

Christmas 2018

“Relentless Advocates for Children”

From all across Myanmar staff and friends gathered to celebrate Asian Children's Mission 10th anniversary conference. It was a three day celebration and staff retreat that featured speeches, music, dance, the graduation of students in the nursing program and five baptisms.

Hope Children's Home and its leaders, Josiah and Phoebe, were gracious hosts. Hope Christian Church prepared the meals. During the first day of the celebration, more than 500 were fed — with two large hogs, lots of chickens, lots of veggies and lots of rice!



Hosts and co-directors of ACM's Hope Ministries — Phoebe and Josiah

Keynote speeches were given by Kent Odor of Asia Christian Services and Brad Pontius of Sherwood Oaks Christian Church. Kent called ACM leaders “relentless advocates for children.” Brad reminded the team, “I can't but God can.” Other American speakers included Board Members Todd Anderson and Kathy DiPietro, along with Founder and Execu-

tive Director Joana Jones. Following are some of the reports and stories from the three day conference.



More than 500 people attended all or part of the celebration, held on the first day of the three day event.



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TEN YEARS AND FIVE BAPTISMS



ACM Board Member Todd Anderson assists Josiah in the baptism of a young woman from Putaik Gyi. She, and the others baptized during the retreat, needed to do this away from their Buddhist relatives .

In 2008, Asian Children's Mission sent 30 school teachers into Burma's southern delta where the rivers are the roads. Deeram was one of those young teachers. On arriving in Putaik Gyi he wrote, "there is nothing here — no fresh water, no shops, no tv, no electricity." His first class met under a tree .

During that difficult first year, Deeram wanted to quit. "But when I looked at all the kids' faces, I felt such compassion. If I don't teach, no one will."

In the evenings and on Sundays, Deeram taught the children praise choruses. He also taught the Bible and they would memorize long passages.

Over time, a strong children's church formed, with the older children taking jobs such as treasurer, secretary, worship leader and so forth. But one thing was lacking.

The children wanted to be baptized.

RESPECTING BUDDHIST FAMILY

Buddhist family members do not want their children to become Christians. In order for the students to both respect parents and elder family members, and for Deeram to be able to stay and teach in the village, baptisms have been postponed. But during the recent ACM retreat five young ladies from Putaik Gyi decided it was time. They are staying with relatives in Yangon while working in local factories. In order to stay in the home, they needed to keep their baptisms secret.

Deeram continues to teach in Putaik Gyi, and is mentoring teachers from nearby villages. He hopes to do more evangelism in the future and see more baptized. (*Deeram is in the pink shirt on the far right.*)



Fourth Class of Nursing Students Graduates



From many parts of Myanmar, students attended ACM's Samaritan School of Nursing. Six ethnic groups were represented in this class. All plan to return to their home areas as health care educators and first responders. FAME of Indianapolis continues to partner with the school.



OUTBREAK TRIGGERS ACM COMMITMENT FOR MORE TRAINED NURSES

Nagaland, part of Myanmar close to the Indian border, experienced a major outbreak of a hemorrhagic fever virus, killing 80 people. The nearest hospital is two days away by motorbike.

Most Nagas have little formal education. There's no isolation of sick people, no gloves, no masks to protect care givers. There's no medicine, even to stop diarrhea. Lack of nutrition during the rainy season also contributes to the outbreaks.

Daniel Moyuez, a Naga leader teaching at the Myanmar Bible Institute, posted this picture of a child suffering from the fever on Facebook. This led to a conversation between Daniel and ACM's director, resulting in commitment to send six students to ACM's Samaritan School of Nursing. After completing the six month program, they will be equipped to teach disease prevention and provide basic life-saving care.

Many Nagas are Christian, but the fullness of the Gospel has not yet been experienced due to the lack of education.

I Became a Soldier of Jesus Christ

Bzan is a first generation Christian among the Mro, an ethnic group living in western Burma. With a background in the martial arts, he dreamed of joining the military. Instead, he enrolled in Bible College.

As an ethnic minority and a Christian leader in a deeply Buddhist area, Bzan was not allowed to preach. He was pushed by a soldier and as Bzan

started to defend himself, he remembered the two key concepts that has since guided his ministry, "Jesus died for me, love your enemies." Bzan disengaged with the gentle words, "God bless you."

The resistance to Christianity continues in Myanmar, but Bzan assumed leadership



of a new ACM ministry in Ponnagyun, a city with no churches — until now.

