

THE MISSION OF GOD
MISSION JOURNEY TO THE UNITED KINGDOM AND PAKISTAN
OCTOBER 2024 THROUGH JANUARY 2025
The Rt. Rev. Patrick P. Augustine, D.Min. D.D.



GOD'S WORK IN THE WORLD

"Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain. (1 Corinthians 15:58)"



High Altar, Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, England



All Saints Church, Peshwar, Pakistan

Wycliffe Hall, Oxford, United Kingdom

At the invitation of Wycliffe Hall, University of Oxford, I was a visiting academic scholar for three months in a community with a long history of Christian witness. The college's founder, John Wycliffe, promoted translation of the Bible from Latin into English.

Since the 8th century, this medieval city's layout was clearly based on Christian symbolism. At its very center stands the tower of St. Mary's Church, where John Wesley and George Whitfield studied. J. C. Ryle, Frank Chavasse, Griffith Thomas, and other evangelical leaders trained for ministry in Christ's service. An evangelical surge in the 1730s known as the Oxford Movement was followed in the next century by a Catholic revival within Anglicanism. C. S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien and other members of an informal literary discussion group known as the Inklings were prominent 20th century Oxford personalities.

Today, Wycliffe Hall still engages and inspires Christian leaders to fulfill Christ's mission through rigorous theological study at the highest possible academic level. It was a great privilege and honor to be invited into this academic and lively faith community.

October 18, 2024 - Southall



After our flight from Chicago, my wife, Myra, and I stayed at the home of Rev. Wilson Gill, vicar of Emmanuel Church, Southall, London. He invited me to preach at both Sunday services on Oct. 20 (11 a.m. in English and 2 p.m. for a multi-ethnic congregation). The Gospel was read in English, Hindi, Urdu and Punjabi. I also preached in English, Punjabi, and Urdu. Rev. Gill and his wife, Rebeca, were excellent hosts.

October 21 to 24, 2024 - Wellesbourne, Warwick

Rev. Gill drove us from London to Oxford so we could visit friends for a few days before my term began at Wycliffe Hall. Rev. Canon Dr. Christopher Lamb and his wife, Tina, drove us from Oxford to their home in Wellesbourne. Dr. Lamb was a student at Wycliffe Hall in 1960 -1963. The Lambs served as Church Missionary Society (CMS) London partners-in-mission in the Diocese of Lahore, Pakistan. They were my principal instructors at Lahore Divinity School at the Cathedral of the Resurrection where I received my ordination training from 1972 to 1976.

Rev. Lamb took us to visit Holy Trinity Church in Stratford-upon-Avon, which was built in 1210. William Shakespeare was baptized here in 1564, attended services, and died in Stratford in 1616, so the town flourishes on his memory. He was buried in this active parish church where Christians have worshiped for more than 1,000 years. We also visited two more churches with 1,000-plus years of services in celebration of God's glory: St. Peter's Church (built in 1200) and the medieval Guild Hall Chapel for mid-week Eucharist.

October 24 to 27 - Nottingham

The Lambs drove us to Nottingham to visit Rev. Graham Burton and his wife, Dr. Gillian Burton. Rev. Burton was my colleague from CMS-London in Rawalpindi-Islamabad, Pakistan, where I had planted St. Thomas Parish of the Church of Pakistan. Rev. Burton and his wife continued to develop this mission church after I returned to the United States in 1983. The parish has its own large building with a congregation of more than 2,000.

On Sunday, October 27, we worshiped at St. Stephen's Church, which has been our partner-in-mission in the Diocese of Bor, South Sudan. During the service, 15 adult Iranians were baptized by immersion. On this joyful day of celebration, I was invited to share the Word of God.

After the service, we enjoyed a sumptuous lunch and tea hosted by vestry member Albert Gill and his family at a restaurant named Tipu Sultan. We visited the legendary Sherwood Forest, home of Robin Hood and his Merry Men who stole from the rich to give to the poor. We also saw Wollaton Garden and Deer Park where The Dark Knight Rises was filmed in 2012.



