

devote yourselves to prayer

Missionaries reflect on how God answers prayer both in the ordinary details of life, and in extraordinary and un-

Out of Islam into the True Light

Judith Calf, Tanzania

Each term I give my link churches and prayer supporters the individual names of students. I know that some pray very specifically and by name for them, so it is a real partnership we have.

For those who have been faithfully praying for my students, thank you so much. In class recently, one of my students brought tears to my eyes when in front of all his fellow students he clearly confessed that he now understood that he has been saved by the grace of Jesus – not anything he has done but only Jesus brought him out of Islam and into the true light of being saved through believing Jesus. What a privilege to hear, what a joy as his teacher! Thank your for your prayers and praise to our Lord Jesus Christ.

"I am your God, I am with you"

Bonnie Lepelaar, Cambodia

My cook, Vanna, has been a Christian for many years. Last year she was diagnosed with advanced cancer of the uterus. She was in despair, with no hope in her heart. At church, she told the members and they prayed together. At that time she was working for another missionary family and they also prayed with her with tears in their eyes. Her cancer was already at stage four, a hopeless case, the doctor said. He did not want to treat her, as her case was too serious, but Vanna believes that God worked in the doctor's heart and he agreed to begin treatment. Once treatment began, Vanna's church prayed every day for her. Vanna often listened to the broadcasts of a Christian radio station, and at that time, heard the words which brought her so much hope: "I am your God, I am with you." She prayed during her treatment and, feeling cool hands on her stomach, thanked God for healing her.

Over a period of one and a half months, she received radiotherapy 30 times and chemotherapy three times. Patients who had lesser cancers were dead within the month, yet every day she grew a little stronger. When she had to stay overnight at the hospital after treatments, she would witness to other patients that Jesus Christ was her saviour. We don't know if the doctor was a believer or not, but he said that God must love her very much.

A Twenty Year Prayer

Alisan Greeff, Namibia

As we were in the final stages of packing to come to Namibia, a friend emailed us from South Africa. Representatives of the CESA (Church of England in South Africa) have been coming up to Owamboland for many years on short missions, teaching people and encouraging the leadership. Our friend said: "I know people who have been praying for 20 years for someone to go to Owamboland and STAY there to teach the people. And now their prayers have been answered."

Timothy, one of the young men David is currently discipling, recently announced, "It's a miracle!" "What is?" asked a bemused David. "That you are here. Many people come and say they want to help us. But you are the first people who have STAYED. We thank God for you."

We know it is the grace of God and people's prayers that are keeping us here. Thank you for being a part of the answer to a twenty-year prayer!

Prayer and Peace

Mary Lewis, Nepal

I am searching the internet for material for an essay and mulling over what God has planned for us after our Home Assignment. The email list

comes up with our Australian home church newsletter. It opens:

