

Thang Kang Lo

Early Life



Thang Kang Lo

Thang Kang Lo was born on January 1, 1972, at Lezang Village, Tedim Township, North Chin State, in Myanmar. His parents were Nang Za Tuang and Niangh Khan Ciin, belonging to the Zomi Chin tribe. He grew up in the first faithful Adventist family who had accepted the three angel messages and established the Adventist Church at Lezang village. His grandfather, Zaang Khan Thang, his Grandmother, Ngai Za Ciin (from Anlang village), his father, Nang Za Tuang, and one of his aunties – Don Go Cing, were the first fruits of Lezang Seventh-day Adventist by taking baptism on October 13, 1963, which was officiated by Pr. Elisha Paul.[1] His father was a regular worker of Upper Myanmar Mission since 1992 and retired on November 12, 2015, with the post of church pastor of Lezang Adventist Church and the Principal of the middle school of Lezang Adventists Seminary. He has seven siblings; Ciin Cian Kai (female), Cing Sian Siang (female), Niang Sit Aung (female), Cing Suan Noo (female), Suan Min Zaang (Male), Ciin Thawn Piau (male), and Thang Ka Ngaih (Male). He is the eldest one. The eldest sister Ciin Cian Kai is currently working as a contract teacher in Upper Myanmar Adventist Seminary (UMAS), and the youngest brother is currently working as a church

pastor at Li-shi Town in Sagaing region, Upper Myanmar Mission. All of his brothers and sisters got married and became Adventist faithful members.

Education and Marriage

Thang Kang Lo went to the Basic Elementary School at Lezang village from kindergarten to grade four. He continued his education at Anlangh Middle school for grades five and grade Six. When he failed Grade 6, he continued it at No. (1) Basic Education High School in Tedim. In 1984, Thang Kang Lo transferred from No. (1) Basic Education High School of Tedim to Upper Myanmar Adventist Seminary at Gyothobin Siyin yaw in Kalay from grade 7 to Grade 9. Then, he continued his education at Burma Union Adventist Seminary (now Myanmar Union Adventist Seminary) in 1987, from Grade 9 (called Pre-1) to college, and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in religion on March 12, 1996.

Whereas he was sent as a frontline missionary as a 50 village teacher to Naga Land at Phapoh village, by God's grace, in 1998, he continued his further study in Master of Ministry through Distance Learning Center of the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies in the Philippines, offered in Myanmar Union Mission headquarter in Yangon and graduated Master of Ministry in 2004. While serving as the Director of Sabbath School/Personal and ASI for Myanmar Union Mission, God gives him another opportunity through the approval of the Myanmar Union Mission Executive Committee[2] to continue postgraduate study in Doctor of Missiology/ Intercultural Studies with Urban Mission emphasis, which AIIAS offered in 2016 as the first batch its program. Currently, he is writing his dissertation with the title "Toward A Contextualized Model of Mission for Theravada Buddhists in Myanmar."

He married Niang Sian Nuam on August 21 2003, from Yadana Theingi Mine in Naungcho Township, Shan State. The Lord

blessed them with four boys and a girl. Their children, Tuang Sian Tawi, the eldest son was born on December 19 2003, Zam Sian Sang was born on October 21 2005, Zaang It Kim was on November 1 2007, and Ciin Samuel was born on January 19 2010, and Vung Sian Hoih Kim was born on April 9 2019. Except for the youngest one, all the four sons are studying in our Adventist Seminary in respective grades; 10, 7 and 6.

Ministry

Thang Kang Lo is one of the youngest ordained pastors serving as departmental director for the Myanmar Union Mission, full of passion and having a missional spirit for God's mission.

After he graduated from Myanmar Union Adventist Seminary in 1996, he accepted the call of Kalay Adventist Seminary as a school contract teacher for one year and served as registrar of that school. Then, the Upper Myanmar Mission executive committee sent him to Naga Land in 1997 as a frontline 50-village teacher/evangelist at Phapoh village[3]. However, the Naga people in Phapoh did not accept him, and he moved to Mualvailup village, where the Kuki Chin people lived. He worked there as a school teacher in the government middle school of Mualvailup for one year only. In 1998, he moved to Pohtu Village in Homalin Township, Sagaing Region, where Shan-Bamar people lived. He worked again as a school teacher in that village for two years. While serving as a 50-village teacher during three years of service in Nagaland, he conducted an evangelistic effort meeting two times in two places. The first place is Mualvailup village, where many local people were interested in the message. However, due to a political crisis, the meeting was stopped before the adjourned meeting. The second place is Minaykone Ward in Homalin Town, and before adjourning the meeting, it was stopped again due to local people's hindrances and interruption.

