



The Beacon

Message From the President

Greetings Friends!

It is a blessed honor to welcome and introduce you to Nyob Zoo Ministries' first quarterly newsletter since its inception earlier this year in May. Even more so, the pace at which our Heavenly Father has wrought out answered prayers continues to challenge us towards new heights. We are excited to share the good news of Christ and His truth through various means. And your partnership and faithful support of these initiatives shall impact eternity.

You may be asking the question: What is Nyob Zoo Ministries and why does it exist? The very expression in the Hmong language "nyob zoo" is a universal greeting of peace and a parting of goodwill. Nyob Zoo Ministries, Inc. is the first non-profit 501(c)3 corporation established for the purpose of reaching the Hmong people by passionate Seventh-day Adventists who already serve their local Hmong ministries in the United States. There are currently nine Directors from five different states that make up the Board. It is primarily led by lay members to support the establishment and growth of fledgling spiritual groups in Hmong communities. Nyob Zoo Ministries also wants to empower and equip Adventist churches interested in effectively reaching the Hmong around them. Our vision is to reach every Hmong person with God's last day message.

Who are the Hmong people? It's often best to preface the answer by sharing that Hmong are not Mongolian nor Chinese. The Hmong are a distinct nomadic group that mainly resided in certain areas of China prior to the 19th century. Due to war, persecution, and unwanted

assimilation, certain Hmong migrated into the mountains of Southeast Asia. When the chaos of the Vietnam War ravaged the region, the Hmong in Laos were heavily recruited to fight against Communism. In the aftermath of the war, genocide was declared on the Hmong in Laos, forcing hundreds of thousands to flee to neighboring Thailand. From those Thai refugee camps, Hmong were resettled in various countries over the next thirty years. Today, there are around 300,000 in the United States.

REACH EVERY HMONG PERSON WITH GOD'S LAST DAY MESSAGE

Though the darkness of war can be unrelenting, a spark of hope made its way to the jungles of Laos in the 1950s. Missionary pilot, Pastor Richard Hall, had been detoured from the neighboring country of Myanmar, so he decided to fly into the northern mountains of Laos to spread the gospel. The Hmong there had never met nor seen a white man who could fly a ship through the heavens. He also had a magical black box that spoke the Hmong language and told stories of a God in heaven who was soon to return. Pastor Hall eventually recruited twelve boys to be trained and educated as Adventist pastors. During the war, many of the twelve young pastors continued spreading the gospel however they could. Eventually, hundreds of Hmong accepted the Adventist message, and one of them was my grandpa, a poor opium addict and former hog farmer. No matter the depths of war and sin, the grace of God prevails amongst the most ignorant and destitute! Amen!

The Hmong are often referred to as "a people without a country." Looking back on Hmong history is painful, yet, also quite hopeful and bright. Sister White stated in Testimonies to the Church Vol.9, pg. 10, par. 3, "We

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have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and his teaching in our past history." Seeing God's plan leading many Hmong to the truth of God's word, we are confident in His divine mission to restore the Hmong as citizens of Christ's heavenly kingdom. It is evident that Hmong history contains the proof of our Savior's unwavering love for a forgotten people.

I never had the privilege of meeting my grandpa, the first Seventh-day Adventist in our family. In 1976 he sacrificed himself to allow others, including my parents, to escape safely to Thailand. But like all the faithful from the past, the sacrifice is not in vain. More than ever we are seeing a hunger for God's word among all Hmong around the world. With today's technology, God has made it truly possible to reach millions of Hmong in a

single generation. Never would my grandpa have been able to imagine his grandson spearheading projects of this magnitude for the God of heaven!

The immense work ahead of us calls for solemn prayer and vital support. Like Pastor Hall and my grandpa, the sacrifices today will yield eternal joy in the Lord's kingdom. I am urging you to support Nyob Zoo Ministries, to become a ministry partner, and to "give of your best to the Master."

In Christ alone,



Cheng Vang



Enoch of the Hmong Church

It's just after noon time on the Sabbath day. The English-speaking congregation is heading to the fellowship hall for a meal. But a four-foot-eight-inch elderly woman makes her way to the sanctuary's entrance. She doesn't speak English, but the elders know who she is and why she has come. It's Grandma Green and she always arrives early for the Hmong services in the afternoon. The Hmong services don't begin for another half an hour, but Grandma Green doesn't mind, because it gives her time to pray for the pastor and the church members.

Little is known about the childhood and upbringing of this mysterious servant of God who later took the name Grandma Green. In Hmong culture, most children are known through their parents' history and reputation, but no one has claimed to know Grandma Green's parents. The most likely reason is that she was orphaned at a young age, and may not have known them herself. Living in the northern jungles of Laos, Grandma Green may have likely been reduced to being a maidservant for relatives as a child. This is often the fate of children with no parents.

In the 1930s, amongst the remote mountains of Laos, there existed no knowledge of the Bible and God's love. Shamanism and animism were prevalent in Hmong

society. The spirits were believed to be everywhere, and there were almost infinite consequences for offending them. But it was much worse for orphans who did not have parents to appease ancestral guardian spirits, which were the primary spirits meant to protect children and families. Grandma Green's only way out of this hopeless situation was to marry into a family to gain the protection of their spirits. But even then, the cost of

being protected still offered no true lasting peace.



