



God made all the difference.

Mr Padang's story, former patient of The McKean Centre, as relayed to Heather Smith, Country Leader Thailand.

"When people asked about the story of my life I always say, 'God made all the difference in my life'," said Mr. Puu Padang, as we soaked up the warmth of the sun breaking through the early morning chill.

"I first came to McKean for leprosy treatment when I was 21. Out in society I always kept my hands in my pockets, afraid of the stigma I would experience when people saw my disabled hands. Although I got the right medicine and the disease was cured I still did not want to return to face people's possible rejection. I got jobs looking after the chickens in McKean agricultural work. Then I moved on with work taking care of the cows. Whenever possible at night I got hold of alcohol from nearby shops, and slept wherever I passed out. I also got hold of small New Testaments which had been given to patients, and I read these again and again.

"One day a fellow patient who had trained as a pastor in McKean Bible School and was working as a pastor challenged me, 'Are you ready to believe?' I realised that I was. McKean chaplain mentored me in the faith, and I was baptised and became a member of the church. My life changed. I met and married a young widow and instantly became father to three very young children. I shared with them the songs and stories I was learning about the Lord Jesus. Now I love to talk about Him with everyone.

God changed me. I no longer thought or cared about my hands. I had confidence. I am a child of God. I was elected a deacon, and later an elder in my church, and our family was actively involved there. But I also became involved in taking my children and later grandchildren to school, mixing with other parents, being active in the Parent-Teacher association. I have been appointed my church representative at the National Assembly of the Thai churches also. I no longer avoided going into general society and was not ashamed of having had leprosy. I see it as God's plan to change my life and bring me to Himself.

When we planned for the national meetings of the Association of People Affected by Leprosy I was elected by the northern Thai group to be their representative. We discussed what we wanted society to do for us: giving us equal opportunity and acceptance. But we also recognise that we have contributions to make to society too.

I happily tell everyone it is God who made all the difference to my life."

Thank You, Lord that You are able to transform lives. Physically and spiritually, You rescue us. We worship You and delight in Your ways. Pray for the patients and staff at McKean hospital to experience God's love this Easter.

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God's victory offers hope and new life for all.

By Glen Coleman
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Easter is the story of a messed-up world which had lost hope and purpose. A world which had forgotten how to live and love with generosity and joy and freedom.

Into that world came a person, Jesus, who was all those things - joyful, generous, loving, full of life, purpose and hope. The people loved him for it, and many wanted to hang around with him and learn how to live like him.

But there were some powerful leaders who didn't like Jesus. They thought he was going to take away their way of life. They had the people following a great long list of rules which produced guilt and sadness. Jesus wanted people to follow the rule of love because it covered all the other rules. It was also much more fun, building communities filled with hope and new life.

The powerful leaders got tired of how much love Jesus was giving. They were losing control over the people, so they decide to get rid of him - and they had him killed.

They thought that was the end of the story. They thought they were back in charge of life and death. But that was not the end of the story.

The death and grief experienced on the Friday was going to give way to the celebration of new life on the Sunday. The victory they thought they had secured only for themselves, God turned into victory for everyone!

From that day to this we can find story after story of how Jesus has transformed people's lives. Each time we hear or tell these stories we celebrate love, generosity, joy, purpose, hope and freedom coming back into the world.

I encourage you to grab a cuppa, and your bible and this newsletter. Read and take in the voices that are telling and retelling the story of Easter. Stories of hope for this life, that remind us that love not fear will lead the way. Stories that speak about inclusion and freedom, about overcoming stigma and discrimination.

You are part of this story. Your faithful, kind-hearted support plays a vital role in transforming the lives of many who suffer the effects of leprosy. Thank you. Thank you for bringing hope and new life. Continue to pray and may God bless and multiply your words and your actions.

SAVE THE DATE: May 11 is The Leprosy Mission Global Fellowship Day of Prayer. Join us in prayer with supporters around the world.



In 2022, no child should have leprosy.

