

Judy Cook

Celebrating Life -Celebrating Community

February 2024



www.bmsworldmission.org/jcook

Greetings from Chiang Mai, Thailand. For many here the recognition of Valentine's Day is seen as important and at Hope Home we also celebrate and remind all the staff and children how much they are loved and respected by us, but more importantly how much greater is God's love and care for them. This year we were also blessed to a part of an event called Night to Shine which is held simultaneously worldwide in churches on the Friday before Feb 14th - giving special needs children and adults the opportunity to shine and shine we did!!

So this year four of our older children at Hope Home got all dressed up and made up to attend the Night To Shine prom evening with other young people and families in Chiang Mai. It is the first time we had heard of it, and first time in Chiang Mai First Church, and we hope not the last. For information and inspiration look up the website (timtebowfoundation.org). On the night the children were processed up a red carpet to cheers and banners, and crowned on stage as Kings and Queens. There was also much dancing, fine dining and talent/karaoke, and even a magic show. The caregivers/parents attending get lavished attention on them too and each child has an assigned 'buddy' to release the parents for a fun night. Above all the fun though is the clear recognition and expression of value and worth of each child and young person there. There is no them/us going on, rather we are one family community together and let's celebrate our belongingness to God. We all came away feeling refreshed, loved and welcomed and my prayer for our non Christian staff who attended, a little closer to understanding how much God really does love them! This evening was such a tangible celebration of life for each of our children and their joy and pleasure was so recognisable.



February has been an exciting month for us at Hope Home too since we are now the official owners of the land nextdoor. This month we have had the land cleared of debris and multitude banana trees, and levelled ready for walls and gates and paths next. The children have just loved seeing diggers, tractors and dumper trucks for real and that has been perfect entertainment for them, albeit a bit dusty. We really hope the walls and gates and some pathing / covering can be down by the end of February since school is out on March 2nd, and we want to let the children run and play as much as they can. We are so grateful to God for His abundant provision of this land and for the amazing way churches and individuals and BMS have been part of this project. Exciting times ahead as we see the emerging of a disabled accessible playground and garden areas too. The ground will be accessible to our community too and they are excited. We hope and pray that this safe and welcoming space can and will provide many opportunities for us to be a true witness in our local community.



Watch this space as we look to celebrate community, and to celebrate life. Our land is also the walking access point between two urban villages, ours and the one where most people pop out to shop, and our staff live in that community too. All the local residents who use the path have been anxiously waiting to see if they were about to lose this access, but they have now been assured that the path will remain open on the outside of our new wall and they have nothing to fear. Word spread quickly and now the families with young children are eager to see what play space is being made for them too. We are being blessed with advice from many sources on what grass to use, what trees to plant for fruit and shade and how best to grow our vegetables. We are confident that the community will embrace this space with us, and that through this community spirit God will be glorified.

Meantime at the Social Development Services Unit of the CCT we are in a seemingly endless run of project writing and report writing. The SDSU staff are so hard working and often out and about on ministry work so it can be hard to find face to face time with them for clarification of reports.

Again, we at Hope Home are grateful to their expertise and advice regarding potential solar energy sourcing for the playground and knowing people we can source for help. The partnership in the Gospel between us all is such a wonderful thing. One potential labourer for the land project, who is also a pastor, came to see what he could do regarding our next phase, and we were pleased to be able to offer him our excess play equipment for use in their church grounds. We are pleased to be able to bless the local Thai church in this way.

Pray for the ongoing progress on the land project and the development of the playground. Pray for the workers and that their lives will be impacted.

Praise God for opportunities for the young adults with special needs to be celebrated across the world through Night to Shine. Pray for each heart represented to know God's love in very real ways.

Pray for the ongoing health of the staff of SDSU, Hope Home and the children and families represented, especially as pollution levels begin to rise at this time of year.

Once again, thank you for your faithful support, prayers and encouragement and thank you for partnering in the ministry of BMS across the world.

May the peace of God be very real and close to you and your family.

With prayers from Judy

Ephesians 2.v.10 "For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

If you would like to support Judy Cook by prayer and committed regular giving, visit bmsworldmission.org/partners or call 01235 517617 for a 24:7 Partners leaflet.



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