In the 1960s, Grandma Green entered her second marriage in her late thirties. It was at this time that the gospel was preached in the surrounding Hmong villages. Grandma Green and her family eventually accepted the Adventist message in 1968. All her life, she was depressed and spoke very little to even family members. But she became content in knowing Christ, her soon-coming King. Grandma Green didn't live too far a walk from where the local believers gathered, so she found great joy in meeting with them every Sabbath.

Even though she couldn't read or write at all, Grandma Green would memorize the tunes of precious hymns in her Hmong language. Even more so, she loved to pray fervently for others, and would often do this regardless of the setting. But tragedy struck again as Grandma Green lost her second husband a couple of years later.

In 1975 the end of the war in Southeast Asia caused Hmong to flee to Thailand to avoid genocide. Most eventually resettled in the United States, including Grandma Green. She continued to stay faithful through the struggles of being a refugee and settled in Central California. Grandma Green decided not to marry again and focused fully on her relationship with Christ.

Her final church congregation, the Fresno Hmong Seventh-day Adventist Church, cherished her faithfulness immensely. Grandma Green always brought her marked Bible, but it was marked by the pastor and elders so that she could take it home for her grandchildren to read for her. Many times, church members would start reading from the Scriptures for Grandma Green, but she would finish speaking the passage from only memory. One leader even exclaimed, "She marks her Bible more than I mark mine, and it's remarkable because she does not even read!"

Once during a statewide Hmong Campmeeting in 2002, the Spirit of God moved Grandma Green to sing one of the hymns she had memorized from the jungles of Laos. One of the women was so astonished hearing a perfectly memorized song, and she exclaimed, "How does she memorize the entire song with all the verses and the tune? We've been singing this song for decades and we still can't memorize the first verse!"

The English title of the hymn was "Is My Name Written There?"

A number of years ago, Grandma Green's local church began keeping attendance. By now she had lost the ability to see, but this did not stop her from her routine of being early to church each Sabbath. As Grandma Green heard the first Hmong member enter the sanctuary, she would say, "Greetings! Please make sure my name is written in the book!" The church member would respond, "Don't worry Grandma. God knows you are here at His church." Then Grandma Green would respond with, "I know God knows I'm here. I'm just making sure that people don't forget."

Grandma Green's legacy was not confined to being early at church and offering prayer for the believers. She was also the most prolific patron even in her poverty. Each time a Hmong preacher spoke

at the pulpit, Grandma Green would often afterward offer multiple large bills and say, "Please keep doing the Lord's work, so we can go home soon!" One time, the Fresno Hmong congregation had an amazing revival with multiple speakers. Grandma Green didn't hesitate to empty her purse of all the bills inside. The speakers could not accept her sacrifice knowing that she might live on nothing for the rest of the month. Many were in tears, ashamed of themselves and their love of this world because of her contrasting faithfulness to support God's work even in her poverty.

THERE ARE ENOCHS IN THIS OUR DAY

In the book, *Our Father Cares*, page 196, par. 3, the servant of the Lord wrote, "...*there are Enochs in this our day.*" Just like Enoch in his day, Grandma Green exhibited the purest childlike faith amongst those around her. Through her nagging disabilities, her lack of

education, her diminished eyesight, her traumatic upbringing, and her tragedies, Grandma Green's faithful life had burst forth the floodgates of tears from numerous church members at her 2014 memorial service. Her dream was to see the Savior coming in the clouds, and she fought for that dream with regard for little else. Grandma Green is now free from the enemy and resting from her labors to await the wondrous resurrection of God's people.

She was truly the Enoch of the Hmong Church.

In carrying forth the same dream she longed for, Nyob Zoo Ministries has created the Grandma Green Project Fund to support the work of pastors, lay leaders, Bible workers, and evangelists. May her inspired life compel us all to hasten the second coming of our Lord and Savior. Amen.



Fresno Hmong Congregation in 2015

Announcements

For the latest updates and information, please visit our website at www.nyobzoo.org.



Hall of Faith Project — With heavy hearts, we announce the passing of a spiritual giant and pioneer of Hmong ministry, Jean Hall. She was the wife of missionary pilot, the late Pastor Richard “Dick” Hall, who was the first to reach the Hmong in the jungles of Laos with the Three Angels’ Message in 1957. They were the first to establish religious institutions for the Hmong ministry work in Laos under very challenging circumstances. In honor of the incredible legacy of the Hall Family, we have set up the “Hall of Faith Project” to support Hmong groups needing to establish and/or improve their religious facilities here in North America. Please look out for our Spring 2025 newsletter where we will feature the Hall Family missionary experience.

Partnership

Are you interested in being a partner or a patron to uphold the mission of Nyob Zoo Ministries? We would love to speak with you on further details. You can email partners@nyobzoo.org or write to our address below.

Donations

Since its inception in May of 2024, Nyob Zoo Ministries, Inc. has been granted status as a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. This enables donors to deduct contributions made to the organization under IRC Section 170.

Please make checks out to "Nyob Zoo Ministries" and mail to:

Nyob Zoo Ministries, Inc.
P.O. Box 1921
Rancho Cordova, CA 95741

Note: If you are donating to a specific project, please write that project in the check memo.
All projects can be found at: www.nyobzoo.org/projects

We can also accept secure PayPal contributions at www.nyobzoo.org/donate



Prayer Requests

Do you have a prayer request? Prayer requests can be sent by letter to our P.O. Box address below or to the email prayer@nyobzoo.org