October 28 to 30, 2024 - Huddersfield, Mirfield, and Manchester

After a train ride, Myra and I visited three Pakistani families who have been dear friends of the Augustine family for 80 years. We stayed with Canon Yahkub Masih, a lay canon in the Diocese of Wakefield, and his wife, Shamim. Canon Masih was honored by Queen Elizabeth who named him a Member of the British Empire (MBE).

I also visited the College of the Resurrection in Mirfield where I spent a month in 1983 with the monastic Community of the Resurrection. It gave me such joy to meet the Rt. Rev. Mark Sowerby, principal of the College of the Resurrection.

We took the train again to Manchester to visit Rev. Oliver Samuel, Myra's brother, and Chaudhry Azher, senior president of the minority wing of Pakistan Muslim Leagues in the United Kingdom. After visiting Muslim League offices, we had a late evening meeting with Rev. Falk Sher, vicar of Ascension Church in Manchester.

November 1, 2024 - All Saints Day, Oxford

We took the train back to Oxford and were warmly welcomed at Wycliffe Hall. After breakfast the next day, we took the train to London where I was invited to preach at St. Bartholomew the Great Church.

November 2, 2024 - All Souls Day, London

St. Bartholomew the Great is the city's oldest parish church. Worship services have been held there for 900 years. St. Paul's Cathedral is just eight minutes away. I attended the 1,400-year-old cathedral's 5 p.m. All Souls Day service.



November 3, 2024 - St. Bartholomew the Great, London

I felt honored to preach in such a large, historic church. Attendance at both services was impressive. The church was packed, and a large number of young people were in the congregation. I congratulated Father Marcus Walker and his wardens for their exceptional ministry. After lunch with the rector and wardens, we returned by cab and train to Wycliffe Hall.

November 3 to 15, 2024 - Wycliffe Hall



My busy days began with participation in morning chapel services. I was able to share my thoughts in groups and attend lectures at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, the Centre for Muslim-Christian Studies, Pusey House, and Christ Church Cathedral.

For many weeks, I was privileged to hear and meet with many distinguished scholars. These experts and their topics included:

- Bishop N. T. Wright - Monday lectures on Isaiah's servant songs. (I later learned he came each Monday on his bicycle,)
- The Rev. Dr. Michael Lloyd, principal of Wycliffe Hall - Handel and the eclipse of deism
- Michelle P. Brown, professor emerita of medieval manuscript studies, School of Advanced Study, University of London, and former curator of illustrated manuscripts at the British Library - Christian Art and the Counter-Reformation 1500 - 1750.



November 15 to 17, 2024 - Manchester



I was invited by Rev. Cornelius Asghar and his rector, Canon Neil Kelley, to visit and preach at St. Peter's Church, Chorley. On Sunday afternoon, Rev. Asghar and his wife, Dr. Shumila Asghar, drove us to Manchester Piccadilly train station for a return trip to Oxford.

November 18 to 23, 2024 Wycliffe Hall, Oxford

Bishop N.T. Wright's Monday lecture was on the prophetic work of the servant in Isaiah 49: 1-13 and 50: 4-11. He taught chapters 52 to 54 on the following two Mondays. For three days a week,

I read and wrote in the library. I started a paper on the missional call of Christ in the sub-continent of India, a topic I explore to this day.

After reading two books by C.S. Lewis, I revised a paper on his life I presented last year at the bicentennial celebration of Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria, Virginia.





On Tuesdays, I walked two miles to the Centre for Muslim-Christian Studies to meet Dr. Danny Crowther. He lectured on looking at the Qur'an, ahadith and Muslim imagination as a reception history study of the Psalter. We have emailed each other while he prepares to publish a book on this topic next year. I also had an opportunity to meet with Dr. Richard McCallum to discuss my

interest in research "Jesus is mentioned in Quran as "son of Mary" 25 times and referred to as Messiah eight times.

I also met with Russ Hersman, a Wycliffe Bible translator who has spent close to 30 years in Sudan. He gave me good news: A Dinka translation of the Old Testament has been completed within the last year.

On Wednesdays, I met with student groups for conversations and prayer. The Principal's Hour was on Thursdays after morning prayer. On one Thursday, Professor Dr. Sarah C. Williams a highly respected social historian launched her new book: *When Courage Calls: Josephine Butler and the Radical Pursuit of Justice for Women.* She lectured on Josephine Butler who was passionate feminist who took on the Victorian sex trade and won. Although she is not as well known for her efforts, this devout Christian was among the most distinguished women of the 19th century.