Again in 1999, the Upper Myanmar Mission Executive Committee[4] appointed him as a frontline missionary to Palaung tribes at Pan Hoe Lay village in Kyaut Mee Township,

Shan State. The local people were folk Buddhists. There was no government school, and Thang Kang Lo started his mission work through an educational approach. He opened a primary school with the help of a teacher called Ngul Deih Cing from Yadana Theingi Mine. The Upper Myanmar Mission sent her as Global Mission Pioneer. There were around 50 students regularly attending primary school. In 2000, by God's grace, a school building was built by the Maranatha project through the leadership of Thang Kang Lo. In 2001, a school building was built again with funds from the Maranatha Project in Kawpaung village, 9 miles away from Pan Ho Lay village. This education program advantaged many children through these buildings.

Furthermore, Thang Kang Lo sent some students from Pan Ho Lay village and Kaw Pawng villages to Pyin Oo Lwin Adventist Seminary in Pyin Oo Lwin, the Upper Myanmar Mission headquarter. Pastor Kai Khan Khual, the executive secretary of Upper Myanmar Mission, baptized Moe Aung, Nan Lu, Aung Kyaw, and Aih Han in Pyinoow Lwin Adventist Seminary, and [5]they became the first fruits of the missional work from Palaung tribes living in Shan state. After some of them finished middle school, the Upper Myanmar Mission sent Aih Han (male), Aung Kyaw (Male), Moe Aung (female) and Nan Lu (female) again to Ayeyawady Adventist Seminary in Myaung Mya, and only Aih Han and Aung Kyaw graduated with Bachelor of Business Administration from Myanmar Union Adventist Seminary.

Whereas he was working as a teacher-evangelist among the Palaung tribes, the Upper Myanmar Mission moved him to Wuyan Adventist Seminary, where he worked as a teacher, and the school appointed him as the school registrar for two years from 2002-2003. After working as a registrar for two years, Upper Myanmar Mission moved him to Manhkring Adventist Seminary with the high school Principal post[6] for five years from 2004 to 2008. During these five years, he established an educational scholarship funding system with donors from inside and outside the country. Through his effort and donors'

support, the school got a Tri-cycle made in China for school transportation without using the school budget. The school conducted an evangelistic effort meeting. Pr Samuel Po was the main speaker to Shwe Naing Bin in Wai Myaw Township, where a congregation had a privilege for regular worship on Sabbath.

In 2009, He was transferred again by the Upper Myanmar mission executive committee to Anderson Adventist Seminary with the high school principal post for two consecutive school years[7]. While serving the school, he established Anderson Adventist Seminary Computer Central adding five desktop computers and later on 15 laptop computers with the valuable financial assistance of Dr P D Chun and his friend Pastor Hong from South Korea. From Grade 8 to Plus 1, students can access basic knowledge of information technology. Moreover, he earned P D Chun scholarship funds, and many poor and needy students could continue their education. Besides, with the help of Pr Nang Do Dal, he earned some funds from Southern Asia-Pacific Division (SSD) to buy the school vehicle for school generating income. Furthermore, through the help of Mr Gin Sian Mung, the senior auditor of the Southeastern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in Riverside, California, the BACA donated a generator supplier for the school.

After two years of leading the Anderson Adventist Seminary, in the 2010 year-end session, the nominating committee elected him as the Upper Myanmar Mission Education Director and Youth Director for a five-year term from 2011 to 2015[8]. During these five years, he conducted meaningful youth camps, evangelistic meetings, and teachers' certification training in various Upper Myanmar mission districts and helped upgrade schools into accredited status. With the help of Korean Adventist brethren by the leadership of Dr PD Chun, Lezang village got a hydroelectric power station and distributed it to 90 houses for the school generating income, along with one desktop computer and five laptops for Lezang Adventist Seminary. While serving as the Education and Youth Director in

Upper Myanmar Mission, Pr Jerry N. Page, the Secretary of General Conference Ministerial Association, ordained him and his wife on January 24 2015, in Yangon Central Church.

After serving five years in Upper Myanmar Mission, in the 2015 year-end session, the nominating

committee of the Myanmar Union Mission elected him as the Union Sabbath School/Personal Ministry & ASI Director for a five-year term from 2016-2020[9]. However, 2021 is the sixth year of the term due to the world pandemic called Covid-19. Under this department, he is also responsible for the offices of Adventist Mission, Adventist Community Service and the SSD's innovated important ministry – Integrated Evangelism Lifestyle (IEL from 2016-2019).

