

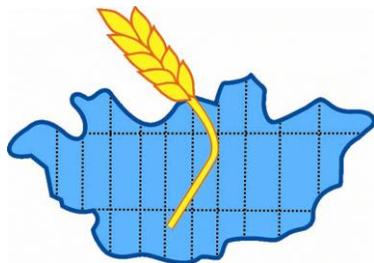
PRISONERS *for* CHRIST
OUTREACH MINISTRIES



MONGOLIA 2015

SEATED LEFT TO RIGHT

Bob Jordan, Don Szolomayer, Greg Von Tobel



*WITH THE CONFERENCE ATTENDEES OF PRISON FELLOWSHIP
MONGOLIA, ULAANBAATAR, MONGOLIA*

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Introduction: The theme for this trip is “...that they may know the mystery of God” taken from Colossians 2:2. Mongolia is a vast country with a small population. The 4,300-foot elevation capital city of Ulaanbaatar is where we arrived and conducted ministry. The population is just over 50% Buddhist, with another 30% having no religious affiliation. There is a small Islamic presence and a very small 2% Christian presence.

Indeed, if we can make a difference here and share Christ among the inmate community, we will largely be speaking to those without any Christian heritage, and for them our prayer is that *they may know the mystery of God.*



For this campaign in Mongolia, the first-ever for Prisoners For Christ, our objective is to meet the prison ministry community established in Mongolia and as is our custom on a first trip to get to know the local ministry leaders and team. We aim to listen close to the Spirit of God to find His will for us in this ancient and fascinating land. There are no prison visits scheduled for this trip.

The team of Greg Von Tobel, founder and president of Prisoners For Christ; Dr. Bob Jordan, chairman of the board and international group leader with Prisoners For Christ, and Don Szolomayer, vice chairman and international group leader, departed Seattle on October 6, 2015 for a flight to Incheon-Seoul South Korea and then ultimately to Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.



The Usual Suspects... Don, Greg, Bob

For those war history buffs, the harbor at Inchon is where most military historians say the greatest, boldest, and most decisive military action in the history of the United States took place. General Douglas MacArthur, leader of the United Nations military presence in South Korea, devised a plan to repulse and virtually destroy the invading North Korean army. Over the objection of multiple military leaders in Washington DC and on his own staff he got the approval of President Truman and launched the surprise initiative that split the North Korean army, cut off its supply line, and overtook by complete surprise the harbor town and won a major victory. To fly over that very harbor on the way into the airport left us to imagine how it was 65 years ago at this very place. The South Koreans commemorate this even annually.

We arrived in Ulaanbaatar and stood in line to come through customs (we're used to this on missionary trips) and met our team and went outside into the freezing night air (we are not used to this on missionary trips!).



Greg, Tunga, Odsuren, Margaret, Don



Freeezing!



Airport Poster

The Mongolian team led by New Zealand-native and missionary to Mongolia since 1992 Sister Margaret Currie and some of her team, locals to Mongolia, took us to our hotel. We had some rich fellowship between the airport and the hotel, and then in the hotel. We arranged for breakfast and pick-up the next day, and the American team then gathered for prayer and thanksgiving at our joy of arriving safely in Mongolia and another exciting chapter in the annals of PFC prison ministry around the world.



Missionary to Mongolia Margaret Currie

Sister Margaret is the founder of Prison Fellowship Mongolia (PFM). For 23 years this dedicated Sister of the Cross has built a tremendous team, ministered to the prisoner, lead and managed the work of the ministries of this international prison ministry, and been an encouragement to all for these many years. On top of that she has a well-honed sense of humor that kept us laughing the whole time we were there! To be with her is to be with a modern-day giant of the faith. She's modest and quiet and is a wonderful lady indeed!

