

need toChristmas Gift Response 2021



#1 Dear Dr. Neil and Mrs. Diana
Sowards and FOB donors,

I am Ruth Khin Aung from MIT's music department. It was my honor to have this wonderful opportunity to share FOB's Christmas gift to a lady who is in need of financial assistance. The following is my feedback after giving the gift to her.

1. How did you choose the recipient?

There are a few families and individuals in the area where I live (Insein-Taungthugone) to whom I have been delivering food and other essential items in several months. Among them, I found that the recipient, Ms. Ah Nay Paw, is one of the least who's in need of financial help.

2. What was the financial situation of the recipient?

Ms. Ah Nay Paw is a Kayar widow, who's taking care of her 10 year old daughter,

her elderly mother, and two other boys who left their homes for the wars in their village in Kayar State, and currently living with her. She is running a small tailoring shop to support her family. With the pandemic and the coup, her business is not doing so well. She is basically trying to make ends meet by the little money she can make from tailoring and some food rations shared by a church she's going to.

3. What was the reaction of the recipient?

She was so surprised to receive the gift as she didn't expect anyone would bring such gift to her. She said she was thankful to the Lord and to FOB for the gift.

4. What was your experience?

When I heard that I was to give the gift to someone I know in need, I thought it could be difficult to make the choice to whom the gift should be given. But right at that moment, I saw this lady, and only this lady, in my mind. Then, I felt joy in my heart as I saw her receiving the gift with a thankful heart. I thank God for his guidance, and I am so glad that I could be a part of sending FOB's Christmas gift to the needy.

I have attached to this email a picture taken in front of Ms. Paw's shop.

With Appreciation, | Ruth Khin Aung

#1a Dear Dr. Neil and Mrs Diana Sowards and FOB donors,

Thank you so much for your Christmas Gift which we have received through Sayama Fom Men.

The recipient is one of my guests, who came from Chin State to Yangon for Cancer treatment. She has been with us since 12th December 2020. She has five children and now her husband and children are struggling to meet their daily needs. Her family cannot afford for her medical treatment. Therefore, we ask financial help from relatives and friends for her treatment.

The recipient was so happy when I told her about the Christmas gift, her eyes filled with tears and said "Hallelujah". The Christmas gift makes her day special.

I was so excited when Rev. Dr. Thomas Cung Bik told me about the Christmas gift, because the recipient is really in need and the Christmas gift is good news for me and for the recipient.

I really appreciate what you have done for the needy person. I wish and pray that May God Bless you more in the coming days and years. Thank you.

With much love,

Esther Hle Khia

#4 I am Wu De Lay, a youth pastor from Man Hkring Lisu Baptist Church. I gave the Christmas gift from Friends of Burma to U Zaw Aung and this was my experience.

U Zaw Aung, a 73 year old, from Nang Jin Village: He is Burman. He converted to Christianity in about 20 years ago. He lived alone with no family members, in a small hut on a land owned by his friend. He suffered from a stroke a few years ago. His friends have been supportive of him since he has no family. People who lived in Nang Jin village do a living by making charcoal. He was very grateful to receive the gift and surprised to get it unexpectedly in a Christmas spirit.

#2 I am Htoo Htoo Sah, a sister of Wu De Lay, and works as a minister at Man Hkring Lisu Baptist Church. This is my experience of giving the Christmas gift from FOB.

Daw Lame Mee, 81 years old from Man Hkring village: she lived with one of her grandchildren, who is 21 years old and works as a daily laborer. Most of the time she is alone in the house. She is very happy and smiling to receive the Christmas gift. For her, it means a lot. Since she is poor and only lived on the support of his grandson, the gift is a lot of help in this time of difficulty.



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A report from U Shee Sho, one of the staff members at MIT.

#2 Dear Dr. Neil and Diana and FOB donors,

Attached is a report from U Shee Sho. He cannot write in English, so I told him to do it in Burmese. He sent his report to me via messenger (see attached), and I translated it.

U Shee Sho is one of my volunteers helping me whenever I went out to distribute rice and cooking oil to the needy. Although he does not know English, I asked him to give one Christmas gift to the most needy person he knows. He was very happy for the opportunity to do so.

Shalom,

Thomas

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Rev. Thomas Cung Bik, PhD



#5 Dear Dr. Neil and Mrs. Diana Sowards and Friends of Burma

I am very grateful for this opportunity to give your Christmas gift to the needy person. I chose Daw Khin Lay who has stones in her kidney. She does not have money to have a surgery to remove the stones from her kidney (which will cost about 1,000,000 kyats). She has been requesting us to pray for her. So I decided to give it to her.



When Daw Khin Lay received your gift (90,000 kyats), she had tears in her eyes and said that God heard her prayers. Seeing her very happy made me very happy too. She was grateful to you for your Christmas gift. She prayed for you that God would bless you richly.

May the joy and peace of Christmas be with you!

In Christ's service,

Rev. Victor Ceu Cung
Soul Seeking Church (Pastor)
09795581654

#6 A report from Mai Aye Aye Aung, former dean of Liberal Arts Program at MIT.



senger. Attached are screenshots of her message.

U Poe Sè is 73 years old man who used to work as a security guard at Asho Chin Baptist Church which is located in Insein Township, Yangon, Myanmar. His one eye got severe visual impairment due to a traumatic injury at work before he became a church security. Afterward, he worked as a faithful servant of God as a church security guard for almost 11 years

until his both eyes were almost complete blindness because of the optic nerve damages. As a Church member, I had convinced his dedication and his dutiful performance throughout those years. Now, he is living with his brother's family since he is a single old man without any income. I had a chance to go and visit his home this morning and gave a Christmas love gift in person. I can clearly see his joy over his face and I am sure that this Christmas sharing will benefit for him financially, physically, spiritually, and emotionally. Thank you all donors and contributors of this project. Merry Christmas.

