

filled with joy and generosity and loves sharing the Gospel.

In front of the crowd at Faith Journey, Faith said, “I have only known English for six months so if I make mistakes, please forgive me.” In perfect English, Faith went on to tell the story of growing up in a very poor family in Vietnam without a mother and an alcoholic father. She met Grace in 2010; she said. “My life as a child was miserable; I had no love and didn’t feel cared for. In 2010, I met Grace and she shared the Gospel with me. She told me that God loves me and cares about me.”

With tears in her eyes, Faith said, “I believe in God one hundred percent. I started reading the bible daily and writing down all the verses that I liked. I couldn’t believe how much God changed my life, so I couldn’t keep it to myself. I shared it will all my friends and different neighborhoods and to people I met randomly on the bus.”

Faith went on to say that she endures a lot of rejection in her country because of her beliefs, from teachers, the community,

and even her family. With intense emotion and streaming tears, Faith said, “The day I declared that I believe in God is the day that my father rejected me. He said that I had to choose between him and my God. He said, ‘If you go with me, I will support you. I don’t have a lot of money, but I will do whatever I can. But if you go with him, you need to get out of this house.’ I cried heavily in front of him and said, ‘Dad, I love you so much, but I choose my God.’”

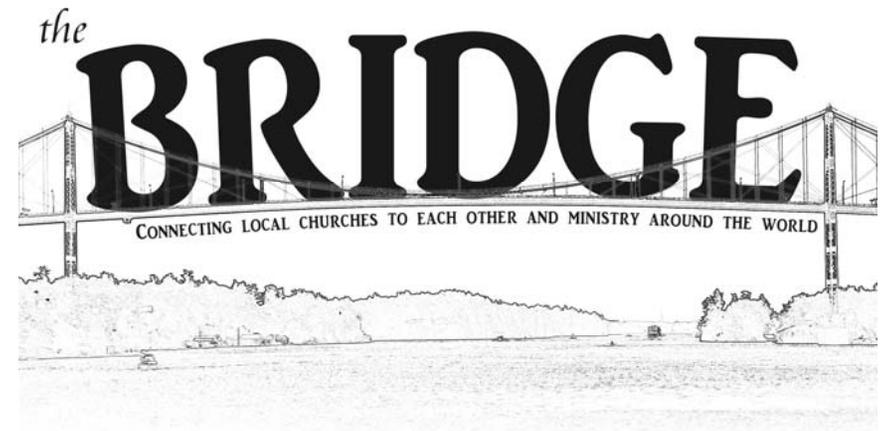
Faith came to the United States earlier this year on a student visa to finish high school at the Banner School in Virginia. Instead of going on to college in the United States like she originally planned, Faith has decided to return to Vietnam to continue helping Grace with Hope House. In conclusion, she said, “What do I have to fear if I have my God?”

Grace and Faith’s stories portray the miracles that can take place and the lives that can change with deep faith and trust in God. To learn more about One Hope for Vietnam ministries, visit [www.onehopeforvietnam.org](http://www.onehopeforvietnam.org).

*The **Bridge** is a Conference Communications Ministry tool that delivers to local churches news and stories of ministry from around the Upper New York Conference and the world.*

[www.unyumc.org](http://www.unyumc.org)

Learn what Upper New York Conference leaders learned from their trip to South Korea, hosted by the Bupyeong Methodist Church, by visiting <http://www.unyumc.org/news/perspectives>.



The Upper New York Conference’s vision is to live the gospel of Jesus Christ and to be God’s love with our neighbors in all places.

## A look inside!

Faith Journey UMC learns about hardship in Vietnam

Page 2

# Faith Journey UMC learns about hardship in Vietnam

*Editor's Note: The names of the two Vietnamese women who spoke at Faith Journey United Methodist Church have been changed and their photos have been blurred to protect their identity.*

On July 16, Faith Journey United Methodist Church in Clay, N.Y. welcomed two special guest speakers. Grace, a 35-year old Vietnamese woman and Faith, a 17-year old Vietnamese girl have been pouring forth supreme love and dedication toward improving the lives of the poor in Vietnam's mountainside and protecting girls from the sex trade.

Grace and Faith represented a non-profit organization called One Hope for Vietnam, which Grace founded in 2010. They shared their stories, a collection was taken for their organization, and beautiful Vietnamese hand-made purses and cards were available for the congregation to purchase as an additional means to help support One Hope for Vietnam.

## Grace's Story

At the age of seven, Grace and her family (including her mother and eight siblings) moved to the North State Street area in the city of Syracuse as Vietnamese refugees. Her childhood was



stricken with poverty and hardship. Eventually, her mother earned enough of an income to move her family to Liverpool, NY, in a safer neighborhood. Grace excelled at her studies and ended up graduating from Syracuse University and then went on to work for Syracuse University. She had achieved what she worked so hard for, the American Dream! She owned her own home and drove a fancy car. But, she was not happy; she felt empty. That is until she was introduced to Jesus when she was 26.

Grace said, "A sister at Syracuse University introduced me to the Gospel and I embraced Jesus with all my heart. I experienced a real transformation. Since meeting Jesus, there is this peace within me that surpasses all understanding. I cultivated a heart of service, especially for my Vietnamese girls."

After a year and a half of developing a relationship with Jesus, Grace felt prompted to go home to Vietnam and serve the poorest of the



poor. She sold all of her possessions and bought a one-way ticket to Vietnam. She said, "I didn't know what to expect, but I knew Jesus would be by my side."

Since then, One Hope for Vietnam was born. This non-profit organization represents many amazing ministries that Grace has created for those living in P.Y., the poorest province of Vietnam.

Grace started Hope Kindergarten to help poor children in Vietnam.

She also invested in a cassava plantation to help with community development.

Grace works with orphans and widows, helping to feed them physically and spiritually.

Every Christmas, Grace delivers food and gift baskets to families in need. Love is expressed in a very practical way.

One of Grace's most amazing ministries is the café she created called HOPE House, which provides employment for high-risk girls who may otherwise become victim to sex trafficking. By working at the café, these girls become empowered and develop a high self-esteem by learning the Good News.

## Faith's Story

Grace met Faith when she was 12 years old; Faith is now 17 and is a devoted disciple of Jesus. She is

*Continued on Page 4*