JANUARY 2026

BALLOU FAMILY

REACHING THAI PEOPLE WITH THE GOSPEL

We are the Ballou family, serving in Lamphun, Thailand. Thanks so much for following and praying for our family and ministry. At the heart of everything we do is the desire to see Thai people turn to Christ, grow in faith, and reach others within their community. We are nearing the 10th anniversary celebration of the "Sila" (Cornerstone) Baptist Church, and we thank God for these years of fruitful ministry in a missions team resulting in a thriving local church.

NEW MEMBERS

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS WITH OUR CHURCH!

CHURCH PROPERTY

Recent Ministry Highlights

Dear Friends,

On the last Sunday of November we held our celebration of the church's 10 year anniversary. The day was even more beautiful than we planned. Luka and Amie, who have planted a church out of ours, drove three hours to celebrate with the group of five believers that have come to Christ in their province of Phrae. The church was full and there were people who have just joined our church in the past year. Boys from Wednesday outreaches, kids and parents from Saturday ministry, siblings and relations of our adult members were all part of the day. Getting to stop and thank God for all He's done in these 10 years was a special moment for all of us.

As we look back on this past month, our hearts are full of gratitude for all that the Lord has done. December was busy, joyful, and deeply encouraging as we had many opportunities to represent Christ and share His love with those around us.

One of the highlights of the month was caroling at our local market. As we sang, everyone involved did such a wonderful job passing out tracts to those who stopped to listen. By the end of the evening, around 2,000 invitations had been shared! It was a joy to represent Christ publicly and to help people see what the church is meant to be: joyful, welcoming, and centered on Him.

Christmas Day itself was another reminder of God's goodness. We had the largest attendance we've ever had in our church building. Seeing the space filled was both exciting and humbling, and it reminded us once again how grateful we are for the prospect of a larger space—one that will allow even more people to hear about Christ and His saving work.

The day after Christmas, we celebrated the wedding of two wonderful young adults from our church, Toey and Milk. Their ceremony was beautifully honoring to the Lord, with a clear desire to give Him glory for all He has done in their lives. They intentionally asked God to use their wedding to point others to Himself, and He did just that. Many family and friends who had never heard of Christ before walked away telling us that they loved seeing a Christian marriage ceremony, and were able to understand the love Christ has for His church that much better!

We were also blessed this month by having Alisa's parents in town. It was very special to see them jump right in and serve during all the special events of the season, even helping Alisa make 8 huge pans of lasagna for the wedding! Their willingness to help and encourage us was a true gift.

Thank you for praying for us and partnering with us in the work the Lord is doing here. We are continually amazed at how He is drawing people to Himself, and we are grateful to walk this path with your support and prayers.

With thankful hearts,

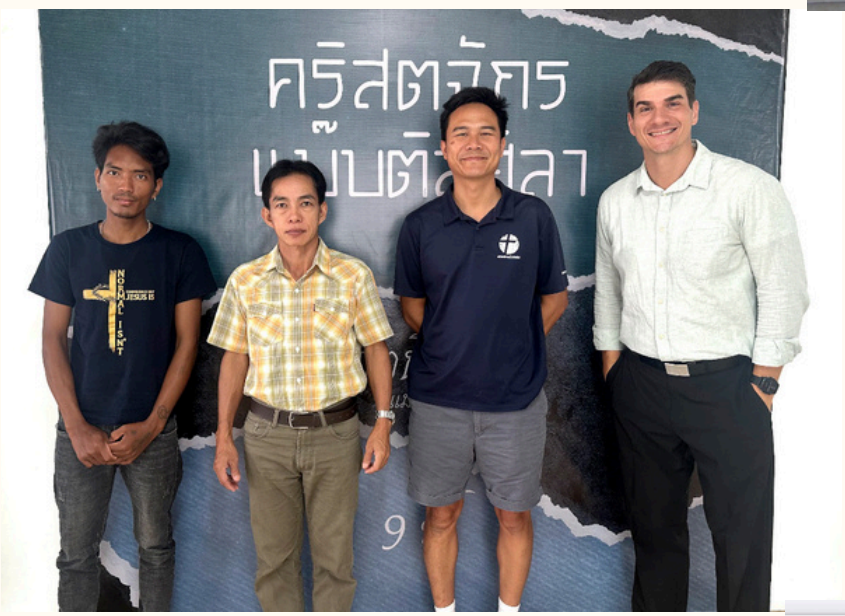
the Ballou family

One of three schools we got to share the Christmas story with!

Christmas service

Milk and Toey's wedding

If there is just one picture I would want to share with you from our anniversary it would be of Leda. Her dad (below, cross shirt) was baptized just before her birth, so she has been in church since the very start! Seeing generations come to know Jesus through local believers is our dream!



Last month I asked you to pray for Mr. Moad, our village elder (center, yellow shirt). His daughter was married this month at our church. He attended our Father's Day service and heard a clear gospel presentation again. Thanks for praying with us for him!

It is probably way too early to share the property site plan, because it is likely to go through numerous changes in the days ahead. And yet - here it is!
I am hoping this might help us all in praying for this place to become a bright beacon of light in this vast, dark city and region.
Pray with us for wisdom in many decisions in the days ahead!

Footnote: Why Buy Land?

The short explanation of the project is that we are purchasing 2.7 acres in a highly visible, highly accessible spot in our city. The driving factor in making the decision to buy land was wanting to see this church be completely self-supporting by 2030. We hold that desire in balance with also seeing many churches in this region capped in their ability to grow by not having enough room for growth in auditorium, classroom, or parking space, or in being inaccessible to a large urban population. We want to see an independent local church with a long-term vision to grow and send.

As we have prayed over this project for the past several years, God began by providing the entire 8 million baht needed for the construction of our building. This means that once we have the land and permits, we are moving right into construction. At present we plan to break ground in November of 2026. Both of our architects and our city planner are confident with this timeline.

Our church has been giving sacrificially in both yearly offerings and through monthly pledges. While the percentage of the overall total is not massive, we look at our people's giving based on annual salary for our area and it is quite encouraging.

The total purchase price of the property was negotiated from 12 million baht to 10 million, and then down to 9 million with the concession that we pay the sales tax of around 0.2 million Baht.

The whole thing has tested our faith over and over again. At many points I had asked God if we maybe could just stay with the comfortable rent that we currently pay. Our anniversary weekend and Christmas service reminded us why we want to see a space that is both accessible by motorcycle to most of our city, and yet still large enough for us to continue growing. On both of those packed sundays, the joy of our church members was electric. They loved seeing every chair full and people standing in the back. We all loved hearing testimonies of people who were buddhist when the church began, and are now faithful and serving. In short, my "why" is because this region needs many more churches that experience the kind of steady, healthy growth that can come from having a generation of leaders who are faithful in their time, while also preparing the next generation and being ready to hand it over to them.