**Trust Pray**

Faith saves lives at sea

“When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you.”

Isaiah 43:2:

**Devotion**

During the secessionist war on Bougainville, I volunteered to run the political blockade between Solomon Islands and Bougainville, transporting life-saving drugs to the suffering people of Bougainville.

We always travelled at night. Saturday 17th August 1996 was windy and dark and we could not see the stars to give us directions. We would have arrived in Solomon around 8:30 pm, but by midnight we hadn’t arrived. We were low in fuel and on Sunday morning the skipper confirmed we’d lost our way. We floated two whole days. People were afraid so I sang gospel songs throughout the night to comfort them.

Monday night, I prayed, “Father, tomorrow exactly you will save us. I cannot allow these people to die out here.” That night, every breath I took was prayers of faith, for our rescue. Tuesday morning, all around us was a clear horizon with no land in sight. I was confident we would be saved on Tuesday, but how? Only God of the ocean knew, I believed.

By midday I was not afraid of where we would land, as long as it was land. I was prepared to die with my people, if it was God’s will. But I still believed God would lead us to safety. By 4pm a miracle happened. God sent a bird, which flew over us from the east and disappeared in the west. It did not dawn on me that the bird had a message for me. But half an hour later, a second bird flew from the same direction. By then, I knew God was instructing us. I directed the skipper to start the engine and travel east for 10 minutes. And sure enough, far in the east the blue land was sighted, and we shared tears of joy.

I prayed again, thanking God for saving us, but this time I told God to keep the fuel supply until we reached the shores of Solomon Islands. Indeed God preserved our fuel which ran out five minutes away from shore. We paddled with our hands to get there. Our great God sent two birds to give us directions to where land was and saved us from the great ocean.

Isaiah 43:2: ‘When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you.’ Let’s believe in this promise as we labour together in His service.

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**Prayer Points**

Mon: The Global Leprosy Strategy, endorsed by the World Health Organization and organisations like TLM, calls on governments to repeal legislation that discriminates against people affected by leprosy. Pray for all TLM countries in Asia and Africa as they work out strategies to influence governments for change – and praise God for the successes to date.

Tue: New position of Head of Advocacy and Communications was created at TLM International in late 2016. Pray for the new appointee, who will work with TLM countries everywhere to make sure that TLM is not only well-represented at events where we can exert influence, but also that we present clear, consistent messages.

Wed: ILEP (the International Federation of Anti-Leprosy Associations) has formed a global panel of people affected by leprosy, who are from several different countries. Pray for this panel, who will be one of the ways in which TLM can ensure that its decisions and policies take into account the voice of leprosy-affected people.

Thu: In the pages of ASK there are many accounts of TLM working to empower leprosy-affected people – often through involvement in self-help groups and associations – to speak for themselves. Praise God for the small successes that build confidence among the groups and the TLM staff who support them, and encourage people to aim higher.

Fri: Authentic participation means finding ways to listen to the voice of people affected by leprosy. Because they are often poor, uneducated and have a history of exclusion, this is not always straightforward. Pray that country leaders and their teams will listen patiently, attentively and respectfully, and where necessary change their approaches and well-represented at events where we can exert influence, but also that we present clear, consistent messages.

Sat/Sun: Pray for God-given courage and persistence for TLM staff who find themselves challenging entrenched, hostile and discriminatory attitudes to leprosy and disability by power-holders, including government and religious authorities and opinion-leaders.

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人们受到麻风病的影响时，他们常常因痛苦而犹豫不决。他们遭遇麻风病的打击时，他们感到震惊和恐惧。但他们仍然相信上帝会引领他们。周一晚上，我祈祷：“主，明天你必拯救我们。我不能允许这些人民的生灵在绝望中消亡。”那天晚上，每呼吸一口都是我对主的信仰，为我们的救援。周二早晨，我们周围是一片光明，没有陆地的影子。我有自信我们会活到周二，但怎样呢？只有海洋之神知道，我相信。

到了中午，我不再害怕去哪里，只要那是一块陆地。我准备与我的人民同死，如果那是上帝的旨意。但我仍然相信上帝会引导我们到安全的地方。到了下午4点，一个奇迹发生了。上帝派了一只鸟，从东边飞过我们，然后消失在西边。起初我没有意识到那只鸟有一则信息给我。但半小时后，第二只鸟从同一方向飞来。那时，我知道上帝在指示我们。我指示船长启动引擎，并向东行驶10分钟。果然，东方的蓝色土地出现了，我们分享了喜悦的泪水。

我再次祈祷，感谢上帝的救赎，但这次我告诉上帝要保存燃料，直到我们到达所罗门群岛的岸边。果然，上帝保住了我们的燃料，当它耗尽时，我们离海岸还差五分钟。我们用手划水到那里。大的上帝派了两只鸟给我们出路的指示，引导我们到达有陆地的地方，把我们从浩瀚的大洋中救了出来。

