

## 2024 Mission Trip Report

### · Armand Lim's Mission Summary

Reflections on 15 Years of Mission Work in India Good morning, Brothers and Sisters, Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Psalm 57:10 says, \**“For great is your love, reaching to the heavens; your faithfulness reaches to the skies.”*\*

Today, I have the privilege of representing about 200 brothers and sisters from both the English and Chinese congregations who have participated in short-term mission trips to India since 2008, with the most recent trip concluding just last week. Over the past 15 years, Grace Baptist Church (GBC) has sent an incredible 28 mission teams to India. I am honored to share the story of this journey and the profound impact it has had on both the regions we served and our own church community.

### The Beginning: A Call to India

In 2007, our hearts were stirred by the testimony of a Bhutanese policeman who became a pastor. This testimony led to an exploratory trip to India, guided by Pastor Stephen Lee and Dr. Tseng of the Chinese Baptist Association.

In 2008, GBC sent its first mission team to the Dooars region of West Bengal—a vibrant area bordering Bhutan and Nepal.

There, we partnered with local leaders, including Brothers Kunsang, Sanjib, and Zulu. On that initial trip, God revealed the immense needs of children in villages and schools.

This inspired us to send our first Vacation Bible School (VBS) team in 2009. Over the years, VBS programs expanded, reaching numerous schools. The impact was clear: at least four former VBS students have graduated from seminary and now serve as pastors. One of them, Ashim, the eldest son of Pastor Sanjib, is pursuing his Master of Divinity and will graduate in 2025.

From 2009 to 2018, we sent nine VBS teams, but by 2018, our focus shifted to equipping local church leaders to run their own VBS programs, empowering them to minister independently.

### Medical and Dental Missions

Since 2008, GBC has conducted 17 medical and dental missions in the Dooars district. These missions have evolved from merely addressing physical needs to incorporating evangelistic meetings, children's outreach programs, and prayer ministries.

These initiatives didn't just bring healing but also elevated the reputation of local churches and pastors. Outreach programs helped many children reconnect with their churches through Sunday school, enriching their spiritual lives.

### Transformation in the Dooars Region

In 2008, the Dooars region had 27 Baptist churches, originally established by missionaries from Nagaland. Today, this number has nearly doubled to 52 churches, with a combined membership of about 4,500. This growth is a testament to God's faithfulness.

### Reaching the Bhutanese People

Significant changes have also taken place among the Bhutanese people. Pastor Kunsang, a Bhutanese believer, felt called to reach his community, particularly Buddhist tribes. Through his efforts, initiatives like the Joshua Discipleship Bible School and the Drukpa Education Society have trained 65 leaders and planted nine churches in Bhutan, with many others in North Bengal, Arunachal Pradesh, and Sikkim.

Additionally, Bible translation into Central Bhutanese languages is

underway in partnership with Wycliffe Bible Translators, extending the Word of God to more hearts.

### Leadership Training

Leadership training has been another cornerstone of our mission. Many passionate local leaders lacked practical ministry training. GBC provided short courses on conflict resolution, forgiveness, church administration, Sunday school organization, and spiritual transformation.

### The Impact on GBC

Our missions to India and Bhutan have not only transformed those regions but have deeply shaped GBC. Since 2008, a significant portion of our English congregation has participated in short-term missions, strengthening our unity and love as a church family.

Our church have supported seminary students, prayed during crises, contributed to orphanages and disability ministries, and provided love offerings during the pandemic. These shared experiences have forged a strong, lasting bond with our brothers and sisters in India and Bhutan, truly making them part of our extended family in Christ.

## Looking Ahead

### What Lies Ahead for the GBC Mission in This Region?

Last May, Pastor Nick and I had the privilege of visiting Nepal on an exploratory mission trip. After much prayerful consideration and deliberation, the deacon board approved a plan and budget to expand our mission efforts. Starting in 2025, our church will begin sending short-term mission teams to Kathmandu and surrounding cities and villages.

We trust in God's guidance as we step into this exciting new chapter. At the same time, our love, prayers, and unwavering support for our friends in India and Bhutan remain strong and steadfast.

Thank you, and may God bless you all.

### · ESTELA VALLE

#### Love in action

"By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has this world goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?



My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth."

1 John 3:16-18

For the past fifteen years, Grace Baptist Church has been sending mission teams serving with the communities joining forces with Pastors in the Dooars area of West Bengal, India.

A friendship that has lasted and impacted the lives of many until this day.

When my name was mentioned as a possibility of joining this year's India mission trip, I took the news with a joyous heart, as I have never been a part of a mission trip before. Since I was a teenager, I've had the desire to be part of serving in a medical brigade but never had the courage to do it.

This year I had felt that I was getting too comfortable in my service and attitude



towards God. Which lead me to seek the Lord in prayer, wanting to grow more in my relationship with Him. So, when my sister mentioned that she had gave my name as new members were welcomed to join the mission trip, I was excited about the prospect.

However, as the training meetings began, the idea started to sink in my mind of what was to come. Many thoughts of doubts started to cross my mind, often questioning myself how I ended up there and feeling completely unqualified for the task at hand.

A sense of anxiety and inadequacy started to invade my mind after each meeting, as I was not sure what or how I could be of service.

In my walk with the Lord, I have often struggled with depending too much on my own abilities and what I can do instead of relying in God completely. However, the Lord is constantly reminding me that is Him at work and not me. God is the one who equips us and we are only vessels for His name to be glorified. What an honor that even though He does not need us, yet He allows us to be part of it.

