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KAREN CHRISTIAN LEADER' S NEWSLETTER

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To see pdf versions of this newsletter in Karen or English go to
http://www.karenkonnection.org/Karen_leaders_newsletters.php3

We trust you all had a good Christmas and New Year season. Snow and cold weather was a problem for much of the US this year but we hope people could still come to your Karen New Year celebrations.

New Karen Hymnals Available Two years ago, there were no Karen hymnals available in the US, Thailand or refugee camps for a period of 6 months or so. Since that time, we have tried to get a larger supply of hymnals here in the US so that they can be available to churches and people that want them. Finally, we were able to go together in a printing of new hymnals with a group in Chiang Mai. So we now have a stock pile of 2000 Karen hymnals at our house in Ohio. These are the complete hymnal with all the hymns, and responsive readings with an index in both Karen and English. The nice thing about these hymnals is that everything was checked and re-typed before the printing so the printing is more clear than in previous hymn books. These hymn books are also printed on thin paper like a Bible so they are thinner and lighter than previous hymn books. Since we were involved with the printing and they were shipped directly to us without going to Thailand first they are also only \$10.00 each, half the price of earlier hymn books. Shipping within the US also costs only \$1.00 each. If you would like any of these hymn books, contact Duane Binkley at dmbink@pobox.com.

Common Language Bibles Available Many of you know that we also have the original translation of the Bible in Karen available for \$12.00 ea. (plus \$2.00 ea. for shipping in the US). Recently though, we also received from Thailand a shipment of the new Common Language Bible in the Karen language. This was produced by the United Bible Society in 2004 and is written in more modern Karen language that is hopefully, more easily understood especially by younger people. We received these for free in Thailand but in order to cover the cost of getting the Bibles to the US, we have to ask \$7.00 ea. As with the hymnals, if you would like any of these Bibles, please contact Duane Binkley at dmbink@pobox.com. We also have Burmese language Bibles (\$8.00 ea.) and Anglo-Karen dictionaries (\$5.00 ea.).

Over 450 Baptized at Mae Ra Moe Camp Some of you will know that each year there is a large Thanksgiving Celebration held the first few days of the new year at the Mae Ra Moe (Mae La Ma Luang in the Thai language) Camp south west of Mae Sariang. This year, the Thanksgiving Celebration was held January 1, 2 & 3. As part of the program, 456 people were Baptized in the Yuam River by an international group of 40 pastors from many countries. The event was witnessed by a large group that gathered on the

river bank. If you would like to see a short video of the event follow this link:
http://www.karenkonnection.org/Videos_audio_recordings.php3

Paper Available: What Does the Resurrection of Jesus Mean for Buddhists? San Lian, an assistant lecturer at the Myanmar Institute of Theology at Insein in Burma has written a paper explaining what the resurrection of Jesus might mean to Buddhists. The paper is written in English and we are not aware of a Karen translation. But it would be especially good for English speaking pastors and church leaders working with Karen communities. The paper is available on the Karen Konnection website under the menu titled “Additional Karen Help Resources” at
http://karenkonnection.org/Docs/011510_Resurrection_of_Jesus_for_Buddhists.pdf.

Carbon Monoxide Danger A few weeks ago we sent out information about the dangers of carbon monoxide. This is a poisonous gas that kills people when they sit in their car with the windows closed and the motor running. Two Karen died from this in Ft. Wayne. For more information, see the paper that is posted on the Karen Konnection web site at http://www.karenkonnection.org/Newsletters/2009-12a_Karen_Newsletter_English.pdf for English and at http://www.karenkonnection.org/Newsletters/2009-12a_Karen_Newsletter_Karen.pdf for the Karen language.

Karen On the Internet and in the News: Kansas City, MO Three years ago it was surprising to see information about the Karen on the internet or in the news. But now it seems information on the Karen is easy to find. Some recent links you might find interesting include videos on YouTube showing the Karen New Year celebration at Grace Baptist Church in Kansas City, Missouri. On December 25th, Kansas City had 9 inches of snow but still 200 people attended the Karen New Year celebration on December 26th. At least 4 video segments are posted on YouTube at www.youtube.com. At the top of the home page, type in “Karen New Year Kansas City 2009” and you will see the four videos listed. Watch one of the videos and there will be links to other Karen New Year celebrations in other cities in the US and Canada.

Karen in Ireland Follow the link http://www.irrawaddy.org/article.php?art_id=17519 and you will find an article written in the Irrawaddy magazine about a group of 100 Karen that have been resettled in western Ireland.

Austin, TX The Associated Baptist Press recently wrote an article about the Karen being resettled in Austin, Texas. The article said that so far about 1000 Karen have been settled there. The Crestview Baptist Church in nearby Georgetown, TX has recently offered to be the church home for about 75 Karen in the area. To read the article follow the link <http://www.abpnews.com/content/view/4702/53/>.

Salt Lake City, UT Go to this article in the Salt Lake Tribune <http://extras.sltrib.com/thailand/thaiside3.html> to read about some of the difficulties that refugees face as they come to the US for resettlement not only in Salt Lake City but across the US. In the article it says that in 2008, 65% of newly arrived refugees were able to find work, but in 2009, the number dropped to only 38%.

Sweet December Celebration in Pittsburgh, PA Following below is a short report on the Sweet December Celebration held at the Temple Baptist Church in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. It is written by Rev. John Reynolds, the pastor of the church and shows a little of the excitement that having Karen come to worship brings to US churches.

A joyous gathering of Karen and Temple Baptist Church members took place on Saturday, December 26, at Temple Baptist Church in Mount Oliver. The event, which numbered over a hundred in attendance, was coordinated by the Karen community in Pittsburgh. It involved singing by the Karen, along with a bountiful Karen meal – no one left hungry! The message, provided by Rev. John Reynolds, was translated into Karen during the sermon.

The Karen also presented gifts to the members of Temple Baptist. These gifts included Karen shirts and bags, along with scarves, all in brilliant colors. A large banner was provided as a backdrop for the service, which spoke of the relationship between the Karen and America, and Temple Baptist in particular. Balloons and crepe paper decorated the Fellowship Hall to complete the atmosphere.

One thing which happened during the time of the celebration seems to provide a confirmation of what God is doing with the Karen at Temple. Following the ceremony, but before the dinner, Pastor Reynolds went upstairs to the sanctuary. On the wall of the balcony, beside the stained glass window on the front of the church, was arrayed a series of ruby-red patches of light. The pattern of the patches was that of an arch, and immediately brought to mind the “tongues of fire” of Pentecost. This display, coupled with a similar display the following morning after worship, confirms how God is lighting a fire at Temple for the ministry with the Karen.

We look forward to continued growth in our relationship to the Karen, and to others in our community who are seeking to hear the Good News.

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. This e-mailing is being sent to 288 leaders of Karens.

Past Issues of this newsletter are available on:

http://www.karenkonnection.org/Karen_leaders_newsletters.php3.