Following is a **summary** of our mission agenda:

| Week 1 | | | | | | | |
|-----------|----------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|------------|----------------|---------------------|--|
| # of Days | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Weekday | Tues | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat | Sun | Mon |
| Date | 10/6 | 10/7 | 10/8 | 10/9 | 10/10 | 10/11 | 10/12 |
| Morning | Dept Sea 11:30am Delta 199 | Arr Seoul 3:15pm | Arrive Hotel early morning | Conference | Conference | Church Service | Dept Ulan Bator 11:50am Air China 902 |
| Afternoon | Travel | Travel | Conference | Conference | Conference | Church Service | Arr Beijing 2:05pm |
| Evening | Travel | De Seoul Kor Air 7:55pm Arr Ulan Bator 10:30pm | Conference | Conference | Cultural Event | Strategy Meeting | Dept Beijing 5:05pm Delta 128 Arr Sea 1:10pm |

Day 1 and Day 2, Travel. The team met at SeaTac at 9am and were boarded for South Korea at 10:30am. Bob has a Diamond Elite status with Delta Airlines from his business travel and as such the team was able to pass some time in the Skyclub Lounge. We had refreshments and got the session off to a good start by having much laughter and anticipation at the trip ahead. This is the first time in 10-years that Greg, Don and Bob have travelled together. Greg shared a devotional and we were off on the first leg of the trip – an 11 hour flight!

We arrived in South Korea and again found a comfortable Skyclub where Don and Bob opted to shower, which was very refreshing! After more eating and catching up on a little rest (we had a 3.5 hour layover) we boarded the plane for the 3.5 hour flight to Mongolia.

By the time we got off the plan, got our immigration status organized, and got our luggage it was well after 11pm local time. The Mongolian team met us and we were off and running. We drove through the cold night to the hotel, and by the time we said our goodbyes for the night, unpacked and ironed clothes and organized ourselves it was almost 2am. Breakfast would be at 9am.



Airport in Korea



Airport in Mongolia



Mural of Warriors

Day 3, Conference. The team gathered for breakfast at the hotel. Don brought the devotional. We dined on the 16th floor overlooking the city. Ulaanbaatar is the capital and by far the largest city in Mongolia. More than half of the nearly 4-million person population lives in Ulaanbaatar (Ulaan means “red” and baatar means “hero”). It was a very cold morning. Here we met a former inmate, over whom we prayed before leaving.

Sister Margaret and the driver Odsuren picked us up and we went to the bank to exchange money. There are 2,000 Mongolian Tugrik’s (MNT) to one United States dollar (USD). Bob, the treasurer, sure had a wad full of cash after this exchange! After this we had a team luncheon featuring Mongolian cuisine that was tasty indeed!



A Cold Morning



Overlooking the City



The Bank

We then set off to the Camp, a retreat venue with a meeting hall, barrack-style sleeping quarters, and for the hearty there were coal-heated “Gers” (a round tent structure with four beds, a coal-fired stove, and no other facilities, if you know what I mean...).

Opening night of the conference was a smashing success. Don is the emcee for the entire conference. He introduces each presenter and their subject and does a brief recap of their presentation afterward as well. The emcee keeps the flow of the conference moving smoothly and provides for all transitions. Don has emceed conferences multiple times in multiple countries. His extreme competency in planning, organizing, and leading the conferences has given him a lifetime job on any missions trip he’s on! 😊



Greg and Bilky (interpreter)



Don and Bagi (interpreter)



Margaret, Bilky, Bob

Don led off with introductions and “About PFC,” a summary of what PFC does in America and around the world. Greg then presented “Why Do Prison Ministry?” to the delight of everyone. Greg wrote most of the materials we’ve used on conferences for twelve years. The Mongolians in attendance took notes the entire conference, as did Sister Margaret. They seemed to soak in everything we said like a sponge. We kept things light-hearted as well, with a lot of laughter to go along with our training.

At the end of this two-hour introductory session we circled the chairs (there were almost 50 attendees, representing 22 different organizations). The Mongolians asked question after question that Greg, Don, and Bob answered. Finally, when the American team couldn’t keep their eyes open any longer we closed the meeting to get some sleep.