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#7 Dear Dr. Neil and Mrs. Diana Sowards (FOB),

This is to express my heartfelt thanks for your Christmas gift for the family, who are struggling for their daily life.

The husband (U Than Tun Lay) was selling prata on the street before, but because of the effect of covid 19 and political situation it did not run well. Finally, he didn't have more money to invest and had to close down his shop. The wife works as a domestic helper and she has to leave her children at home in the daytime when she has got an offer to work. That means she cannot earn money everyday and it is hard for her to support her three sons for their education. The youngest one is only 11 months old and she has to leave the baby if she has to work. So I pickup their family as a needy one. I do believe your donation means a lot to them.



Thanks again and may God bless you all.

Blessings,
Aye Aye Maw

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#8 Dear Dr. Neil and Mrs. Diana Sowards

Greetings from Myanmar!

I am Kay Thi Htwe, one of the faculty members of Myanmar Institute of Theology. I am very glad to have had a chance to send your Christmas gift to the people in need.

I walked around one of the suburban areas near my church on December 3 and a friend of mine who accompanied me informed me about some poor people who live in the area. Among them, I chose Chit Myat Noe to send her your Christmas gift. She is a nurse-aid and single mother. When she was six months pregnant, her husband abused her and lived with another married woman. Moreover, he spent most of his time gambling.

After Chit Myat Noe gave birth to a baby girl, her husband left her and married another woman. Now she and the little baby girl are living with her widowed mother and fifteen year-old sister. She worked as a nurse-aid at a clinic before. Starting from the pregnancy and until now, she cannot work and does not have any earnings. Her mother is unemployed too. Some neighbors are helping her family by sharing food and supplies. They are surviving through the support of some neighbors and crisis response teams. I visited her on December 5 and gave her your Christmas gift. She told me that she has never received this kind of Christmas gift throughout her life. That is an unexpected and wonderful gift for her.

The next day, She called and told me that she, for a month, had been wondering how to buy a birthday present for her daughter. Her daughter will turn one on December 8. Because this is the first birthday of her daughter, she wants to make it special for her little girl. She was very happy and told me how thankful she was .

Thank you very much Dr. Thomas Cung Bik and Sayama Dr. Fom Men for asking me to pass this Christmas gift to those who are in need.

Thank you very much Dr. Neil and Mrs. Diana Sowards for your love and kindness towards our people. You are the angels of God who proclaim good news of Jesus Christ and Santa Claus who bring the love of God to those who are mourning this Christmas.

May the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you. And May God bless both of you and your ministry.



Sincerely,

Kay Thi

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#9 Dear Dr. Neil and Mrs Diana Sowards & FOB,

Greetings! I'm Aye Min Khaing, one of the faculties of MIT. This email is to let you know the story of the Christmas Gift recipient.

Aye @ Aye Su Mon is 12 years old, attended 5th grade in 2019. She is the 3rd child among 4 siblings. Her mother is a worker making a mosquito net where she earns 1500 kyats (which is less than a dollar with exchange rate these days) per item. Her father lost his job during Covid Pandemic and Coup. Her eldest brother works delivering beverages to diners around the neighborhood and he earns 6000 kyats (equal to about 3.5 \$) a day and gives 4000 kyats (2 \$) back to the family for food. Her second elder brother, herself and the youngest are dependents of the family.

Aye joined the Sharing Love Program of Ywama Baptist Church to learn sewing and crochet. Though there are many children and related families who are in difficult situations, we chose Aye for her commitment towards her work, eagerness to learn new things and for her hard work. The parents find it very difficult to feed the whole family and it is sad to know that they won't let Aye attend the school when they are open again.



Aye expressed her deepest gratitude to receive this Christmas Gift and was so surprised and happy to receive it. I'm sorry that I couldn't take the recent picture of her and the family because of many limited situations. I attached her pictures that I received from the Sharing Love Program. And of course, it is always a joy to help someone, to be a help for others especially during this Christmas Season.

Thank you.

Merry Christmas to you and your family.

Carry each other's burdens and so you will fulfill the law of Christ.
(Galatians 6:2)

Aye Min Khaing
Lecturer cum Graduate Studies Program Coordinator, Graduate Studies Office, Liberal Arts Program, Myanmar Institute of Theology



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#10 A report from Dr. Ai Shu, Academic Dean at Pwo Kayin Theological Seminary.
To, Dr. Neil and Mrs. Diana Sowards and FOB,

Wishing you Merry Christmas

Firstly I thank God who gave me this opportunity to get in contact with you.

In Myanmar there are many people who faced many difficulties because of the military coup and Covid. There are many needy people around the country. Among them I choose one of the families to share your Christmas gift.

Lwin Lwin Aye is a mother of five children who flee from her own village because of political situation. She lived at Tha Byae Gone village, Twintay Township, Yangon, which is far away two hours by car from our compound, Ahlone. Her husband resisted the military coup who unjustly killed people. Therefore the military tries to arrest her husband so that he does not dare to live in his village. According to the brutality of the military, if they do not see the one they want they arrest the family members. So that, Lwin Lwin Aye and her childrens come and live at our compound. She is a poor daily worker in her village. When she arrived at our compound she was jobless and she faced many difficulties to feed her children. So, all of us try to take care of her whatever she needs. Sometimes she is really depressed because of her situation: no job, no income.

When she got support from FOB she was really happy. I saw a smile on her face. She said words of thanks to the donors who gave them Christmas present.

