

## The Ethnic Thai of Thailand

### **The People Group**

The Ethnic Thai people are hospitable, friendly and generally cheerful. They are also polite and respectful, avoiding conflict where possible. They are highly loyal to their nation, religion and monarchy. Their identity is built on being Thai and Buddhist which means it is difficult for them to see how they can follow Jesus in culturally relevant ways. While Christianity is growing among Thailand's minority people it is yet to significantly impact the ethnically Thai.

### **The Global Interaction team among the Ethnic Thai**

God is at work among the Ethnic Thai and He is drawing people to Himself. Over the past years, the team has built relationships within their community, begun to share stories of Jesus and walked with people as they have chosen to follow Him. This journey to faith is by the grace of God. Praise God that numerous faith communities are now regularly meeting and local leaders are being equipped to teach and lead their own people.

As the team journey with the Ethnic Thai faith communities, they are witnessing the believers discerning what being a follower of Jesus looks like in their context. The faith communities are questioning which elements of their culture can be adopted as part of their expression of faith, and which other elements should be modified or rejected in order to remain true to the Gospel.

### **Prayer Needs**

- Pray that the Ethnic Thai faith community leaders will be equipped to lead their own people
- For the faith communities to be sensitive to the Spirit's leading as they discern their identity within the wider community
- For God to prepare the hearts of the Ethnic Thai people the team connects with
- That God's Spirit will open opportunities for intercultural workers to have meaningful conversations and share the message of Jesus
- For Ethnic Thai believers to remain deeply connected to their communities, sharing about their faith in Jesus as opportunities arise

### **Pray for the Team Members**

Dema and Carolyn

Glenn and Liz

Luke and Belle

Muana (Team Leader) and Villy

Petina

Margaret (candidate)

## Stories of Hope from Thailand

### **“Who is the Son of God?”**

Glenn and Liz serve among the Ethnic Thai people and have spent the majority of their first term focusing on learning the Thai culture and language. They know that the better they can communicate, the more likely they can introduce their Ethnic Thai friends to Jesus.

Glenn and Liz’s language nurturer, Mrs L, is a Buddhist woman who works with them in the morning and runs a drinks stall in the afternoon. As they got to know each other they began sharing stories about their lives. As time went on, Glenn and Liz started to sense God’s prompting to study Bible stories with Mrs L during their lessons. They used a Thai children’s Bible with simple language and beautiful pictures. Every lesson Mrs L would quickly flick forward to the next story in anticipation and would ask, “Who is the Son of God and how is He the Saviour”? They were amazed at how enthusiastic she was to know more!

When Glenn and Liz return to Thailand following their Home Assignment, they will continue to learn culture and language with Mrs L and are excited to share more stories about Jesus and answer Mrs L’s questions. We pray with Glenn and Liz that Mrs L and many other Thai friends will come to follow Jesus.

### **Steps of Transformation**

Muana and Villy first met Mick in 2007 when he was a monk studying at a Buddhist university. Following God’s prompting Muana invited Mick to attend a Bible study and in 2012 he started attending.

Mick recalls, “A few months later during a Bible study I was reminded of a time in my youth when I heard a voice while watching the Jesus movie. Through the Bible studies I realised it was the one true God that had spoken to me and I wanted to hear His voice again. I asked Muana and Villy to help me.”

With a strong understanding of the local culture, Muana and Villy were able to explain the Good News of Jesus in a way that made sense to Mick.

Muana shares, “By 2017 Mick knew Jesus was real and that he needed to declare his allegiance to Christ through baptism, despite his family’s concerns. Since then, even through some big challenges, Mick has been unwavering in his faith. He openly shares his faith and has become a strong man of prayer. He is such an encouragement to us. It is a joy to see his life being transformed.”

Mick is now one of the leaders of his emerging faith community. Praise God for His activity in Mick’s life and pray for him as he is built up to lead his own people.

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