

GLOBAL DAY OF PRAYER FOR
BURMA
— 2025 —



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PRAYER FOR BURMA

Heavenly Father, we give you praise! Thank you for hearing our prayer. Thank you for being a God who draws near to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit (Ps. 34:18). May the millions displaced across Burma experience your present closeness. Thank you for being a God of comfort (2 Cor 1:4). May those people and communities presently grieving the loss of friends, family, and dreams of the future experience your loving care. Thank you for being a just God. May your justice roll down like waters (Amos 5:24) throughout Burma on behalf of the oppressed. Thank you that you are a gracious and merciful God who is quick to forgive (Ps. 86:15). May the people of Burma forgive others as you already have and will forgive them when they trust in you. Thank you that you are a God of love (1 Jn. 4:8). Fill the hearts of every tribe and community with your love. Teach all of us to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us (Matt. 5:44). Thank you for your son Jesus Christ. May the people of Burma experience freedom in mind and spirit through relationship with Jesus Christ. May the people of Burma experience freedom on every level. Only you can do this. May our hope, the hope of the people of Burma, only be in you. In Jesus's name, amen.



AS YOU READ

Through this year's Day of Prayer for Burma, we encourage you to use the individual prayer points placed throughout the publication as a guide and reminder for the different and specific ways to pray for this country.

THE GLOBAL DAY OF PRAYER FOR BURMA HAPPENS EVERY YEAR ON THE SECOND SUNDAY OF MARCH. PLEASE JOIN US IN PRAYING FOR BURMA.

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FROM THE DIRECTOR



DEAR FRIENDS,

Can we love others as we love our children? Can we love our enemies as if they were our children? Can we love the Burma Army? In the story of Adam and Eve their son Cain kills Abel. There were consequences. However, Adam and Eve did not kill the remaining son, Cain in punishment.

Later on, King David faced the rebellion of his son. Absalom took over the royal city, committed evil and then came out with an army to kill his own father and those with him. King David rallied his own army to stop this attack but told his men not to kill his son. In the battle, Absalom's forces were defeated and he was killed despite the king's orders. King David was distraught and heartbroken and had to be reminded by his men that more people were at stake, not just his rebellious son. King David understood but was overcome with grief.

From then until now, people have been killing each other. And, from then until now, the idea of killing our own children is so horrible we can't even think about it. If I would never hurt my own children, how can I hurt someone else's?

My father told me after he served in the Korean War that sometimes you may need to stop a man's heart with a bullet, but you can never change a man's heart with a bullet. Dad said, "I want to be working with God to change people's hearts with the love of Jesus." That

is the same mission of the Free Burma Rangers. Our mission is to share Jesus's love, help people, and get the news out. It is not to fight or kill.

At the same time, we have faced people doing great evil, such as ISIS who were killing men, women, and children right in front of us and attacking us as well. In some cases, we have fought back. The same has been true in Burma. We are now in the 74th year of war in Burma and the last three years since the coup have been the most intense: over 3.5 million displaced in these last few years, and thousands killed. We have lost many of our friends and the suffering is great in Burma. The dictators are supported by Russia, China, North Korea, Iran, and other countries as they slaughter their own people. The people of Burma have stood up and fighting has intensified. The pro-democracy forces are fighting and killing Burma Army troops. As we encourage them to pray for their enemies it also makes us ask the question: how can we be willing to kill another person's child, if we would never kill our own? This is something that I've struggled with in thought and prayer.

God made it clear to me years ago in Burma that nothing truly precious is eternally lost. We will see each other again because of the love of Jesus. This knowledge makes room for forgiveness.

I remember the words of my professor, Chuck Kraft,

at Fuller Seminary: "You can live well with sorrow, but you can't live well with shame." When we share our sorrow, we can comfort each other. Jesus can take away our shame by forgiving us – and when we forgive those who have wronged us, we can have a part in taking away their shame and helping open a door to redemption for them.

For us and most of you, dear readers, most of the time we are not fighting people physically, but we all are in some form of battle with people who have hurt or betrayed us. We can ask Jesus, "What do I do now?" God has helped me to ask, what would I do if it was my child who just hurt me? When we're trying to help our children who have done something wrong, we pray for love and wisdom to be able to stand firmly on the truth in love and also in justice.

Something I learned in the battle against ISIS and here in Burma is this: love is the difference between revenge and justice. The only way we get justice is with love, love for the perpetrator and the victim. Justice is born of love and forgiveness and builds up; revenge is born of hate and shame, and destroys. Justice is our responsibility. Revenge will destroy us and not bring about justice or healing.

When we've been badly hurt, Jesus can supernaturally help us forgive and move towards justice. If we allow it, He will fill us with His love for everyone involved. In love, we give discipline and punishment to our children to stop them from doing the wrong thing and build them up. As we pray to God for love for our enemies, He will give us that love and help us see our enemies as if they were our children. God will help us know when and how to take a stand.



We pray for the Burma military as if they were our children. We thank God for the opportunities to treat wounded Burma soldiers and carry them to safety. We thank Him for the time young Rangers donated their own blood to a wounded Burman soldier who just minutes before was trying to kill them. We thank Jesus that we have had chances to pray with Burma Army soldiers and tell them who He is. These acts of love offer hope for redemption for these soldiers who are stained by the shameful evil they've taken part in.

In all our lives, there may be a time to fight physically, legally, or some other way, but we always need to remember, we could be fighting our own children. That other person we're fighting is always someone's child. May God help us remember that, see our own sins and faults in the situation, and forgive others just as we want God to forgive us. In the end, we are all children of God.

Thank you so much for praying for and with us and for the people suffering in Burma, including the dictators and their army. May God bless you,

Dave, family and FBR

Opposite: The Eubank family together in Burma on a mission earlier this year.

Left: Ranger giving blood to a Burma soldier in Karenni as our doctors save his life.

Right: Peter Eubank carries a casualty in Karenni State, Burma.

THIS YEAR COUNTRY OVERVIEW

HORROR AND HOPE IN BURMA

BY ASHLEY SOUTH

Four years after the February 2021 coup, Burma is in deep crisis. The illegal and illegitimate State Administrative Council (SAC) junta has committed widespread and systematic war crimes, including hundreds of airstrikes on civilian communities, with over 1000 casualties in Karen areas alone (including scores of children). As a result of Myanmar Army and proxy forces attacks on civilians, there are over 3 million internally displaced people in the country, with over 1 million in the Karen free state of Kawthoolei.

