

December 2019 Judy's Jotting

Belated Happy Christmas and best wishes for a peace-filled and wonderful New Year

Once again my apologies for a very late December jotting and no email Christmas letter – but I may just make it for before the New Year dawns! I am attaching the Hope Home Christmas letter for those of you who may not have received one in the post too.

I trust you had a great time over the Christmas season and enjoyed precious time with family and friends. We did here – more to follow, mostly in picture format. Thankyou so much to you for your emails, cards, greetings and generous gifts to both myself and to Hope Home – personal thankyou's will follow in the New Year but for now please accept this as a preliminary thank you from us.

News from December:-

1. December 1st is World AIDS Day and for CAM this time is always busy with joint community events and extra opportunities in church services too. This year was no exception. CAM took the joint CCT worship service in Chiang Mai and it was a celebration / memorial service and everyone seemed very affected and moved, and I trust left with heightened awareness that the problem of HIV/AIDS is still as real today and relevant to the church. We also had a visiting team from Australia who joined in at activities at CAM, including a 5am start mini marathon run for AIDS – and also they spent an afternoon at Hope Home which was a lot of fun.



2. The first week in December also saw our first visit from our new BMS rep – Rev Kwame Adzam. He had a busy few days trying to fit a lot in, but it was good he was able to spend time with Paul and Sarah Brown for one day, and to visit CAM and Hope Home too. He also was there for the CAM worship service so this was helpful for him to get a glimpse of some of how CAM works.
3. December saw us with a very spotty-rashy-feverish month at Hope Home as one by one nearly all the children succumbed to the chicken pox....some only a little and some, like poor Wichai very severely. Praise God though that Joy and Phil escaped!!! This meant children off school longer than normal and a few cancelled activities –but thankfully we were all clear enough for our community Christmas party though Mary (Satang) was still a little scabby. Thankfully we are all over this now and no staff succumbed too.
4. So Christmas celebrations for us.....Thai church at Santisuk Church with the CAM family folks – our children were incredibly well behaved and thoroughly enjoyed the food afterwards. Nearly

all staff came too, at their request even if on a day off – and we got a rare photo with everyone except Bunmee.

