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*Free Methodist World Missions makes disciples by mobilizing the global church and empowering international leaders
to establish transformational churches.*



HEARTBEAT

APRIL 2024

Brother, Are You in a Tree?
Unexpected Opportunities
A Cross-Cultural Union

Brother, Are You in a Tree?

By Bryan, missionary to Southeast Asia

Brother, are you in a tree? That is an actual question asked during a training conducted for pastors in Creative Access Country-NP. The answer was – yes, that pastor really was in a tree. The location of his village meant he had to climb a tree to get cell service to join the pastor's training event.

This man is just one example of the reality faced as we equip those who lead churches across Asia. The diversity of Asia is reflected in the diversity of locations, languages and situations where our leaders pastor Free Methodist congregations. This extreme diversity means the Asia Area needs to be adaptable and have a multifaceted approach for equipping leaders.

Gethsemane Leadership Training (GLT) is the Asia Area's pathway for pastoral education. Think of it as seminary training offered to people right where they are already serving in ministry. In Asia, it is not unusual for those preparing for ordination to



already be serving as pastors. Our work is to come alongside them as they lead and learn. GLT offers leaders 12 core modules engaging head, heart and hands. These modules focus on key skills needed to thrive in leadership over the long haul.

In Asia, there are leaders who have Master of Divinity degrees and others who have limited literacy. We have leaders in urban centers with great infrastructures and leaders in rural areas where electricity and internet access are limited. Some leaders serve in places where they can lead and worship openly and others serving in creative access areas where discretion is key. We have leaders who are full-time pastors and leaders who are bi-vocational. Adding to the complexity is the diversity of languages and cultures.

Embracing the diversity, we work to engage leaders in their context through three main training modalities:

On-Site – Our team travels to a specific location and spends three to four days with a group of leaders walking them through one of our modules.

Zoom – Zoom is the only way for us to equip leaders in certain creative access countries.

Video – Twelve core modules are being brought to video, allowing us to engage the diversities of language and culture.

Keeping the focus on relational learning, leaders gather as cohorts with a local mentor who answers questions and helps the students apply the training to their ministry context.

God is amazing us as we see pastors engaging in this training, even up in a tree!



Saying *Yes* to Unexpected Opportunities

By Michael Jay Calado

Despite my family's financial challenges, I strongly desired to pursue my passion for digital arts. After much prayer, in November 2022, I quit my job, deciding to embrace whatever the Lord might have for me. Soon after, I met two key mission leaders in Asia. They had seen my work and asked me to edit a video for Free Youth Asia Connect, a gathering of youth from across Asia.

My story begins in Baguio City, Philippines. I was 11 years old when the Free Methodist work began in our city. At an early age, I established a personal relationship with God and had the opportunity to develop my talents in a community of love and faith.

Although my primary roles in the church were as a worship leader and Sunday school teacher, I had a profound passion for digital arts. When the pandemic disrupted our physical gatherings, we adapted to gathering online through Zoom meetings and utilizing the live stream of the Philippine General Conference.

In 2021, as physical gatherings gradually resumed, many were still afraid to go out. I felt compelled to create a live stream for our church, allowing people to join our service virtually. I was no expert, but eventually, through trial and error and the guidance of the Lord, I made it happen. The experience of managing our church's livestream challenged me creatively and deepened my love for graphic design and video editing.

At the same time, my family's business suffered during the pandemic due to store closures, posing financial challenges. I was a college student but had to pause my studies due to finances. I resumed online classes while I worked in a call center for two years to help support my family. As the challenges persisted, balancing a full-time job with studies became unfeasible.

Another unexpected opportunity came at the beginning of 2023 when I was informed the Asia Area director needed someone to assist with video editing. I questioned whether I could do the job, but this was an opportunity I had been praying for, so I said YES. I decided to put my trust in God's enabling power. I was nervous because I did not have formal qualifications or expertise, but others believed in me and encouraged me.

I am so grateful to work with FMWM Asia. This opportunity has expanded my territory and connected me with leaders from other Asian countries. I have been inspired and encouraged by their stories and have grown to appreciate the work of our missionaries and leaders who step out of their comfort zones to share the gospel with unreached people.

God is working in Asia! I am in awe! God is using our unique skills and cultural diversity as we collaborate for kingdom impact.

