

STRATEGIC GIVING 2020

Meet Lilian Yang

Lilian reminds us of the call to missions that so many of our Baptist sisters heard through the 19th and 20th centuries and for whom women at home organized themselves in circles of support. As you commit to Baptist Women's support of Lilian, pray for her and for women in your church who are considering overseas mission—even in this time of COVID-19.



▲ One of the multi-purpose buildings in a Lahu village

▼ The first worship service in a new building in a Lahu village



by Kristine Gonzalez

Canadian Baptist Ministries

Target: \$7,000

LILIAN YANG is the National Field Staff for Canadian Baptist Ministries (CBM) in the Golden Triangle Region in Thailand. She is Chinese by ethnicity, born in a multicultural area in Eastern Myanmar. Lilian grew up in church and got baptized at 12. “I had the chance to teach children in Sunday school since I was a teenager,” she says. “It was an important and special experience of my life because I discovered that I was very interested in the Bible. I also realized my Bible knowledge was limited. Since then, I’ve wanted to learn more about God and His Word. I am eager to serve God by teaching the Bible to others and I felt that it was a calling from God that became clearer as time passed.”

After obtaining her college degree, she traveled to Malaysia to study theology and complete her graduate degree in pastoral ministry. She obtained her MDiv in Taiwan, after which she came to serve with CBM.

Today, Lilian works with Thailand Bethel Theological Institute (TBTI) managing the library, teaching theological courses and equipping local pastors and laypersons. She also helps local churches, organizations and seminaries in developing ministry training on sharing the Gospel and expanding community outreach.

Thailand Bethel Theological Institute (TBTI)

In the Golden Triangle Region, there are a lot of ministry needs and opportunities. However, a lack of financial resources blocks ministry development. For example, lack of finances for education means pastors often need to wear multiple hats—preacher, counselor, worship leader, administrator—even when they’ve only been educated or trained in one area.

TBTI closes this gap by providing scholarships and training in different areas of ministry for pastors, church leaders and lay persons so that church growth, church planting and integral mission can happen.

“The students of TBTI respond positively to my teaching,” shares Lilian. “One student told me that she was encouraged when she realized that she also

came from a similar background. Some students are from Myanmar, as am I, and we all know how it is to grow up with limited education and financial resources. It is the reason that I understand their situation.”

Lilian’s other ministry area is with the Lahu Villages project, where she assists in communicating with the local pastors and translating for meetings between team leaders and the local pastors. Before COVID-19, Lilian also worked with SENT teams who came to serve the region.

Lahu Villages

In the Lahu villages in Shan State, Eastern Myanmar, more and more people are coming to Christ. This began when Myanmar pastor Duodu brought the gospel to them. With villages in far-flung locations in the mountains, villagers don’t have access to some basic necessities such as education, electricity, sanitation or healthcare. CBM began supporting Pastor Duodu’s ministry, helping to provide resources for multi-purpose centres. These learning centres serve as a venue for medical services, a place of worship and a site for other community development initiatives. Through partnership with Pastor Duodu, many people in the Lahu villages have given their lives to Christ and continue to grow in the Lord.

One villager shared that he and his family used to live in fear before they came to know Jesus. They used to be animists, believing in the spiritual essence of objects, places and creatures. But, as Pastor Duodu ministered to them, they received the saving knowledge of Christ, replacing fear with peace and joy.

“When I take part in the Lahu project, I see that God uses our very limited resources to bless so many people. The villagers shared that they benefitted by having better water supply and having the multi-purpose building as a place for regular worship service and a venue for children to study,” Lilian shares.

Lilian finds it satisfying when she sees the fruit of God’s ministry—from congregation members who learn more about and grow in the Lord, to seeing Lahu villagers’ lives improve from services they’ve received. She shares, “Before joining CBM, I was mostly

serving in churches. I didn't have many opportunities to serve in the frontlines of the mission field. But now God has enlarged my vision and my ministry through CBM."

Ministry in COVID-19

In July 2020 TBTI started the new semester with physical classes following guidelines that will prevent the spread of the pandemic and as permitted by the Thai government. However, some of the students from Myanmar are not able to return to the campus as the Thai-Myanmar border is still closed. Those who are not able to be physically present are able to join classes online.

Local church pastors are still able to travel to the Lahu villages, sharing gospels and providing for some health needs.

Though some churches have commenced physical Sunday worship services, some are still held online. For these, Lilian connects with the congregation through recorded devotional and Bible study videos. Even so, Lilian remains hopeful: "I feel that God let me serve Him in a better way by joining CBM. I am excited for what God is going to do through CBM's mission projects in Golden Triangle Region." ■

RWANDA LITERACY PROJECT

Please consider supporting the Rwanda Literacy Project as 2020 draws to a close. Read all about the project and the impact your support will make on our website at baptistwomen.com/causes/international-projects.

CBM APPOINTS NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

WE ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE that our mission partner, Canadian Baptist Ministries (CBM), has appointed Jennifer Lau to the position of executive director effective November 1, 2020.

Jennifer began her service with CBM in 2002 as communications manager. Over the years, she brought her deep faith in the Lord and her excellent skills in management, marketing and communications and fundraising to bear as she moved into senior leadership in the organization. Most recently, Jennifer served as the associate executive director.

Baptist Women wishes Jennifer God's favour and blessing as she assumes this role.

We wish to thank CBM's former executive director, Rev. Dr. Terry Smith, for his partnership and wish him the best. ■



Jennifer Lau