In late November 2024, the International Criminal Court issued an arrest warrant for junta leader Min Aung Hlaing. Finally, the international community seemed to be waking up to the horror of junta actions in Burma, which have long been well documented by the United Nations and other agencies. Sadly however, in the global context of violent crises (not least in Israel-Palestine and Ukraine), international attention and support to the anti-junta movement in Burma has been limited. The United States and some other governments should be commended for stepping up their aid - but far more is needed.

Across the country, humanitarian needs are much greater than the current supply of aid. Many international agencies continue trying to access vulnerable communities from 'inside Myanmar', under surveillance of the SAC. However, conflict-affected communities are generally only accessible 'cross-border' by local Burmese civil society organisations, and a very few international friends, like the Free Burma Rangers. (From my travels in Burma, I can assure readers that FBR are known and loved throughout the revolution, shining a light on the situation, and bringing help where most others fear to tread.)

In the absence of enough international support, the people of Burma often have to help themselves. Across the warzones, local organizations provide assistance, while Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAOs) provide wide-ranging services, despite limited resources - in the teeth of vicious attacks by the Myanmar junta. For example, the KNU education department administers

some 1500 schools attended by well over one hundred thousand of the most vulnerable children in the country.

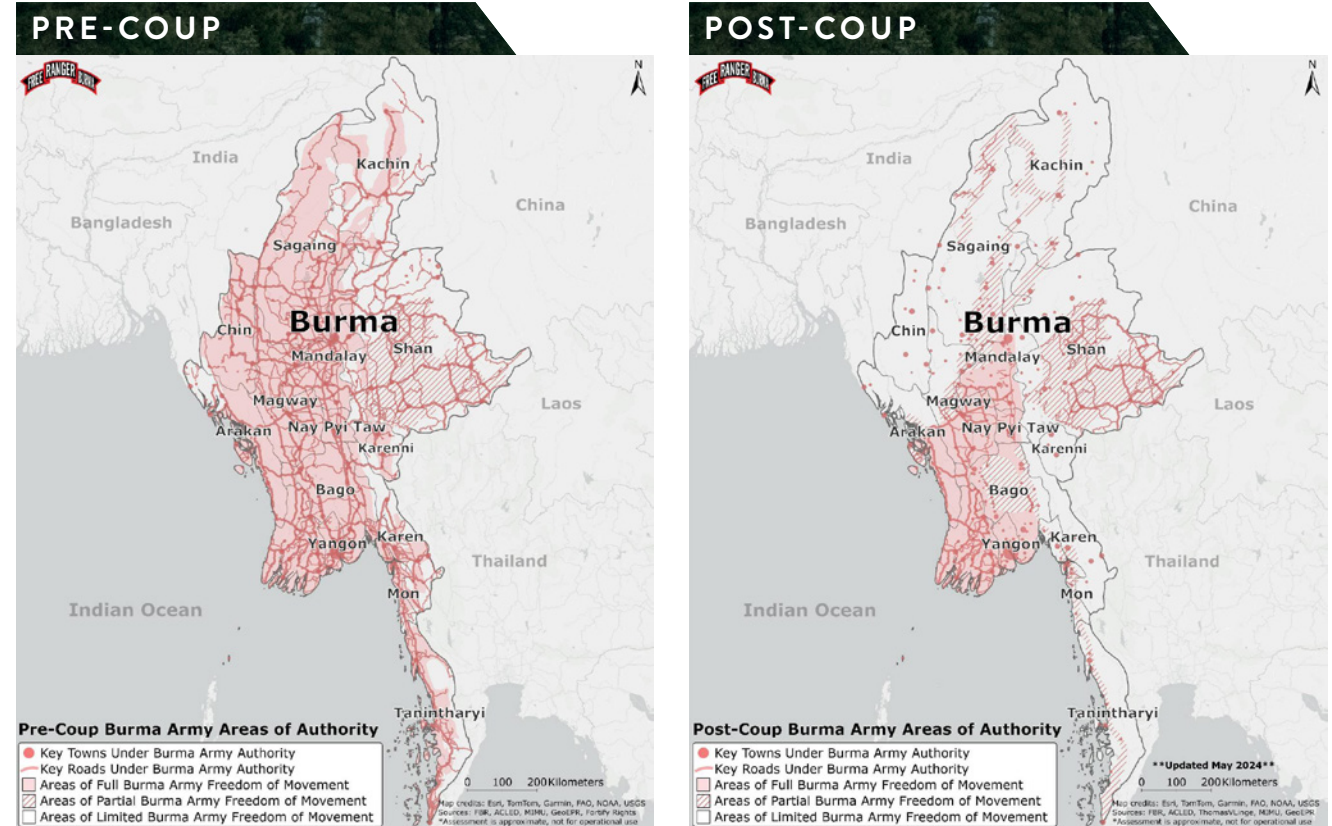
Such achievements have been matched in recent years on the battlefield. During the quarter-century I worked in and on Burma before the coup (and indeed, during the quarter-century before that), no EAO to my knowledge succeeded in taking and holding a significant Myanmar Army position. Since the coup, well over 500 Myanmar Army bases have fallen to opposition forces - EAOs, and People's Defence Forces under authority of the National Unity Government. In Karen areas alone, at least 138 bases have been liberated. For the first time in decades, most of the Thailand-Burma border is controlled by freedom fighters, rather than junta forces. Militarily and politically, momentum is with the EAOs - with junta forces collapsing across the country. However, Min Aung Hlaing and his cronies are not finished yet.

The challenge to the international community is to support EAOs and civil society organisations which are committed to self-determination, democracy and freedom. In the meantime, China and Russia (in particular) are doubling down, increasing their support for the SAC junta.

Unlike in some other conflicts, it seems clear in Burma who the good guys are. What also needs to be understood is that the SAC will not stop attacking the people until anti-junta forces can properly defend civilian communities. The most effective way of providing 'humanitarian protection' will be to provide direct military support to anti-junta forces - starting with defense against deadly airstrikes, and equipment to jam increasingly deadly SAC drone attacks.

The situation in Burma may be horrific - but this is also the best opportunity in decades (perhaps centuries) to achieve freedom and self-determination. Anti-junta forces have demonstrated great resilience and creativity - they need help in standing up against the increasingly well-armed and thoroughly despicable junta.

SHRINKING DICTATORIAL CONTROL



Left: Protesters gather in cities after the 2021 coup.