As I am Academic Dean at Pwo Kayin Theological Seminary as a house wife and a mother I am really busy. Many demands of our society push me to do more work. I try to help the needy as much as I can. I collected donations and help the needy. Sometimes I sell in order to get donation. Although I try my best it cannot fulfill the demand of the needy. Sometimes I feel really weak.

By the grace of God when I got information from FOB to give a Christmas gift for a family, I really thank God and also thank you for your concern and kindness to our needy.

May God bless you and your ministry!

In His Service,

Dr. Ai Shu

Academic Dean

Pwo Kayin Theological Seminary

Yangon, Myanmar

#11 A report from Nant Hlaing Yadana Soe who used to work at MIT. My husband provided a rough translation of her letter.

Dear Dr. Neil and Mrs Diana Sowards
FOB

Subject: Words of Gratitude for the Christmas Gift

On December 5, 2021, with much thanks I received your Christmas gift (90,000) from Rev. Dr. Thomas Cung Bik. On December 8, 2021 when I was distributing some food items to needy families, I chose Daw Nora for your gift and gave it to her. Daw Nora moved to North Dagon from her village and lived there for many years. Last year, I was told, she moved to Hmawbi. She is a widow and she attends a church near her place where I first met her and know her. She has six children, and is now living with her two young sons in Hmawbi. During this difficult time, one of her sons was treated for heart problems at ER. In addition, her youngest son is a driver on highways and one night while he was driving, he was stopped and beaten by the soldiers, and he is now taking treatment. In addition to her struggle to feed the family, she now needs to pay for medical treatment for her two children. She is in a very difficult situation. As much as I could, I encouraged her, prayed for her, and gave her your Christmas gift. I told her about the gift, and she was very grateful.

I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to you for your Christmas gift that Daw Nora received when she is in dire need.

May God give you the peace and joy of Christmas!

In Christ's service

Nant Hlaing Yadana Soe
Kyo Tatar Pwo Kayin Baptist Church
Founder, PHILO Care Ministry and Mental Health Services.

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11 a A report from Nant Hlaing Yadana Soe who used to work at MIT. My husband provided a rough translation of her letter.

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FOB

Subject: Words of Gratitude for the Christmas Gift

On December 5, 2021, with much thanks I received your Christmas gift (90,000) from Rev. Dr. Thomas Cung Bik. On December 8, 2021 when I was distributing some food items to needy families, I chose Daw Nora for your gift and gave it to her. Daw Nora moved to North Dagon from her village and lived there for many years. Last year, I was told, she moved to Hmawbi. She is a widow and she attends a church near her place where I first met her and know her. She has six children, and is now living with her two young sons in Hmawbi. During this difficult time, one of her sons was treated for heart problems at ER. In addition, her youngest son is a driver on highways and one night while he was driving, he was stopped and beaten by the soldiers, and he is now taking treatment. In addition to her struggle to feed the family, she now needs to pay for medical treatment for her two children. She is in a very difficult situation. As much as I could, I encouraged her, prayed for her, and gave her your Christmas gift. I told her about the gift, and she was very grateful.

I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to you for your Christmas gift that Daw Nora received when she is in dire need.

May God give you the peace and joy of Christmas!

In Christ's service

Nant Hlaing Yadana Soe
Kyo Tatar Pwo Kayin Baptist Church
Founder, PHILO Care Ministry and Mental Health Services.

#12 A report from Saya Myo Aung, a tutor at MIT.

Dear Dr. Neil and Mrs. Diana Sowards,

It was a privilege for me to participate in the Christmas Gift program, hosted by Friends of Burma (FOB). I prayed for the recipient and God showed her. It is Daw Aye Aye Khaing, mother of three children, widow as well. They are living in a slum area. They are very upset because the regime government forced them to remove from that area even though they the slip for living there. They have no income and her daughter has polio and she can not walk till her age of twelve now. They are facing a very hard situation for long but Christmas Gift program made them joy and happiness. I can not express their reaction because they all are very happy for having that Christmas Gift. I am also very pleased for that family. I am very sad because I have a

chance to see their real situation. Their house is going to break down and they can not afford to mend it. Christmas Gift 90,000 ks made them to keep on for the living. Thank you so much for your concern for our people and such a precious gift for them. I made some attachments in this email. Please kindly see the attachments.

Blessing,

Myo Aung, Tutor, Business Department, Liberal Arts Program, Myanmar Institute of Theology



#13 Dear Dr. Neil Sowards and FOB Donors,

Thank you so much for your generous gift. We have given your Christmas gift to the mother who has difficulty to give a birth. But now, the baby was born well in this Christmas month. Both the mother and baby are healthy. This family was happy and thankful to you for your gift. Thank you again for your support.

Sincerely,

Nay Blut, Saw

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#14 A report from Sayama Naw Phaw Eh Wah @ Gloria.

Dear Dr. Neil and Mrs. Diana Sowards and (FOB),

Greeting you all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ! Thanks be to God in the highest!

I am so glad to write a letter of thanks with lots of joy and happiness on behalf of Sayar Gideon Shwe (age 80). Sayar Gideon Shwe was the university chaplains of the campus of KyiMyinDine (R.C.3) University Christian Fellowship (UCF) after the years 1988-1989 mission work. Followed by the political situation in our country. He faithfully served God with his family. He was a member of KyiMyinDine U.C.F senior friends gathering in 2018 because he could not walk as he had Post-polio disease. Through sayar Thomas Cung Bik, I made a call to sayar Gideon Shwe and she said that sayar Gideon Shwe was currently in hospital.

