## MERCY NEVSLETTER



Hello Mercy Family!

I had the great privilege of being in Southern Asia earlier this year. God provided Mercy with an incredible team who had the privilege of sharing the gospel with hundreds of girls and boys ages 3-17. We were in boys and girls homes doing crafts, make up, painting nails, playing games, coloring, singing, dancing, sharing the Good News of Jesus, praying with them, and for them. Most significantly of all, we were able to hold each of their faces in our hands and tell them how deeply loved they are by Jesus and how much value each of their little frames hold. It was powerful.

"So the master said, 'Go out into the country lanes and behind the hedges and urge anyone you find to come (to the great banquet), so that the house will be full." Luke 14:23

As we traveled through the beautiful countryside of Southern Asia, I realized we were living a moment out of the Parable of the Great Banquet. We were heading from the city to one of the Boy's Homes in a more rural area. Rice harvesting was happening all around the highway. We learned that rice is grown all over the country and harvested 3 times yearly. Yet rice must be imported to feed 169.4 million - Southern Asia cannot fulfill this need. Jesus is the only true way to feed and sustain this nation and all of us;

"I am the Bread of Life, they that come to me will never go hungry." John 6:35

Upon arrival at the Boy's Home, we were welcomed with singing and took in the beauty of the children and the home in which they lived. The men in our group quickly broke the ice with silly games, fist bumps and lots of laughter; then we all "played" cricket together! We brought gifts of crayons, school supplies, and crafts, but their gift of singing praises, reverent prayer and shy, excited smiles will fill my heart for time untold. Each session with the boys was more delightful than the last. Sharing times of worship and Bible stories and crafts was amazing, but the time we shared with the staff we traveled with was just as precious.

Our relationships with the ministry staff assigned to us have deepened through shared experiences, developing trust and joy in each other's presence. I experienced more warmth and acceptance than my last trip in December. Most importantly, I observed interest and engagement in the Biblical parts of our presentations. Whatever we prepared and shared with the children was taken in by any adult in the room. The Gospel was declared to people who know and follow Jesus and to people who are wondering just who this Jesus is and why He matters! While this portion of our trip was physically taxing in the extreme heat and humidity, I was spiritually refreshed, grateful and ready to continue this good work.

## Jodie Beals / May 2023 Southern Asia Engagement Trip

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