Right: A protester uses a three-fingered salute that has become a symbol of the pro-democracy movement.



LIFE IN A SLUM

HELPING THOSE LIVING IN DEEP POVERTY

Squatter villages have sprung up around the larger cities of Burma. These temporary settlements have developed into slums. Volunteers from around Burma have come together to work in these areas, forming an organization that works to improve the lives of the slum's residents. Because of security concerns, we can't name them, but want to share their work.

With survivors' ingenuity, families just manage to get by. There is chronic food insecurity, unemployment and inadequate resources in most areas of central Myanmar. We find the children who just wander about and bring them into our school. They thrive in this structured safe and fun environment. These children, the ones who are not having to work to help support the family, are now given an opportunity to attend school. We teach them the basics like math and reading, but importantly social skills so that when the time and opportunities open up, they will be prepared for community life.

With the terrible problem of food insufficiency we provide nutritious food and vitamin supplements each class day.

For the older children, we tutor, and for those already at grade level, we prepare them for advanced learning opportunities. We offer practical training in areas where opportunities for work do exist.

Professional health care is out of reach for most. On paper, Myanmar has socialized medicine, but realistically there is no free health care. Our area does have a free clinic, and as a result we see that what underlies much of the population's health problems is poverty,

poverty without resources, a cold hard hopelessness.

Water, as with food, is of great concern. There are shallow wells in these communities and all water needs to be boiled, exacerbating severe shortages of wood and gas as fuel. Even so the water is so salty that it is unpalatable.

We have dug deep wells, but seepage of so much garbage and sewage into the soil has contaminated even our deep wells. Our well is by far superior to most of what is available. When the barrels of rainwater go dry at each shelter/home, we provide as much water to the community as possible.

All about is discarded plastic, open sewage, mold, smoke, pollution, and intense high humidity and heat. Pathways and alleys in these squatter villages remain muck even after the floods of rainy season pass. Skin disease and parasites are rife.

Contamination of the land is so extreme it is like living on a plastic landfill. There is no garbage removal. There is no place to even dump the garbage. To burn would be a cancerous nightmare and a fire hazard. An unattended flame would be so intense that these villages would be leveled in minutes. With scraps and tin however another slum would be resurrected in two weeks.

Yet people more and more come to escape that which is going on around the country. They are looking for safety, any work, a life worth living.

Our prayer is that a righteous peace come about to this land and all may enjoy the abundance of beauty in this country.

LIFE IN AN IDP CAMP

BY ANTONIO GRACEFFO



A young boy in Kaung Par IDP camp, Karenni State, Burma.

When an airstrike hits your village, fleeing is a rational choice. But what happens when the place you flee to is bombed too?

Maria, a Catholic Karenni mother of four, shared her story: "We ran to the jungle first, but there were always mortars and airstrikes." Eventually, she and her family reached Daw Noe Ku IDP camp, now home to over 5,000 people. The camp has been targeted too—its Catholic church, school, and college have all been destroyed. Unlike U.N. refugee camps, IDP camps in Burma receive minimal outside support and lack U.N. protection. The Burma Army is free to bomb them, leaving their security precarious. Peter, who fled to the camp with his wife and infant son after the coup, said, "Last night, planes flew over, so everyone slept in the riverbed." For the IDPs, the sound of an airplane always signals danger. Makeshift bomb shelters—simple holes in the ground—are scattered around bamboo huts. Maria wishes to return to her village but knows it's too dangerous. "The situation in the camp isn't stable either. We always have to be alert for airstrikes," she said.

Life in the camp is far from easy. Oo-Re, a section head, explained, "TBBC (Thai Burma Border Consortium) provides 14 kilos of rice per person per month." This aligns with the World Food Programme (WFP) and

the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) general guidelines for subsistence-level food assistance in emergency settings. To help residents ration their supplies, Oo-Re said they distribute the rice twice a month, giving seven kilos each time.

There is also a secondary food distribution when extra supplies are available, explained Oo-Re. "This may include Indian beans, salt, and sometimes cooking oil or Mama noodles," he said. "However," he added, "but not every month. Sometimes canned fish, but almost no meat." While a diet of rice can sustain life, it lacks sufficient nutrition. There are no paying jobs in the camp, leaving residents unable to afford extras like eggs or other supplements. "Some families have relatives in Thailand who can send money," Oo-Re explained, "but others have no one, so they get nothing." For those receiving financial support from Thailand, the arrangement often comes at a significant cost—families are split apart, with fathers or older sons working illegally as construction or farm laborers. These jobs, which pay 300 baht per day (around \$9 USD) for only a few days of work each month, come with constant risks of arrest and deportation.

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a significant issue among internally displaced persons (IDPs). "Because of the war, we have so many people who were killed or wounded, losing a leg... We get trauma from that," explained Oo-Re. "We cannot forget what we see here and what made us flee."

On the Day of Prayer for Burma, I urge everyone to pray for the IDPs. While international media often highlights the refugee crisis, few people truly understand what it means to be an IDP. They are among the most vulnerable of all displaced populations, lacking support and protection from any organization. Pray that the United Nations acts immediately to provide material aid, including food, medicine, and physical security, to these forgotten individuals. IDPs represent a neglected and dire humanitarian crisis that urgently demands attention.

As we lift up these prayers, let us be guided by the words of Isaiah 1:17, which call us to seek justice and care for those in need:

"Learn to do right; seek justice, defend the oppressed, take up the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow." (NIV)

PRAYER POINTS

PRAY FOR GOD TO PROVIDE RESOURCES SUCH AS FOOD, WATER, AND MEDICINE, TO THOSE IN DESPERATE NEED, ENSURING THEIR BASIC SURVIVAL IN TIMES OF CRISIS.



“BECAUSE OF GOD I AM STILL ALIVE” A RANGER FINDS JESUS

Aung Gyi, whose nickname means “Victory,” is 27 years old. He is from the Sagaing area of Myanmar, but grew up in Mandalay, a city in central Burma. As a young teenager, he lost both his parents, who passed away just one week apart. He has three older brothers, but isn’t able to communicate with them anymore after they were all briefly arrested by the police due to Aung Gyi’s participation in the revolution.

Aung Gyi returned to Sagaing for university, where he studied mechanical engineering and, perhaps more importantly, met his future wife, Lin, in 2019. In February 2021, the Burma Army staged a coup and overthrew the elected government; very quickly the people of Burma rose up to resist – the revolution had begun. In the cities of central Burma there were mass protests, and in the outlying ethnic areas, the scale and intensity of violence by the Burma Army against the ethnic people began to increase. Aung Gyi and Lin both became involved in the people’s movement and in May 2021, after learning more about the situation for Karenni IDPs (internally displaced people), they and three other friends raised 4 million kyat so they could travel to Karenni to help.