As both of sayar's daughters were married and have their own families, as sayar was 80 and his wife was 75, their financial situation might be very tight during this time of pandemic, crisis and hard situation. They were so thrilled to receive your love gift. They all were so glad to receive your donation and thank you all for your kindness and thoughtfulness. You truly made the difference for them, and they were extremely grateful for your love gift!

As for me, I could not give this amount of money on my own but because of your donation, we all can feel God's presence, help, love, and care which change it to a blessed Christmas for all of us. Thank you very much for your generous donation. I went to sayar's apartment with my cousin sister who knew Sayar Gideon while she was attending YaeZin Agriculture University and met him at YaeZin U.C.F. Because of your generosity, we have been able to send your gift 90,000 kyats which revealed God's care and concern for them during this blue Christmas. We took sayar and sayarma photo and attached it to this email. On behalf of Sayar Gideon, we really would like to thank you all for your generosity and appreciate your empathetic heart with great concern for them during this critical situation. We pray for you all to have God's blessings abundantly and always.

With lots of gratitude,

Naw Phaw Eh Wah



#15 A report from Dr. Pum Za Mang, a lecturer at MIT.

Dear Dr. Neil and Mrs. Diana Sowards & (FOB),

I choose this family, as I know well the uphill challenges they face for years after Pu Lian, the father, has been paralyzed for many years.

The eldest son joined state police to bring food on the table, but left his job early this year as part of the civil disobedience movement in rejecting military rule. The family has been struggling since, and their financial situation is really bad. Pi Dar Van, the mother, cried out of joy when she received this special Christmas gift (Ks. 90,000). It was a blessing when I became a channel of blessings to others.
Peace & Blessings,

Pum Za Mang



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#16 Dear Dr. Neil and Diana,

Sweet December and Merry Christmas!

On behalf of my team (Saya Klo Htoo, Saya Allen Soe Oo, U Saw Shee Sho, and me), I would like to express our gratitude to you and the donors for four Christmas gifts (4 x 90,000 = 360,000) which we used to buy Christmas gifts for the needy. We packed them into 35 bags (each bag has items such as cooking oil, canned fish, noodles, eggs, soap, toothpaste, some cookies, small cakes, and masks).



This very early morning (December 11), we drove around the Insein township and visited dumpsters where the needy were collecting plastic bottles and other reusable items. Since they

unexpectedly received the Christmas gifts, they were very happy and grateful, and their happy faces made us also very happy. This morning we could give your Christmas gifts to 35 needy people.

My team and I are grateful to you for your Christmas gifts and for the opportunity to give them to the needy in Insein township.

May God continue to bless you and all the donors and give you the peace and joy of Christmas!

Shalom, Thomas, Rev. Thomas Cung Bik, PhD, Coordinator of PhD Program, Myanmar Institute of Theology, Seminary Hill, Insein 11011, Yangon, Myanmar

#17 A report from Sayama Moe Moe Nyunt, Lecturer in Mission and Evangelism at MIT.

Dear Dr. Neil and Mrs. Diana Sowards and
Friends of Burma

I am writing this email to mention that I am so much grateful to you for your kind Christmas gift.

As the recipient of the Christmas gift, I chose Daw Manthangi who has been suffering from stroke for over sixteen years. Financially, she needs to depend on her son and two daughters. Her eldest daughter's family is taking care of her wellness. (Her eldest daughter is a freelance evangelist.)



I visited and passed the gift to Daw Manthangi on December 9. She was surprised and became silent for a while when she received the gift. Then, she murmured the blessings upon you and me.

I thank God for you and Ms. Fom Men who helped one of my visions become reality. I am experiencing a meaningful Christmas season again. Yes, God hears my prayers one after another.

May the Lord our God shower his blessings upon you, your family, and ministry!

With Christ's love,

Moe Moe

#18 A report from Rev. Dr. Soe Thiha, principal of Pwo Karen Theological Seminary.

Dear Dr. Neil and Mrs. Diana Sowards and FOB donors,

Last week I received 90000ks and sent it to Naw Ella, who is a gov high school teacher and now she is doing CDM. She is away from her family and hiding somewhere. She hasn't received her salary since May and really needs financial support. She was so active in her church activities and a good Christian. When she received your gift, she was so happy and sent me a thank you note in her Viber account. She could feel God's love through your gift.

As I could handle your Christmas gift yearly, I am so honored and enjoying this ministry. Wishing you a very special Christmas.

Take care.
Soe Thiha

#19

Dear Dr. Neil and Diana and FOB donors,

Dr. Siang Zi, vice-president at Chin Christian University, could not open her email, so she called me and told me about the family she chose for your Christmas gift. She sent me the picture via messenger.

She gave the Christmas gift to Pi Hnem Khun who cannot speak. Her husband also cannot speak. They have one daughter. They are very poor. So she chose her to be the recipient of the Christmas gift.

Dr. Siang Zi was grateful for the opportunity to give it to the needy family who cannot speak and express their gratitude.



Sincerely,
Fom

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#20 Dear Dr. Neil and Diana,

This is a report from Saya Chit Maung who is a pastor and missionary in Dala. He wrote his report in Burmese (attached) and my husband translated it.

Dear Dr. Neil and Mrs. Diana Sowards & FOB

Merry Christmas to you all

My name is Khine Thazin. There are six members in my family. My father took any available jobs to feed our family. But after the Covid and political crisis, he cannot find any regular work. My mother and I sold water, but because of the situation in our country, people can no longer buy water from us. So we are struggling for our daily food. In this difficult time, my mother accidently stepped on a nail, but we would not take her to the hospital right away due to lack of money. But slowly the wound of her right foot became worse. My mother also has other health problems. We went to Yangon General Hospital for treatment, but there are not enough doctors there, and we have been there for a month. In order to attend the hospital, we borrowed money with an interest rate of 30 kyats. In this time of physically and mentally being very tired and stressed, we are thankful to God for this Christmas gift. We are very happy to receive it and pray that God will bless the donors richly.

