

Newsletter

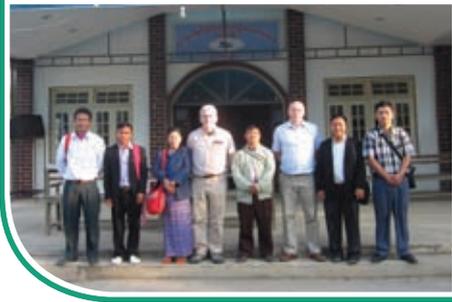
MARCH 2016

PTI strengthens the church in many of the poorest places in the world, by teaching pastors to expound the Bible more effectively. Our fundamental purpose is therefore to *Teach to Preach*.

**WELCOME** to the latest edition of **P** bi-monthly newsletter, which has two important new perspectives. One is from a new trainer, Ian Rees, who relates his recent experiences in Thailand. The second is from strategically-important eastern Myanmar (Burma), where we held our first conference for Lahu speakers. This attracted church leaders from across the border in China, too.

- Existing countries
- Potential new countries
- Conflict is preventing training

**Myanmar, January to February 2016**



*A river scene in Myanmar*

This was the first PTI conference to be held in Kyaingtong, Eastern Myanmar. Kyaingtong is strongly Buddhist and very remote but its location is very strategic, close to China, Laos and Thailand.

This was the first conference specifically for Lahu-speaking church leaders. Lahu is spoken by about 720,000 people, most of whom are just across the border in Xunan Province, China.

We expected 75 church leaders at the conference, but 90 turned up, requiring extra food and accommodation. It focused mainly on teaching 2 Timothy, but sessions also included "What Is a Christian?"; "Four Steps from Text to Sermon" (basic homiletics); "Reading The Bible" (basic hermeneutics) and a Bible Overview from Creation to Consummation. Each afternoon included workshops in handling a Biblical text and we tried to make the conference as interactive as we could.

Both trainers and delegates found the Q&A session at the end of each day most helpful and revealing.

We all sensed the presence of God with us, which was seen in an obvious love of the Lord Jesus Christ and the gospel, plus a hunger for God's word. This conference was very blessed by God, and we were all greatly encouraged.

The two most significant aspects of this conference were the eleven Christian workers who attended from China and the border region, five of whom made the long journey from Xunan. And five leaders came from the northern hill region, representing 50 Lahu-speaking Evangelical Baptist churches, some of which are very large. Afterwards they asked us to hold a similar conference next year for at least 70 leaders of those churches. It is an exciting prospect. One sensed that we were among some of the choicest of God's servants. It was a privilege to be with them.

by Paul W and Ian C, PTI Trainers

For more information about us, our vision under God, and our plans to considerably expand the current work, please visit our website [www.pastor-training.org](http://www.pastor-training.org)  follow us on Facebook

If you would like to give to support us, either through prayer, financial giving or volunteering your time, please contact **Simon Percy** on 0208 504 0709.



## Thailand - Eat Rice!

First impressions? Rice with every meal! Yes, breakfast, lunch and dinner. And the Karen invitation to a meal is simply "Eat rice!" We certainly did.

Aside from eating rice, our two weeks in Thailand were significantly different. The first was at the Kalnin Leadership Centre, outside Chiang Mai. American funded, it was large, comfortable and well-equipped. Our students were 18 younger Burmese church workers ("Barefoot Doctors"), so our sessions were interactive and lively. The second week was at the Karen village of Teemuley, in the mountains perhaps 100km from the Burmese border. Facilities were more basic, our group was larger (perhaps 80) and older, so sessions were more formal – although the older folk were more willing to ask questions.

During our time with them it became evident that people need to be trained just how to read the Bible for themselves. Occasionally we asked questions that required reading further in the text for the answer, but it was all we could do to get them to look ahead. We are used to expository preaching that draws answers from the text; that way of thinking is rare in Thai culture. So we hope that they have begun to appreciate how essential it is to get to grips with the Bible text itself, rather than just rely on a few isolated Bible verses.

We were invited to return, and there is certainly scope for further work in the Karen villages. The Barefoot Doctors



Chiang Mai, Thailand

programme does not start again until 2018, but I feel it has greater potential, at least from our church's perspective, for wider church involvement over a set three year period. It should be possible to form closer links with students, follow their progress over the three years and perhaps even support them when they return to Myanmar. So we are praying about how we can do this as a church.

■ by Ian Rees, pastor of Salway Evangelical Church, Woodford Green, PTI Trainer

## Prayer points

Everything by prayer... with thanksgiving (Philippians 4:6)

MARCH 2016

### Thank God for:

- The recent conference in the Far East. Two in Thailand and two in Myanmar
- The two new trainers who went on these conferences and who enjoyed their time there
- The excellent conferences that have taken place in India
- The requests that PTI has received to do additional conferences in these countries
- For the churches that have been willing to release their pastors for this training

### Please pray for:

- Gerald Tanner and Alastair Steven as they prepare to do training in Uganda
- Simon Percy, Paul Gamston and Jonny Dowds as they begin a new round of conferences in North East Zambia
- Preparing two new conferences in Nepal with Samuel R
- New trainer John W as he prepares to join Merv N to train in Nepal. Simon Percy as he speaks about the work of PTI in South Wales and the North West
- The Ministry Board to be guided as it considers requests for additional trainers
- The Lord to raise up additional trainers

## Proposed conferences for 2016, God willing

<b>April</b> 11-15	Soroti, Uganda	Gerald Tanner and Alastair Steven
<b>April</b> 18-22	Kasese, Uganda	Gerald Tanner and Alastair Steven
<b>April</b> 18-22	Nakonde, Zambia	Simon Percy, Paul Gamston and Jonny Dowds
<b>April</b> 25-29	Mpika, Zambia	Simon Percy, Paul Gamston and Jonny Dowds
<b>May</b> 8-12	East Nepal	Merv N and John W
<b>May</b> 15-18	West Nepal	Merv N and John W
<b>June</b> 14-19	Sunyani, Ghana	Daniel Grimwade and Ivan Watson
<b>June</b> 21-24	Ho, Ghana	Daniel Grimwade and Ivan Watson

