

## Thailand and China Update - Roscoe Snell

October 2021 was an exciting time! After twenty months, I was finally able to return to Southeast Asia. Over this time, I had waited for China to reopen for travel. After many news articles, which offered questionable hope, China remained closed except for those with businesses, work permits, or family residing in China.

Following discussions with other missionaries and a great amount of prayer, I began the paperwork for residence in Thailand. I believe that I was directed to northern Thailand, where many Chinese are living and many are studying at the universities. Having an understanding of the Chinese people and being able to speak Mandarin Chinese would be a definite advantage for working in this region.

On October 6, I left for Thailand. Upon entering, I was required to quarantine for seven days. Then I proceeded to the northern Thai city of Chiang Mai. Within two days, I found an apartment near Chiang Mai University. The apartment has a large living room, which is perfect for meeting with people. My hope is to have individual or small group Bible Study, guitar lessons, and English tutoring. Using English and guitar lessons are great ways to build relationships and introduce the Christian faith to those not yet in the Christian family.

To be completely honest, the progress has been slow, mainly due to COVID. People are required to wear masks everywhere, even outside. Many people are afraid to meet new people and they social distance. Up until recently, groups have been limited to fifty people. (Now it is up to a hundred.) In church, temperature checks are required before entering and masks must be worn at all times. This includes the pastor and worship team. These regulations and precautions have slowed establishing relationships.

I have been able to make a few connections, especially in the Chinese community. I am meeting with a few Chinese people, offering Bible study and English tutoring. Also, I have been invited into a few homes and have shared dinner with some of my new friends. At Christmas, I was asked to play guitar and sing Christmas carols, which was a wonderful time of worship and fellowship.

Some of my American friends have asked how long I will remain in Thailand. All along, I haven't viewed Thailand as a temporary move until China reopens. When China does reopen, I plan to split my time between Lijiang, China and Chiang Mai, Thailand. I will go to where I am busy at that moment. The distance between the two cities is only ninety minutes by air.

As I said earlier, the health crisis has slowed making connections, but I believe that it can offer new opportunities for the people of God. We can be sources of encouragement and comfort. The times may be uncertain, but our God is that Solid Rock. Our creative God has given me some unique opportunities to share His love, care, and hope with those in my new neighborhood. I pray that my ears, eyes, and heart remain sensitive to His leading.

As for China, travel is still denied for me, but the underground churches are thriving. Almost daily, we remain in contact. I thank the Lord that He has provided a safe way to continue to teach and counsel. May they continue to grow and mature in faith.

I know that many at PCF pray and provide financial support to this work. I will never forget the kindnesses shown to me during "my time in exile" from Asia. You are the best and a definite blessing from the Lord.

With love and deep appreciation,  
The Thai Guy