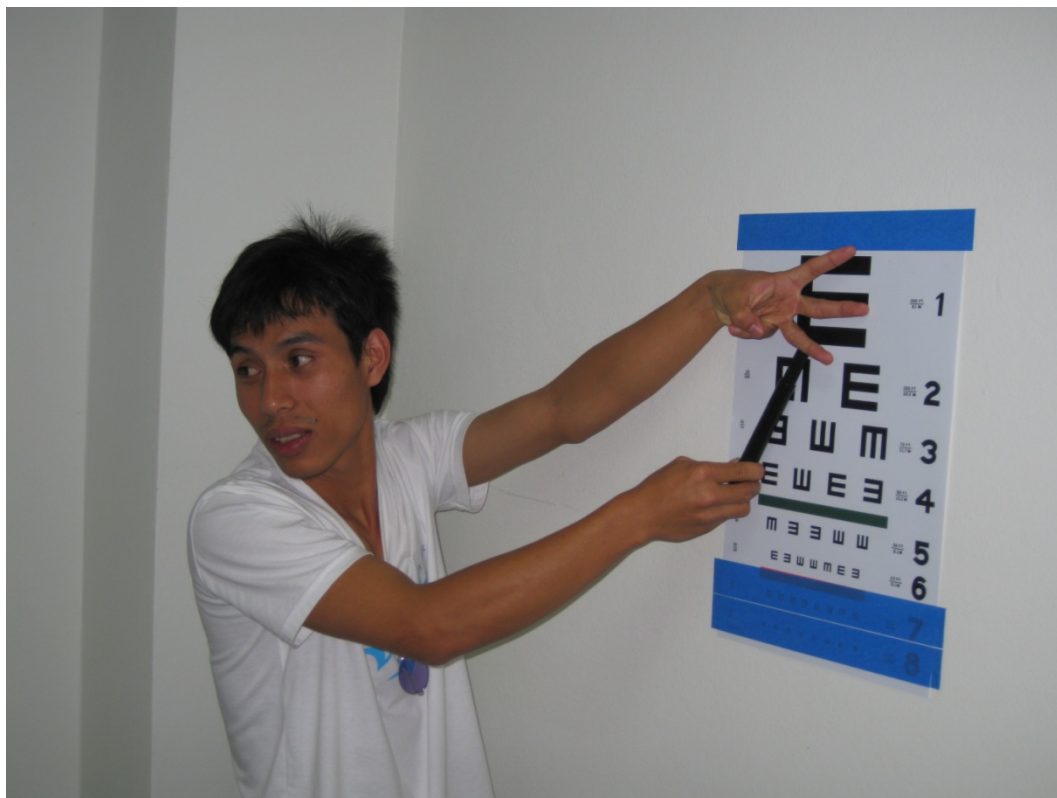




Our team consisted of a family medicine doctor, pediatrician, dermatologist, nurses, dentist, dental hygienist, pharmacist, optometrist, physical therapist and support members.

We had one day of clinics at the ZOE children's home in Chiang Mai where we saw staff, ministry students and children.







Our team then spent four days at a remote Karen village in northern Thailand where we had two days of clinics. Here are some of the optometry stories from the village.

"Towards the end of the first day in the village a young mother of around 28 needed glasses, but she had a lazy left eye and only used her right eye. We focused on trying to find a pair of glasses that would help her right eye and tried several pairs that didn't help. Then our optometrist, Doug, started adjusting her prescription as we continued to search our inventory. After several unsuccessful searches we located a pair and when the mother put them on she said, "Better!" We looked at each other and thought, 'Only God could have provided that pair of glasses for this mother!' "



"Most of the people in the village were Christians and many of them said that their eyes hurt when they read the Bible. We distributed over 200 pairs of prescription glasses and readers in the village and the pastors of the two churches thanked us for enabling many in their congregations to be able to read the Bible better. Two of our members even made a house call with the auto-refractor and laptop to one of the pastors who was ill and with the help of walkie-talkies and a student courier, we found glasses for both the pastor and his wife. "



"I had the privilege of delivering a pair of distance glasses and a pair of custom readers to one of the Zoe student's mother. She was 77 years old and lived in the village. One of the Zoe rescue staff, took me there on a scenic route and we walked over an amazing suspension bridge, as usual I didn't have my camera and missed out on an awesome photo op. After several adjustments of the prescription, we were able to come up with only one pair of distance glasses and one pair of custom readers that might work. She had very poor vision. I did not anticipate the glasses helping much, due to cataracts, but to my surprise she could see amazingly well. She could see the leaves on the distant trees for the first time since she was a child. She was so happy, but she sheepishly handed me back the glasses. I asked her what was wrong? She said, "I have no money to give you for these glasses." I told her that I was sent by Jesus to deliver her glasses as a free gift. She repeated, "Yes Jesus sent you today to give me sight." We prayed over her. It was a beautiful moment. "





Several of the students grew up in the village we went to and it was very meaningful to them that our medical/dental/optometry team came to their village. This young woman was one of the ministry students who were served as translators for the optometry team. Her family was from a nearby village and they came to our clinic, where we found classes for both her parents.

Our team's last clinic was a day spent at a Christian children's school in Chiang Mai.

"There were many great moments working on the optometry team. One of the experiences that stood out for me was a 10 year old boy that we met on our last day of clinic at the school. He was the first student to "fail" the eye chart test out of the many we had already tested that morning. When we used the auto-refractor to determine his vision it turned out he was extremely farsighted and we only had one pair in our entire inventory of 1800 glasses that was a "possible" fit. Due to some mis-communication, we also only had about 1/3 of our inventory at the school at that time and were waiting on the remainder of the glasses to be transported from ZOE. So when I went to go find the pair of glasses, I was expecting that we probably didn't have them yet. I opened the first suitcase of glasses that was there (about 300 pair inside) and the first bag I saw on top of the pile was the bag that contained the pair of glasses I was looking for. That should have been my first clue that something special was about to happen."

"I put the glasses on the boy and could immediately tell from the smile that he could see better. I asked him to look off to the distance and an interpreter - one of the teachers at the school - told me the boy could now see the trees across the field. I then took one of our reading charts and asked through the teacher if he could read one of the smaller print lines at the bottom of the page to make sure the glasses were helping him with closer vision. The teacher said, "He doesn't know how to read." At first I wasn't sure I heard him correctly and tried to clarify. "Do you mean he can't read it or do you mean he can't see it?" The teacher repeated, "He doesn't know how to read." Then I pointed to a line on the chart and asked if he could at least see the words and numbers. The teacher said "Yes, he can see the smallest line clearly, he just can't read it." It was at that moment it dawned on me that this boy hadn't learned to read yet at 10 years old because his vision was so bad that he'd never been able to see what he was reading. These glasses were going to change that. I remember blurting out to everyone around what had just happened as I felt my throat start to choke up and my heart lift in praise to God. I don't think I will ever forget that moment. "



Here are some other pictures.