Since the coup, Karenni State has seen some of the heaviest attacks by the Burma Army, and hundreds of people have been displaced. While the need is great,

travel there, especially from the outside, is difficult. Aung Gyi and the group knew their trip could be difficult and dangerous. Once on their way, they arrived in a town near the Karenni border and stopped to buy supplies and try to learn more about the situation and safest way to the IDP area. While there, they heard there was a ceasefire, so they set off again to reach the IDPs. At one point, they were stopped at a Burma Army checkpoint, but were miraculously the only people on the bus who didn’t have their IDs and phones checked. On the way, they often didn’t know where to go next but Lin would encourage the team to pray and wait. They heard there were many IDPs in Demoso, so they decided to go there; but, before continuing, they decided their group needed a name. Freelance Volunteer Myanmar was born.

Since then, FVM has grown to a total of 20 volunteers. Their mission is to visit IDP camps to give supplies and medicine, and facilitate children’s programs. In September 2021, they met FBR Karenni teams and began to collaborate. They were able to give money for mobile medical clinics and participated in Good Life Club programs.

In January 2022, during an FBR relief mission, an FBR Karenni leader called Aung Gyi to see if he could organize food for some team members who were returning

*Opposite: Aung Gyi exercises during an FBR training .
Below: Aung Gyi helps evacuate a fellow ranger after he stepped on a land mine.
Bottom: Aung Gyi leads resistance soldiers in a prayer.*



to the area. Aung Gyi liked what FBR was doing since there were many similarities between FBR and his work. He also met Dave Eubank who gave a donation to FVM to help continue their work. In June 2022, Aung Gyi met with FBR teams again on a relief mission and asked to join a team for basic training later that year.

Aung Gyi was raised Buddhist, but he says that it always felt more cultural than personal. Lin is a Christian and while they were dating, she would take Aung Gyi to church every Sunday and explain her faith to him. Aung Gyi says that he would have identified more as an atheist at that time.

After Aung Gyi met Dave Eubank, he started to think a lot more about faith. He saw that Dave would go to the frontline in Burma and in many other countries as well, but every time they met, Dave just talked about Jesus. He remembers Dave saying, “He (Jesus) forgets my sins and shows me the way.”

Aung Gyi said, “I think he prays a lot and that’s why he hasn’t gotten injured on the frontline. So I started asking my girlfriend because I was curious about that. My girlfriend was so happy and we started reading the Bible together. Dave Eubank inspired me a lot. When I graduated from Ranger training, Dave said ‘Pray, think, act’ and so I wrote it down. Whenever I went back to the frontline I always thought about this.”



Pretty soon, God started working in Aung Gyi's heart. In July 2023, in Pan Tein, Aung Gyi went with a Ranger team to help provide medical help for an impending battle between the Karenni National Defense Force (KNDF) and other resistance groups, against the Burma Army. On the way to connect with the other half of their group, they contacted them to ask if there were any landmines in the area. The group said, no, you can come in – but suddenly they heard a landmine explode. Aung Gyi says, "I'm not afraid of mortars, jets, or gun fire, I'm only afraid of landmines. I said a prayer, 'Lord be with me and cover me.' A soldier had stepped on a landmine and I ran out to help stop the bleeding and to evacuate him. Suddenly all the soldiers lay down on the ground and everyone looked terrified. I yelled to ask what was going on. They showed me there was a landmine wire between my legs. I stopped and prayed, 'God help me and be with me.' I was safe and the landmine didn't explode."

Another experience occurred in November 2023. He was driving a truck with 25 IDPs and some Rangers sitting on top of it. Loi Kaw was being bombed and he was helping to evacuate the people. He didn't think they would be a target because they were just civilians and weren't right on the frontline. Suddenly he heard an explosion near his truck and realized he was a target. They came to an open field and the jet shot rockets and machine guns. The first time, the jet shot about 10 ft. behind the truck; the next time, the fire was in front of the truck about 10 ft. Aung Gyi said, "I remembered I needed to do one thing – I needed to pray. The Rangers



Left: Aung Gyi often uses his musical abilities to give IDPs hope. Right: Aung Gyi and his wife, Lin.

shouted that the jet fighter was diving. I was yelling in my mind 'God please help me' and suddenly I stepped on the brake. Bullets came three feet in front of my truck. The IDPs were crying and I just drove fast to get away. The Rangers were shaking and I grabbed their hands and prayed with them. I said we need to thank God because we are still alive. I called my girlfriend and told her 'I want to get baptized. Because of God I am still alive.' She told me that the day before she prayed that I would accept Jesus."

Aung Gyi got baptized the next month in Karenni. "Before that I did a lot of Bible study to learn more about God. Two days later, on 27th December, Lin and I got married."

Recently, Aung Gyi helped with a medical training for frontline aid workers. He helped to facilitate many worship events for the students. "Every worship night I want to show young people that Jesus is real and you just have to ask him. He's real. Every night at worship I am so happy. It feels so powerful for me. Even some Christians they forget to pray and connect with God. You don't need a long prayer – just 'God help me' and 'God be with me.'"

Now as a Christian, life still has many challenges, but Aung Gyi says his goal is to "try to share my life with my people and give love to my enemies."

BAPTISM IN THE JUNGLE

On Sunday, 19 May, in the jungle of Karen State, six followers of Jesus asked to be baptized. Some had believed in Jesus for many years and others were new in their faith. We were in a special medical training and four of the students – men and women from the Karenni, Karen, and Burman ethnic groups – said they wanted a new life. Joining them were two American women who only recently arrived to visit FBR. One of the women said, "When we walked into camp we could feel God's presence. I want to be baptized."

On Sunday, we gathered with some of our team and walked down to the river before church. One by one, the six people entered the water and, one by one, they professed their faith in Jesus. They declared their gratitude for forgiveness of sin and for the new life Jesus had given them now and forever. As they came back up out of the water, a choir of children and our team sang "Holy, Holy, Holy" and "Alleluia." It was a sacred and moving time as our hearts filled with God's presence and we struggled to sing without crying as we witnessed joy, peace, gratitude, and God's loving presence. We were all blessed to be there. Thank you for praying for these six special people and for all the new medics as they go home to serve in harm's way. We go together and we go with God.