On some Fridays after morning prayer, I took time to discover Oxford treasures on foot. My first visit was to Pusey House, founded in 1884 as a memorial to Edward Bouverie Pusey (1800-1882), Regius Professor of Hebrew and canon of Christ Church Cathedral. Pusey was a figurehead of the Oxford Movement for 40 years. The house promotes theological study and holiness of life. It also provides spiritual counsel and comfort to members of the university. The College of Holy Cross is part of the building. I attended the noonday office and prayed the rosary with the congregation. I also went to Compline there a few times. C. S. Lewis Society met at Pusey House once a month. I shared my paper on C. S. Lewis with the members of this distinguished group.

From Pusey House, I walked to the High Street and visited University Church and College. I continued on to Magdalene College, University of Oxford, founded in 1458 by William Waynflete, bishop of Winchester. He wanted the college to be one of the grandest in Oxford. Its famous alumni include Henry VIII's chief minister, Cardinal Wolsey; physicist Erwin Schrödinger; and literary giants Oscar Wilde and C. S. Lewis. I walked around the deer park and stood before the New Building where C. S. Lewis stayed and taught.



Myra and I also attended an organ recital in the beautiful, historic chapel of Magdalene College. The chaplain who gave me a tour helped me learn Magdalene's rich history and meet some academic staff members. I thank God for such a grand opportunity to learn, study, and meet people in Oxford.

November 29 to December 8, 2024



On Nov. 29, I led a delegation of British-Pakistani Christians to visit the Pakistan High Commission in London. I had prepared a memorandum on the issue of Christian persecution in Pakistan and offered thoughts to promote inter-faith harmony. We were warmly welcomed by the high commissioner and his staff.

We then took a train from London to Crickhowell, Wales,

where Rev. Canon Rana Youab Khan had invited me to preach on the first Sunday of Advent at St. Edmond's Church. We appreciated the warm welcome and hospitality of Rev. Rana and his wife, Moseena.



For the next few days, Myra and I explored Oxford. I also attended more lectures and meetings.



December 3 to 5, 2024 - Oxford

At Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, Dr. David Singh gave me two books on the life of Sadhu Sunder Singh, "the St. Paul of India". Myra and I read about him for the next three days. In November 2022 I presented a paper: "The Living Water in the Indian Crucible" on the life of Sunder Singh at Caleb Institute, India. At Wycliffe Hall Library I was able to revise and add new facts to my paper. I also read Bishop Stephen Neil's autobiography, God's Apprentice, and his History of Christianity in India. This missionary was a towering figure in 20th century south India.

December 5, 2024 - Oxford

Rev. Richard Moy, international director of Sharing of Ministries Abroad (SOMA) came from London to meet with me. In these ways, SOMA facilitates encounters with God around the world:

- Envisions and empowers local leaders for evangelism
- Equips and encourages development of other leaders through short-term cross-cultural mission teams
- Creates international learning cohorts that support its worldwide community of prayer

While serving as a priest in Virginia in the 1990s, I was involved with SOMA teams in the ministry of renewal and support of international mission teams.

December 11, 2024 - Oxford

I attended morning prayer and a lecture at Oxford Centre for Mission Studies before I met with Dr. David Singh and Petras Bahadur, director of the worldwide mission department of the Seventh Day Adventist Church. He travels almost monthly throughout the world for his mission work. Bahadur is studying here for his Ph.D. He is doing research on the early 20th century converts from Islam to Christianity in the Indian subcontinent.



Pusey House was my next stop on this busy day. After a cold, rainy walk, I was warmly welcomed by principal Father George Westhaver. After our meeting and lunch, I spoke with some young men discerning their call to ordination. I answered their questions and shared my insights about the call to priesthood.

I met next with the Rev. Vaughan Roberts, rector of St. Ebbe's Church, a large evangelical parish with many college students and multi-ethnic ministries. Later in the evening Myra and I then dined at



an old English pub with 10 Wycliffe Hall students and Dr. Ed Stetzer, dean and professor of leadership and Christian ministry at Talbot School of Theology, Biola University, La Mirada, California. He had brought his team to conduct one week "School of Evangelism." This was a very powerful and moving week for all of us. I shall attempt to summarize our learning:



Gospel is you announce
Gospel is you obey
From the Gospel mission flows
Good deeds are not Gospel. They flow from the Gospel.