God has connected the dots in my life. The challenges, struggles and pain have been stepping stones, allowing me to meet the right people at the right time and contribute to expanding God's kingdom in Asia as I help maximize technology for kingdom purposes. And to add to these blessings, God affirmed my decisions through His faithfulness in providing for my family's needs. To God be all the glory!

A Cross-Cultural Union Fueling Asia's *Faith*

By Rev. Dr. Eric

Helri and Phuong's story transcends borders. It is a story of shared passion for Jesus. Helri, an ordained elder from the Free Methodist General Conference of the Philippines, met Phuong, a dynamic young leader from Creative Access-VN, during the 2018 Young Leader's Mission Congress sponsored by the Asia Pacific Free Methodist Missions Association (APFMMA). Despite the distance, the relationship progressed, and the couple married in August 2023. A few months later, they were commissioned as FMWM-Asia's second international missionary couple.

Their paths may have originated in different corners of the continent, but their destination is clear: serving the Lord, together.

Helri, a graduate of Asia Pacific Nazarene Seminary, will join the Gethsemane Leadership Training team. Phuong has natural evangelistic gifts and a compassionate heart toward touching the lives of children and youth, a ministry that reflects her soul and her story. Together they dream of fostering the next generation of leaders. These dreams include planting seeds of faith through innovative means like baking and teaching English — establishing relationships through practical means, sharing life and the love of God.

Helri and Phuong's story is a testament to the power of love and faith. It's a story of ambition, compassion, seasoned leadership and youthful zeal, all woven together by an unwavering commitment to serve. As they embark on this new chapter, their journey is not just theirs; it's a beacon of hope, a love letter to Asia, and a promise pointing to the power of the good news of Jesus!



We expect they will be fully engaged in the work on the field by the middle of this year.

Why not join them? They are prayerfully seeking gospel partners to pray for them and support their ministry financially. We invite you to be a part of a unique new team with a long-term kingdom view.

To partner with them: fmwm.org/asia/helri-phuong/

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APRIL PRAYER GUIDE

01 > Monday | Middle East

Despite their circumstances and fears, pray believers will be confident that the One Who is in them is greater than the one who is in the world (1 John 4:4).

02 > Tuesday | Creative Access-CA

As Julie lives and serves in Creative Access-CA, pray she will live each day as a gift from the Father, following the Holy Spirit's direction through all her daily activities.

Birthday: Julie

03 > Wednesday | Southeast Asia / Togo

Southeast Asia: The filming of videos for three Gethsemane Leadership Training video modules is scheduled for April 8-17. Pray the filming will go smoothly and the final videos will be an effective tool for training pastors and leaders across Asia. **Birthday: Darin**

Togo: New missionaries Jordan and Audrey Kaufmann are preparing to serve in Togo. Pray the Lord will provide an abundance of prayer and financial support, allowing them to be deployed soon. **Birthday: Jordan Kaufmann**

04 > Thursday | Chile

In early February, parts of Chile were devastated by wildfires. Pray for the recovery efforts and the church as they respond with compassion to those who suffered great loss.

05 > Friday | São Tomé & Príncipe

Thank the Lord for two churches that are the fruit of five years of labor in São Tomé & Príncipe. Pray for the various discipleship ministries among children, youth and adults.

06 > Saturday | Middle East

Pray Area Director Dale will have continued wisdom from the Lord as he makes decisions for an area in turmoil. Ask the Father to give him the ability to encourage, guide and direct the Middle East team members. **Birthday: Dale**

07 > Sunday | Hungary

Pray for the monthly "Brunch Church." Ask the Father to use these gatherings to help those who attend recognize God's grace and mercy and realize how much He loves them.

08 > Monday | Latin America / Colombia

Latin America: Thank God for the team in Latin America and pray the Lord will continue to encourage and guide them. Pray the Lord will raise up future generations of leaders who will participate with Him in the continued restoration of Latin America. **Birthday: Ricardo Gómez**

Colombia: Pray for Nikki Roller as she balances family, homeschooling her two girls and her ministry responsibilities. **Birthday: Nikki Roller**

09 > Tuesday | Creative Access Asia

Pray believers in countries where persecution and opposition to the gospel is high will be able to support and encourage one another. Thank the Lord for the growth of His church in these difficult places.