Above: Suuzanne and Sahale Eubank lead a children's choir gathered to celebrate the baptisms.

Right, top to bottom: Hein Htet Aung, Saw Day Daw, Saw Shwe Rey Htoo, and Saung Tha Zin Paing are baptized.



PRAYER POINTS

PRAY FOR THE MESSAGE OF THE GOSPEL TO REACH THOSE SUFFERING IN WAR-TORN AREAS, THAT MANY MAY COME TO KNOW JESUS AND EXPERIENCE HIS PEACE AND SALVATION.

A SONG OF FREEDOM

COLLECTED BY TYLER BRADLEY

Tardy and Shel Gyi are two Free Burma Ranger students from different parts of Burma. They came together to pen this song about their country and share their love of music.

I was privileged enough to listen to them and record their music as a beautiful river coursed through the background in rural Burma.

The passion and beauty of their mingled voices allow anyone to understand what they are communicating, even without understanding the language. Please take the time to listen to the recording by scanning the QR code and read along with their words, translated from the page of their notebook.

Let's join hands and work together
my bold brothers

Let's face the future difficulties together

East, West, South and North we'll share together
and overcome

For the future of our generations.

We will overcome the obstacles

To fall the dictatorship

Set aside all your grudges

Moving forward with wisdom and light.

Let's create a new peaceful Myanmar

And leave a legacy

For the new generation of peaceful souls.

Don't give up and keep going

You'll succeed one day

Even if we face difficulties this time,

It's just a temporary obstacle

Let's move forward.



A MOMENT

BY L + C, WIFE AND HUSBAND

This moment took place at a Burmese restaurant which we "stumbled into" on a trip back to the U.S. We knew we wanted to, had to, speak words, pray they would comfort, pray we could come alongside this one man somehow. Jesus gives us hands, feet, mouth and love which we can share wherever we are, wherever we go.

Marshmallow puffs...sky daring you to pluck them

Blue blue blue heavenward no gaps

Sun warming the slightest wind chill in a covert bone.

Turkish coffee and a new friend remind us

We don't look for gifts but they won't leave us alone.

A warmer hug, we move on yea emails await

Add one minute, leisurely paces

No way, another beckoning space.

Distant, he scribbles words with indifferent dull eyes

Like an ill child who ignores cookies and pies.

We wait patiently reading the labels, familiar jars

Laphet thoke tea leaf salad dressing

Milk tea silky...I see longyi sarongs none behind bars.

We sniff ooh and ahh with this find,

He brings the order mechanically

setting it down without looking, unfine.

Our words spill out, "We've been to Burma."

His salt and pepper hair rises,

eyes seeing us...it's the first time.

"We're so sad about what's happening."

"The country and people are lovely...so nice."

His heart says, "It's terrible there..."

I raise funds for simple needs like rice.

I try to help. That's what I can do."

We cry, "Thank you, thank you, we try to help too!"

His dark eyes glimmer, hope peeks out.

We all share a smile, more reassured about
us and the people of Burma...are not alone.

Only together will we get through.

A SCHOOL DAY

BY AIMEE W.

Green trees sway around the place
Butterflies begin a chase

Open windows, open door
Bare feet tapping on the floor

Teacher points and they recite
Pick up pens, begin to write

Something different in the air...
SUDDENLY THEY'RE ALL AWARE

They hear at first a roaring sound,
Then an airplane coming down

Tearing, ripping, way up high,
Jet so black up in the sky

Hearts are racing, eyes so wide
Children run away to hide

Pencils falling on the floor
Teachers, students, out the door

Into bunkers in the ground
Waiting for the awful sound

Minds are racing, seconds by
All-clear brings about a sigh

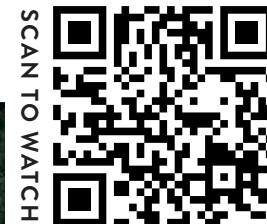
Little feet back through the door
Little children, in a war



I was talking to my Karen friend the other day and she shared with me that her home village had just been bombed the week before. A jet had come screaming over her village and within moments, all the villagers had run out of the village. Minutes later, another jet came and dropped a bomb. Several houses and the middle school building were damaged, but all the villagers were safe.

My friend shared that she was relieved that many children had not yet returned from a school break so school had not been in session that day. It got me thinking about so many school children in Burma who anxiously worry about their safety while studying every day.

Please pray for students in Burma who believe that education is a gateway to their futures and who don't take their opportunities for granted. Pray that they will be safe while they study and that school buildings will cease to be targets for Burma Army jets.



**(VIDEO) A DAY IN AN IDP
STUDENT'S LIFE**

BY YAZAR

PRAYER POINTS

PRAY FOR GOD TO GIVE PROTECTION TO CHILDREN
LIVING IN BURMA, SHIELDING THEM FROM HARM AND
PROVIDING THEM WITH A FUTURE FILLED WITH HOPE.



IMPRISONED FOR HELPING THE INJURED YE MYAT HTUT'S STORY

Ye Myat Htut (also known as Ko Ye) is a 32-year-old Buddhist from Yangon, a member of a group called the People's Rescue Force (PRF), which is similar to FBR. The PRF go to the people impacted by the war and help how they can, whether it's giving out food or providing medical care to injured resistance soldiers. Ko Ye works as a medic for the PRF and we met him when he attended an FBR medical training to learn more skills to better treat people wounded in the fighting.

Early in the coup, Ko Ye was arrested and imprisoned by the Burma Army. This is his story.

Before the coup, Ko Ye worked in HR for a tech company but also volunteered part-time as a firefighter. When COVID hit Burma, he felt compelled to help. He volunteered with an organization called the Irrawaddy Foundation to provide ambulance services for patients.

Then, in February of 2021, the military seized power in a coup. Burma Army soldiers came to the COVID response center Ko Ye was working at and conscripted everyone there into supporting the regime. For five days, Ko Ye and his ambulance were forced to stop helping COVID patients and instead focus on evacuating and

treating soldiers and policemen who were somehow injured while attempting to suppress the people's protests against the military takeover. From February 5th to the 10th, Ko Ye witnessed the regime's brutal crackdown tactics. The junta forces beat the protesters with batons and shields, and employed tear gas, hoses, and rubber bullets. Ko Ye felt guilty supporting such violence against his own people.