December 12, 2024 - Oxford



I attended lectures on evangelism and the mission of the church. Myra and I then went to Blackwell Bookstore in Oxford city center for an enjoyable reunion with long-time dear friends, Dr. Philip and Faith Lewis. They were CMS missionaries from the United Kingdom while I served as vicar of Christ Church in Rawalpindi, Pakistan. Dr. Lewis is a well known professor of Islamic studies in the United Kingdom and author of several books. He presented me his book he wrote with a Muslim scholar Sadek Hamid "British Muslims-New Directions in Islamic Thought, Creativity and Activism."

December 13, 2024 - Oxford

This was the last day of Wycliffe Hall's Michaelmas term. In many western liturgical calendars, Michaelmas (also known as Feast of the Archangels) is observed on September 29 until mid-December. I attended three mission and evangelism lectures before Myra and I had lunch with Rev. Dr. Justyn Terry, vice principal of Wycliffe Hall. We also spent time with Rev. Dr. Michael Lloyd, principal of Wycliffe Hall. We thanked them both for inviting me to be an academic scholar.

This afternoon I walked to St. Ebbe's Church. Its rector, the Rev. Vaughan Roberts, invited me to visit after we met a few days ago. Three panels of stained glass above its altar are dedicated to Thomas Valpy French (1825 - 1891). He served as St. Ebbe's vicar before he spent three decades as a missionary in India and then became the first bishop of Lahore (1887-1888). Bishop French was known for his ability to fluently speak seven languages.

My grandfather, father, and I have a 3-generation link with the Diocese of Lahore, Pakistan. My father served as an archdeacon of Lahore, and I was trained and ordained there in the Cathedral of the Resurrection. It was a great honor to stand under the altar memorial window and thank God for the life and ministry of Bishop French. I also asked God's blessings on the ongoing ministry of the Diocese of Lahore, Pakistan.

On my way back to Wycliffe, I visited St. Michael's Church at the North Gate, another historic church in the city center. I was particularly interested in that building since I knew Bishop N.T. Wright is one of its parishioners.

That afternoon, after the evangelism conference ended, we gathered in Wycliffe Hall's refectory for pre-Christmas and a send-off party. An ordinand from the Diocese of London drove us to London for a 4-day hotel stay near Heathrow where Rt. Rev. Manowar Rumlshah was waiting for us. Bishop Mano retired to London after serving as bishop of Peshawar in Pakistan. An evening of reunion and dinner was enjoyed by all.

December 14, 2024 - London

Myra and I visited downtown central London and enjoyed Christmas decorations. Esther Das, a long-time friend, was our guide. About this time, Myra developed a chest infection.

December 15, 2024 - Third Sunday in Advent, London

While Myra rested in our hotel, I worshiped at Westminster Abbey. I was invited to sit in the quire where the choir sings. These choir stalls are also used for the clergy and state officials. I had recently seen the Royal family sitting in these stalls during Queen Elizabeth's funeral service and the Coronation of King Charles III was held as 40th monarch crowned. It was such an awesome view to behold of the High Altar and to receive sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.



December 16, 2024 - Our last day in London



I met with Rt. Rev. Anthony Poggo, secretary general of the Anglican Communion, in a garden cafe adjacent to Lambeth Palace. We discussed many issues of the worldwide Communion.

Myra and I give thanks to God for such rich opportunities to learn and form new friendships during our stay in the United Kingdom. Myra found her own ministry at Wycliffe Hall with theological students. She became a prayer partner with several of them. She met with them regularly in the common room of our building where we stayed. Wow, what an amazing opportunity for three months to grow and connect with this faith community. Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

The mission of God continues in Pakistan

December 15, 2024 - Westminster Abbey, London

As Advent drew to a close, I worshiped where England's royal family would soon celebrate Christmas.

December 21, 2024 - Islamabad, Pakistan

A Pakistani bishop invited me to preach on Christmas morning. I told him I wanted to preach in the upper Swat Valley, God's cathedral, at an elevation of 5,663 feet. Far from London, I would lead a worship service where few Christians live within 50 kilometers of the place I would preach.