By Louise Timmins
Head of Fundraising and Communications
The Leprosy Mission England and Wales

*When through the woods,
and forest glades I wander
And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees
When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur
And hear the brook, and feel the gentle breeze
(How Great Thou Art, Stuart Hine)*

Whenever I sing this beautiful hymn at church, I close my eyes and I'm transported back to 2011. I'm holding my much longed-for baby girl in my arms, singing these words like a lullaby to her. We're standing in the glory of God's creation, at Anandaban Hospital, on the roof of the world.

After a 12-year wait for a child, and a promise from God fulfilled, my husband and I had finally adopted our precious little girl. She was tiny, malnourished, and desperate for love. The doctors at this Leprosy Mission hospital tended to her lovingly, making us feel part of this special family of staff and patients. Our first month together at Anandaban was a time of healing, restoration, and hope.

Our journey is a story of God's faithfulness. Of how He walks with us in our times of deepest sorrow and darkness. Of how when we are

struggling to scale the challenges of the mountain in front of us, He is where our help comes from. It's also a story of just how special a place Anandaban is, and how the people of Nepal have been laid on our hearts.

My very first visit to Nepal was in 2009, when my husband Paul and I led a Leprosy Mission trek to raise funds for the amazing work at Anandaban Hospital. As we spent the first few days of our trip shadowing medical staff, we were touched by their gentleness and love. We sat and talked with patients affected by leprosy. It was hard to hear about the deep emotional wounds that remained. Rejection, loss, broken dreams. Anandaban was their place of hope.

A year later, though we didn't know at the time, our baby was born. She was left at a hospital at a day old and taken to a small children's home in the days after. We'll never know the reason her family couldn't care for, whether it was extreme poverty or even death. But we know she must have been loved because she was taken to a place where her family knew she would be cared for.

In December 2010, as I sat at my desk at The Leprosy Mission an email arrived from Shovakhar, the head of The Leprosy Mission Nepal. His email read 'this is your daughter' and attached was a photo of a nine-month-old little girl.

You can imagine my joy! It was important that I knew no family was looking for her in Nepal, so we advertised on radio, put notices in local papers etc, but sadly no family came forward. It's ok precious child, God has a plan for you!



Louise Timmins bonds with her daughter Marika at Anandaban Hospital, Nepal in 2011.

Finally, the following June we had permission to travel to meet our daughter. At sixteen months she was tiny and malnourished. She clung to her carer, terrified of us, new people, new smells and a foreign language. Gently she was placed on my chest and after looking at me for ten minutes she fell asleep. Paul cried as he watched us. He had prayed for our six-year adoption wait that God would bind my heart to our coming child, and that their heart would bind to mine.

**Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to Thee,
how great Thou art!**

Now, as our daughter is on the verge of turning 12, Anandaban Hospital is still a place of healing, restoration and hope. God has His hand on this place, on the patients and the medical team. Because of this they have a new and exciting hope – ending leprosy, not just in Nepal but across the world.

Today, high on the same hill where I first sang to my daughter, pioneering work is taking place to reach the greatest height of all – ending leprosy in our lifetime. In a crumbling lab, a dedicated team is making scientific breakthroughs that will have a global impact.

While there has been an antibiotic cure for leprosy since 1982, there are many challenges when it

comes to diagnosing and treating people before they develop terrible disabilities. Leprosy is a disease of poverty and thrives in remote communities where there is little or no healthcare.

Scientific breakthroughs are needed in diagnostics and disability prevention so that people affected by leprosy can have the healthcare and opportunities that they deserve. But to continue this ground-breaking research, we have a mountainous challenge ahead. The Research Centre is too small, not fit for purpose and was severely damaged in the disastrous earthquakes of 2015. The lab simply won't pass the upcoming Nepali Government inspection.

If this happens, the chance to end leprosy in our lifetime will be lost.



Marika Timmins aged seven on her first visit back to Nepal and Anandaban Hospital.

Please pray for the staff at Anandaban Hospital in Nepal as they help to diagnose, treat and care for patients affected by leprosy and disability. We also pray that the Mycobacterial Research Laboratory at Anandaban Hospital will receive more funds to continue its scientific research and help end leprosy. Thank you for your prayers. God bless you!

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

— 1 Peter 1:3