Ko Ye was determined to escape his conscription. He made up a story for the soldiers who were in charge of him and his fellow health workers, telling them he had a family emergency at home. Once home, he gathered a group of his friends together to help protesters injured by the Burma Army crackdown. He would never passively watch his people suffer again.

Five days later, during a protest, two injured protesters were brought to Ko Ye. They had been shot. This kind of injury was beyond Ko Ye and his group. They needed to get these people to a doctor but the hospitals weren't safe. Ko Ye sent the injured to his house; they could figure out a next step from there. Once they all arrived at his home they found out that Burma

Army soldiers, determined to arrest the injured protesters, had somehow figured out they were at Ko Ye's house. Quickly, Ko Ye contacted a doctor he knew and sent the two injured civilians there. Not long after, the soldiers surrounded his house and proceeded to arrest everyone there. Ko Ye, one of his friends, his brother, his two cousins, his father, and even his 14-year-old nephew, were all taken into custody.

They were taken to a police station initially, where Burma Army soldiers separated them into individual interrogation rooms. They asked Ko Ye where the injured protesters had gone and who the doctor was who had agreed to help them. Ko Ye, his family members, and his friend all refused to give any information. Even when the interrogation went on for four days. Even when they were beaten for falling asleep, beaten before each round of questions, or beaten just because. Even when their captors threatened to kill the others if the person didn't talk. Even when they handcuffed them to the ceiling and left them hanging by their wrists for hours until they went unconscious from the pain. None of them broke.

Ko Ye remembers that the only way he knew to keep track of time was that at 8pm every night the city would explode with the sound of banging pots and pans as people showed solidarity with the protesters and their opposition to the dictators. The little bit of sleep he was able to sneak was on a cold hard floor and he would be awakened by beatings and more rounds of questioning. Other prisoners said to just stay awake, walk around in the cell, but there was no real way to escape the torture. He still has the handcuff marks to this day.

Ko Ye, his family, and friend were questioned for four days and then sentenced to prison. His nephew was sent to Juvenile Hall instead of the main prison. The Burma Army tried to make it seem legal by charging them with "Defamation of Country" but they knew that was just a cover. They were being punished for helping the protesters.

During the interrogation, Ko Ye had been isolated in his own cell but in prison he was jailed alongside 60-70 others in a large room. It was actually a relief to no longer be so alone, even if they were strangers. The group welcomed him in, encouraging Ko Ye and making prison a little less bleak. He was no longer the

focus of an interrogation, but the wardens would still beat the prisoners for no reason. There was no privacy: the cell had three toilets for the entire group to use out in the open so the guards could still see them. The food was barely sufficient, hard rice and watered-down beans.

Prison was not all bad for Ko Ye. He met like-minded individuals, others who disagreed with the military takeover. They were able to teach each other things like English and Burmese. Ko Ye came out of prison more able and more motivated to fight for freedom.

After two years in prison, Ko Ye, his family, and his friend were all released together. They were still on probation for another year with the potential for more time to be added but they were a little closer to freedom. They wanted to escape Yangon, one of the major cities in Burma at the center of the military's control, but were unable to get away. Ko Ye followed his probation, not wanting to risk his family receiving any further abuse. Finally, after 11 months, someone helped them escape the city and Ko Ye felt safe enough to openly support the revolution without fear of reprisals on him or his family.

Ko Ye joined a team of 20 others to form the PRF unit he is a part of to this day. When we spoke with him they were preparing for another relief mission after the training. Also, sadly, one of their team members had just been arrested.

Ko Ye has every right to be angry and to want revenge on the military and its soldiers that abused him and his family. Yet, when we asked him how we could pray for him and Burma, this is what he said: "Pray that this situation will end soon. Without an end, many people can't go back to Burma. Some Burma Army soldiers don't want to do what they are doing but are stuck; please pray for them. And pray for people in Burma who are afraid and want to get out but can't."

His concern for his people, even those who oppressed him, is proof of his integrity and heart, qualities that the junta imprisoned him for and yet could not beat out of him. Ko Ye also has been thinking and praying about accepting Jesus as his Savior and being baptized. We thank God for Ko Ye, that his life was saved, for his courage, and the way he inspires us; we pray that he and his country will soon see the freedom and the victory they have sacrificed and risked so much for.

PRAYER POINTS

PRAY FOR GOD TO RESTORE JUSTICE TO THOSE OPPRESSED BY THE WAR IN BURMA, BRINGING FREEDOM TO THE CAPTIVES AND A SENSE OF DIGNITY TO THE MARGINALIZED.



GIVING BLOOD TO YOUR ENEMY

BY DAVE EUBANK

Since the coup in Burma three years ago, over 3 million people have been displaced and thousands have been killed. The Burma military regularly attacks civilian populations in both their villages and in hiding places where they go to flee the fighting. Jet fighters, heavy mortars, and artillery kill and maim people every day. Families are gunned down the moment they step into range of Burma Army troops.

Seeing these vicious attacks, it's hard to not hate the Burma military. We wonder how we can obey Jesus' command to love our enemy when confronted with such evil. The answer is that we cannot, not on our own. But we can ask Jesus to help us. We can surrender our hate, our fear, and our loathing to Jesus. This is what we pray for every day before we set out on mission – and he does help us.

In February, local pro-democracy resistance groups asked us to provide medical support as they tried to push the Burma Army out of the town of Shadaw in Karenni State. The Burma Army camp there was terrorizing the population. The camp commander had issued a challenge to all resistance forces, saying, "Come here if you dare, I'll kill all of you." Soldiers from this camp had recently gunned down three mothers and their three children.

As we approached the town, we saw the destruction caused by bombers and artillery. In the middle sat a pagoda, with the Burma Army camp dug in all around it. The soldiers in the camp shot at anyone who approached. The villagers had fled to the surrounding

valleys and mountains. Even so, the jets continued to bomb the homes and began to bomb the neighboring countryside as well. They were hunting people.

The Karenni resistance wanted to stop the bloodshed. Three times they offered the Burma military the chance to surrender, saying, "We have surrounded you. We don't want to kill you. Please surrender, you'll be treated well. Join us for a new Burma." Three times the Burma military answered with mortars and airstrikes. Finally, the resistance resolved to stop them for good. We went to help treat any wounded. We set up a hidden clinic in the jungle nearby, created a forward casualty collection point, and formed rescue teams.