以赛亚书43:2: ‘当你们经过水的时候，我必与你们同在；通过河谷，我必与你们同在。’ 让我们相信这个应许，因为我们正一同在祂的服务中努力。

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**Speaking Out**
Singapore and South Korea

About The Singapore Leprosy Mission

The Singapore Leprosy Mission (TSLM) is a support group (established in 2004) that raises financial support for TLM, encourages people to pray for the work and raises awareness in Singapore of leprosy and The Leprosy Mission. They are currently supporting Anandaban Hospital, Nepal from 2016-17, where major repairs are needed following the 2015 earthquakes in addition to the ongoing leprosy work. Their target is to provide SGD $50K of support, which may be renewed after review at the end of the two year period.

About TLM Korea

Although there are very few new cases of leprosy detected each year in South Korea, there are still many elderly people living with leprosy-related disabilities. Some continue to live in leprosy rehabilitation villages, isolated from mainstream communities. TLM Korea runs the Jesus Hospital in Daegu, which specialises in dermatology services and any cases of leprosy, and an adjacent 80-bed nursing home for elderly people with disabilities including those caused by leprosy. It also provides other forms of support to elderly leprosy-affected people in the community and raises prayer support within South Korea for TLM’s work.

Prayer Points

Singapore

Mon: Thank God for the dedication of the Singapore Leprosy Mission board. Pray that the directors will have wisdom, strength and God’s guidance as they promote the work of the Mission.

Tue: The chairman, Dr George Seow, sends out a regular newsletter as The Singapore Leprosy Mission’s main way of informing donors and asking for funds. Pray that God will use the newsletter to speak to people’s hearts and that they will reach and exceed their income target.

Wed: New donors are needed in Singapore. Pray with the directors that new donors will be found through personal contacts of the board and current donors, and through extending their mailing list to new churches.

South Korea

Thu: TLM Korea Jesus Hospital cares for more than 400 aged people affected by leprosy and disability and their families each year through out-clinics in leprosy villages around Daegu district. Pray they can develop good relationships with the villages enabling them to visit in the local church once per month.

Fri: Most people affected by leprosy in South Korea are elderly. Pray that those cared for by TLM Korea will have peace and security for the rest of their days.

Sat/Sun: Pray for wisdom and health for Chairman Mr Allun Cho. Pray for all TLM Korea board members and staff as they undertake leprosy work in Jesus Hospital and nursing home for the elderly.

Vocational Education

The Leprosy Mission Trust India has six Vocational Training Centres (VTCs) spread across six states in India: Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. Young people affected by leprosy and other disabilities are given vocational education to prepare them for gainful employment. The job-oriented trades taught in the VTCs include both institution-based and community-based vocational trades, such as diesel mechanics, printing, computers, two/three wheeler mechanics and electronics. Disability assessment and individual tailor-made rehabilitation plans developed by TLM’s occupational therapists motivate and enable the differently abled students of the VTCs to opt for careers which were formerly only dreams. VTCs also provide placement assistance and advocate for fair labour conditions and safe and appropriate working conditions for students when they are placed.

Community-Based Vocational Training is another major function of TLM’s sustainable livelihoods programme, enabling the VTCs to reach out to more people. Individuals such as youths and married women receive training and employment support in mushroom cultivation, silk thread weaving, computers, mobile repairing and tailoring. This sort of training is unique as it promotes community-based solutions in linking skills training and sustainable livelihoods for the most vulnerable communities, especially those who cannot access established training centres.

Key Team

Singapore

Rev Dr George Seow – Chairman
Ms Lam Yan Yan – Recording Secretary
Canon Louis Tay – Committee
Rev Milton Lazarus – Committee

South Korea

Mr Jaewoo Choi – Programme Coordinator
Dr Mrs Nan Hee Kim – Medical Director
Mr Allun Cho – Chairman

Vocational Training Centres and Key Staff

Mrs Tina Mendi – Head of Sustainable Livelihoods and Empowerment
TLM Platinum Vocational Training Centre, Vizianagaram, Andhra Pradesh
– Mr Vijay Patta – Principal
TLM Chhattisgarh Vocational Training Centre, Champa, Chhattisgarh
– Mr Mahendra Rao – Principal
TLM Vocational Training Centre, Nashik, Maharashtra
– Mrs Shyla Francis – Principal
TLM Regional Vocational Training Centre, Vadathorasalukkottai, Tamil Nadu
– Mr Vinson Thomas – Principal
TLM Wellesley Bailey Vocational Training Centre, Faizabad, Uttar Pradesh
– Mr Keshava Thanapati – Vice Principal
TLM Bill Edgar Memorial Vocational Training Centre, Bankura, West Bengal
– Mr Gabriel Pani – Principal

Prayer Points

Mon: Pray for the staff involved in the admissions process, who travel to remote places to reach out to the poor and needy students affected by leprosy to counsel them for admission to VTCs.

