

KAREN CHRISTIAN LEADERS' NEWSLETTER

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The Very First Karen New Year Day (Broadcast Speech 21st, December 1938)

THE KAREN TODAY

Sd/- San C.Po, Shwe Ba, Hla pe, Sydney Loo Nee, Saw Pe Tha.

1st, Thalay - Htaik Koppho - Pyatho 2678.

This is An Historic Day. It is our first officially recognized National Day. It is a day of opportunity. We are emerging from isolation into the stream of national affairs. Our conviction is that our two million Karens have a significant part to play in Burma's destiny.

We own our existence as a people, not to an organization or any political arrangements, but to certain distinctive qualities that have been given us. Our traits include simplicity, a love of music, honesty, steadiness, and a sense of God. We believe that we can best keep and develop these characteristic in association with other people.

We are in a crisis. For us the choice lies between seeking protection through isolation or active participation in the life of Burma. United ourselves, we could help to make Burma a Nation. We recognize that as leaders we must be fully committed to our country free from fear, personal ambition, racial and religious prejudice.

Today we recall our heritage, our ancient poets and prophets and our tradition of Ywa (God). We believe every individual, every home, every village has a place in the new advance. Progressive in thinking constructive in planning and courageous in living, we can share responsibility with other communities for the making of Burma a united people.

Are we ready on this Karen's New Year Day to put the best traditions of our people at the service of the whole country?

From Duane Binkley: Congratulations to the Grace Baptist Church of Kansas City, Missouri. Earlier this year, some Karen met some members of Grace Baptist Church and began attending services there. Once the people of Grace Baptist got to meet some Karen, the church became very active in working with the Karen community. Now there are about 30 – 40 Karen that attend church each Sunday. The church is helping with transportation, furniture, shopping, tries to visit often and tries to fill the needs they see. The resettlement agency working with the Karen in Kansas City is called the Jewish Vocational Services. They recently presented the Dr. Marvin Bordy Distinguished Service Award to Grace Baptist Church in recognition of their service to the Karen community.

We have received some Burmese language Bibles from Thailand. To cover the cost of shipping them from Thailand, we ask \$8.00 per Bible, plus the cost of sending them within the USA. We also have some Sgaw Karen language Bibles and English to Karen dictionaries we can sell. Drum Publications also has a Karen to English dictionary that can be purchased through the internet. If you are interested in any of these, please contact us at dmbink@pobox.com. We have heard that they are out of Karen language hymn books in Thailand now. We have a few left we can still sell, but there may be some months coming when no new hymn books are available.

We have now added the Karen language titles to the books, Bible studies, Sunday school materials and other items that are available on the Karen Konnection website. That should help make it a little easier to see just what is available. These materials are available to download on your computer. From your computer, you can print them if you would like.

Karens in Fort Wayne, Indiana. About 1,500 Karens have come from refugee camps in Thailand in the last three years under the sponsorship of Catholic Charities. Probably 300 to 500 additional Karens have come to Fort Wayne from other U. S. cities through secondary migration. An unknown number have left Fort Wayne to go to other U. S. cities. Fort Wayne already had about 3,000 Burmese of Burman, Mon, Chin, and Karen who came in the first wave that started in 1991. Many of these "Karen" are actually Muslims of Indian descent who lived in the Karen held areas.

The **Burmese Christian Fellowship** worships at First Baptist Church, 2323 Fairfield Ave at 1:30. It has about 300 involved in their Karen language service and 150 children and youth in Sunday school. There is a youth meeting on Saturday at 3:00 pm. Their leader is Hti Mu Beloc, Saw Lincoln and Thra Hto Lwee.

New Life Lutheran Church has a church service at 242 S. Coliseum Blvd at 12:30ish in the Burmese language led by Pastor Jim Keller. About 25 Karens are involved in this ministry and 3 other ethnic groups. Other activities include a Youth group, assisting with resettlement needs, ESL, citizenship classes, etc.. Their leaders are Vicar Dave Strable and Medical Deaconess Thay Lar Htoo.

Myanmar Indigenous Christian Church (MICC) meets at Christ's Church at Georgetown Square at 2 pm. Membership includes Chin, Karens, non Burmese, Their leaders are Pastor Abraham, Saw Barnardo and U Zaw Zaw.

Assembly of God About 15-20 attend the 9:00 am service which has a Burmese translator. English tutoring is provided during the 10:45 service.

Southwest Lutheran Church sponsors a Karen service at Crescent Avenue United Methodist Church at 3 pm Crescent Ave and Tennessee with between 40 and 50 Karens attending. It is sponsored and led by Southwest Lutheran Church.

Pictures from Arizona Karen Baptist Church Christmas Program: Please the click on (or copy and paste) the following link to see pictures from our 2008 Arizona Karen Baptist Church Children Christmas Program:

http://www.bellevueheightschurch.com/Karan_Church_Xmas_Program.pdf

Excerpt from Karens Christian Leaders' Manual H. Sexual Predators:

Unfortunately America's freedom is misused by some people. There are increasing numbers of sexual predators who prey on children and youth and used them sexually. Therefore children must never be allowed to be alone in public places and must be watched and guarded. At one Karen church some young children ran around the church and the church yard while their parents attended church. The back door was unlocked with no adult watching it.

Children must be taught to be careful about strangers. They should never get into a car with a stranger. Or accept candy or treats from someone they don't know. Or go with them to a secluded spot. You can not teach your children to be too careful.

Already a young Karen girl was sexually molested and murdered in Utah. We don't want that to happen again.

Financial Aid for Students. There is some financial aid for students from National Ministries. Visit their website at www.nationalministries.org or call 1 800 ABC-3USA ext 2067. You can also write American Baptist Scholarship Fund, National Ministries, PO Box 851, Valley Forge, PA 19482-0851.

Back Issues. Issues No 1 & 2 are available from Duane in either English or Karen.

Feedback. If this newsletter is interesting and helpful to you, please let us know. Also send us any information to share with other Karen groups. Tell us what you would like to see in the next issues. Give us e-mails of leaders who might like to receive it--our list is very incomplete.