10 > Wednesday | ICCM

Pray for the Doctor Buconyori Free Methodist High School in Soy, Kenya. This school in the Rift Valley is preparing Kenyan young men to follow Christ and pursue excellence in their studies.

11 > Thursday | Portugal

Pray for international missionary Cida Matos as she continues developing work with cell group leaders in Portugal. Also, pray for Cida as she takes courses to prepare and equip her for a counseling ministry.

Birthday: Cida Matos (International Missionary)

12 > Friday | Europe

Cindi Angelo has new responsibilities in Europe, leading the pastoral training team for emerging new churches. Pray the Lord will give her wisdom and insight as she leads through this ministry role. **Birthday: Cindi Angelo (International Missionary)**

13 > Saturday | Paraguay

Pray for international missionary Juan Carlos Rodriguez as he helps mentor and encourage pastors in Paraguay while working on a master's program through Asbury Theological Seminary.

Birthday: Juan Carlos Rodriguez (International Missionary)

14 > **Sunday** | Philippines

Thank the Lord for the new work in the Ilocos region of the Philippines. FMWM-Asia international missionaries Alan and Ammabelle have experienced new progress in reaching young people. Eight were baptized in January. Pray for continued momentum and enthusiasm – and deep discipleship.

15 > **Monday** | Nigeria

Pray for the ministries in all four annual conferences of Nigeria, including family ministry, ministry to widows and the underserved, and evangelistic outreach to the unchurched.

16 > **Tuesday** | Greece

Missionary Michael Long recently completed his PhD. Pray the Lord will use his education and expertise to benefit the church and all those he serves. **Birthday: Michael Long**

17 > **Wednesday** | Middle East

Continue in prayer for the Holy Land and all the workers in this region. As we lament the loss of life, pray for God's peace to prevail.

18 > **Thursday** | Malawi

Pray for the work of the Great Commission Bible School in training excellent pastors and leaders.

19 > **Friday** | Asia

Pray for the growing team of FMWM-Asia missionaries and leaders. Ask the Father to give them a holy zeal to pursue Jesus, share the gospel and obediently disciple those who commit themselves to Christ.

20 > **Saturday** | Ecuador

Please pray for Becky Crouse's health, for wisdom in ministry and healthy patterns of life, and for her two daughters who are studying and working in the U.S. **Birthday: Becky Crouse**

21 > **Sunday** | Japan

Pray the Holy Spirit will move in amazing ways in Japan, defeating the powers of evil and darkness and unlocking the hearts and minds of people through the power of the gospel of Jesus. **Birthday: Chris Wilkins**

22 > **Monday** | Ghana

The FMC in Ghana aims to have 100 sustainable and self-propagating churches by 2031. Pray for workers and the physical and spiritual resources to reach their goals.

23 > **Tuesday** | Sweden/Denmark

Praise the Lord! There are now five churches in these two countries. Pray the Lord will bless and multiply these churches.

24 > **Wednesday** | Southeast Asia

Pray Bryan will develop deep relationships with national leaders. Ask the Father to give him Spirit-inspired creativity as he works to equip pastors and church planters across the diverse cultural contexts in Asia. **Birthday: Bryan**

25 > **Thursday** | Jordan

As regional violence continues, many in Jordan are beginning to ask questions and explore matters of faith. Pray many will be drawn to Jesus.

26 > **Friday** | Uruguay

Pray for the annual meeting of this mission district, April 26-29, in Durazno. Ask the Father to encourage and renew all those who attend.

27 > **Saturday** | South Africa

Pray for the South African General Conference as they implement the Life Pathway Journey, an intentional plan for discipling and investing in young leaders.

28 > **Sunday** | Honduras

Pray for a spiritual awakening among leaders and in churches, bringing about renewed passion for the lost and the desire to see communities transformed by the gospel.

29 > **Monday** | Set Free Movement

Pray for Sokleap, the Set Free Movement leader in Cambodia, as she teaches young people how they are made in the image of God and educates them on the dangers of human trafficking.

30 > **Tuesday** | West Africa

Pray for the current cohort of seven students at the Wesley Missionary Institute in Togo. Please pray they will be well equipped and prepared for missionary service in West Africa through their studies and practical learning experiences.

Birthday: Dosseh Takpale (International Missionary)

"It is possible to move men, through God, by prayer alone."

– Hudson Taylor