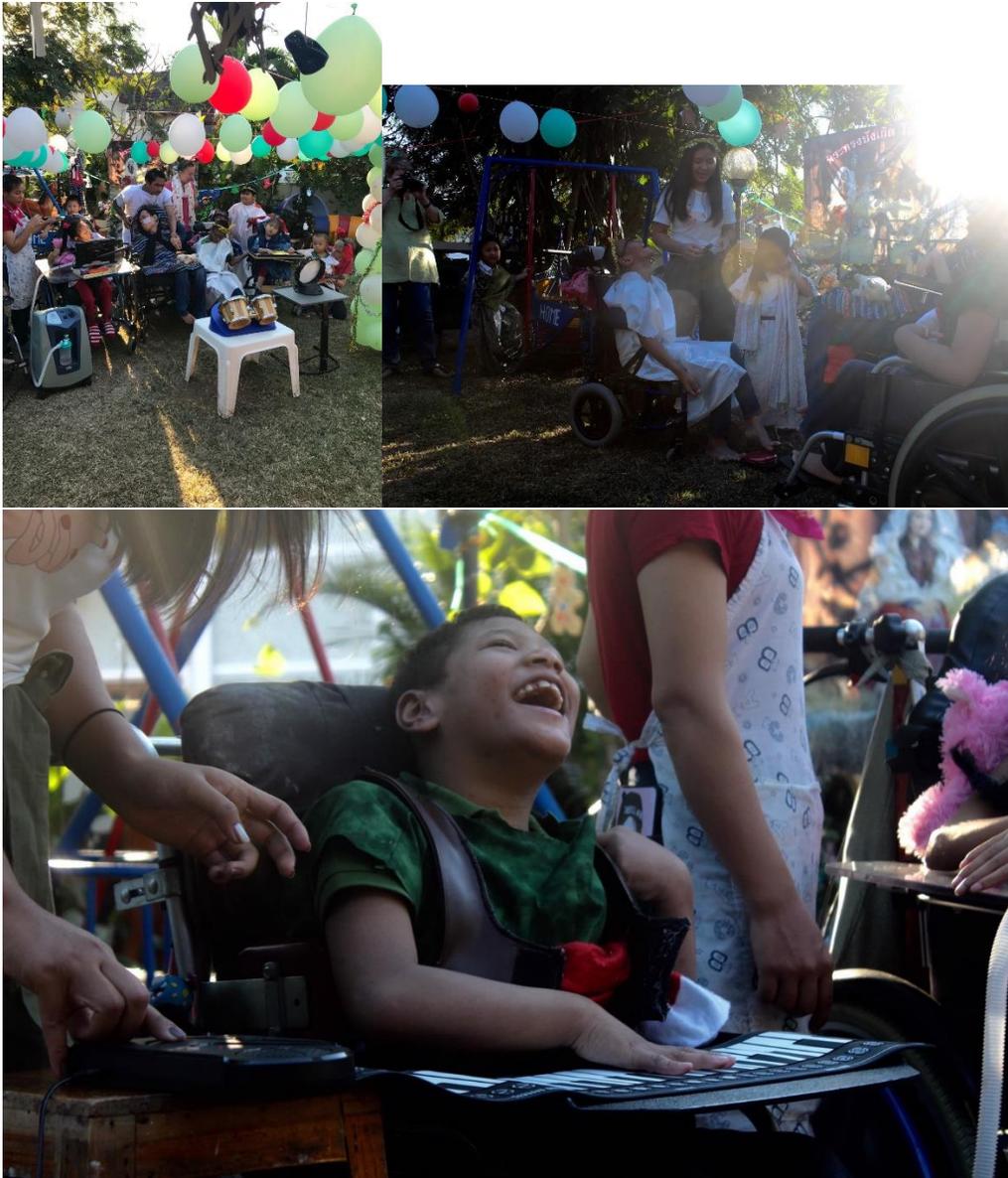


On Christmas morning we all attended the International church for their morning service and again our children were really well behaved...this was helped by snacks and milk at the ready and 9 large balloons floating as part of the children's talk, and the post excitement of stockings opened. We returned home for a meal of rice, pancakes, scrambled eggs and dumplings – and then present opening time. We also had a visit from the local Nursing Home and a donation of warm jackets for everyone – it is colder now so needed!



December 23rd we held our community party as we do each year with families from community visiting and also CAM staff. CAM folks kindly prepared the bulk of the food as per everyone's request because they make the best noodle dishes in Chiang Mai! We performed our nativity play with a small twist, and also a musical item with switch-adapted musical instruments so all children could participate. We all had fun decorating beforehand and making cookies to share too. You can NEVER have too many balloons! Mary (Satang) and Joseph (Tada) did really well though Tada was a bit wandering. Phil the angel Gabriel was excellent helped by Natalie. Choppy had assistance as the star –overwhelmed by the responsibility. Joy wisely led the smaller wise men and Wichai and Sam shepherded Amos the sheep very well. Jane, a foster care mum came despite the hanging over chicken pox and she provided her foster son as Baby Jesus – this was a relief because our swaddling baby was Elsa the doll with large purple shiny eyes! She didn't make any photos thankfully.





5. New Van

With a change in the laws coming into effect in the New Year we have realized the need to change our truck to a van that will appropriately seat all the children we take to school – God’s provision has been amazing.....we have a buyer for the truck at a reasonable offer – and we saw a van for sale in our village which has the right number of seats, and has an electric operated swivel chair for disabled access and was in the price range following the van sale! Amazing. We have put down a deposit and will make final payment on 7th January. The owner of the van runs the local nursing home – so we are hoping to keep building on relationships there. And see how we can partner together more.....maybe our children provide encouragement and smiles and hugs for the older people there???



6. New Staff –new housing

December saw the start of a new worker, Phi Bee – he is a delightful young man and he has settled in very well thus far. He requires help to legalise his paperwork and this is in process with the kind support of Rev Sanan Wutti acting as his guarantor for us. He is fantastic with the children, especially the active boys, and he is also creative and arty and gentle, but he also has quite a bubbly character. We look forward to working together and teaching him new skills as his grasp of the Thai language improves. He needed accommodation, so we went ahead and booked a hostel room 5 minutes' walk in the village behind us – this also triggered us to rent 3 more rooms and move the female staff over there too where they will have more freedom and responsibility themselves for upkeep etc. We therefore have stopped renting the staff house in the village – everyone seems okay with this action thus far. This meant closing up the staff house which was also a storage area for left over playground equipment –the children are delighted to have the train back....the rest is going to be stored at mine until we have a larger playground ourselves – we are looking into possibilities to purchase the vacant plot next door to us. Please pray with us in this next big venture if it comes about.



7. Visitors

Over December it has been a pleasure to have Becca's parents visiting and they have helped with many jobs at the house, and much unseen in the background too. Early January we are looking forward to a return visit from Helen Ball, and in mid-January my parents and my aunt and uncle are coming – we have holiday booked by the sea so a relaxing time for all we hope. Pray that the recent bad air pollution settles before their visit – it is very early to be starting this bad but it is definitely here!

8. Visa

Finally –please pray that my visa and work permit came through on time –the expiry date is 6th January and it is always a bit tricky to get it done with all the public holidays around New Year – the completed paperwork should be available this Monday so God Willing it will be done 2/3rd January – I always stress a little when it gets a bit too close to the expiry date but God is in control.

9. So – thank you for reading through this, and thank you for your amazing support and encouragement for me, CAM and Hope Home throughout the past year.

Much love and my prayers for you too

Judy