

SEEK FIRST THE KINGDOM

But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. ~Matthew 6:33

Community... what thoughts come to your mind when you hear that word?

Maybe thoughts such as: spending time together... enjoying group activities... helping out when someone's in a tough spot... learning from each other... laughing and crying together... being in close proximity with a specific set of people... serving together for a common purpose... encouraging each other in the Lord...

One of the first definitions of the word *community* listed in the Merriam-Webster's dictionary is "a unified body of individuals... the people with common interests living in a particular area."

We have the privilege of living in a very unique community here at Gospel for Asia. Although all of us have diverse backgrounds and are in varying seasons of life, our common purpose (serving the Lord to reach the lost in Asia) gives us a unity that would otherwise be lacking from a typical group of people who just happen to live in the same neighborhood.

Developing this community isn't our main focus, but it is a part of life that we consider to be important. Living in a Christ-centered community doesn't happen automatically – we have to be intentional about building relationships, ministering to one another's needs, and encouraging one another in the Lord. Paul told the Ephesian church to "walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, *endeavoring* to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:1b-3, emphasis added).

One of the major ways we grow in our love for each other and for the Lord is through our times of prayer together at our daily and weekly prayer meetings. Whether we're praying for needs around the world or for each other, the hours we spend before the Lord are definitely a core part of what binds us together.

There are so many facets of what it looks like to be part of this community, but instead of just listing them out in bullet points... how about some pictures? :)



Easter Hymn Sing



With Tori, the intern we hosted for 2 weeks



Campus Work Party



Rebecca and Megan's weekly lunch date



Labor Day four-square game



Frisbee!



Participating in the Christmas choir



New Staff Class graduation (Rebecca was a mentor)



Another Hymn Sing... at someone else's house, where Rebecca played the pump organ

From the Office

Thank you for your prayers for our work in the IT department! The project related to the restructuring of the School of Discipleship program (something we wrote about last time) was completed on time and without error, for which we are very grateful to the Lord. It wasn't nearly as complex as the New Zealand SE migration project, but it was still important to get it completed accurately.

As you might guess, it didn't take long for the next project to surface. Now we are working on moving our database from in-house server

machines to be "in the cloud" (hosted on machines located away from here and owned by someone else). This project has actually been on our planning list for several months, but we couldn't move forward on it until DonorDirect got the configuration set up. Rob is the official project coordinator, and Rebecca is involved in the performance and functionality testing. We make a good team when it comes to completing projects. :) Of course Jonathan and LaMott will also have their share of testing and configuration to do - we're really grateful for the whole IT team and

how we are able to work together to serve the staff here at GFA.

Besides these major projects that take a dedicated amount of focus and energy, we also stay busy with other responsibilities. For example, Rebecca continues to provide help for our CRM users, and Rob manages many of the database selects we do when we're going to send out mailings or emails. He recently finished the database select for the donors and sponsors who will receive the GFA Christmas Catalog this year, which we will be dropping in the mail in early October.

A few issues back, we wrote about Piyush, one of the Bridge of Hope children we are privileged to sponsor. Behind every Bridge of Hope child, there is a group of dedicated staff members who shower these kids with love, affection, and care. Here is a report about one of these staff members and the impact he had on just one student.

Special Love for a Withdrawn Child

Sumit stretched his hands out over the sick boy, fervently asking Jesus to heal Niral. During the past two years, Sumit had grown to love the child, and his heart cried out to God on Niral's behalf.

When Sumit, a social worker serving at a Gospel for Asia-supported Bridge of Hope center, first met Niral three years earlier, he saw a 6-year-old preschooler who was often very quiet.

Endeared to the shy boy, Sumit asked about his family. He found out poverty gripped Niral's family, and even though Niral's father worked as a cook and his mother found labor jobs, food was often in short supply. Niral timidly went to a public school, but he had attended sporadically and struggled with his lessons. Seeing the family's situation, the Bridge of Hope staff invited Niral and his sister to enroll in the program.

Hearing the details of Niral's life, Sumit's heart went out to the young boy, and he took special interest in Niral. He mentored him and offered him help with his school lessons. Sumit explained the class notes to him and sought to instill in Niral a desire to learn. He also encouraged Niral to participate in sports, which would help him overcome his shyness.

With Sumit's guidance, Niral began excelling in his studies and happily played with other children. Sumit even taught Niral about good manners and moral values.

The care Niral received at the Bridge of Hope center demonstrated Christ's love to him and aligned with the stories he was learning about Jesus' life. Soon, Niral, his sister and his mother began attending worship services led by a Gospel for Asia-supported pastor. They fed on the Word of God and discovered the grace and mercy of Jesus for themselves.

Then Niral fell sick and couldn't attend school. As days passed, his condition only worsened. His mother informed the Bridge of Hope center coordinator about Niral's illness, and soon all the Bridge of Hope staff and children were praying for the young boy.

Sumit frequently visited Niral to pray for him and to see the progress of the boy who was so dear to him. Soon, God answered their many prayers, and Niral completely recovered!

Report taken from:

<http://gospelforasia-reports.org/2016/08/special-love-withdrawn-child/>



After witnessing God's healing power, Niral's mother trusted Jesus as her Savior. Niral's faith in Jesus grew as well, and he eagerly prayed for those around him to find the hope his family had discovered.

During these three years, Sumit's special love for Niral greatly impacted the young boy, and Niral thanked God for the time the Bridge of Hope staff invested in his life.

"As a result of joining Bridge of Hope, now I am interested in helping others," Niral shared. "I received help from Bridge of Hope; in the same way, I would like to help the poor and needy."



Rejoicing in Him,

Rob and Rebecca

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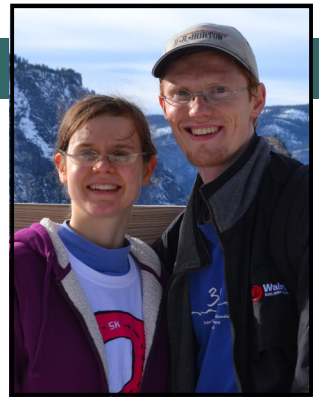
Rob and Rebecca Gaebler, Gospel for Asia (Sept 2016)

Praises

- **Praise** God for how He is building GFA into a godly community focused on serving Him!
- **Praise** the Lord for opportunities to host people in our home, whether just for times of fellowship over a meal or for more extended visits
- **Praise** God for the completion of and forward progress on many of our IT projects!
- **Praise** the Lord for dedicated Bridge of Hope staff in each one of the centers around South Asia!

Prayers

- **Pray** that we would continue to grow in loving and serving one another
- **Pray** for the Azure migration project of our StudioEnterprise database, that we could finish it quickly and seamlessly
- **Pray** for wisdom for Jonathan and the ministry leaders as they discuss solutions for prioritizing projects across multiple departments
- **Pray** for the Bridge of Hope staff to have a heart of compassion for each student, strength each day as they serve, and joy in helping these children and their families



Thank you for your prayers

“...be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints” (Eph. 6:18)