The Swat Valley, locally known as Pakistan's Switzerland, was a Taliban stronghold until recently. TV was banned, public hangings were not uncommon, and girls were barred from going to school. Because Taliban control had ended, it seemed safe to go there.

At noon on Dec. 21, Rev. Ifrahim Matthew, an evangelist among Muslims for the last 55 years, his son, and two grandchildren drove us 356 kilometers to upper Swat. We spent the night in the Madyan Hotel. Our rooms were icy cold without electricity or gas.

Sunday, December 22, 2024 - Swat Valley, Bagh Dehri



We had been invited by Gulzar Griffin. For 40 years, he has quietly worked alone as an evangelist in this area. He sought permission from local government authorities as well as their support to protect us during the first Christian worship service in the history of this region.

After a small, scattered group of Christians from within 50 to 60 square kilometers began to arrive at the Government Higher Secondary School, the local khan (chief), high school principal, and other Muslim leaders joined us in a Christmas cake-cutting ceremony. An assistant commissioner and 30 security soldiers joined us before the start of our Christmas service.

The district commissioner welcomed the group and assured Christians they have local government's full protection. I told the authorities they were free to leave after their speeches, but the commissioner next to me said he and his party wanted to stay. God thus provided an amazing opportunity. Thirty Christian adults and children and about 36 Muslim adults were part of our Christmas service. For most, it was their first experience of Christian worship.

Since Muslims do not use musical instruments in their mosque to worship Allah, I began by explaining the joy of praising God Almighty with musical instruments. I read Psalm 100, which is an invitation to praise God. I changed my Christmas sermon to help them understand about the birth of the Savior of the world. I used texts from Isaiah and the prologue of John's gospel. I reminded the Muslim leaders and soldiers that Jesus is mentioned by name 25 times in the holy Qur'an. The Qur'an emphasizes Jesus as a prophet, unique in creation, born of a virgin, and a messenger from God. He is referred to as "Isa bin Maryam (Jesus son of Mary) and al-Masih.

A small group of Christian children presented a Christmas program, and Rev. Ifrahim Matthew gave copies of New Testaments to all Muslims present before we ate Christmas dinner together. Christmas cake pieces were distributed as part of our dessert. We pray that seeds of the Gospel sown in this mountainous area will bear fruit. One day in our lifetime or after we are gone, there will be a thriving congregation and a first church built here to the glory of God.

At 5 p.m., we began our return journey through mountain passes and arrived in Islamabad at 10:30 p.m. We offered prayers for peace and prosperity now that this area is free of Taliban control. I feel we were scouts of Jesus Christ as we explored and prayed "Let thy Kingdom come." Alleluia!

Sunday, December 29, 2024 - All Saints' Church of the Martyrs, Peshawar, Pakistan.



Where Alexander the Great and other warriors stayed on their way to invade India, hundreds of thousands of Muslim live around this church built by Rev. Thomas Hughes in 1883. It is inside the Kohati Gate of the old walled city of Peshawar in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a parish of the Church of Pakistan. With its minaret and dome, this architecturally unique place of Christian worship bears a striking resemblance to a Saracenic mosque.

In this historic sanctuary, on September 22, 2013, a twin suicide bombing by the Taliban (Islamic militants) killed 127 and injured more than 170. An estimated 37 children were among the victims. Since then, I have come here to preach and celebrate Holy Communion. I have visited those who were injured and prayed with many who died because of injuries. I have also visited orphans of that tragedy who attend St. Edward's High School next door and have raised funds for their education.

After a 3-hour bus ride from Islamabad on Saturday, Dec. 28, I was greeted by Daniel Samuel, education director of the Diocese of Peshawar. We met in his home for two hours with local Muslim leaders before he took me to the residence of Rev. Shazad Murad, vicar of All Saints Church, where I stayed that night. The next morning, I led worship, preached and celebrated Holy Eucharist on the last Sunday of the year. I always feel the presence of martyrs here and their great witness of the living Church. I am reminded “The blood of the Martyrs is the seed of the church.” It is a privilege and honor to worship, pray corporately, and lay hands on people after the service.

