

As Everyone is Entering: I will put signs on the doors

Everyone Remove their Shoes

No Chairs (Except Adult Chaperons)

Females On Left Males On Right

Good Morning everyone! You may be wondering why I asked you all to remove your shoes, sit on the ground, and split up by gender. Well in most traditional Indian churches this is how they worship. I wanted you all to get the Indian experience while worshipping this morning.

I went on a Mission of Peace to India from December 27<sup>th</sup> to January 13<sup>th</sup> this past year. Every Mission of Peace group or MOP comes up with their own mission statement. Which is much like our rally covenant, a promise to ourselves, everyone around us, and God. My MOP mission statement is:

**Called by God we will transform ourselves through Shalom and compassion. While learning about India, we will grow in Christian and global community, expand our horizons, build an understanding of our diverse cultures and express Gods love.**

I'm going to break this statement down and tell you of my journey in fulfilling this mission statement.

**Called By God:** Between going through the fund raising process for Kaitlyn Johnson's MOP trip and receiving an e-mail from Beth Dimond about the application process I had this feeling inside of me that God wanted me to go on the MOP trip to India. After getting accepted to go on the MOP trip to India I was an even mixture of nervous and excited the whole time I was fund raising and preparing. With all the support from my friends, family, community, and businesses I knew God was speaking through all of these people telling me it was my calling to go to India on the Mission of Peace.

**We will Transform Ourselves Through Shalom and Compassion:** Before sharing how fulfilled this this section of our mission statement I will explain the term Shalom. It is the presence of God, the awareness of God always being there, and bringing wholeness to brokenness. My greatest memory that describes this portion is in Hyderabad, our second city. It was probably about 10 o'clock at night and

we were on the bus with the door opened waiting while Ravii, our drivers assistant, was getting directions. I was sitting right by the door of the bus and there was a group of about five scruffy, barefooted children outside our door. They were signaling that they wanted us to give them something. So I dug through my bag and gave them each a pencil. All five children shook my hand and said namistay, the divinity in me greets the divinity in you, a common Indian greeting. A few minutes later a small girl from the group standing outside our bus gave me a folded piece of paper. On the inside of it were three words God bless you and a heart. This made my heart melt and tears well up in my eyes. When I later reflected on that moment the song Come and fill our hearts with your Peace came to me. That single moment that night filled my heart with Gods peace and I like to think I filled that little Indian girls heart with Gods peace too.

**While learning about India, we will grow in Christian and global community:** Our last weekend in India we spent an over night with Indian families. Elizabeth and I spent the night at Reji and Rejini Soans flat. We were able to really experience a day in the life of an Indian person. I learned so much from them and their family. They were so hospitable the whole time. At the end of our stay we exchanged e-mail addresses and still correspond.

**Expand our horizons, build an understanding of our diverse cultures and express Gods love.:**

In Mysore, our third city, we visited the Ellen Thorburn Kowen Memorial Hospital. Like almost every other place we visited our whole group was presented with garlands. Our group then split up into pairs and each pair was supposed to have one or two student nurse tour guides. Somehow Alice and I ended up with six student nurses showing us the hospital and nursing school. It was amazing to see how many different wings of the hospital there were and how projects they did were similar to projects we do at our schools. Like posters and table charts. Through out this whole tour one of the student nurses was holding my hand. In India girls and girls hold hands and boys and boys hold hands. Her holding my hand gave me a safe, warm feeling. I don't even know her name but she is someone in India that really touched my heart.

In conclusion I would like you to join me in prayer; for India, and the Indian people. Please follow along on the handout and join me in the attitude of prayer.

Our Father in heaven,  
Reveal who you are.  
Set the world right,  
Do what is best-  
    as above, so below.  
Keep us alive three square meals.  
Keep us forgiven with you and forgiving others.  
Keep us safe from ourselves and the Devil.  
You're in charge!  
You can do anything you want!  
You're ablaze in beauty!  
Yes. Yes. Yes.  
Amen.