The above story was from Khine Thazin. I chose this family for your Christmas gift because when I looked at their family, I was very sorry for them. I also prayed that God would send them other helpers too.

I am very thankful to FOB for your gift for this family.

Chit Maung

Sincerely,

Fom



#21 To, Dr. Neil and Mrs. Diana Sowards & Friends of Burma

Report of Christmas Gift (Ks. 90000) from FOB

The Recipient Name: Daw Oak Loi (72 years)
Yangon Wa Baptist Church

Received Date: 13 th December 2021

1. I chose Daw Oak Loi as a recipient of Christmas Gift from Friends of Burma because she is really in need. She is a widow whose leg is broken a month ago. She is on medicating and financially she needs help.

2. As she is a widow, she doesn't have income. She is relying on the support of her daughters and son. Her daughter is a minister in a church who does not have much income. Due to economic crisis in Myanmar, her daughters and son could not support her well.

3. I explained to her that I brought a Christmas Gift for her which is from the United States, she was surprised. Tears came from her eyes and she said, "God hears the prayers of a widow. I was serious ill during last two weeks because I could not take breathe well and went to hospital for oxygen. My leg was broken and I also needed medicating. I worried about my medicating costs. You bring to me a blessed Christmas gift. Thank God and donor who brought this gift to me."



4. It was my great joy to bring good news to the needy person. I gave this Christmas gift to the recipient on her birthday service. It was really a great joy for her in receiving this Christmas gift on her birthday. She is a poor widow but she invited pastors and ministers at her place to pray for her. She gave thanks to God for saving her from dangerous sickness she faced. Her leg is on medicating and in good condition. Seeing her life struggles and the joys she has in times of difficulties, I am glad for having opportunity to send Christmas gift to the person who needs God's care and love.

Rev.Dr. Aye Nwe
Yangon Wa Baptist Church

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#22 A report from Saya Obed Sui Lian Hre, an MDvi student at MIT who lives in Falam, Chin State. My husband knows him very well, so he asked him to give two Christmas gifts. This is his first report.

Dear FOB,

Nu Peng lang (age 89) was chosen to accept the Christmas gift. She has no support from her children because they are CDmers. They are actually difficult to live their daily life. When I gave gift, her face was full of happiness. Unfortunately, she can't hear and see anything, but her grandson told her that she got the Christmas gift. She said, "Even though I don't know who you are and which organization gave me a Christmas gift, God knows exactly, and May God bless my son and also the organization." Simply saying, when I gave her a gift, I was so happy indeed. At the same time, I am getting too enthusiastic to be involved in this kind of Charity work.

Obed Sui Lian Hre, Falam Representative



#23 A report from Saya Obed Suilian Hre. This is the second report from him.

Dear FOB,

I chose Nu Zing Thluai (age 46) to accept the Christmas Gift that you prepared. I chose her because she and her husband live in Falam now because their house was burnt by the Myanmar military. They have no house in Falam, and they rent a small room in Falam. Indeed, she can't hear and speak anything, but she knows what we did (she can see). Her husband is about 70 years old and his left hand was cut and he can't do anything too. They are supported sometimes by Falam



Volunteers and other organizations as well. They are really difficult financially. When I gave her, she was shocked and she looked at me strangely and I explained that she was given the Christmas gift, and her tears were falling down and she smiled. Her smiling makes me happy at the same time, and my tears fall too. Because I am so happy. Thank you so much FOB, God knows and notes your works. May God bless FOB and long live FOB!

Obed Sui Lian Hre, Falam Representative

#24 16 Dec,2021 Dear Dr. Nail and Mrs. Diana Sowards & FOB.

I am writing this letter to express my sincere gratitude for giving me an opportunity to participate in "Christmas Gift" program made by Friends of Burma (FOB).

During the last week of November, I had received 90,000 MMK to help the most needed person around me. I had a conversation with one of my staff about this program and he told me about a woman who lives in his native village called 'Tanggyi' of Kangyidaunt Township in Delta Region. Her name is Auntie Tala and 60 years old now staying with her two sisters in a tiny bamboo house. Her elder sister is a widow and the younger one is a spinster who is the only one that can support the family.

The main economic in Delta Region is agriculture. Before transition from hand production to machines, women could get regular earnings by working in the farms, but their daily



incomes are not sure for nowadays. In such a way, Aunty Tala's sister can go to the farm at only two rice planting seasons during a year and can get some incomes. For other seasons, she has no regular incomes but has a chance to collect some rice stalks that left in the field during the harvest time. So that the family can meet their daily need for food. Extra income for health care and other expenses are not sure for the family.

This story reminded me of the 'Book of Ruth' and I decided to give 90,000 MMK Gift to Aunty Tala's Family. So I transferred it to her through Wave Money (One of Myanmar mobile Financial Services Providers). Aunty Tala's younger sister cashed out the money and I got a chance to make a call with her. She was excited to receive that gift because the family never expected to get such amount of money as a Christmas gift. She said that she could buy rice bags for about three months and some drugs for Aunty Tala and the oldest one. She said "thank and GOD bless to all the donors" instead of Aunty Tala because aunty is a woman with congenital disability and can't reply to my call.

I am blessed to participate in this program and let me say thank you once again. Let me attach one photo of Aunty Tala that I received from my staff. I am sorry for the quality of the photo. In this photo, what we can see is Aunty Tala putting Thanaka (Myanmar traditional powder for skin care purpose) on her smiley face. Thank you for taking time to read my letter.