Told to expect resistance, he and his family prayed as they entered the large rented house that would serve as church and youth hostel. Instead of resistance, he and his wife are making friends with neighbors. "Our gates are open. We have devotions every night and worship on Sunday — and not quietly either!"

His boldness is already bearing fruit. Christians who had lived in fear are now attending services. Two of the 10 Buddhist high school students living in the hostel are ready for baptism, and ready to share their new faith with family members.



Sending Aid in a War Zone

Maeram, one of ACM's key leaders, understands there are dangerous locations in Myanmar. She also understands that she is often the key link to getting desperate people the food and shelter they need to survive.

The most current example is getting rice to people near the Tibet border whose crops have been eaten by rats. Because of a grant from IDES, the rice is purchased and loaded on trucks to make the dangerous 100 mile journey to Putao. The bags will then be loaded on a small army of motorcycles to travel over narrow mountain paths and log bridges to finally reach the villagers.

The journey would be difficult enough without the added complication of the civil war in Kachin state. If the insurgents are not fighting, all is well. But if they are, the civilian population is in danger. Although the fighting has ceased for the time being, it is not completely safe for women. At the request of ACM leadership in the US, Maeram is sending a man in her place to ensure the delivery of the rice.

“WE ARE BEING KILLED, AND WE DON’T KNOW WHY”



Racial and religious discrimination are common in Myanmar, and the results can be deadly. Although the Rohingyas have received international attention for their terrible plight, a quieter genocide has been occurring for some time among Christian minority ethnic groups in Kachin state.

Maeram says, “We are being killed, and we don’t know why.”

Nwe Nwe San, a Sunday School teacher, cried when she told about a 4th grade student she tutored. A bright and hard-working child, he had his eye on the school prize that would be awarded to the top student at the

end of the year. Although he was the top student, the prize was given to an ethnic majority Buddhist boy. Nwe Nwe’s student, a Mro Christian, was heart broken. “How can you explain this to a child”, she asked? He has yet to regain interest in his studies.

The American Bible Society and the Trauma Healing Institute have produced a Bible-based curriculum to address trauma in both adults and children. *“Healing Hearts”* has been translated into more than 60 languages, including Burmese. The Burmese edition was translated by Dr. David Sangdong, whose PhD is in linguistics and recommended it to Asian Children’s Mission. It was recently field tested in Burma, with good results. ACM expects to train facilitators to start addressing this need among our children. For more information visit <http://thi.americanbible.org/>.

Circuit Climbing Teacher on China Border

Ashar teaches in small villages along the border with China, climbing mountains, avoiding leeches and wading through streams.

There are no schools, and Ashar is the only teacher within miles.

The small churches in these remote villages have trouble recruiting and keeping ministers because there are no schools for their children.

To keep ministers in the area,

Ashar would like to open a youth hostel for preachers’ kids ages 5-15. They would live within one or two days’ walk from their parents and receive an education.

She believes educated ministers will add stability to the villages and promote the value of education.

She hopes to continue her own teaching ministry and hire an assistant to tend to the children.





BE STRONG & COURAGEOUS! JOSHUA SCHOOL OPENS DOORS IN MANDALAY

About us:

Asian Children's Mission

Justice

Myanmar is a beautiful nation marred by a significant imbalance of wealth and power. We focus on protecting vulnerable women and children and providing them with educational opportunities.

Jesus

As a Christian organization, we are motivated by the love and compassion of Christ and the truth of the Gospel.

Adventure

Our work takes us to exotic locations on the planet. But the real adventure is in coming alongside Myanmar's people to love and serve them.

Asianchildrensmission.org



The parents arrived, the guests arrived and the students arrived. The ribbon was cut, speeches were made, songs were sung and students recognized.

Wait. What?

Students recognized? These same children who have been turned away from other schools because of their disability actually applauded and celebrated?

YES!

It was truly a joyful occasion. The Joshua School for

Special Needs Children is providing needed therapy and academic support. Buddhist and Christian family members understand this ministry is due to the love of Christ for children.

Old and New Ways to Give to ACM

- Write a check to Asian Children's Mission
- Donate securely through our website (Asianchildrensmission.org)
- Give through your employer. Some larger companies offer matching donations. Would you check with your company to see if they would match your gift? ACM is an approved non-profit for many corporations.
- Set up a fundraiser on Facebook! Facebook does not charge any fees. It is particularly easy to do a birthday fundraiser.
- Participate on Giving Tuesday (Nov. 27). "Like" Asian Children's Mission on Facebook and watch for more information!
- Use Amazon Smile for your online shopping and choose Asian Children's Mission as your charity.



SAVE THE DATE



#GIVINGTUESDAY