January 3 to 5, 2025 - Sukkur Sindh, Dera Murad Jamali - Nasirabad, Baluchistan, Pakistan

There are only two flights a week from Islamabad to Sukkur, Sindh. A small Pakistan Air Lines Fokker covered the 963-kilometer distance in two hours. Sukkur is a historic city on the west bank of the Indus River in Pakistan’s Sindh province. It dates back to the civilization of the Indus Valley, which lasted from 2,600 to 1,900 BCE.

I was received at the Begum Nusrat Bhutto airport by an inter-faith group of Muslims, Christians, and Hindu leaders led by Brunenor B. Newton. We traveled by car to Mr. Newton’s home in Jacobabad, a city founded in 1847 by General John Jacob. The city’s history is entwined with the British Raj in India. It is notorious for its extreme weather conditions. Summer temperatures routinely soar above 40°C (104° Fahrenheit) with peak highs exceeding 50°C (122° Fahrenheit).

Mr. Newton is the principal of Victor Public Higher Secondary school with 1,600 students from grades 1 through 12. During my visit, I shared my thoughts with students about the importance of education for the progress and prosperity of Pakistan.

January 4, 2025 - Sukkur

I met with community leaders over breakfast. At 11 a.m. we drove 40 kilometers and crossed the border into Baluchistan Province, which is a district and divisional headquarters. Thirty Christian families live in Dera Murad Jamali within a total population of 250,000. These families have neither a place to worship nor a cemetery. They must carry their dead by public transport to Sukkur for burial.



Mr. Newton and a small delegation from Jacobabad accompanied me to meet with Moin Ur Rehman Khan, commissioner of Nasirabad Division. I spoke to him about the right of all Pakistani citizens to bury their dead and have a place to worship.

We presented an application for granting five acres to the Christian families of Dera Murad Jamali to meet these needs. Commissioner Khan promised to recommend this grant to support the small Christian community. We had brought two Holy Bibles in Urdu and English. I presented both to the commissioner.

As our visit came to an end, we thanked him for his hospitality and an opportunity to meet with him. Because he is a Muslim, I asked his permission to pray with him and for his administration. After he accepted my offer, I laid hands on him and prayed for him and his administration.

That afternoon, I was pleased to bless and give keys to a new Honda 70 cc motorcycle to Muhammad Rehman, driver of the high school van. This gift was purchased with money from Joshua Mall of Round Lake Beach, Illinois, in the United States. That evening, Mr. Newton arranged a barbecue dinner on the top floor of his high school.

Sunday, January 5, 2025



About 75 Christians gathered for worship at 11 a.m. We dedicated Asher Augstan as a lay pastor-evangelist to serve the local community at Rev. Newton Memorial Church, which was named for Mr. Newton's father. A total of 22 young boys and girls who had graduated in their Sunday school classes were blessed and dedicated their lives to serve Christ. I preached on the lessons of the Feast of Epiphany and celebrated the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist before we sat down to a delicious lunch,

Individuals and families then asked me to pray for them until 3:30 p.m. While I was exhausted by standing at the altar for four and a half hours, I was also spiritually energized. I give thanks to God for such an opportunity to serve Christ and His people. At 4 p.m., after thanking the Newton family, I left for Sukkur airport to catch my flight to Islamabad.

January 7 to 9, 2025 - Diocese of Faisalabad, Pakistan



After a 6-hour bus ride to St. Peter's Church in Faisalabad, I was driven to Satrah by Khalid Salim. My grandfather served as a pastor in this village for many years. My father helped build St. Augustine Church in Satrah while he was archdeacon of Lahore Diocese and rural dean of Gojra. Three times a year, he held a watch night prayer service from 9 p.m. to 4 a.m. He memorized close to 50 Psalms, many chapters from the Old and New Testaments, morning and evening prayers and collects, and the Great Litany.

This watch night tradition has continued. Priests, lay evangelists and a few hundred Christians gather to pray in Satrah twice a year. Many have memorized passages of the Bible, and others recite together from their Bibles. Three hymns, three passages from the Bible, and three prayers are sung, said and recited for a couple of hours. At 2 a.m. those who are sick and need laying on of hands for healing and blessing are invited to come forward. At 3 a.m., Holy Communion was celebrated.