Respectfully, Allen Soe Oo, Property Supervisor, Myanmar
Photo: Aunty Tala putting Thanaka paste on her face.
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#25 A report from Sayama Tha Khu Hla. This is her first report.

Dear Dr. Neil and Diana and FOB Donors,

We gave two Christmas gifts to Sayama Tha Khu Hla so that she would choose two needy persons and give the Christmas gifts to them. She sent me the following report via messenger.

I chose a retired pastor who is poor. He does not have a house. His children are also very poor. So he was in a very difficult situation. In addition, his right leg was amputated only a few days ago. He still needs to go back to the hospital. I gave him a Christmas gift of 90,000 from FOB. He said that he was very grateful for the gift.

Sayama Tha Khu Hla



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26 A report from Sayama Tha Khu Hla. This is her second report.

Dear Dr. Neil and Diana and FOB Donors,

Sayama Tha Khu Hla chose Nant Cho Thet Khaing who was infected with polio. She wrote to me as follows:

Cho Thet Khaing is suffering from polio and is living with her widow mother who is about 70 years old. They both have health problems. Since she has polio, they are in a very difficult situation. Today she was very ill and they did not have money to buy medicines. When they received the Christmas gift, they were very happy and said that they were very grateful for the gift.



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*****#27 A

report from Sayama D. Nang Ram, a recent MDiv graduate of MIT.

Dear Dr. Neil and Diana and FOB Donors,

Sayama D. Nang Ram sent a report in Burmese, and the rough translation is provided below.

I gave the Christmas gift to Sayama Maran Ah Ja. She was one of the ministers of MYC (Myanmar Young Crusaders) and now lives alone on the campus of the training school in Hmawbi. She is a widow, but her children or grandchildren cannot support her. The school supports her 20,000 kyats with some food per month.

Currently she has diabetes and kidney problems. Her right arm was broken and a metal was inserted in it. Since she has no one to help her and needs financial help for her medical expenses, we went to give the gift to her.

We told her that the Christmas gift was from FOB. When she received the gift unexpectedly, she was surprised and happily received it. She told us how good God has been to her and prayed for you.

I was also happy for this opportunity to be able to pass on the gift to the needy person. I felt called to do as much as I can for the needy and to take care of elderly people. In the days to come, if I can be of any help, please let me know.

Thank you for asking me to do this.

D. Nang Ram.

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#28 5 Dev 2021

To Dr Neil and Mrs Diana Sowards and FOB

Subject: Christmas Gift 90,000 MMK

It is my great pleasure to write this report on a wonderful program called “Christmas Gift” from Dr Neil and Mrs Diana Sowards. The recipient of the gift is Mr Jang Tin Sei. He is a B.Th 3 rd year student at Tedim Christian College, Yangon. He lost his father while he was in B.Th 1 st Year. His mother has no job due to poor health. As his family cannot support his study at TCC, the College takes care of his study expenses by looking for scholarships from wellwishers. Thus, this Christmas Gift 90,000 MMK is very meaningful for his study life. I see that he is very happy to receive this surprising gift and I also feel very proud to assist this program. Yours sincerely,
Rev. Dr. Nang Sawm Piang Principal
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#29 A report from Saya Htoo Htoo Wah,
lecturer in English at MIT.

Dear Dr. Neil and Mrs. Diana Sowards and
FOB Donors,



I am writing to express my heartfelt gratitude to you for your Christmas love gift (90,000 kyats) given to me by Sayama Dr. Fom Men and Saya Rev. Dr. Thomas Cung Bik. Yesterday I gave this love gift to an orphanage called "New Life" situated in a village in Taik Kyi Township, Yangon. This orphanage is being operated by Saya U Saung (a seminary graduate) and his wife Naw Eh Ka Lu Htoo. There are 24 children in this orphanage who range in age from 3 to 16 years.

Due to the present political situation here, these children do not go to school. A lady is helping them with their school lessons. Their monthly expense is around 800,000-1,000,000 kyats (not including school expenses if they go to school). They do receive donations sometimes. To generate and supplement income, they grow vegetables and breed a few cows, chickens, ducks, goats, fish, etc. If needed, Saya U Saung (His children call him "Ah Pa" (daddy)) is not hesitant to do odd jobs to feed his children. The children are found to be well taken care of and well-behaved.

They are very happy to receive not only your donation but also us (I went there with my wife and two staff from MIT). With the children, we talked, we sang and we ate. The children were excited and happy by our visit. Who would not when shown love and care especially at Christmas time. We are as happy as them also because we, through your help, are able to do something for the needy.

On this visit, I also gave them other donations given to me by a few other donors (The total amount I gave them yesterday was 300,000 kyats). After visiting them in person, I came to know some immediate needs of theirs and now I am talking over with some of my friends to fulfill some of those needs.

Last year you also gave me an opportunity to share your Christmas love gift with two needy persons (One old and poor man who died a couple of months ago, and a Christian minister who is battling with cancer- she is still living).

Again, thank you very much for your love, care and concern for the needy people here. I also thank Dr. Fom Men and Rev. Dr. Thomas for being a channel of blessing.

May God continue to bless you, your family and your ministry abundantly.

In Christ, Htoo Htoo Wah, Myanmar Institute of Theology

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#30 A report from Saya Chit Maung and sent to me by my husband.

