

Revival & REFORMATION

The Official “United in Prayer” Weekly Blog and Prayer Requests
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April 28, 2019 Building a Church by Hand (Baptized by Fire – Part III) By Jiwan Moon

(At the time of this testimony, Jiwan Moon and another young adult, Seong Hoon, were student missionaries in a remote village in the Philippines. This testimony is the conclusion of a three part series, continued from the April 21st United in Prayer feature blog.)

We had less than two weeks before we were to return to the United States. Seong Hoon and I wanted to do something more for the villagers before we left. After the amazing results of the evangelistic series, which only came because of much prayer, the people needed a place to worship. We wanted to build them a church, but the only money we had was for food and transportation for the trip home.

We went to the nearest town and got an estimate of how much it would cost to build a church. We didn't have enough money for the building, but we made an urgent call to the Korean American Youth Adventist Missionary Movement (KAYAMM) in the United States: “Please send us \$200. We need to build a church!”

We visited the Southern Mindanao Mission and begged the president for a cash advance until the money arrived from the U.S. The leaders of the mission gave us enough money to lay the foundation. Seong Hoon and I said jokingly to each other, “Let's not worry about the food; there are bananas and coconuts to eat. If we lose some weight, we will gain it back when we get home.”

I'd never built anything in my life! I don't think I'd ever held a shovel. I had no idea we needed gravel to lay a foundation. I didn't know we needed sand. I thought we'd just put cement on the ground and a foundation would appear.

We didn't have money for sand and gravel. Someone suggested that we get them from the river bank. The river was more than a mile away. We spent an entire day digging and collecting sand and gravel. Our hands were covered with blisters. When the blisters broke, our hands were covered with blood. We wrapped our hands with our clothes and continued working. Exhausted, we didn't stop to think about how tired we were; we just thought about how we were going to build a church so people could come and worship.

Sometimes we put the sand and gravel in containers we carried on our shoulders. Sometimes we carried it back to the building site on the back of a cow. It was going so slowly.

The captain of the village had a truck, and we decided to ask him if we could carry the sand and gravel in his truck just once. After a little while, he said we could. We were thrilled!

We drove across the river and started loading the sand and gravel into the truck. We didn't stop to eat. All we could think about was worshipping together in the church we built with our own hands.

After the truck was loaded, we watched it move slowly into the river. Suddenly we realized something was dreadfully wrong. The driver told us that the load was too heavy. We tried everything to get the truck going again, but every effort failed. After a couple hours, the driver said, "It's no use; it has to be unloaded."

I tried to hide my tears as we unloaded the truck and watched our hard work disappear into the river. I couldn't speak. Seong Hoon didn't say a word either. After the truck was unloaded, it still wouldn't move. Someone went to get the military truck to get the truck out of the river.

We knew the construction was over. We couldn't ask the captain to use his truck again. As we walked back to where we had hoped to build the church, one of the members stopped us. "Why do you look so discouraged?" the old man asked.

We told him what had happened. He started smiling. We didn't know whether he was mocking us or just trying to crush our spirits.

"Have you seen that small hill right next to where you want to build the church?" he asked. "A long time ago someone started building a house right where you are building the church. He wasn't able to continue, but he left a truckload of sand and gravel. Go look under the thick grass," he urged us. "You'll find what you need."

Was he serious? There was only one way to find out.

Sure enough, we found a small hill right next to the construction site. We started digging and found exactly what we needed. God had already provided for our needs long before we thought to ask.

That Sabbath we worshiped in the new church. Seong Hoon and I had tears in our eyes as we hugged each other and thought of the many blessings God had given us in answer to prayer as we dedicated ourselves to Him.

This mission experience changed my life. It was here that I came to know Christ personally. It was here that I realized the happiness of bringing people to God, and I committed myself to serving the Lord in ministry—no matter what the future held. And what an amazing future and life of ministry God has given me in the almost twenty years since this experience. Time and time again, I've seen that we serve a God who truly hears and answers our prayers.

Jiwan Moon is the Public Campus Ministries director for the General Conference. He is also the associate director for Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries. He resides in Silver Spring, Maryland, along with his wife and three daughters.

World Church Prayer Requests

April 28 – May 5, 2019

- **PRAYER REQUEST:** Pray for the many students who will be soon be graduating from high school and colleges. Pray that God will guide and direct their steps and plans for the future.
- **PRAYER REQUEST:** Please pray for the safety of those who travel for the Church in full time ministry. Pray for their health as well, as many follow very intense traveling schedules.
- **PRAYER REQUEST:** Pray that God would help each of us, as well as those in leadership, to honor our body temple and embrace and live the NEW START principles (Nutrition, Exercise, Water, Sunshine, Temperance, Air, Rest, and Trust in God) to the best of our ability.
- **PRAYER REQUEST:** Pray for more willing to dedicate their life to foreign missions, especially in difficult unreached areas.
- **PRAYER REQUEST:** Please join us in praying specifically for the following “Prayer Focus” city. Zhongxiang, China, has a population of 1,030,000. Due to its average life expectancy of 75 years, nearly 10 years more than the worldwide average, Zhongxiang has been called China’s “Hometown of Longevity.”
- **PRAYER REQUEST:** Please pray for God’s blessing on Zhongxiang in the following areas:
 - Pray for wisdom for Zhongxiang’s leaders.
 - Pray for the families of Zhongxiang.
 - Pray for the young people making major life decisions.
 - Pray for those who struggle with their health in Zhongxiang.
 - Pray that the city’s most lonely elderly residents may find friendship.
 - Pray for the women of Zhongxiang—for their safety, education, and well-being.
 - Pray for the men of Zhongxiang—for wisdom, for their careers and their sense of purpose.