

Louise and Peter Lynch

Breakfast, lunch and tea

July 2020

www.bmsworldmission.org/lplynch



"In Bangladesh we have suffering for breakfast, lunch and tea" said one of the Pastors in a theological forum we held recently. He is right. Without exaggeration the last months have been disaster after disaster. While the Covid crisis is still developing the people have been hit by Cyclone Amphan, and now with heavy monsoon rains we have the worst flooding the country has seen for 10 years. Millions of people are displaced.

Yet, in among this suffering there are signs of grace and this series of snapshots is our attempt to reflect something of both.

A COVID Snapshot

If you close one eye you could almost imagine that there was no COVID threat in Bangladesh. When we go out in Mirpur, apart from seeing everyone with a face mask, it is as busy as it was before, and all the safety measures in the shops have stopped. We go to the office most days, wearing our masks at all times and keeping distance from our colleagues, but we sing and eat together as we did before. People are allowed to travel to their villages for Eid and it feels like the country is opening up. But if you have both eyes open, you see that statistically the infection and the death rate is increasing in Bangladesh. Numerically we are now 16th worst affected in the world. Most of the confirmed infections are concentrated in Dhaka and are spread across all the age ranges. There have been a series of scandals linked to testing which has led this week to a significant reshuffle in the Department of Health and a drop in the rate of people going for testing. Fear of COVID stigma is really high and people are treating themselves at home and preferring to die at home. The true figures and true picture, even with both eyes open is unknown. Please keep praying for us as this is a very challenging situation to navigate.

A Snapshot of God at Work

Last week we had a great day with a group of people from north of Dhaka who came to meet with us because God had spoken to them. The eight men sat and told us about how God had revealed Jesus to them and that "Jesus was the great light". They described how they had started to follow him. They wanted to know more about Jesus and baptism. It was so encouraging to see how even when we are locked down - God's Spirit is never locked down. He is working to reveal Himself to people who seek Him. Please join us in praying for more stories like this! Pray for these families and all those in their area who are searching for God.



A Snapshot from the Hill Tracts.

This is our sister Mrs. Toar Len Bom who worships in a Baptist church in the Hilly district. She used to cultivate Jum, but she lost all her crops and livestock in the landslides last year. Her husband is sick and at 65 she is also unable to labour, so she was feeling despair over how she could pay the fees for the children in her family so that they could carry on in school. In January we distributed crop, livestock and house repair grants from BMS to 250 families. Mrs Toar put her grant towards buying 2 pigs and recently the female pig had 6 babies. We received this message *"Mrs Toar loves the pigs very much. She takes care of them. She expressed that within one year she will earn £250-300 from the pigs. Now she is dreaming new dreams and can see hope. Mrs. Toar Len Bom kept her belief in the difficult time. She stood her faith on the Lord. She loves Jesus and loves her children very much. Now she is seeing new hope that she could pay her children's hostel fees. She is grateful to BMS and the Lord."*



A Baptism Snapshot

Two weeks ago, we were excited to hear from our friends who work in the North of Bangladesh in the tea garden areas. This is a place we have visited a few times and have been able to provide some training and recovery project work as well as taking opportunities to share the gospel. They sent us some pictures of a family who they had just baptised and said that another 3 families were preparing for baptism. It is great to see the ministry of this faithful couple bearing fruit. Their dream is to set up a mission and training hub in their area so that they can reach out and train new believers. We are praying with them for a piece of land and the finance to see this established.



A Snapshot Conversation

We have recently started a theological forum that gathers together some of the Pastors and college Faculty to explore theological and ministry issues. Our hope is that we can start to produce some resources that reflect life and theology in Bangladesh. The first two sessions were on suffering and along with the opening line of this letter, here are a few of the things they said that caused us to think:

"I believe that the Bible is a book for suffering people. A book for the persecuted. Suffering doesn't matter because God is glorified."

"We should be asking 'how can we use our suffering to extend the kingdom of God?'"

"Ministry is all about the suffering. Jesus told people to follow the way of the cross".

"Suffering should be treated like a gift" As Paul wrote (Phil 1:29) "You have been given not only the privilege of trusting in Christ but also the privilege of suffering for Him".

Please pray for God's grace for all those who suffer.



A Snapshot from London

July was a high-pressure month for Calum and Jonah as they needed to find new places to live and new people to live with. So, we are thankful to God, that as we write, both have new addresses and all the practical details are sorted for the next phases of their lives. We liked having them live together but as Calum heads out into different hospitals for his placements and Jonah begins a new job in September they needed to separate. We are also immensely grateful to friends who continue to provide them with all sorts of practical help.

A Snapshot of the Future

We are planning, along with BMS to come back to the UK for Home Assignment and will be available from 26th October to 13th December 2020. We would love to meet you virtually, in some socially distanced appropriate way or in a church service (if they are happening). If you would like to request a visit can you go to www.bmsworldmission.org/get-involved/request-a-speaker, select *Request a mission worker* and submit your request online— by Monday 24 August 2020 please.

We are realistic that we are living in a fluid situation in the UK and here. Flights from Bangladesh can change at short notice, but we are hopeful and excited about the possibility of seeing you.

Peter and Louise

If you would like to support Louise and Peter Lynch by prayer and committed regular giving, visit bmsworldmission.org/partners or call 01235 517617 for a 24:7 Partners leaflet.