As the days fast approached, I found myself feeling anxious and not knowing what to expect about the mission trip. In hindsight, I could have prepared better spiritually, spending more time in prayer and reading Scripture instead of trying to focus more

on physical needs. Spending time with the Lord is crucial to remember why we are serving and keeping our focus solely on Him. After a very long journey we arrived to India and it was time to “go in action”. This trip truly left me blown away by hearing the testimonies of the Pastors working with the

communities and how a small seed planted by the Lord, a long time ago kept flourishing for his glory. I could not help but

think of God's faithfulness towards them as well as us. "The LORD'S acts of mercy indeed do not end, For His compassions do not fail. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness." Lamentations 3:22-25.

I often hear the phrase "love in action" but on this trip God allowed me to see and experience this every day. I saw it from the Pastors, with the mission teammates and the volunteers. My part on the mission team was very small, I even felt like I could have done more or done a better job. Although, looking back, I see that the Lord wanted me to understand that we are not, in our own ability, equipped for God's call.

We must rely on him and, in our weakness, we will see his strength. Remembering in Scripture how God called many to his service, even with their shortcoming and failures but in the end His name is glorified. "And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me." 2 Corinthians 12:9.

Overall this experience has led me to wonder on what I am doing for the Lord and what I can do to continue to serve him by helping those around me. Specially those

that are around my age. How I can sacrifice more for God and rely on Him more and more. My desire is to continue sharing with other "love in action" and not let them be merely words. I praise God for the people he allowed me to meet and learn from as well as seeing his handy work in the lives of the people of India. Honor and glory be to him forever, Amen.

· Shane Yu

India Mission 2024.11

The first, the last, but not the end.

2008 is the first year that church started India mission, and it was also my first mission trip. I am a nurse, and I were asked to join India mission in medical site and work with a local doctor who was a missionary as well.

It was a precious experience for me in learning what is mission, and I saw a good model of a faithful servant of God to be a missionary , and I did experience God's leading and learn to trust in God more and more, because there were a

lot of unknow during that trip, and realized that to be a nurse and received



well training in a medical center in Taiwan is purposeful and meaningful, for God is calling me to serve people in India or somewhere else. 2011 and 2015.

I joined India mission again, but after that, my second daughter was born and she was diagnosed a rare disease which makes her have intractable seizure and severe development delay, I have to take care of her with my wife. To join mission again seems to be impossible.

However, I still put mission in my heart, so when Armand asked me to join India mission for this time will be the last year, and there is also lack of nurse, my wife and I think about that seriously and pray for that, seeking God's will and leading. For me, it may be not easy to have a long vacation, and for my wife, it's not easy to take care of children by herself. After praying,

we both felt peaceful, and decided to take the challenge to join mission trip again for this is the vision that God gives us.

Although my last trip was nine years ago, when we arrived in India, the streets, the traffic, the smell are so familiar to me, everything is so similar, there is no huge change in India, but there are somethings different from before, I discovered that there are more smiles on the faces of



villagers, and they seem to feel freely and comfortable to come to church. I saw some villagers, including adults and children, come to church almost every day during the free medical/dental service days, even they already received treatment, they still come to church, chatting or playing. I believe that church is already part of the community, and people there may realize that gospel and faith could bring peace, joy and freedom.

The other thing touched me very much is that we have several young local co-workers and some told me that, in 2008/2009, they were 9 or 10 years old, they came to church for VBS, and they became VBS students for years, nowadays, they are all adult and start to serve the Lord, they serve in the church, they lead the worship, they become our helpers, they are part of the mission as well.

We may not go to India again, but God already raise a new generation in India, for the land he will revive.

I believe that God's love and salvation will keep flow in India, our mission is the last but not the end.

· Anne Tan

Romans 8:26-30

26 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. 27 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God. 28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. 29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. 30 And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

What GBC had intended and God's grace for His children in GBC and India has



once again shows that God's Word is alive and He is a living and active God weaving a tapestry of hope and love timeless and borderless.

Armed with the knowledge that this would be the last year to go to India mission, I know and trust God that He has a time for everything after 8 years of seeing His guidance and faithfulness. From the increasing complex hurdles of collecting documents and navigating India visa applications, to the random and incidental immigration hassles, the otherwise uncomfortable journey/travel, and the eternal worries and what-ifs that anything could go wrong and nothing could be helped, God came through for our team.



As soon as we see Pastor K, Pastor S, and local volunteers, it became more like a homecoming rather than a mission. Their warmth and hospitality reminded me of how it is with God's people, one big happy family in Christ.

Thank you, Heavenly Father, for expanding my view of heaven and Your kingdom where every tribe, language, and people come together worshipping God through serving His people all for His glory alone. During the week, I had the chance to chat with some Indian brothers who have been hard at work in planting churches within West Bengal and their heart work in following the great Commission by going around these churches to care and shepherd the believers. Their passion for the gospel does not diminish with the hardships they are enduring for the sake of God's kingdom. It truly makes my own personal hardship pale in comparison. I give

what I can, but they give even if they can't. I am reminded again that God's purpose and will should take precedence over my own comfort if I love Him above all. Our morning team devotion also reiterated this and brought home the question: How much do I really love God? How am I loving Him with all my heart, my soul, my mind, my strength, as I should? How am I reflecting God's love to the people around me and across the world?

Mission is not a mission without the purpose and will of God. Although we weren't able to directly share the gospel to the people we served because of their non-conversion law, God use acts of kindness and service to show Himself to believers and non-believers. This year, I am very encouraged despite the exhaustion, strengthened in my feebleness, and blessed to see and hear the testimonies and works of our India brothers. God loves India. May God preserve the hearts of our India brothers and sisters as they struggle with the challenges of sharing the gospel to their countrymen. God loves me. Thank you, God, for the opportunity to go to India for His mission, to have a family in India, and the privilege to see how You have been working in my life and the lives of Your people in India.