

# Phnom Penh Prattle

November 2009

## 'We feel like rubbish'

One of the things we love about living here is the opportunity to work alongside inspiring Cambodian men and women who are passionate about the situation and future of their people. Abraham Sim is one of these people. He works with some of the communities who have been forcibly evicted from their land in Phnom Penh without adequate compensation, in the name of economic development.

*'We feel like rubbish tossed to the wind, but today you restored a little of my dignity'* one evictee explained after attending a grief and loss program run by Abraham and Peace Bridges.

Remember Abraham and his team as they work with traumatised young people in these communities who have sought refuge from their troubles by joining violent gangs.

Pray too for our Peace Bridges staff as they continue to provide non-violent communication training to key people in the land advocacy movement who are working to prevent unjust evictions.

## Piggy banks and preschools

I (Fiona) discovered how one little piggy can start a preschool while spending time with our partners Disability Development Services Pursat. They are doing a fantastic job of helping rural communities ensure that people with disabilities are included in village life.

Several communities recently decided to establish preschools to help prepare children with disabilities for school. But how could very poor subsistence farmers afford to pay a teacher?

Yeay (below left) was given a pig, paid for by some of you, using May Mission Month funds. Her family had been thrown into crisis when her husband had a stroke and was unable to farm. The community responded by choosing Yeay as the 'keeper of the pig'. In return for feeding the pig, Yeay's family get to keep some of the newborn piglets. The other piglets are sold to cover the preschool teacher's salary of \$12 a month. Thirty children are getting a fantastic head start in this village alone, and the model is being replicated in other villages too.



Photos by Di Marshall



Photo by Di Marshall

## What's next?

We leave Cambodia on 28 Nov for a 6 month home assignment. We're excited about Visarl and Narin (and ourselves!) finally being able to spend lots of time with our families in Newcastle and Sydney. Though Visarl may end up disappointed- he is convinced it *will* be snowing in December!

Barry will hopefully catch up with many of you as he visits some of our supporting churches. Unfortunately time is limited, so if we are not visiting your church this time, please feel free to come along and catch up with Barry at one of the churches listed.

While at home, Barry will get started on some research into cross-cultural programs tackling violence in families. There have been few examples of good outcomes from violence prevention programs in Cambodia, so this research will be an opportunity to try and ensure Peace Bridge's new program can be as culturally appropriate and effective as possible.

Please remember Mony, pictured above with his son, as he takes responsibility for Peace Bridges' 15 staff and programs while Barry is away. It is hoped that Mony will replace Barry as Peace Bridges' director some time in the near future, so taking on this interim role will be an important time of discernment for Mony and the Peace Bridges Board.

Pray too that another donor will be found for the Family Violence Prevention Program: <http://peacebridges.blogspot.com/>. If your church is interested in supporting the project during May Mission Month please go to [www.globalinteraction.org](http://www.globalinteraction.org) and follow the Project Links.

Thanks to all of you for your support and prayers throughout the year. We couldn't be here without you! Trust that you have a peaceful Christmas and maybe we will see you in 2010.

*Fiona, Barry, Visarl and Narin*

## Hope to see you...

- |          |                                    |
|----------|------------------------------------|
| 28 March | Canberra Baptist                   |
| 30 March | Batemans Bay                       |
| 31 March | Milton Ulladulla Baptist           |
| 11 April | Camden Baptist                     |
| 18 April | Frenchs Forest Baptist (am)        |
| 18 April | Small Boat, Manly (pm)             |
| 25 April | Northside Baptist                  |
| 1 May    | Event at Global Interaction office |
| 2 May    | Toronto Baptist                    |
| 9 May    | Avalon Baptist                     |
| 16 May   | Mayfield Baptist                   |
| 23 May   | Raymond Terrace Baptist            |



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