the earthquake in Mandalay, Myanmar [photo credit EPA]

Faith, Hope, and Love Global Ministries (FHLGM) no longer has staff on the ground in Myanmar, but we are still able to support and collaborate with numerous Christian leaders, former students, and other trusted partners to provide theological education to future pastors and to distribute humanitarian aid. For example, Dr. Ar Naing (pictured below), a former student of mine, organized a committee of MIT alumni/ae to thoughtfully distribute thousands of dollars donated by FHLGM and others to earthquake victims.



On the Thai side of the border, our ministry target group is mostly Karen Christians, especially leaders, teachers, and students—themselves refugees from Myanmar—who are serving IDPs and other refugees in the borderlands. By teaching, counseling, and encouraging them, we are helping to prepare them to effectively serve thousands of people in both Myanmar and Thailand. The people we teach and mentor are able, in turn, to reach villages and camps that we could never reach.

There is so much to share from our most recent six and a half weeks in Thailand, that, in this e-newsletter, I am only going to focus on my teaching and ministry with seminarians at [Kawthoolei Hope Theological Seminary](#) (KHTS) and the privilege I had to give the charge to the graduates at commencement at two different schools. In future letters, I will talk about some additional teaching and ministry experiences, which were fruitful and life-changing in amazing ways.



KHTS Faculty workshop

During our first week in the border area, I taught “Critical Reasoning and the Bible” to 19, first-year KHTS students to fill in some pretty big gaps in their academic preparation for seminary. After initially surprising many of the students by teaching them they could truly learn to think for themselves, by the end of the week, the joy and hope that was generated from learning new intellectual skills was almost palpable.

- *This course is perfect and I would like to express that we learnt a lot more than we deserved. (Naw Eh Nee Doh, M. Div First Year, KHTS)*
- *The lectures come up with practical examples, group discussion, and practical reflection with Biblical examples which help us to engage well in our learning process. And I love this course so much. (Naw Eh Tar Luu Moo, M. Div First Year, KHTS)*



Opening the minds of KHTS first year seminarians

Outside the classroom, students lined up each afternoon to meet with me one on one. All of them are far away from home, some cannot return safely to their villages, and few, especially the boys, do not have any "parent-figure" to talk to about their loneliness, stressors, and uncertainty about their futures. Some have questions about God and God's will for their lives, others just need someone to pray with them. After our times together, the relief and smiles on their faces, or grateful hugs, told me everything I needed to know: through the counseling sessions, God touched them with his love.



Thank you for caring about your brothers and sisters in Christ in Myanmar and Thailand. Thank you for praying and sending contributions to further our work among these amazing people and in support of those in crisis right now. Our Gospel truly changes people's lives for the better, and we have the privilege of teaching and encouraging those who are on the frontlines of sharing it with others and building Christ's church.

Gratefully, in Christ's service,

Charge to Graduates

On two successive weekends in March, Tim had the unusual privilege of delivering the [charge to the graduates](#) at two different schools, one in the Mae La Refugee camp and at KHTS. In his message, he challenged the graduates to answer three important questions for their futures: "Who are you?" "Who do you want to become?" and "How do you plan to become that person?" You can read the text of the charge on Tim's blog site.



[Read Here](#)

*Tim, Jill & FHLGM SE Asia Program
Coordinator, Saw Newton, at the KHTS
Commencement Ceremony*

Eastern Congo Ministry Update

Since Goma and Bukavu fell to M23 rebels this winter, the Congolese people there have been living in fear and uncertainty. Thousands of dollars have poured into the country, including many contributions from FHLGM supporters, to help address the vast humanitarian needs, medical expenses, and food for children and vulnerable women. However, the needs are staggering and rebuilding is next to impossible under the circumstances. Residents have to take turns keeping vigil at night as violent burglars are terrorizing the city, and M23 soldiers have been snatching young people off the streets to force them to join their ranks.

Please pray for Dr. Bolingo and our FHLGM staff serving in Goma, Bukavu, Butembo, and Beni—for safety, their distribution of humanitarian aid, and wisdom to know how and when to resume our webinars for pastors and chaplains and our book distribution.

How can you help?

Along with prayer, please support your brothers and sisters in Christ in Myanmar, Thailand, and the Congo by making a donation to our **general operating fund** (supports staff, programs, and book distribution).

For those wishing to specifically address the humanitarian crises in Myanmar, along the Thai-Myanmar border, and in Eastern Congo, please choose one of the options below. **100% of contributions given for crisis relief go directly to those in need.**

[Faith, Hope, and Love Global Ministries Current Funding Priorities:](#)

1. Humanitarian support for war victims in Goma, DRC. (\$80/family for coal, rice, oil, and maize). Mark your gift "**Congo Crisis**".
2. Humanitarian aid and medical supplies for those in the nine refugee camps in Thailand or other severely affected areas within Myanmar, where conditions continue to deteriorate dangerously after [losing millions of dollars of US AID](#). Mark your gift "**Myanmar Crisis**".
3. Humanitarian aid for those affected by the devastating March 28 earthquake in Myanmar. Mark your gift "**Myanmar Crisis/Earthquake**".
4. Sponsor one or more MIT students to study with Tim in Chiang Mai, Thailand for an intensive course in May (\$580/student). For most of these students, this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to be able to get out of Myanmar for a brief spell and study at this academic level.

Donate Now

"This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth. (1 John 3:16-18, NIV)

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