

# Kathryn Smith

## Prayer letter, September 2017

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### Settling In

It's been nearly 4 months since I arrived in Bangkok and time is flying past. It was quite an adjustment moving from a small country town to a big and busy city like Bangkok. I am finding it is a place that people either love to live in or cannot get out of it quick enough, the jury is still out for me.

Bangkok is a city that never seems to stop where ancient Thai culture and western influences have collided. I have enjoyed exploring the city, immersing myself in the culture, trying out the local food and making the city my home for the duration of my language training.

When I first arrived in Bangkok I stayed in the Christian Student Centre attached to the language school. It was a comfortable room to stay in initially and 30 second walk from the school but it was next to a busy main street and just underneath the sky train track so I was relieved to find an apartment that was in a quieter part of the city.

The apartment I am currently in was a real provision from God as many of the apartments in Bangkok are rented out on a 12 month contract, which is too long for me as I will only be in Bangkok until the end of the year but I was able to find a place that was for a 6 months contract. It was, also, fully furnished so I had to buy very little for the flat, which will mean I do not have too much to take with me to Chang Mai.

I have been attending a local Thai church every Sunday. The church is part of the Church of Christ in Thailand denomination and there are around 50 in the congregation. The service is more traditional than I am used to but the congregation is very welcoming and we always have lunch together after the service. This gives me an opportunity to try out my Thai language. They are very patient with me and I have enjoyed getting to know them. Every Wednesday evening there is a bible study group that I attend as well.

### Language School

Soon after arriving in Bangkok I started language

school. Lessons start at 8.00 in the morning until midday. Then in afternoon we are expected to do personal study which includes homework where we ask a Thai person questions based on the subject we have been learning in the morning.



*Language School*

There are 6 core modules to complete, the first 3 are basic communication and the next 3 are learning to read and write Thai. Once you have completed those modules there are elective modules you can take and choose from various topics, such as, social problems, Thai culture, biblical language and medical terms.

Picking up the language has not come easy to me and I have had needed to repeat some modules which has been quite frustrating at times, but I am processing slowly. I have enjoyed meeting other students, mostly from the neighbouring countries around Thailand and finding out their stories and why they are learning Thai. Some are here to work in Thailand, while many are missionaries.

### TBMF Conference

At the beginning of August I had the opportunity to attend the Thai Baptist Mission Fellowship (TBMF) conference, in Cha An, which is about 3 hours' drive away from Bangkok on the coast. This is a weekend for Baptist missionaries who are working in Thailand to come together for a time of fellowship, rest, teaching and fun.

I had a great time and I really enjoyed meeting with other mission workers, finding out about their work and

experiences, especially hearing the inspiring stories of those who have spent 20 or more years working in Thailand. What was, also, very encouraging is hearing nearly everyone say how hard they found learning the Thai language and how after spending many years speaking it they still make mistakes. This makes me feel a lot better as I face the task of learning the language.

### **Chang Mai**

Towards the end of August I went up to Chang Mai for a long weekend to visit the project I will be working on. On the Friday I worked in Hope Home, it was great to meet the staff I will be working with and the children I will be caring for and to use some of my nursing skills. Then on the Saturday morning I attended a community support group for people living with HIV/AIDS run by CAMS. It was interesting to hear their stories, how CAMS is helping them and how they are supporting each other.



*Hope Home*



*CAMS Office*

The weekend in Chang Mai was inspiring and has made me really excited for the projects I will be working on.

### **Prayer Points**

- Please pray as I continue in my language learning, that I will gain more confidence in using what I have learnt as I am out and about.
- For relationships to develop within the Thai church I am attending.
- I am hoping to move up to Chang Mai in December to continue my language learning. Please pray for a smooth move and I will quickly settle into the new city.

**Kathryn**

If you would like to support Kathryn by prayer and committed regular giving, visit [bmsworldmission.org/partners](http://bmsworldmission.org/partners) or call 01235 517617 for a 24:7 Partners leaflet.



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