Dear Dr. Neil and Diana Sowards and FOB Donors,

I asked Saya Chit Maung (a missionary in Dala, Yangon) to give two Christmas gifts to two needy families. He came to collect the gifts and told me that he would give one gift

to a needy family (see **Report - 20**) and the other gift to another poor family. He advised the father of the second family to drive a tricycle to make some money for his family. So he borrowed a tricycle (see pic. 1). He had to pay 1000 kyats per day to the owner. On average he could make about 3000-4000 kyats per day, but after paying 1000 kyats to the owner, he would have 2000-3000 for his family. Saya Chit Maung mentioned that if he owns his own tricycle, he will not need to pay for the rental and will be able to earn more for his family.

I asked Saya Chit Maung how much would be the current price of the tricycle that he had borrowed. He said it would cost between 150,000 and 180,000 (new ones will cost more than 400,000). Then, I strongly felt that we should give two Christmas gifts to Ko Nyi to buy a tricycle which will help his family tremendously and will be used for years. So I gave two Christmas gifts ($2 \times 90,000 = 180,000$) to Saya Chit Maung to buy a tricycle for this family. Saya Chit Maung later told me that he and Ko Nyi bought a tricycle (pic below) with 170,000 kyats and the rest (10,000) would be for their immediate use.

I translated Saya Chit Maung's letter in Burmese as follows:

Dear Dr. Neil and Mrs. Diana Sowards and FOB donors,

Merry Christmas to you all.

I chose Ko Nyi's family for the Christmas gift. There are five members in his family including his mother. He worked any available jobs to earn a living for his family. His mother and wife collected bottles along Ayeyarwady River. Sometimes they picked betel nuts and sold them. Since he could not find any other job, Ko Nyi borrowed a tricycle to make money for the family. I chose the family for this reason.

Ko Nyi said that he was very happy and grateful for a Christmas gift of a tricycle for his family. He was very happy to receive it unexpectedly and how much he was grateful is beyond what he could express. He was grateful to you and the donors and prayed that God would bless you more.

My family and I live and work as a missionary in Dala. Here most of the people are not educated and they are very poor. Some people sold water to earn a living. But after the virus and the coup, many people who used to buy water from them could no longer buy it from them. So they are in a very difficult situation.



Saya Chit Maung

I am also very happy that we made this decision to give two Christmas gifts to buy a tricycle for Ko Nyi's family. Your gifts made this Christmas more meaningful and special for this family.

Shalom,

Rev. Thomas Cung Bik, PhD
Coordinator of PhD Program
Myanmar Institute of Theology
Seminary Hill, Insein 11011
Yangon, Myanmar

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#31 To, Dr. Neil and Mrs. Diana Sowards and FOB Donors, Friends of Burma

The Christmas gift of 90,000 ks. (Ninety thousand Myanmar kyats) donated by Friends of Burma was given to Mrs. Ing Taik, a Cancer patient lying down at Thiri Sandar Hospital in Yangon for major operation. Living in a remote village with no financial income, her family face financial difficulty even for their living let alone for her treatment. But since the doctor told them that she would die soon unless she takes immediate operation, they borrowed money from neighbors and brought her Yangon from far away even though there were some difficulties and challenges to travel during the current political situation in the country.

It was the first and unexpected Christmas gift for her. Feeling unloved, forgotten and even hopeless at hospital, she could not feel the joy of Christmas this year. But the gift renewed her hope and joy. When she said, "I have never forgotten me,

but always remembered me." And she also expressed her gratitude to Friends of Burma, "Thank you to the donors for blessing me with this gift. It is the first Christmas gift for me this year. It helps me feel special and God's love."

I was touched when I saw joy and hope on her face when I gave the Christmas gift and said a prayer for her at hospital. The inner joy came to my mind from helping her and praying for her when she responded "Thank you" and



“Amen.” The feeling confirmed that Christmas is truly a season for remembering others especially the needy, the sick and the poor. Christmas was not a season to celebrate for her, but she deserved Christmas gift. But I observed the Christmas gift meant a lot for her it reminded her of God being with her with unfailing love.

Thank you, Swe Maung

#32 A report from Dr. Saw Shwe Gyan, vice principal of Karen Baptist Theological Seminary.

Dear Dr. Neil and Mrs Diana Sowards,
Friends of Burma,

Greetings from Burma!

I am a minister working at a Bible School in Yangon. I usually visit churches and villages to see the real situation in the community. During this Christmas holidays, I went back to my village situated in Ayeyawady Division and celebrated Christmas together with my family and villagers for a couple of days. One evening, I visited Hpu Maw Din, a poor elder about 80 years old who lives alone in his small house. Hpu Maw Din told me that he has five children, but now four of them have already got married and live separately, but have to struggle for their daily survival. Currently, his youngest



daughter lives with him, but always has to go out and work hard for daily basic food. Currently, it is very hard for him to survive. After having talked with Hpu Maw Din, I had compassion on him and I gave him the love gifts with me from Friends of Burma. He was so amazed and joyfully said, “Thank you very much. I am very happy with your Christmas present.” I explain that this Christmas present is from the Friends of Burma, a tender loving care group which loves people living in Myanmar like you. After that he said, “Send my very special thanks and prayer to the Friend of Burma. May our heavenly God bless FOB abundantly.” Then, I went back home with satisfaction and a

good feeling of a meaningful Christmas by sharing a Christmas present on behalf of FOB.

Best Regards, Saw Shwe Gyan,

#33 A report from Saya Mana Tun, a lecturer and director of Peace Studies Center at MIT.

I feel so blessed and privileged to participate in your Christmas Gift program in December, 2021.

