

Scuphams to Cambodia

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Sending Church:

First Baptist Church of Mission
5641 Outlook Street
Mission, KS 66202
Phone: (913) 432-2991
Website: fbcmissions.com
Email: fbmissionks@gmail.com

Joel's US Cell Phone: 417-414-5614
Also available on WhatsApp

Joel's Cambodian Phone: +855-889-023-805
Also available on Telegram

Email: scuphamx2@yahoo.com

Financial Clearing House:
Global Independent Baptist Missions
P.O. Box 700
Sherman, TX 75091
Phone: (903) 771-4772
Website: gibmissions.org
Email: gibm1296@gmail.com

Prayer Requests:

1. Joel and Valerie to learn Khmer
2. God to send more laborers into His harvest

Churches and Pastors,

Greetings again from Cambodia. I trust you all had a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Although things were different this year, we were able to have several video calls with family at Christmas. The Sunday before Christmas, Good News Baptist Church hosted a big day and the building was packed to capacity. Children needed to sit on the floor and others on the stairs. The Christmas holiday is barely recognized here, but it was very refreshing that in the church the emphasis was truly on Christ's birth.

We are both continuing to progress with language school. Last week I finished another level. It is certainly very challenging, but we are making progress. I have looked many times, but I still can't seem to find the "easy button" for learning Khmer, so we'll continue learning one day at a time. Whether listening to the message, or talking to people in Khmer, it seems every Sunday we are able to understand a little more than the previous week. My daily prayer is for patience with learning the language and culture.

Last fall we were invited to go visit a pastor and church in Battambang. At the beginning of January we were privileged to visit Pastor Ratha and Bethany Baptist Church. This is in the city of Krong Battambang in the Province of Battambang. As a short summary of his story, Pastor Ratha is Khmer. In 2005, he was saved under the ministry of a Filipino missionary. He moved to the Philippines to train at Baptist Bible College in Manila. That college was started by American Missionary Bob Hughes. Pastor Ratha is one of many national pastors who have a similar story. It was amazing to me to consider the ripple effect of influence.

During our trip, we had opportunities to ride around town with him, and it struck my heart how many times he said, "no churches of any kind in this neighborhood." Currently, there are two Independent Baptist churches in Krong Battambang. This is a city of about 1 million people. I feel the reality is that I could throw a dart at the map of Cambodia, and it would land on a place of need. However, it struck my heart seeing his heart for his home area. I do not yet know if Krong Battambang is the specific place that God would have us to start a church, but I do know that that area and many others need the true Gospel.

Please continue praying for us, and the need for more laborers, as we serve the Lord here in Cambodia.

Thank you again for your faithful prayers.

God's servants to Cambodia,
Joel, Valerie, Lydia, and JD Scupham