



May the birth of Jesus Christ bring you joy!

May the New Year bring you bountiful blessings!



December 16, 2009

The Lord allows me to shine His light by doing His work in 2009 and I am thankful to the almighty God. The Lord also brings together brothers and sisters who join me hand in hand in the ministry to build the Arizona Karen Baptist church. Every Monday and Wednesday, I help my Karen friends with their official appointments, medical visits, job search, and various needs. I believe that fellowship and encouragement play the most important roles in ministering to the Karen refugee congregation at this time. Therefore, I usually spend Tuesdays and Thursdays visiting our Karen families, especially the new arrivals, pray for them, and remind them of God's promise to give rest to those who are weary and burdened. During the week, I also prepare for my messages and Bible lessons. The Friday prayer vigil that we started in 2009 has grown and my heart is filled with thankfulness and happiness to God for this blessing. The prayer chain starts at 9 p.m. every Friday night and ends at 5 a.m. every Saturday morning. We started with 10 prayer warriors but we now have 30 prayer warriors. Each signs up for a 20 minute time slot and communes with God. Please keep those prayer requests coming in! The attendance at the church has grown largely since the beginning of the year. Yet, many still cannot attend church regularly

due to transportation issues. We are thankful to Monte Vista church and its dedicated drivers for picking up our Karen families with the van weekly.

On a personal level, 2009 has been nothing short of exciting! As all of you know, I was able to start working as a full-time minister in May for which I am grateful. My wife, Hsakupaw, had three cataract surgeries. Why three, you might ask? The first surgery in the left eye did not result in a much improved vision. So she had to get another lens piggybacked and it worked out thankfully. Today, she had the cataract removed in her right eye. My four children and one daughter-in-law started attending vocational schools this year. Our eldest daughter, Paw Ku Thay, is currently in Orange County, California, working and also going to school to get a certificate in care giving. Our sons, Bar Soe Tun and Kopiko Tun, are now attending Job Corps career development training sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor. Bar Soe is working on getting a security guard's license and a GED certificate. Kopiko is learning to become a computer service technician. Our daughter, Jenny Tun, and daughter-in-law, Mu Lawlaw Loo, started attending medical assistant training at Brown Mackie College. Our Son-in-law, Min Kyaw, continues to work hard at Lee Lee oriental market and regularly participates in the church youth band.

Well, cherries on the top in 2009 are the arrivals of our granddaughter, Joanna Tun, in July and our grandson, Justus Tun, in August. Our three-year-old grandson, Johnny Loo, is happy to be with his new brother and cousin. With all of the kids going to school now, you might guess that the free time we had in the past has now become babysitting time. The flexible schedule I have allows me to help my family as my children pursue learning opportunities. God is good!

Well today, December 16, 2009, is the 2749th Karen New Year day. So, we are already in a new year according to the Karen calendar. I am thankfully amazed at the blessings the Lord poured out on our family in 2009 or in 2749. Our family sends you our deepest appreciation for your love and support.

In His Service,

Tha Hser Tun and family