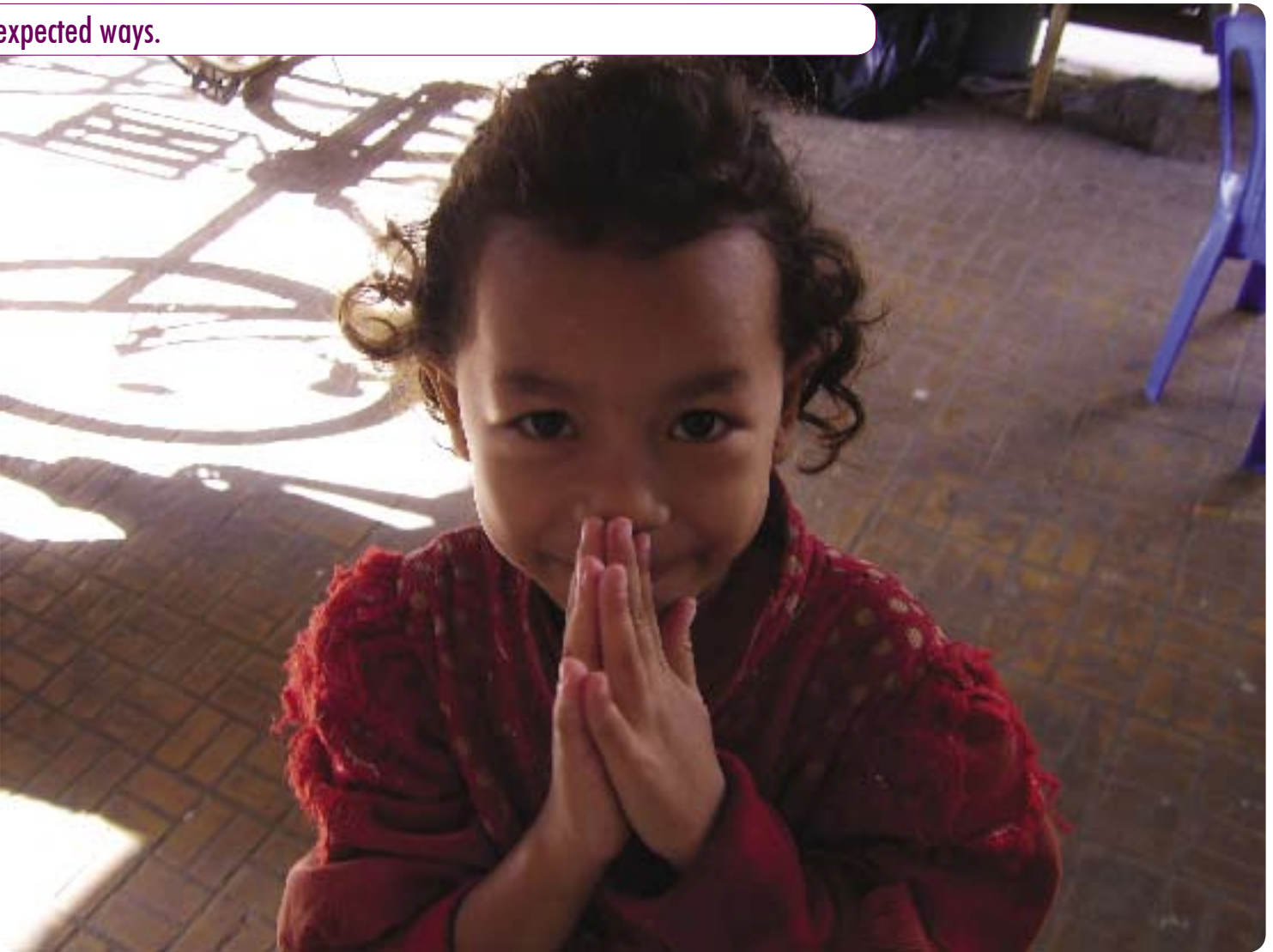
Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4: 6-7

I remember. This verse first came alive to me in Purcell's anthem when I left home and moved into college. I remember the vividness of this verse in 1985 as I cut off the last strip of the calendar saying "only one more week and we get out of this terrible place forever," my husband walked in the door and said, "I think God is calling us to come back here for a long term commitment". I remember the peace of this verse rolling over me as I sat beside our youngest, unconscious with meningitis, gazing fixedly at a reproduction of the *Good Shepherd* on the hospital wall and counting her respirations. I remember this verse rolling over and over as the plane took off and we left our family on the ground, this time all 'grown up' and giving us the freedom-to-go, a freedom that I wasn't sure that I wanted. I remembered it again last week as my Bible college students and I looked at Jesus' healing of the woman who had been bleeding for years. She came "trembling" and Jesus sent her away in peace.

I worry, I get a knot in my stomach that I can't swallow away, my requests are broken and indistinct, and God's solid rock of peace in Christ that passes all understanding guards and holds it all together.

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, to

expected ways.



A young Cambodian girl at the Sunshine Centre.

Answered prayer . . . and then not

Elspeth Collie, Argentina

Not long ago an evangelistic group for pre-adolescents started up in our church, led by the youth leader and three young adults. The idea was that the small group of kids already in the church would invite their non-Christian friends along. Our daughter Lucy (12) invited all the girls in her class to the first meeting. We prayed all week that some of them would come - it felt like a big prayer.

On the day of the first meeting five classmates wanted to go and

three actually went: the very girls who had teased Lucy in the past for going to church and talking about God! They all loved the meeting. The following meeting two classmates went. Then two mothers objected that they didn't want their daughters going along to a Protestant church where the Bible was read. We live in a conservative Roman Catholic suburb where there is still an entrenched mistrust of non-Roman groups. These mothers' attitudes dampened

the girls' enthusiasm for the group and no classmates went to the third meeting.

The prayer seemed to be answered and then not. What did God want to teach Lucy out of that disappointing experience? Surely God wanted more people to come to know him and his church to grow. Answers to prayer can be ambiguous, and we just have to take it on faith that somehow God will use them to his good purposes.