



Return from Central Asia

Esther Mueller's Update

August 26, 2013

Cindy: An Inspiring Woman in Closed Central Asia

I have spent the past **7 weeks** in **Central Asia** for the field assignment of my leadership course called the **School of Leadership and Ministry Development (SOMLD)**. The nation I lived in is a closed country so sharing the gospel and converting to Christianity is illegal.

During my time in Central Asia I worked with local Christians whose stories amazed me. One woman, Cindy (whose name I have changed for security reasons) told me how she grew up Muslim but became a Christian after befriending Canadian missionaries. Cindy shared how fighting broke out in her city between her ethnic group and another group. Thousands of people were killed and hundreds of thousands were displaced as their homes were destroyed with fire. In response, Cindy took supplies to the stricken

areas and asked for forgiveness and peace on behalf of her ethnic group. While delivering supplies a group of men arrived ordering Cindy to leave so they could kill the people in the village. To this, Cindy responded, "If you want to kill them you will have to kill me first." so the men moved on. In the aftermath of the fighting Cindy took advantage of the chaos in the local market to hand out Bibles. A few months later on television a reporter held up one of the Bibles, informing the city that an unknown person illegally passed out Bibles after the fighting and emphatically stated that this should never happen again.

Cindy's life sounds like a story from a

book but she is a real person with real faith in a real God. She inspired me to keep pursuing God even when life is challenging or the world around me appears formidable. It is encouraging to know that bold people like Cindy exist, especially in closed countries in Central Asia. It was a huge honor to work with Cindy during my time in Central Asia. **Please pray for protection, wisdom and more teammates for Cindy** as she serves God in a closed country.



Sitting with one of my campers, Eyeeeleeda, at the end of camp celebration

Joys:

-I am **going to America (North Carolina and Florida)** for **6 weeks** to reconnect with family, and friends and raise support

-I officially **completed the School of Ministry and Leadership Development (SOMLD)!**

-I had an amazing trip to closed Central Asia where I served at two kids camps, encouraged local believers and built relationships with non-believers

Prayer requests:

-For meaningful times of reconnecting with family and friends in America

-Please pray that more people will commit to supporting me monthly

-merger: my team, YWAM Nexia is merging with YWAM Vancouver. Please pray for wisdom and a smooth transition as we bring two groups together to form a new team

Discovering a Precious Gift

Seven weeks ago I would not let someone pay me to work with children. I did not think I liked working with kids and my lack of experience did not convince me otherwise. Now I can confidently say that children are precious gifts that I enjoy investing in. What changed, you may ask? Well, while in Central Asia, I was a counselor at two different

summer camps for kids. I was so nervous about supervising for the first time and I felt very inadequate. As I got to know the kids, though, I was amazed by how open, loving and receptive they are. The barriers that I felt would separate me from relating to them like speaking a different language and coming from a different culture did not stop the children from forming

friendships with me. They loved me even though I did not earn or deserve it. The acceptance and love that children freely give is a beautiful gift to a world that longs for love and acceptance. Now I see that children are incredible gifts, with many talents and strengths that I have the honor of seeing and helping develop when I have the opportunity.

Please prayerfully consider partnering with me through financial support

Checks can be made out to "Main Street UMC" with "Esther Mueller" in the memo and should be mailed to:

Main St UMC
306 South Main St
Kernersville, NC 27284



Above: We prepared a dance to perform for the kids at camp



Above: We dressed up as superheroes for our superman themed camp



Above: Using my height to help decorate for camp at an orphanage



Above: I handed out Samaritan's Purse shoe boxes to the children at camp



Above: Yum! Delicious bread baked fresh and bought daily



Above: The white buildings are yurts which shepherds in rural areas live in



Above: I am teaching campers at the orphanage how to make bracelets during the handicrafts club