



# MYANMAR

MISSION TRIP 2017





## MISSION TEAM

The Myanmar missionaries who worked alongside us really enriched our time in Myanmar. It was fascinating to hear about their journey and what called them to Myanmar as well as the everyday struggles and God lessons learnt along the way. Not only did they keep us safe and supported during the trip, they invited us into their circles where we could build relationships with local people - what a privilege!

## BEAUTIFUL HEARTS

The most memorable moment of the trip was during the visit to Dala. Despite the extreme poverty in which this community lived, the people had a 'love of life' and positivity which was truly touching. The photograph of this elderly lady exemplifies this. Her initial expression reflected her physical state, however, once asked to smile, her beautiful inner spirit was revealed.





## POWERFUL EXPERIENCES

The time spent playing games and speaking English to children were some of the most powerful experiences of the trip. Watching them play, problem solve and laugh was special, but I particularly valued chatting to them about everyday life. They were so excited to tell you about their family, their dreams and what they had prepared for our community lunch!

I would have loved the opportunity to spend more time with these communities, possibly to do a half day of circuit activities involving a mix of physical, mental and social skills e.g. ball co-ordination games, artistic activities and social-speaking games.





## COMMUNITY MEALS

One lovely cultural activity that occurs in Myanmar is that of community meals. Family are known for their generosity by sharing meals with those less fortunate. It would be great to see this kind of compassion more regularly offered within Australian culture.

## LUXURIES OF HOME

Time in Myanmar reminded me of how lucky we are to have access to water. Myanmar's struggle for clean, running water was evident in hotels, restaurants and in local communities which relied on individuals to collect and distribute water from the local well.

While it was an amazing opportunity to try the local cuisine, my tummy did miss a few luxuries from home including: fresh bread, simple sandwiches, creamy ice cream, and of course, fast internet.



# FAITH EXPLORED

Our exposure to Buddhism, challenged me to re-examine my own faith, particularly the purpose of prayer. I started thinking about the true value of prayer, if God cared about the small things we prayed for, if prayer could change his plans AND, If I was viewing the world with an inherent bias, was this influencing my ability to hear God's message? Through worship, reading time and prayer throughout the day, we grappled with deeper faith questions and God's voice in the everyday became increasingly clear.

# SHARING TESTIMONY

Sharing my testimony allowed me to explain how God has moved throughout my life and at the most pivotal points. While serving God doesn't always seem easy or even enjoyable, it's always purposeful (something often revealed weeks, months, years later!). I hope my testimony was an example of how God is always with us and, once we stop and listen, can guide us to a more joyful, fulfilling life.

Matthew 11:28 was written on the church wall and summarised my thoughts perfectly...

“Come to me all who are weary and burdened,  
and I will give you rest.”







# GOD IN CREATION

Some of the most treasured times in Myanmar were through acknowledging God's creation. I particularly felt his presence in the countryside where the land was teeming with life, from fish and vegetation to farmers cultivating the land. The ingenuity, creativity and hard work of the people was inspiring. During time in nature, conversational prayer opened my eyes to the amazing power of God to work in all countries, lives and situations.

One particular song that resonated with me during this time was "So will I (100 Billion X)" by Amanda Cook (Bethel music).



# PERSISTENT PRAYER POINTS

## ***Love for animals:***

There are many stray dogs on the street in Myanmar. These dogs are rarely treated with love and are often scarred, malnourished and psychologically traumatised. These animals, amongst others, need prayer.

## ***Safe travel:***

Travel in Myanmar is precarious as drivers don't always respect the road rules and cars are seldom fitted with seatbelts. The car accident during our trip was a strong reminder to pray for road safety, particularly the implementation of road rules and infrastructure.

## ***Rubbish management:***

The sheer volume of plastic waste that circulated around Myanmar's streets and waterways was mortifying. The need for education on this issue, a waste management system and international initiatives to support recycling were consistent prayer points.

## ***Healthcare:***

I realised the immediate need for better healthcare when we encountered a leper. This man was suffering with hypopigmentation, skin lesions and could barely see; totally abandoned by society. In this moment, I prayed for vaccinations to become readily available in Myanmar and for people to have compassionate hearts. Jesus' time showing love to lepers, despite their disfigurement, reminded me of our call to love others.







WE CONTINUE TO  
PRAY FOR MYANMAR...