At dawn, the fighting began with rockets, mortars, bullets, and grenades flying. Karenni troops and our rescue teams carried wounded soldiers out through a gauntlet of fire. At our casualty collection point, our medics stabilized them then carried them back to our hidden clinic and skilled team of a surgeon, medics and nurses. Ten Karenni soldiers were wounded during the fight, but all of them survived due to the excellent treatment.

Within an hour, the Karenni forces had taken the camp. As the position began to fall, we saw wounded enemy soldiers surrendering. In total, 33 Burma Army soldiers were captured and along with them came four women and three children, two of whom were orphans. They were the families of soldiers and local police. Covered in dust and blood, some wounded, they looked terrified as they were led away.

As we evacuated them out of the battle area, jets and transport planes came in and began to bomb all around the captured camp. We hid in a small grove of trees at the end of town. For two hours, the airstrikes continued, landing all around us. The captives huddled together in terror.

We told them, "Don't be afraid, we're not going to hurt you. But your air force will kill everyone, soldier or not, in Shadaw. This is what the people of Burma have been facing for years. Now you know what it feels like. The cause of the dictators is lost. Please give up on that idea! We are not better than you. We're just people, but God has made us to love each other and help each other. We came here because of Jesus' love, and we forgive you, and we give you a chance to live differently, please take it. Pray to Jesus, he will help change your heart."

One of the women huddled with her wounded husband, who was a police captain. They held hands and looked into each other's eyes. I could see the love they had for each other. It was very touching. Watching them reminded me that no matter what evil they'd been a part of, they weren't completely evil.

As the fighter jets came screaming in, I pulled the couple towards me with both arms and shielded them the best I could. Our team did the same, shielding their former enemies with their own bodies. As the bombs hit, we felt the pressure wave, and fragments hit branches above us. We could see the bombers were slowly creeping in our direction, with the last impacts only 40 meters away. We should've been killed, but we were on low ground that dipped behind big trees. However, the next hit could kill us. We had to move.

We got on the radio and called Peter, asking him to get as many stretcher teams as possible and come to us. We loaded up those who could not walk and began the procession out, using a route we had scouted out.

About 100 yards before the clinic, the Burmese woman who had been holding hands with her husband collapsed in front of me. She was overwhelmed by fear and crying, oblivious to the world around her. I carried her the rest of the way. When we arrived, she cried again and repeated, "Thank you, God bless you." I helped her get to her husband, and, again, I could see the deep love they shared. I could also guess at their fears: they may be killed, or he might be killed for supporting the dictators as a police officer. They didn't know if this was the last moments they were sharing together. Seeing their love, I hoped they could change, that they could put the cause of the dictators behind them.

We gathered all the wounded prisoners and began to treat them. There were many serious injuries. One

of the wounded had lost a lot of blood so one Ranger, Barnya, volunteered to donate blood. He lay down and looked straight at his former enemy as his blood flowed into the transfusion bag. The medical team then administered the transfusion, saving the soldier's life. This was blood given for the enemy out of love, not spilled by an enemy in hate. The captives saw that we were giving them life, not death.

Both they and us received gifts that day. Their lives were spared and we had a chance to practice loving our enemy. We got to be part of God's answer to hate – love. It's hard to love and forgive the enemy, but it's the only way that hearts really change for the better.

Some of the team asked me, "How can we help these people, with what they have done to our team members and families?"

I said, "I don't know. What I do know is Jesus told us to 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.' What does that mean for us?"

We pray and hope that all the Burma Army soldiers see the futility and evil of their ways. We pray that when they experience mercy it will break their hearts and they will not only love each other, like the police husband and wife, but they learn to love others that are different than them. That is my hope for Burma.



Opposite: An FBR volunteer gives medical aid to captured Burma Army soldiers and their families.

Above: FBR medical teams work to save the life of a Burma Army soldier with blood donated by a ranger.

CHURCHES UNDER FIRE

In Kachin State, in the north of Burma, the churches have played a significant role in providing support and shelter for families whose homes have either been attacked and destroyed by the Burma Army, or are in danger. In a place unreached by the large international organizations typically supporting victims of state violence – the right hand cleaning up after the left hand of the international order – local organizations have stepped up to support each other. Sometimes the difference between being shelter and needing shelter is only a few miles. And when there are no ‘big guns’ enforcing no-fly zones and the safety of civilians from predatory militaries, sometimes that distance contracts down to nothing.

Such was the case at the Kunglaw Baptist Church compound, in Kachin State, on 15 November 2024. As is usual in rural Kachin State, the village church is more than just a building set aside for Sunday services. It included a compound with a school, the church building, a community hall and extra housing for teachers, staff and students. Kunglaw Church had opened up its compound to around 20 families who had been forced

to flee their homes, providing shelter and support. On this Friday afternoon, the pastor was sitting on the veranda while children played outside. It was around 3:30pm. School was out for the weekend. The sound of airplanes came out of the clear blue sky.

Here, the sound of planes is not innocent, it is ominous. Children, adults, everyone, look to the sky in fear of the death that comes from it. The children who were more alert, maybe more anxious, responded quickly, running to the place that seemed to provide the best shelter – the church building. Others followed. The church also provided the clearest target and the bombers nailed it that day. One bomb landed on the church and another between the church and the community hall. The kids who had been most alert, who had heard the planes and run the fastest, reached the church around the same time as the bomb. They were killed when it landed squarely on the church.

In all, seven children died and two adults. In that number was an entire family – two parents and their four children. Eleven other people were injured and rushed to the nearby town of Laiza for care.



Less than ten miles away is the Chinese border. Less than ten miles away are the big guns that enforce the no-fly zones. Less than ten miles worth of an accident of geography cost these nine people their lives. Less than ten miles provides enough cover for a murderous regime to drop bombs on a church providing shelter.

This is not an isolated incident. On 27 October, just two weeks earlier, a church in Hsenwi, northern Shan State was bombed at 9:45 at night. And three days after the Kunglaw bombing, on 18 November, a Chinese Christian Church in Kutkai of northern Shan State was bombed at 1:45 in the morning, resulting in the deaths of two small children and a woman, with 12 more people injured.

The church compound in Kunglaw is empty now. But the church – the church that is the people and not a building, is still providing shelter. According to the local reverend, the IDP families are now taking shelter in the houses of the villagers. In his words: “Whatever happens, we have to take responsibility for them.”

“What should we do then?” the crowd asked. John answered, ‘Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same.’”

- Luke 3:10-11



Above: People mourn the nine people killed in the Kunglaw Church bombing.

Opposite Top Left: Shrapnel destroys the wall of Kunglaw Church.