Tue: Pray for the physio and occupational assessment of students in order to appropriately modify training facilities for young people with disabilities.

Wed: Pray for the VTCs catering to community-based training. Pray that they will be successful in reaching out to married women and young girls and boys who are unable to undergo institution-based training due to family commitments and cultural barriers.

Thu: VTCs have very limited financial support. Pray for new donors, particularly in India, to come forward to support them.

Fri: Pray for God’s presence with VTC alumni groups across the country to strengthen and support themselves and students.

Sat/Sun: Pray for the partners like Quest Alliance, Mahindra and Mahindra, Tata Motors, Force Motors, Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) and HDFC Bank who provide equipment, training, upgrade faculty, etc. Pray that many more partners come forward to support the work of the VTCs.
Netherlands

‘For in Him we live and move and have our being.’
Acts 17:28

About TLM Netherlands

The Leprosy Mission Netherlands (Leprazending Nederland) was founded in the 1980s to support The Leprosy Mission International with funds, prayer and human resources. The office is in Apeldoorn and there are nine members of staff, eight board members and eight volunteers. TLM Netherlands supports two Dutch cross-cultural workers: Geeske Zijp in Chad and Tanny Hagens, who has worked in Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Ethiopia in recent years.

TLM Netherlands’s vision is to see leprosy and rehabilitation services strengthened and to enable transformational change in the lives of people affected by leprosy in India, Bangladesh, DR Congo, Myanmar and Chad. In order to make that possible, TLM Netherlands seeks support from donors, churches and funds and organises events to get people involved with the vision and mission of TLM.

TLM Netherlands consists of people from many denominations, increased in recent years from 200 to 300 supporters. Thank God for the increasing number of devoted supporters who pray for the work and people’s spiritual needs.

The group of prayer supporters in the Netherlands, consisting of people from many denominations, increased in recent years from 200 to 300 supporters. Thank God for the increasing number of devoted supporters who pray for the work and people’s spiritual needs.

Prayer Points

Mon: Thank God for the important contribution of volunteers who are working for TLM Netherlands. They are doing a wonderful job and are highly esteemed. Pray that they will be able to increase the number of volunteers in 2017.

Tue: Pray for the wellbeing of all staff members, board members and volunteers of TLM Netherlands; for joy, wisdom and fulfilment in their tasks.

Wed: The group of prayer supporters in the Netherlands, consisting of people from many denominations, increased in recent years from 200 to 300 supporters. Thank God for the increasing number of devoted supporters who pray for the work and people’s spiritual needs.

Thu: Pray for ongoing contact with churches and Christian organisations in the Netherlands, that they will take an interest in the needs of people affected by leprosy and be inspired to partner with TLM.

Fri: Give thanks for the many donors who give generously for the projects in the various countries TLM Netherlands supports. Pray that the team can reach more people and find new donors.

Sat/Sun: Please pray for Dutch cross-cultural workers in the field, Tanny Hagens and Geeske Zijp. Pray that they can support the staff where they are working, reassure and encourage persons affected by leprosy and be inspired to partner with TLM.

Mangla, the eldest daughter in her family in Maharashtra, India, was born with a bilateral cleft lip and palate. Her father, who wanted a son as his first-born, tried to give her away to an orphanage, and only changed the plan due to her mother’s persistent pleading. When Mangla was one year old, at her mother’s insistence, she was given surgery to correct her cleft lip.

As if her father’s hatred wasn’t enough, Mangla was diagnosed with leprosy when she was in 10th standard. “I cried a lot when I was told that I had leprosy. My mother asked me not to tell this to anyone. And my father hated me even more,” says Mangla. When, overwhelmed by what life had thrown at her, Mangla failed in her school exams, her father didn’t talk to her for six months. He wanted her to leave the house because her sisters’ marriage prospects would be affected because of Mangla’s leprosy.

With a friend’s encouragement, Mangla joined TLM’s Vocational Training Centre (VTC) in Nashik, Maharashtra, and completed a two-year secretarial course. Such was the love and care she got in the VTC, she decided not to go home. She joined a private firm, but wanted to go back to the VTC to work. “God heard my prayers; I returned to work as office assistant and girls’ hostel warden in Nashik VTC,” says Mangla. “Nashik VTC was the turning point in my life. I decided not to bow down before the challenges in life. I knew leprosy and other problems couldn’t stop me from making a career and having a life I wanted.”