During these six years of the term: (2016-2021)

(1) he conducted various significant training, seminars and certification programs related to his mission fields as he equipped God's people for His mission.

(2) he was called by the Upper Myanmar Mission to lead the youth camp at Gangaw district twice, and once in Teddim district, won 15 precious young people to Christ.

(3) he was privileged in attending abroad conferences and meetings such as Adventist Community Service in New York in 2017 and Andrews University Campus in 2018, IEL/NDR training in the Philippines and at Bali in Indonesia, and advisory meetings in SSD Headquarters as well as in AIIAS, and he brought MYUM-ASI officers and members to SSD-ASI conventions at Bangkok in Thailand, Davao city in the Philippines, and at Taiwan in Taipei.

(4) he practically organized the MYUM-ASI (Myanmar Union Mission – Adventist laymen's Services and Industries). The SSD Sabbath School Director & SSD-ASI Secretary Dr Hermogenes Villanueva, accompanied by Yew Lipsin, SSD-ASI President and

David Tan, Vice President, officiated it on August 11 2016, at Yangon Central Church, Yangon, in Myanmar. The first officers of MYUM-ASI were (1) Zaw Dan, President, (2) Htay Min Tun, President-Elect; Dr Hla Hla Myint, VP for Treasurer; Theo Lian Pianga, VP for Trade and Commerce; Tun Nay Shin, VP for Communication and Kyaw Soe Hlaing, VP for logistics.

(5) he was significantly the first and foremost who launched the online virtual zoom evangelistic effort meeting in the Myanmar union mission, designed to listen and watch care group members. Through this virtual zoom crusade, 56 precious souls were baptized.

(6) Furthermore, he persuaded Dr and Pastor Pyung Duk Chun from south Korea to convince his brother-in-law – Mr Martin M. Ro, to donate a grand four-storey school building (costed USD 280,000) in Upper Myanmar Adventist Seminary (UMAS) Campus, Upper Myanmar Mission, in commemoration of his late dear wife, Elicia Gilja Ro, the sister of Dr P. D. Chun. The school building was named “Elicia Ro” after his wife’s name. The Union President, Pr. Timothy Muna Paul, the Executive Secretary, Pr. Kelly P Lyan, the Treasurer, Sagagyi Cally Thein, and Union Sabbath School/Personal Ministry Director, Pr Thang Kang Lo, attended the opening ceremony. The union officers, accompanied by Mission officers, inaugurated this Elicia Ro building on November 13, 2018, and Pr Thang Kang lo read a congratulatory message of Elder P. D. Chun. Besides, a portion of the fund (USD 20000) donated by Mr Martin M. Ro has also shared to Ayeyarwaddy Adventist Seminary extended the boy’s dormitory on its campus.

Currently, Pr. Thang Kang Lo, with his family, is committing himself to God’s mission with God’s given gifts and has a tremendous passion for reaching the unreached people groups in Myanmar with the everlasting gospel (Revelation 14:6-12).

[1] Interviews with Nang Za Tuang by Thang Kang Lo, October 4, 2021, at Lezang village through phone call.

[2] Myanmar Union Executive Committee minutes, 2016-229, archive in the office of Myanmar Union mission, Dagon, Myanmar.

[3] Upper Myanmar Mission Executive Committee Minutes, 1998-005, archive in the office of Upper Myanmar Mission, Pyinoolwin, Myanmar.

[4] Upper Myanmar Mission Excecutive Committee minutes, 1999-02, archive in the office of Upper Myanmar Mission, Pyinoolwin, Myanmar.

[5] Upper Myanmar Mission Executive Committee minutes, 2002-119, archive in the office of Upper Myanmar Mission, Pyinoolwin, Myanmar.

[6] Upper Myanmar Mission Executive Committee minutes, 2004-030, archive in the office of Upper Myanmar Mission, Pyinoolwin, Myanmar.

[7] Upper Myanmar Mission Administrative Committee minutes, 2008-101, archive in the office of Upper Myanmar Mission, Pyinoolwin, Myanmar.

[8] Upper Myanmar Mission Executive Committee minutes, 2010-086, archive in the office of Upper Myanmar Mission, Pyinoolwin, Myanmar.

[9] Myanmar Union Mission Executive Committee minutes, 2015-296, archive in the office of Myanmar Union Mission, Dagon, Myanmar.