

Thanksgiving at Christmas 2016

First, thanks to all of you who have expressed interest and provided support to Ta Kai Hae, Lah Wah and their family. Even more, however, is the thanks we all feel that this family has made it to Toronto and begun to settle in Canada.

Everyone is now in school or enrolled in ESL classes. They also have travelled, with our team members, to the Karen Baptist church, a journey of well over an hour each way. On the morning of December 24, they will make the trek to celebrate their first Christmas in Canada with the Karen community.

Here are some individual highlights.

Ta Kai Hae has farming experience, so urban agriculture may be a route for future volunteer or employment experience. He also has a certificate indicating caning experience, which is not surprising, given the thatched houses in the refugee camp, and Karen women being noted for their weaving. We await further developments, and ideas from the community.

Lah Wah has some mobility issues, but is very determined. She also has a beautiful singing voice, and sings Christmas carols around the home, both in Karen and also in English, as she loves her ESL class.

Hser Eh Tha Mee is a bright and responsible 15 year-old. She loves going to school independently on TTC, has made friends, and helps her parents with banking and telephone skills.

Paw Loy Hay didn't get to start classes right away, because she needed bussing to her ESL school. When she did start, though, there was a team of new friends to welcome her, including another new immigrant, a girl from Syria. It turns out that Paw Loy Hay plays the guitar!

Poe Taw Talay Soe is a typical nine year-old boy, active, with athletic potential, and full of mischievous spirit.

And Bwe Ku Say, turning eight on Boxing Day, loves glitter and pretty clothes. On a trip where the adults were all involved in registration and completing forms, she practiced printing her name in English, drew a picture, and hid Paul's hat and mittens!



There continue to be adjustments to life in Canada, some challenging, some positive. Dressing for school in a Canadian winter turns out to be very different from dressing for life in a refugee camp in Thailand. But then, in Thailand, you don't enjoy the novelty of playing in the snow!

We know that you join us in wishing every blessing for the newcomers. And we wish you a joyous Christmas.

Redeemer Refugee Settlement Committee