Today, Mangla is a happy woman. She has completed two university degrees and now works in the administrative department of TLM’s Kothara Hospital. She’s married and has a five-year-old daughter. “I knew God would give me the strength to face life bravely. He guided my every step and helped me to be successful. On seeing my success, my father had a change of heart. God brought me honour in front of my father. Now I’m his pet! He wants to live with me,” says Mangla, with a smile lighting up her face.

FEATURE

The Turning Point
England and Wales – Part 2

‘Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give.’
Matthew 10:8 (NIV)

About TLM England and Wales

TLM England and Wales’s executive office team carries and imparts vision, reporting to the board of trustees to ensure the effective governance of the charity. It is responsible for the recruitment of staff and looking after its policies and procedures. At the core of the Mission is the essential activity of prayer and engaging supporters to pray for leprosy-affected people, staff and TLM’s work.

The programmes team works alongside implementing countries in Africa and Asia to develop, deliver and monitor effective and sustainable programmes. The team also secures funding from institutional donors and provides funding packages and feedback for supporting churches.

The fundraising team’s unique role brings together supporters and people affected by leprosy who need their help, even though they may be oceans apart! It raises awareness of the needs of leprosy-affected people through publications, including the New Day newsletter, posters, films, leaflets for churches and fundraising campaigns. In 2017 it hopes more people will choose to give by direct debit which will reduce administration costs and hopes more people will choose to give by direct debit which will reduce administration costs and help with forward planning.

The supporter care team is an essential part of the Mission’s culture in supporting its fundraising efforts. Engaging with TLM’s donors, staff and dedicated volunteers, it resources a range of tasks from telephone and email management, processing financial gifts and updating donor giving from each appeal.

Week 49: 4–10 December

Bangladesh – Community-Based Rehabilitation and Advocacy

About TLM Bangladesh

TLM Bangladesh focuses on a group approach in many of its community-based projects across various communities. TLM-facilitated self-help groups provide mutual support and improve health and livelihood opportunities for people affected by leprosy, disability and poverty. Through these groups, TLM provides training, skills development, access to microcredit for members and educational opportunities for the children.

Other projects include the North West Bangladesh Ultra Poverty Initiative Project (NuPIP), which works to overcome extreme poverty among people with leprosy-related disabilities and to reduce food insecurity and improve livelihoods.

The Hagar Centre is a short-term shelter for women who are less fortunate than us. It provides thousands of hours of service. Their contribution of £5.5m by the end of 2017. Pray that it will provide an education through this project, and ask for a positive result quickly and experience justice.

The Advocacy for Empowerment Project aims to influence policies and practices of Government and other decision-makers. It is striving to ensure that leprosy services are provided in previously uncovered southern districts of Bangladesh. It also initiates awareness building through the media.

Chittagong People-led Development Project is a new concept for TLM Bangladesh. Rather than TLM providing a community development programme for a disadvantaged group, this project aims for the people themselves to form local associations so that they will own and run their project. There are multiple elements: disability care; raising awareness of people’s rights; improvement of social status; and economic and income development.

Prayer Points

Mon: Pray for the leaders of self-help groups and associations, that they may not be officially registered with the government, their activities will not be further support from TLM.

Tue: Pray for courage and resourcefulness for the ten Area Management Committee leaders who will be responsible, independently of TLM, to manage 117 groups in their communities.

Wed: Pray for seven ulcer care committees, who take care of ulcer patients by themselves in all the working area of TLM Bangladesh.

Thu: Pray for women residing at the Hagar Centre who have court cases in different areas, that they will get positive results quickly and experience justice.

Fri: The new phase of NuPIP funded by effecthope (Canada), targets people who are ultra-poor with debilitating leprosy disability or filariasis. Pray that the beneficiaries will be able to improve their social and economic status through income generating activities and enjoy their rights in the community.

Sat/Sun: Pray for TLM Bangladesh as they seek support from journalists to report on leprosy issues, raising public awareness and drawing the attention of policy makers. Mass awareness of this neglected disease will contribute to early diagnosis, treatment and referral, therefore reducing disability resulting from leprosy and social stigma.

Senior Staff

Mr Sareendra Nath Singh – Programme Leader, Community Programme
Mr Noel Manna Dey – Finance Manager, Community Programme
Mr Dalwor Hossain (Delu) – Manager, CBR Partners
Mr Ambor Chisim – Manager, NuPIP and Hagar Centre
Mr Pranoy Rozario – Manager, Dinajpur Sustainable Community Based Rehabilitation Project
Mr Richard Mondal – Manager, Chittagong People-led Development Project
Mrs Lovely Probhati Mrong – Manager, CBR Project
Mrs Masuma Parvin – Manager, Advocacy for Empowerment Project

Top: Meeting of an association of self-help groups.