

Stitches of HOPE HOPE NEWS

Christmas

Christmas is the most awaited and enthusiastically celebrated festival in Australia. The season is about God's love expressed to a hurting world in the gift of his Son Jesus, the Christ. At Stitches of Hope, we aim to spread Christ's goodness to his precious ones in Cambodia, allowing them to experience peace, love, joy and hope, not just at Christmas but every day of the year.

Thank you for partnering with us to make this a reality. 2020 has been an extraordinary year. Curtailed from fund-raising events we have had to rely on God to provide – and he has! Money has come in from surprising sources and left us giving glory to God for his provision.

This has meant the intentional and elegant paradox of the birth of a homeless can be celebrated in every home, including those of the people we love in Cambodia.

May you feel the presence of Lord in the candles that spreads their glow on your table and experience the wonder of His abiding love. May He guide you through each day of the coming year. Accept our thanks for being God's Blessing to the poor.

Covid-19 in Cambodia

Covid-19 has reached Cambodia. Cambodia has taken early and decisive steps, according to the World Bank, to prevent the flow and spread of the disease. As the battle against the virus continues, the risks of illness and economic fallout remain. House-hold level shock can have a long-lasting and disproportionate impact on the poor and vulnerable.

While there seems to be a high awareness of social distancing and other preventative measures to reduce the risk of

coronavirus infection, knowledge does not fully translate into practice of basic hygiene and social measures. Nationally, people have experienced a reduction in income and reduced food and non-food consumption. Despite Covid-19, markets are still supplying a variety of basic necessities and staple foods and medicines are able to be purchased.

Schools have been closed, impacting both our Children's Home on the outskirts of Phnom Penh and the education centre at Chrey Vien. At Chrey Vien, we encouraged the teachers to use the pupil free time to engage in professional development. We are pleased to report that at the Children's Home for quite some months our three carers coped with 15 children home from school! No small undertaking! They daily took temperatures, used strict hand hygiene and implemented safe social measures. Cambodians have an amazing capacity to "make do" and we often found ourselves in awe of their ability to manage in creative and supportive ways.



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Change of Accommodation

These Covid-19 burdens on the staff and children in the Home were exacerbated by other factors. The house that we have been renting was found to be unsafe and for other reasons too, it became necessary to leave the premises and relocate in July. Fortunately, the Sewing Centre is on adjacent land owned by our In-Country Director. In that and another building on site, the staff and students have temporarily camped while a new home is under construction on the same parcel of land. Added to the mix of home-schooling, health protocols and meal preparation in a make-shift kitchen, life could have been a strain were it not for the deep faith, maturity and resourcefulness of our leaders in Cambodia. They never cease to amaze us.

Sewing Centre

The ripple effect continues. Having the girls sleeping in the Sewing Centre has slowed the production of the sleeping bags. A number have been made, but in numbers too small to justify shipping them to Australia just yet. This project of getting sleeping bags sewn in Cambodia, shipped to Perth and distributed to WA homeless continues to be very satisfying and worthwhile. Thanks for your continued involvement in caring for the underprivileged in both countries. It means a lot.

Christian Rallies in Cambodia

In November 2019, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association held its first rally in Cambodia, with Franklin Graham preaching to the crowd. In October of the same year, in this predominantly Buddhist nation, the government of Cambodia held its largest-ever meeting with Christian leaders. Prime Minister Hun Sen addressed over 3000 leaders representing more than 7000 local

churches. He addressed the Christians gathered and thanked them for their involvement in education, ethics, and social projects. He praised the church's role in contributing to the peace and stability of the nation through promoting human dignity and unity. The growth of the church stands in stark contrast to the repression and trauma of its historic past.

In November 2020 our leaders, graduates and older students participated in a large national Christian rally that inspired them to live boldly for Jesus.

This bigger picture may help you pray for our charity and staff in this emerging country.

Please join us in praying for
Safety from Covid-19 for all SOH staff and students
Children returned to their villages to care for parents
University students Schhivkeng, Sokda, Malis, and Seavmay
The Christian gospel to spread unimpeded in Cambodia
In praise for
Dedicated, joyful staff in trying circumstances
Donations to enable Christmas parties in Chrey Vien and the Children's Home
Deeds of giving being the very foundation of the world



Please consider becoming a **Monthly Partner with Stitches of Hope** to help support the wonderful projects that are being carried out. It is such a worthwhile organisation and we are appealing to you for your help with the ongoing running costs each month especially now that the US dollar value has dropped so much and we have a large commitment which includes food, power, water, transport, education, clothing, medical and wages to maintain. We would love to have you come on board with us to partner in this very exciting and worthwhile work.

If you are willing and able please complete the details below to contribute and receive a blessing.

\$40 \$50 \$75
 \$100 Other \$ _____

Name: _____
Address: _____
Postcode: _____
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Please mail to: Stitches of Hope
1448 Toodyay Road Gidgegannup WA 6083

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