Opposite Top Right: A woman mourns a loved one.

Opposite Middle and Bottom: Aftermath and destruction from the bombing.

I AM

BY NAW ZUZAN REE HTAR ZIN

I am a human being
I am a girl from a small town
I wonder why we have to face this situation
I hear children crying
I see people running
I want to give them a hand

I am a human being
I pretend that everything is okay
I feel the pain of a war widow
I touch a kite in the sky
I worry that we cannot meet again
I cry and pray to God

I am a human being
I understand that this is God's plan
I say there is no more war
I dream children are playing
I try to make a flower blossom
I hope our country will one day be full of peace
I am a human being

*NAW ZUZAN REE HTAR ZIN IS AN X-RAY
TECHNICIAN AT EARTH MISSION'S KLER
MU CLINIC, KAREN STATE.*



PHOTO SERIES BY SKY BARKLEY

Please join me in offering prayers for those enduring unimaginable hardships. Let us lift up the brave young men and women on the frontline, facing danger with courage. Let us remember the innocent children who are forced to abandon their homes, seeking refuge in the shadows of the jungle. Let us hold close the hearts of mothers and fathers who watch helplessly as their children suffer the type of loss we can scarcely comprehend. May our hopes and prayers unite for an end to this war, bringing peace, healing, and a brighter future for all.



A STEADFAST HOPE

BY VOMPI

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you.

-1 Peter 1:3-4

I felt a sense of anticipation mixed with an uneasy hesitation as we approached Malsawm Village (Name Changed for Security) in Chin State, Burma. After being here 10 months prior, I was eager to see the people again. I was also hesitant because the last time we were here Malsawm had just been bombed – devastated by a Burma Army airstrike. My last memories were of a shattered and desolate village. The faces I remembered were ones of blank shellshock, fear, anger, and despondency. There were so many tears. I stood in the deep craters while surveying obliterated homes and strewn wreckage. I stood with village leaders over the blood-soaked ground where two people (a father and a beloved schoolteacher) close to the blast were killed. We prayed for severely injured children. We cried and prayed with grieving and fearful people. I remembered talking with an elderly couple in the place where their house once stood. They recalled what it was like to have their house literally blown away from over them as they napped underneath with their children and grandchildren. They all miraculously survived, but the physical and emotional injuries were new and big.

There was, however, one lasting image of joy and hope I took away from Malsawm. It was witnessing young Rangers demonstrating spiritual leadership as they grieved with those who grieved, listened carefully to victims' stories, opened scripture to share words of hope and promise, and then laid hands and prayed – often with heartfelt tears. We all shared God's words of hope, comfort, and assurance in Jesus Christ with everyone we talked to.

That was the Malsawm we left 10 months prior. That last memory of a shattered village along with the blood, tears, and brokenness shaped my fears of what we would see when we returned. Would the village be abandoned? If people were there, would they still be traumatized and fearful? I tried to emotionally prepare myself. As we approached the village though, I was surprised – pleasantly surprised – at vibrant signs of joy and hope.

The village was alive with activity. People were busy with bags of cement, lumber, and tools. They were rebuilding and repairing homes – all in various stages of completion. Then my heart rejoiced when I recognized familiar faces. There was a village leader. There was the man we prayed with. There was the elderly couple. There they all were. As they looked up, they were beaming with smiles.

One by one they dropped their tools and started yelling, "Mr. Big Bear! You came

back!" (my name in Chin means Big Bear). And as they gathered round and shook hands in that hearty Chin way, their infectious joy and hope flooded in where pain and fear had been.

As we walked through the village, villagers recalled with solemnity what their homes looked like after the bombing, but words of thanks and praise quickly followed for the restoration that was taking place. We stopped at the places where the two villagers were killed. In those places there were now two memorial stones. There was a moment of silence as we looked at them, but I rejoiced because the villagers grieved like people with hope. They talked about these two people in the present tense – as being with the Lord. Then we came to the place where the elderly couple's house had been blown away. They were there. The foundation of their new house had been laid and the frame was starting to take shape. There was pride and joy as they showed us the progress. The new home would be better than the former one.

I asked some villagers, "Are you afraid the Burma Army will bomb Malsawm again?" The replies were varied, but they all shared this theme: "We know it is possible, but we are not afraid. We choose to not live in fear, but in hope – hope in Jesus Christ. If it were not for Him, you would not be here. If it were not for Him, we would not have come back here. And because of Him, we can live and rebuild without fear. Even if our homes are destroyed again, we have a home in heaven."

The village leader, the elderly couple, and many others explained with joyful confidence that Jesus Christ is their Lord, and they trust in his love and protection. Even in death, they still have hope because Jesus is the resurrection and the life. I was touched that many shared how thankful they were for the Rangers who shared God's love and prayed for them after the airstrike. Being pointed to Jesus in that painful time gave them help, hope, and love in a powerful way that steadfastly endured.

I understood now that their unshakeable joy and hope was rooted not in the rebuilding houses and then wishing for the best. No. They were rebuilding because their hope is in Jesus' mercy and the unbreakable promise that an eternal inheritance awaits them. Here were living examples of what Romans 5:5 proclaims.

"Hope will not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us."

What a powerful reminder of how Jesus changes everything! We left Malsawm recharged with an overflowing joy and hope. When Jesus fills someone up with these things, you can't help but catch the overflow. That's what happened when those junior rangers prayed with the villagers 10 months prior. And that's what happened on this day when these villagers shared with us the reason for the hope that is in them.

We were blessed to pass through Malsawm one more time a couple of weeks later. This time we gathered the children of the village and did a Good Life Club. There are few things more joyful than singing, dancing, running, and laughing with children as Jesus is lifted up and praised. For this chapter in Malsawm's story, it seemed a fitting epilogue that in the place where hate and destruction tried to crush hope, these were instead stamped out by the dancing feet of children and the sounds of singing and laughter. The joy of the Lord was and is their strength. Just as Jesus lives, our hope is a living hope – imperishable and unfading.

"Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you believe so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." - Romans 15:13



Opposite: Children participate in a Good Life Club in Malsawm Village.

Above: Remains of a house in Malsawm Village after an airstrike by the Burma military.

PRAYER POINTS

PRAY FOR GOD TO REVEAL HIS LOVE AND TRUTH TO THOSE IN CONFLICT ZONES IN BURMA, DRAWING THEIR HEARTS TO JESUS AS THEIR SAVIOR AND SOURCE OF HOPE.

