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Bible Printing

How many Bibles do you own? Could you afford to buy a new one today? What if it cost you six days wages to buy one? And what if you couldn't read what you bought?

Did you know India is just a bit bigger than one-third the size of the U.S.? That its population is almost 1.2 billion people? Try thinking about those numbers this way. There are about 300 million people in the U.S. today. That means that in India, there are 4 times as many people living in a third the space that we have in the U.S. 645 Million of them live on less than \$1.25 a day.

One-third of the world's poor people live in India; more poor than live in all of sub-Saharan Africa.

That's not all.

India also has the largest number of illiterate people in the world—with illiteracy rates greater in rural areas. Outside the big cities, almost half of all women can't read while about a quarter of men are illiterate. 860 Million of India's people live in villages. That's a lot of people who can't read.

It cost \$7.25 for us to print a Hindi pictorial Bible (pictures with captions in Hindi). But for most of the Christians Mid-India serves (poor & rural), \$7.25 is almost six days wages.

So the question is, can you afford to buy a Bible or two for India this month?

“Teaching the Gospel through service”

MICS Messenger - April 2011

This quarter, we are pleased as well as privileged to bring you this letter from Andrew Jit, Missions and Outreach Minister of the First Christian Church in Springfield, Ohio. He shares the experiences of his January trip to India.

India Reflections

It was a blessing and a privilege to travel to India and spend time with Jay and Romola and Ernest and Numreta. First Christian Church, Springfield, Ohio has been a longtime supporter of Mid-India Christian Services through the Henry's, but this was our first time on the field with them. It was a humbling and incredible experience!

We were warmly greeted by their team in Delhi and were taken such good care of during our entire visit. The work that we are in partnership with became so much more real and as we saw the multiple works that the Henry's are involved in. It was an honor to go there and to see face-to-face the multiple projects Mid-India is using to reach people for Christ and to see the name of Jesus exalted.

We had the privilege of hosting a leadership conference for students and pastors that Bethlehem Bible College has trained. The theme of the conference was “The Choice is Yours” and even though we went to teach them, those who attended taught us more than we could teach them. A highlight for all of us was the wonderful worship we experienced together. They were wonderful and it was a blessing to learn many of their stories and pray, teach and encourage them.

They were wonderful hosts and we thank them for taking excellent care, sorting out of all of the travel arrangements and logistics.

As a missions pastor it is easy to send support to Mid-India Christian Services but can I encourage you to go. Why? Because it will impact and touch you in multiple ways, and there are incredible things going on in India and I am thankful to be partnering with Kingdom minded missionaries. So if you have never gone there, book a ticket soon and know that you will come back changed, I know I did.

Blessings,

Andrew Jit

Missions & Outreach Minister



Report: Pendra Project

The church at Pendra is a 14 hour drive from Damoh. There are another 35-40 churches within a hundred mile radius. Christians in that area have had no place to gather since the Pendra church was planted 10 years ago.

Because of radical Hindu persecution, meeting out in the open became dangerous, and having a safe meeting place, essential. Ernest was shot at on one of his visits. Since the radicals know his car, it is dangerous for him to stay overnight in a local motel. So, a safe house was needed in addition to a meeting place.

Although it was time-consuming and difficult, we finally obtained a building permit for a facility large enough for all the Christians in the area to meet and fellowship together. A preschool and sewing center were also included in the plans. And, because Christians are not allowed to use village wells, we also needed to dig our own well on the property. After several setbacks, permission for the well finally came through as well.

By the end of 2010, we completed the building, including a safe house. The preschool started, the sewing center has machines, and the well is dug. We thank, and greatly appreciate, everyone who contributed to the completion of the Pendra Project. We are already beginning a similar project in another area!



Completed Pendra compound.

Construction is not all we have accomplished in Pendra! We also started goat projects in two local villages. Christian families are given 7 goats to begin with and are asked to give the first offspring of each she-goat back to the mission to pass on to others. The families receiving these goats are taught to tithe their income, save some for care of the goats, save some for their families, and only then use the remainder for themselves.



Family's herd of hardy goats.

Goats have proven better animals for these projects than water buffalo because of periods of drought. The goats can forage in the forest and don't require the care that the buffalo do. The project is doing well and the goats are now producing meat and milk as well as reproducing themselves.

Parsonages:

How many churches in the U.S. still own a parsonage for their minister? Most churches have sold their parsonages or converted them to other use while their ministers choose where to live and whether to buy or rent. Ministers can't do that in India. Many Christians in India can't find a place to live because, as a general rule, Hindus won't rent to Christians – let alone to a Christian preacher. If they do, they themselves are often threatened by radicals. MICS is working on solving this problem for our preachers. Whenever we build a church building, we also try to build a parsonage for the preacher and his family. (We usually have to dig a well as well.)



Dedication of new parsonage.

We are truly thankful for all of you who have provided a parsonage for a preacher. If you or your group would like to take on a parsonage project, please contact our field representative.

Henry's and McFarlands are in the U.S.

The Henry's arrived in the U.S. on April 1st and the McFarlands on April 12th. (Thank you for your prayers for Jay and Romola. Jay said this was one of the smoothest flights they have ever had.) They are here until the middle of July, during the summer recess of Bethlehem Bible College.

This summer they are staying in Bethel, Ohio. They will be reporting to their supporting churches, visiting friends and family, and trying to raise new support. They will also be at the North American Christian Convention in July. Please stop by booth #318 and say "hi."

These visits to the U.S. are important for many reasons. Because the part of India they work in is so desperately poor, their work depends on the outside support of American Christians. So, while they are here, they need to raise funds.

Also, the family needs the fellowship and encouragement from Christians here. They are under such stress and harassment from radicals when they are in India--they need this time of refreshment and spiritual strengthening. They need these three months to renew, relax and revitalize.

One time, after picking them up at the airport, Romola told us that it was only when she saw us standing at the bottom of the escalator that she finally felt safe. Another time, after we picked them up at the airport and took them to their apartment, they made the comment as we left that tonight, for the first time in months, they could go to sleep and not be afraid. Can you imagine living under that pressure all the time – not only for yourself but also for your children and grandchildren? It is so hard for us to imagine what it is like to be persecuted. We need to count our blessings!

Songbook Update:

What can we say? Your generosity has been overwhelming! Thank you, thank you, thank you! We were able to print the Hindi songbooks, and are passing them out to the churches.



*Home sweet home on \$1.25 a day wages.
See Bible Printing on back page.*

Tidbits

Of India's 1.2 billion people . . .

31% are under age 15

50% are under age 25

65% are under age 35

by 2030 India's population will exceede China's!