

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!



One might reasonably expect that this article would be Christmas themed, as we approach the festive season. Instead, I am borrowing some insight from that curious and specific celebration enjoyed by our American friends: Thanksgiving.

Just a few weeks ago, I was treated to a full American Thanksgiving meal while visiting the United States. More recently our family hosted a 'kiwi-ised' version for some American friends visiting New Zealand. Not a pumpkin pie in sight!

I like this tradition. Not necessarily sweet potato casserole, but the idea of focusing a day on the giving of thanks. America can keep Halloween, but I would take Thanksgiving gladly. It encourages one to pause and reflect. Rather than screaming headlong into the consumerism, stress and conflict of Christmas (maybe that is just my family?), it is a reflective moment of gratitude to the creator of all.

Here at Bright Hope World, we have much to be thankful for. Our team is a good starting point. These are the people who give up their time and money to trapse to often difficult places to listen, encourage, challenge, and love our partners. Without our tireless office team and Partnership Facilitators, our ministry does not work.

And then there are our partners. I got an email last week from one of our partners in Beirut who were celebrating Thanksgiving there. She said "Thanksgiving is not a common celebration in Lebanon; however, we have all the reasons to give thanks to our Lord now that your prayers and ours were answered as the ceasefire is announced. Let us pray that it continues to be implemented." How encouraging and challenging it is to see a posture of gratitude in Lebanon at the moment? Such are the people with whom we partner. They are truly exceptional.

This year has been a tough one around the world. In Zimbabwe and Zambia: drought and crop failure. In India: floods and persecution. In the Middle East: war and hunger. In the DRC and Mozambique: the constant threat of militia violence. Yet, in the midst of it all, our partners remain positive and prayerful. They do not abandon their posts but serve relentlessly and at great cost. They innovate and strategise. They act decisively and make immeasurable impacts in their communities.

Quite sincerely, I am truly grateful to be connected to such people: our partners and our team. Charles Spurgeon once made a comment that raised the stakes on Thanksgiving even further: "I think there is a better thing than thanksgiving: thanks-living. How is this to be done? By a general cheerfulness of manner, by an obedience to the command of Him by whose mercy we live, by a perpetual, constant delighting of ourselves in the Lord, and by a submission of our desires to His will."

I think that is rather well said.

Fraser Scott

Executive Director

BRIGHT HOPE NEWS

The Bright Hope World team is steadily coming back to New Zealand after a big year of travel and connection with partners, donors, and supporters.

Those returning from India will be glad it is a bit cooler in New Zealand, whereas those that have recently returned from the US will be happy with how warm and sunny it is!

An exciting recent development for us has been the rebrand and relaunch of La Mai coffee (www.lamai.co.nz). This is a partnership we have been involved with via our Thai partners for more than fifteen years, and it is such a great way to support their farmers as well as funding water projects and other great ventures in Thailand.

A quick plug – we've recently added 'keep cups' and lovely La Mai tea towels along with some excellent value packages that are great Christmas gifts (hint, hint!). We also have a subscription service whereby you can get top-quality coffee delivered to your door on a regular basis – whenever you want it!

Bright Hope World does all of this without paying any of our team. All the profits go straight back to community projects in Thailand, and we pay well above fair trade rates for the coffee to boot.

So, if you haven't tried it – now's a great time. And if you don't drink coffee, buy some for someone who does!



A young, 11-year-old boy wrote to the Good News Team recently. He had found their comic books on the shelves of his school library as they send their booklets out to 500 schools in Thailand every week. This young boy was so interested in the comics that he scanned the QR code on the back of the comic book to contact them. Because he was not allowed to write in any of the books in the school library and because the comic books contain heaps of games and activities, such as crosswords that require you to write in the book, he wrote to ask how he could buy a comic book for himself.

They let him know that they would send some to him for free and asked how many copies he would like. He quickly wrote back saying that he wanted 15 copies, one for himself and one for each of his friends! After they sent the comic books to his house, another of his friends saw them and scanned the QR code to contact the team and request a further 10 copies for himself and his friends as well.

Both of these children have now joined in the Bible correspondence activities. Both of them live deep in the south of Thailand where the communities are 95% Muslim. The Good News Team know that through these comic books and the lessons in them, seeds of faith are being sown and their efforts are never in vain.

Read more at <https://www.brighthopeworld.com/partnerships.asp?pid=132>.

BRIGHT HOPE WORLD OFFICE CHRISTMAS CLOSURE DATES

The Bright Hope World office will be closed from Friday 20th December and will reopen on Monday 6th January. The last La Mai coffee orders for 2024 need to be in by lunchtime on Monday 16th December in order to be sent before Christmas. Normal coffee ordering will resume on the 6th of January 2024. Any standing orders that are due during this period will be sent out prior to Christmas.



1. Pray for encouragement for our partners in difficult places. Pray for them (and us) that we would follow Charles Spurgeon's words and embrace 'thanks-living'.
2. Pray for the Good News Team and the hundreds, if not thousands, of children who they are reaching with their comic books, school programmes and Bible correspondence courses.
3. Pray for the 25 boys in southern Thailand who have recently received the comic books and are doing the correspondence course, that they will all come to have a personal relationship with Jesus and be a shining light in their communities.
4. Pray for all our partners over the upcoming weeks as the Christmas period can often add a lot of extra stress and pressure to already difficult situations.
5. Pray for the ongoing success of La Mai coffee!

