

Punjab Mission

Calling

Both my elder brother (Rev. Kuldip Gangar) and I were born in Punjab. Our family moved from Punjab, India to England in 1960. We both came to faith in our teens. Our family belonged to the Sikh religion. Though things were difficult at home due to our conversion, the Lord preserved us by His grace. Not only did the Lord protect us, but also saved our entire family. In time our parents and our siblings, except one sister, were also brought to faith. Furthermore, many of our relatives were also saved. One convert was our aunt. She had a great burden for our relatives back in Punjab, India. She began to take trips back and share the gospel with them. Eventually, my brother and I both ended up going to Westminster Theological Seminary and entering the ministry in the CRC and later in the URC and the Free Reformed Church. Our aunt kept asking us to accompany her to Punjab so that we might preach the gospel. Due to our pastorates we were unable to take up her call, until February 2004. This was the first trip that we had made to Punjab since we left as children some 43 years ago. We were delighted with the response that we received from the villages. We spent three weeks there. We held three evangelistic meetings, and conducted worship services and Bible studies. The evangelistic meetings were packed with about 300 people attending each meeting. The people were open and responsive. They were eager that we should not forget them, but would return. We are thankful for the response and the door that the Lord has presented and opened. We are eager to pursue this mission opportunity.

Credentials

The Lord not only calls us to serve Him, but also equips us for the task. As we look back on our first trip we see various credentials with the Lord had prepared us.

- We are both fluent in the Punjabi language. We were both born in Punjab and were raised speaking the language. Even after we left for England, we spoke Punjabi. We are thankful that we can use this language credential to communicate the gospel. Though theological terms are not part of everyday Punjabi, we were able to pick up such terms in our preaching.
- We are both natives of Punjab. This common ethnicity with the people of Punjab goes along way in removing possible obstacles in missions. Though this is by no means a prerequisite for missionaries, it is a great advantage.
- Though we have not lived in Punjab for nearly 43 years, our parents were well known to the villages we visited. The villagers knew us, although we were too young to remember them. Such a relationship provided for us an open door into the villages. This was borne out by the turnout to the meetings as well as their desire for us to return.

- Not only were we known, but we also had many extended family members living in the villages. These relatives greatly helped in giving us credibility before others.

We are thankful for all these advantages that the Lord has provided for us. Though we do not want to suggest that those who do not have the above credentials cannot serve this region, we do not want to ignore such advantages. If Paul could become all things to all men to save some, then we certainly want to use all the things the Lord has provided for the same end.

Vision

- **Evangelistic** We intend to conduct both personal evangelism as well as tent meeting style evangelism. We have, so far, held such meetings in three villages. We hope to revisit some of these and go to other villages as well. This seems to be a good approach.
- **Ecclesiastical** We intend to establish house churches in each village so that the people do not have to travel far to attend church. Given the lack ability of the villagers to build churches, house churches are the best approach.
- **Educational** We intend to identify possible leaders for house churches and provide basic theological training so that the churches may have qualified leaders. We also intend to provide general theological education for people, since they are faced with many different ideas from religious programs on television as well as other missions such as the Pentecostals.

Costs

In order to give the churches some idea of the costs involved, we have included a rough budget based on our trip in February 2004.

• Travel cost to Punjab per person	\$1500
• Travel cost while in Punjab (car and driver)	\$600
• Room and board for a month	\$700
• Tent meeting cost for three tent meetings	\$1200
• Punjabi Bibles for distribution (\$2 Per Bible)	\$1000
• Charitable gifts to villages for improvement projects	\$1000
<u>Approximate cost per year for a month mission</u>	<u>\$6000</u>

The Lord has brought us this wonderful opportunity to work in Punjab. We were not actively looking for it, but God has brought all the pieces together so that we might have this opening for missions. We also have a ready-made base from which to work. Our aunt has built a Christian Center (five-bedroom house with a church building attached to it) in which we stay. It is open for us to use as a base of operations. There is a house church in place. The members were very active in the meetings that we held. We preached in the church the weeks we were there and led Bible studies with them. They are eager to work with us to extend the Lord's Kingdom. The minister attended all our meetings and led the singing, which was a great help. We look forward to working with them. It seems the Lord has brought all things together for His purpose. We are humbled to be able to participate. We covet your prayers and financial support. Please take the time to look at our website and see the pictures of the mission of 2004. May the Lord bless you in your ministry and bless us, as we become coworkers in this new mission field.

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