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## A NEW GENERATION OF LEADERS

This past year has been our most challenging yet rewarding year so far. We welcomed 84 students into our program in January, and throughout the year have been able to empower youth through mentorship, service opportunities, and encouragement as they lead their own community projects.

### STARSTRUCK

One of my favorite projects this year was working with students who wanted to start a worship band, with the goal of leading worship at our big PYF camp in October. Because Thailand is only 1% Christian, there aren't many worship bands here like there are in the States. You could probably count all the popular ones on one hand. I invited the lead singer from one of these bands for a workshop to teach our students about worship, teamwork, and the heart of a worship leader. The students were starstruck at first, but after a few hours became comfortable asking questions and learning from one of the most popular

worship bands in Thailand!

After months of meetings and weekends of practice at sound studios, they were finally ready to lead worship at camp for over 400 people!

Mai, the lead singer of the newly formed Telos band, has been part of our program for three years now. She shared with me that ever since her first PYF camp, she remembers having a dream and desire to lead worship one day in the future. Mai's story reminds us that God can transform and use anyone for his glory, even a young teenager.

### THE ONE

This year, nine students from a new youth home asked to join our leadership program. After spending some time with them we realized that all of them were Buddhist. We let them know they were more than welcome, and let them serve alongside us, as we knew it would be a good opportunity for them to learn about Jesus. Our service camp theme

this year was "The One," and we focused on the story of Jesus leaving the ninety-nine to find the one that was lost. It was a perfect introduction for them into what our faith is all about. All nine students heard the Gospel and had a safe place to ask questions, voice doubts, and discover the heart of the Father seeking after each and every one of us — His beloved children.

Throughout the camp, these nine students would ask us questions like, "So... how do you talk to God?" Or "Are you a Christian because your parents are, or do you have to do something?" One of my favorite questions after the Sunday church service was, "Why do Christians have sermons that are so long and boring?" I'm sure you can see me smiling as I write this. All of these questions led to fruitful conversations where we were able to answer questions they had and share the Gospel. Please pray with us for these students as they consider a new faith in Jesus Christ.



## MINISTRY IN BRIEF



The Telos band, leading worship at camp this year. Witnessing God working in the lives of these students throughout the year was a blessing.



At the end of one of our service camps, students wrote down how God worked in their lives over the weekend and used a sheep sticker to stick it to the board. He is mindful of every “one.”



This year we had the opportunity to work alongside an afterschool program for village kids called Global Outreach International. This gave the students in our leadership program the opportunity and platform to practice mentoring younger children.

## → BETTER TOGETHER

In August, we took a group of students to a village for a three-day service project. We called the camp “Better Together.” Romans 12:4-15 says, “For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.”

One afternoon we were walking from house to house, visiting with people and asking if we could pray for them. My particular group of students were pretty nervous, as this was their first time doing something like this. The first house we visited was so awkward. There were awkward silences, awkward questions, and everyone felt incredibly shy. As time went by, the “khun yay” or grandma of the home shared her story with us about how she came to faith. She also shared about how the entire village came to faith in the past because of the boldness of one person sharing the Gospel. She encouraged our students to be bold in their faith. She ended up being the encouragement our students needed. As we left the house, we took a minute to talk as a group, and everyone’s faces were glowing. They were excited to go to the next house! After that, I felt like I had to run to keep up with all of them because they were so excited to visit and talk with everyone in the village.

Over the next few days, the students worked together to dig and lay concrete for a baptismal pool, clear mud from a recent

landslide, and clear brush from an overgrown soccer field. On the final night, one of the boys in our group got stung by a scorpion. Everyone rushed around him and asked how they could help, prayed, and found medical supplies. This reminded me of how important it is to have people around us to encourage us and push us forward. That’s what it means to be better together!



*While going house to house students shared their testimonies, prayed for the sick, and asked if there was anything they could do to help each family.*



### SOMETHING OLD: PYF CAMP

In October, our team held two large youth camps with over four hundred participants. All the students at these camps come from boarding homes, orphanages, and trafficking aftercare centers. Students were able to attend workshops, electives, play games, and make new friends. They were able to hear the gospel, some for the first time. It is a gift for them to spend four days away from their institution or boarding home and learn more about who God is and how special they are.

Our team worked tirelessly to prepare for this camp. Sometimes we get bogged down in all the planning, details, and safety

measures that we forget to look up and see God moving and working all around us. While it feels like a daunting task pulling off this event year after year, I try never to lose sight of the fact that the fruit of this event is worth much more than a bit of exhaustion. God has blessed everything we have poured out for seven years now, and for many students — a defining moment in their life takes place at camp, as they decide to put their trust and faith in Jesus!

During the camp, students attended workshops focused on our camp theme “Face to Face” — the stories from Exodus such as Moses’ encounter with God at the burning bush, the parting of the Red Sea, and the giving of the 10 Commandments. Of all the activities we do at camp, the prayer room always ends up being my favorite part. On the last day, a group of students came up to me and said, “P Luke, we all just did the prayer room activity together and cried the whole time.” I thought, why are you crying, and what is going on in this room that is making all these kids cry?

I walked up, took off my shoes (take off your shoes, you are on holy ground) and stepped into the room. I immediately felt peace. I realized this room was not making

kids cry because of the Exodus-themed decorations and activities, but because it was a safe place for hundreds of students to feel safe to encounter God. Those students’ tears were because God was healing their hearts and they were experiencing the power of coming “face to face” with the Lord in prayer.

### SOMETHING NEW: PYF CAREER FAIR

In August, PYF held its first ever career fair. We invited all the students in our network who were in their final two years of high school to see what opportunities their future could hold. Career fairs are not normal in Thailand, so it was a new experience for our staff and for most of the vendors that came to set up a booth. We had universities, workplaces, and various non-profits share future opportunities with students.

We were so proud to see over three hundred students attend. For students growing up in institutionalized care, it was an opportunity for us to inspire them towards their bright and prosperous future, as our foundation’s name (Prosperous Youth Foundation) suggests. We received all positive feedback from the students and vendors, so we are already planning our next career fair!



### → FAMILY UPDATE: GROW WHERE YOU ARE PLANTED...OR TRANSPLANTED?

We often hear the phrase “grow where you are planted.” Sometimes I feel like we did the opposite of that as Americans living in Asia.

Every now and then I grab plants or flowers from the jungle to plant in our garden. One of the plants I transplanted this year looked like it died, and after a few months, I started debating whether I should rip it out or not. Transplanting caused all the leaves to wither and the plant to look dead, but on the inside, the plant was still alive. After a few months, the plant finally came back; it probably just needed to adjust to its new environment.

We have faced so many challenges living overseas. God reminds us that although the road ahead looks challenging, He will give us the strength to press on as long as we remain rooted in Him.

We are so thankful that amidst the challenges life throws at us, our family still finds joy in our daily lives in Thailand. We attribute this to God as He continues to be our source of strength and refuge. We look forward to continuing our work here as God continues to bless the ministry and work we do here and continues to give us more and more opportunities to serve children and young adults. Thank you for your partnership with us and for remembering us in your prayers.

**In the Peace of Christ, The Millers**



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