When I was asked to choose someone in need, one family, a family of three, that actually needed such gift, suddenly came into my mind. U Mana Hung, a father, has not been able to work a proper job for more than ten years. Daw San Thi Win, a mother, has been working on daily wage jobs and due to Covid-19 pandemic and military coup in Myanmar, she was unable to find such usual daily wage jobs. The two parents, including their six years old son Arkar Thang Mana, got infected with Covid-19 in September, 2021, and suffered serious health impacts for subsequent months. In the last week of November, their son (6 years old) got into an accident with a bicycle and injured his leg really bad. I called U Mana Hung and he came to my house early morning on December 1, and received the Christmas gift, 90,000 kyats, with a big smile and surprise. U Mana Hung was so happy and he prayed that God would return many blessings to the donors and program.

As for me, I felt like I saw with my own eyes how a special prayer was answered by God. I knew that U Mana Hung's family desperately prayed for help as they seriously needed. By God's grace, U Mana Hung's son has recovered from the injuries and bruises and the family's Christmas season was helped/blessed by the Christmas Gift. So, it was indeed a kind of fulfilling /satisfying experience to see and witness how the Christmas Gift, 90,000 kyats made an impact in terms of health, happiness and faith. With deep gratitude,

Mana Tun

#34 report from Dr. Paw Lar Say, associate professor in the Department of Economics, MIT

Dear Dr. Neil and Mrs. Diana Sowards and FOB Donors,
Wishing you A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year too!



First of all, I would like to say thank you so much for the Christmas gifts (90000 MMK/per) especially for the two women (photo attached) in this Christmas time, 2021.

In fact, there are so many needy families surrounding us in Toungoo (Kyauk-Twin village) and it is quite difficult to choose for this Christmas gift. But, as I'm working with those needy families during these severe hardship times, I have chosen the two women whom I saw as the most needed.

The first one (black color one) is a single mother who has two kids (13 and 9 year-old) and also has a widow mother (one grandmother) and there are 4 members in her family. She is the one who is taking care of her two kids and an old aged mother by doing hand weaving. She said with tears that she is so happy to receive a Christmas gift like this and she thanks God and also says thank you so much to FOB. And said she will buy rice first and for the rest she will buy and do hand weaving (Karen traditional dresses) to earn money for their living.

For the second one, she just stayed with her husband, only two of them at home as their young daughter is working in Maesot and didn't get any news from their daughter for two years. Life is so difficult even for their daily food. She said she thanks God that she has received this (90000 ks) X'mas gift as she never received this in her life. She will buy rice and medicine as she and her husband need some rice and medicines as they are suffering from Covid 19 - corona virus.

My heart is filled with joy and love for the blessings especially for the two needy families during this Christmas season. And I believe that surely the families would feel God's love through FOB's loving care and great concern in this Christmas time.

Thanks for making this Christmas a special and a meaningful Christmas for those families.

May God continue to be with FOB and more blessings to encourage others in the future.

PawLar

#35 A report from Rev. Dr. Thomas Cung Bik, Associate Professor of Old Testament at MIT.

Dear Dr. Neil and Diana Sowards and FOB Donors,

I would like to wish you a blessed New Year 2022. There is a grocery store called STAR not far from MIT. We usually walk there to buy basic necessities. Every time I went there, I passed by a dumpster and saw this young man trying to collect any reusable and recyclable items such as bottles that he



could sell. I spoke to him and asked him how much he made by selling them. He said on average he made three-four thousand per day. He has a wife who cannot find any job at this time, and they have a six-year old boy and a two-year old girl.

The day before Christmas my family and I walked there and met with him again. This time we gave him your Christmas gift of 90,000 kyats. We told him that we are Christians and that this Christmas gift was from you who cared about people in Myanmar. We also shared the good news of Jesus Christ and along with the gift we gave him a small Bible. Since he received it unexpectedly, he was very happy and thanked us and you for this gift. He told us that he had borrowed some money from his neighbors and he would use it to pay back his debt, and the rest he would use for his family. He said that he could not work every day or there are days he cannot make any money. He said this would help his family tremendously.

My wife and I took our two children, and this was a good opportunity to teach our children how to be kind to the needy and that there are many needy people like him who need help. They were also happy to be able to give the gift to this needy man.

Thank you very much for your Christmas gift for this man and his family! May God continue to bless you!

Shalom, Rev. Thomas Cung Bik, PhD, Coordinator of PhD Program, Myanmar Institute of Theology Seminary Hill, Insein 11011, Yangon, Myanmar

A report from Rev. Dr. Thomas Cung Bik, Associate Professor of Old Testament at MIT.
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#36 A report from Sayama Seng Tawng, Lecturer at MIT.

Dear Friends of Burma in Christ,

I am Miss Seng Tawng from Myanmar Institute of Theology(MIT). I have been teaching Old Testament subjects since 2010 at MIT. I kindly received 100 US dollars from Dr. Fom Men to give Christmas gifts for two persons who are from Kachin State. I have given these Christmas gifts of 50US Dollars each to Saya Jawng Li and Daw Sana Lu.

Saya Jawng Li was a former Bible translator of the Kachin Baptist Convention for at least ten years. He has been paralyzed for eight months. He needs medical cover. He really expressed his words of thanks to Friends of Burma who kindly supported this Christmas gift of 50 US dollars for his medical treatment process.

Daw Sana Lu is a widow and her house is built with a bamboo hut. It is nearly falling down. She needs to make a better shelter for her safety. She felt thankful to Friends of

Burma who shared a Christmas gift of 50US dollars that she can spend for renovating her house.

There are no words that can express our thanks. May God continue to bless your mission wonderfully!

In the service of Christ Jesus,

Seng Tawng, Lecturer, Biblical Department, Myanmar Institute of Theology (MIT),
Seminary Hill, Insein, Yangon, Myanmar

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