During my visit, we followed the same form of this night prayer service. Spending a whole night of praise, prayer, and recitation of the Word of God is a powerful spiritual experience. I finally went to bed at 4 a.m.

January 8, 2025 - Gojra, Punjab

At 9 a.m. Bishop Aleem Anwar of Faisalabad drove me from Satrah to diocesan headquarters in Gojra where 37 pastors of urban and rural congregations had gathered. I was asked to teach on “A Call of A Priest” and to celebrate Holy Communion with clergy at St. John’s Cathedral.

After lunch, we spent another hour socializing and learning about their ministry mostly in small rural parishes surrounded by large Muslim majority communities.

After an hours rest, Bishop Aleem drove me to Montgomerywala, a Christian village established in the 1870s by the Church Missionary Society. More than 1,500 people can sit on the carpeted floor of a very large church my father served as vicar from 1952 to 1960. A revival happened during his tenure, and many people still remember his ministry.



At 7:30 p.m. a service began with lots of praise and prayers. After preaching for 45 minutes, I invited the congregation to commit their lives to Christ. Others came forward for prayer or healing, and we laid on hands for two hours. I was asked to say final blessings at 11 p.m. After dinner hosted by a parishioner that lasted until close to midnight, Bishop Aleem drove me back to Gojra to stay in the diocesan headquarters.

A mother of three college students had also travelled from Gojra to attend our preaching mission in Montgomerywala. This family asked Bishop Aleem if I could stay in their home. After Bishop Aleem agreed, I went to their home at 1 a.m. where they had already prepared a bedroom for me. They asked me to pray and lay hands on each of them to bless them. Prayer and conversation continued until 3 a.m. I slept until Bishop Aleem arrived at 8 a.m January 9 to take me back to the Faisalabad bus stop so I could catch another bus to Rawalpindi.

Sunday, January 12, 2025 - Gulpur Evangelical Church, Azad Kashmir



This is the first church in the state of Azad Kashmir. It is surrounded by high Himalayan mountains. I also name it a Cathedral of God. It took years of efforts by Rev. Canon Dr. Ifrahim Akthar Matthews, appointed by me as a canon for evangelism, to plant a church. The state had claimed since there were no Kashmiri Christian families in Azad Kashmir, we could not propagate and build a church.

Several years ago, we found one Christian family with a State of Kashmir resident identity card who have lived here close to 100 years. They gave us a small piece of land at the end of their property. We laid the foundation in 2015, built a prayer room, and then consecrated it as a church in 2016. This congregation has been growing ever since. We give thanks to God for the faithful ministry of Pastor Arshad John. I consider it a privilege and honor to serve and support this ministry.



January 13 to 15, 2025



Rev. Canon Ifrahim Matthews drove me from Islamabad to Lahore. At the diocesan guest house, I was warmly welcomed by Bishop Azad Marshall, Bishop of Raiwind Diocese and presiding bishop of the Church of Pakistan and his diocesan team. Lahore has a population of 14 million and is an estimated 2000 years old. It is home to two dioceses of the Church of Pakistan, which is going through a time of division. Five dioceses are on one side, and three others have formed an alliance.

From 9 a.m. to late evening, I shared a message of forgiveness and reconciliation with both groups. I read 2 Corinthians 5: 11-21 and prayed with them. After 14 hours together, we ended our

meeting at 2 a.m. the next day. I felt God had brought me to Lahore for such a purpose: to be His instrument and to carry a message of forgiveness, peace, and reconciliation. I give thanks to God for this opportunity.

By now, I felt my mission had been accomplished on this trip. It was time for Myra and I to return to Wisconsin. Tired but filled with the Spirit and many memories, we turned our minds and hearts to our long journey home.





Help with Compassion is 501 (c) (3) organization incorporated in the United States whose goal is to work with the persecuted, the poor and the marginalized by carrying the cross for Christ. To this end, Bishop Patrick Augustine, Missionary Bishop to Bor South Sudan leads and organizes a dedicated volunteer team to support mission work in Asia and Africa. All the work, including Bishop Patrick, is done voluntarily. There are no operating costs to pay salary for Help with Compassion. All donations are directly used to support charitable work overseas.

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