



## MAY PTL - PRAISE THE LORD REPORT APU FOCUS INTERNATIONAL

### May Teams

Northern Thailand – Laos | South Africa West | Ghana Accra  
Indonesia | South Africa Resource | Tanzania | India Kolkata  
Ukraine | Uganda | Himalayas | Ireland | Haiti



### Northern Thailand Laos – May 10<sup>th</sup> – June 5<sup>th</sup>

**PTL for knowing the Lord is good** – “We have just under two days left in Laos. It's been great - very different to be in this particular country - truly a stretching, eye-opening experience. I have an immense appreciation for the believers here who suffer so passionately and joyfully for the LORD. During the church service yesterday morning, (this was a state church monitored by the government), we learned that 35 people were arrested last October and imprisoned for one month after evangelizing in a certain part of Laos. One of the pastors who was arrested shrugged his shoulders, and with a big smile on his face said "The LORD is good. That's part of being a Christian." Needless to say, I was enthralled and left in such awe and utter respect for these "warriors" out here who battle on the front lines of spiritual warfare and persecution every day. It was truly humbling.”

### South Africa West – May 11<sup>th</sup> – June 15<sup>th</sup>

**PTL for divine appointments** – “I'm not even sure where to begin. The only way I can think to describe our time here is divinely appointed. Our days are so full and rich, and I thank God daily for the opportunity to be here. This past Sunday we were able to worship with the congregation at St. Philip's, an offshoot of the church of England in South Africa. Monday was spent here at Makani, our home base, doing maintenance projects. Tuesday we spent the morning walking around George connecting with people and praying for them. Some intense rain interfered with our afternoon plans, so we spent some amazing time in prayer and connecting with God both as a team and individually. Today, Wednesday, we visited the children's ward of the local hospital in George. We came armed with balloons, hand puppets, and coloring books...and I'm pretty sure we were a hit! My favorite moment was when a little girl roughly 18 months old with a breathing tube in one nostril ran up to me with her arms outstretched, demanding to be held. Simply precious! By this afternoon the rain had cleared up enough for us to visit Blanco again. We messed around with the kids for a bit before starting our program about "helping those in need." Johnny did an excellent job narrating the parable of the Good Samaritan while the rest of us acted it out with as much comic relief as we could muster. Even though our time here is brief, we pray that seeds of Christ's love are planted. As soon as our program was done, a girl about 7 years old jumped into my arms and didn't let go until we left. My best guess at spelling her name is "Bandileen." She kept tugging my arms more tightly around her, and so I sat and held her close while the rest of the team led all the kids through several variations of tag. As I held Bandileen and watched all of the kids running around, I kept praying that they would know God's love and tangible presence, and ask you to echo that prayer with us.”



### Ghana Accra – May 11<sup>th</sup> – June 12<sup>th</sup>

**PTL for the Volta region** - On their time in the Volta region “We went to a service for the disabled people at Pastor Samuel's church where we worshipped and fellowshiped with them. It was amazing to see how much joy they had and I think that we were all humbled. We went to Sunday mass in the local Catholic church in Wli. That was an experience, but even though we didn't understand a word that the people said, they were so gracious and happy to let us join them. We played a full on soccer game with one of the local teams in Wli. It was a hard fought battle, but in the end we scraped a 2 to 1 win. This was largely due to the efforts of Brandon, our soccer fanatic and our drivers goal keeping skills.”



### **Indonesia – May 11<sup>th</sup> – June 14<sup>th</sup>**

#### **PTL for the Indonesian Church**

“Today, we went back to Dian Kasih National School. We had an amazing lunchtime conversation with one of the teachers, Yusup, at the school today. He was telling us about how the church in Indonesia is growing in the cities but shrinking in the villages. This is because Indonesia is predominantly Muslim and there is pressure in the villages to convert back to Islam. He believes that the believers in the villages are ill-equipped to defend their faith because they have had little theological training. He wants to go the villages and teach them more about the Bible so that they can strengthen their faith, but cannot as of right now due to his economic position. He asked us to pray for him and for the situation in general, and we were more than happy to oblige. It was amazing to hear his story and be able to encourage him.”

### **India Kolkata – May 19<sup>th</sup> – July 1<sup>st</sup>**

**PTL for new perspectives** – “I’ve seen a few signs plastered up throughout the city that reference Kolkata as the City of Joy. I’m really not sure what to do with this title. I haven’t decided yet whether I think it is an oxymoron that this place of near hopelessness is titled the City of Joy, or whether I think that, in spite of all of its shortcomings, there is such great potential for a foundational joy that would be able to transcend the pain of this world. I imagine that my experience here will shape how I feel about the city’s nickname. I am really excited to begin work in the Mother Teresa Homes as I feel that I am transitioned and ready to begin my work here in this alien location. I read something really powerful once in a Kurt Vonnegut novel, that is that “there is no reason that good cannot triumph as often as evil. The triumph of anything is a matter of organization. If there are such things as angels, I hope they are organized along the lines of the Mafia.” This quote is so powerfully true. The evil (from systemic all the way to metaphysical) here in Kolkata is impeccably well organized. Through your prayers and the work being done by Christ loving people here in India, hopefully we can bring some organization to the ever potent force of ‘good’.”

### **Himalayas – May 23<sup>rd</sup> – July 7<sup>th</sup>**

**PTL for amazing cultures** – “We participated and partnered with the local A-G church here in the city and assisted in their ‘RAVE’ outreach to local teens. The Indian culture/humor when it comes to entertainment is a joy to participate in; it is definitely a site to see. Last Sunday we went to their ‘SOAR’ outreach which is a live radio show that is shot and filmed in the church itself. Entertainment consisted of everything from Rap and Hip/Hop dance crews to artists like Lecrae, drama inspired choreographies, solo worship artists from Canada and Berkeley CA, and Bands from Northern India and the Middle East. This morning we woke up at O-Dark-Thirty to follow the food distribution outreach which is out of the city and into rural areas of Kolkata. We crossed over an off shoot of the Ganges river and saw many numerous slums as we were invited by hundreds who are regularly fed. The church feeds between 10 and 11K every day and it was a blessing to see people who lived outside the city. Indian terrain continues to amaze me, I can’t go anywhere and not be left stunned by how many new things there are to see and experience.”

### **June Teams**

**Tanzania | Ukraine | Uganda | Himalayas | Ireland | Haiti  
South Africa Resource | Nepal | Nepal Resource | South Africa East | Dominican Republic  
Thailand | Peru | USA-Alaska | USA-Camden | India Compassionate Hands**

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