

The SEARLES in THAILAND

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Update on Wat:

This month, Lord willing, Wat may receive an electric wheelchair. It will be a second-hand chair donated by a friend of his who is receiving a new one. As is customary here, we will give a gratuity of about \$85 in appreciation — a great blessing considering the chair is worth about \$500. Everything in this situation is still “maybe,” “hope so,” and “if God wills,” which is the normal way things move forward in village life. We continue to pray that this gift becomes a reality.

We are grateful for all the ways the Lord has allowed us to care for Wat. For three years he slept on a plywood and foam bed, but we were able to replace it with a hospital bed, along with an air mattress with breathing cells. We poured a concrete pad for the bed, while the village contributed a new aluminum awning to replace the rusted tin roof over his space. I also built a second hospital bed that can be adjusted to the height of his wheelchair so he can transfer himself independently.

Recently, we poured another concrete pad that will serve as a wash area where he can wheel in, transfer onto a bed, and wash himself. By God’s grace, a severe bedsore he had — four inches wide, exposing his backbone — is now healed. Praise the Lord.

When I first met Wat, he barely spoke — only yes or no — and no one had visited him in three years except his foster mother and grandmother. Today, we share open conversations, witness together, and I believe he has accepted the Lord. Once we can arrange the details, he wants to come to church. Please pray for that day.

It has taken much work, prayer, and financial support, but we are beginning to see progress — not only in Wat’s life, but in our relationship with the entire village. Here, everyone knows everything about everyone, and the care shown to Wat has earned a great deal of credibility. God has opened many doors for witnessing through this one relationship, allowing us to care for “one of His little ones,” and in doing so, to show our love for Christ.

Over the past several weeks it was a blessing to have had several new visitors, but it meant something to Maureen and I that two others that we had ministered to and witnessed to, one 30 years ago, the other 40 years ago, also came.

I want to thank God for 44 years of health. At 78, I have felt like a 35-year-old, able to preach, drive, mix cement, lay block, and build houses. Six months ago, all of that suddenly stopped. I don’t know whether it was muscle pain, joint pain, or something else, but I hurt everywhere. After many visits to various doctors and few answers, I am somewhat better now. One doctor believes I have a “locked shoulder,” possibly caused by diabetes. The pain makes sleep difficult. Another suggested it was simply “my age” — but I believe the shoulder diagnosis is closer to the truth.

I know the Lord told Paul, “My grace is sufficient,” I confess I am looking forward to that grace kicking in. I would deeply appreciate your prayers — perhaps even more for Maureen, who is patiently enduring all of this.

Thank you for your love and support. May God bless you.

Tim & Maureen