Now, when we arrived we were shown the Gers as well as the barracks. The barracks were heated, had a restroom and shower, closet, desk, sitting chairs, and two double beds. Bob and Don opted for the barracks, mainly because it was bitterly cold and the thought of the stove running out of fuel during the night, or the thought of traipsing off to the bathroom building was a little too much, especially in our fatigued state.



Barracks



Ger



Stove and Beds inside Ger

However, the Chief, the Warrior, the Leader of Men, Greg Kahn Tobel announced that he was staying in the Ger. So of course Don and Bob had to needle him during the conference about how wolves might crawl into the tent, and to make sure he got up every two hours to feed the fire else we’d find his stiff, frozen body in the morning, and to remember to bundle up when he has to go to the little boys room in the middle of the night. Gregski didn’t see the humor in this that Bob and Don did, but so be it... Bob did tell Greg he’d leave his door unlocked so that when he came for a warm refuge in the middle of the night Bob wouldn’t have to be disturbed. Bob quoted about the “unjust judge” in the Bible who, when a friend came at midnight, said “don’t bother me, I’m in bed.” More laughter...

After the Conference and after the Question and Answer period Greg says “I’ve made a decision, I’m not going to sleep in the Ger tonight.” So Bob says Greg can stay in his

room, and that's what he did. Well, the power goes out during the night, and both rooms are cold... Probably would have been warmer had Greg stayed in the Ger!

Day 4, Conference. We began the day with an excellent breakfast. Every meal we had at the Conference, or the hotel, or a restaurant, or a church was a taste treat and immensely satisfying. There was so much variety, it was attractive and colorful, it was tasty with the right amount of seasoning and spice, and there was more than enough every time. It is another cold day, but the scenery is breathtaking, the sky is blue, and we are ready to tackle another day!



The rugged and beautiful tundra of Mongolia!

Today was a full day of training and ministry. Throughout the day Greg, Don, and Bob taught multiple subjects and each shared their personal testimonies. Subjects taught included How to Start and Grow a Prison Ministry; Working with Staff at the Prison, Four Divisions of PFC, Code of Conduct; The Importance of the PFC Network; and Group Leader Responsibilities. The team taught expanded versions of these subjects because we had the time and the attendees were receiving it all so well.

A suffix on many Mongolian names is “-suren.” Our driver was named Odsuren. One of the volunteer ladies name is Boynasuren. So to the pleasure of everyone Bob announced his name is now Bobsuren, and his team is Gregsuren and Donsuren. So for the rest of the conference we kept this up and everyone enjoyed it. “Suren” means many things, like “shining” and “standing firm.” So it’s a badge of honor, and we wore it proudly.

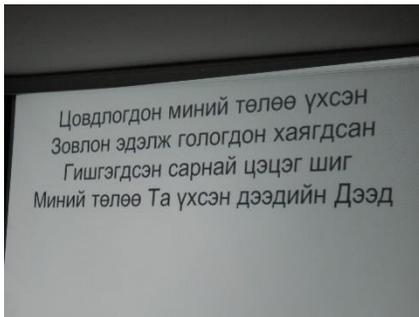
The day was broken up into generally two hour blocks. We had opening worship for most sessions, and light snacks when we were not going to the dining hall for lunch or dinner. We covered every topic planned for the basic adult training. At the lunch break we had time for an outdoor meeting with one of the ministry teams. Many good questions!



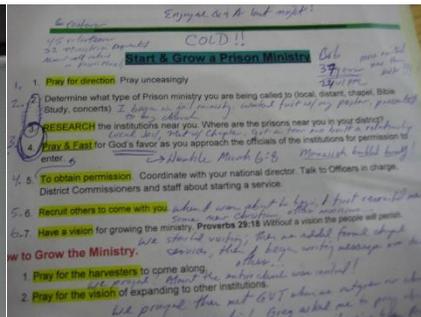
Outdoor Lunch Meeting

Again, at the end of the session and after another fabulous dinner we had another Question and Answer session. We finished that up at 9:30pm (the Conference began at 9am) and we all headed to bed. Every session opened in praise and worship, and often a song would be sung, and though we couldn't read the words, we knew the melody.

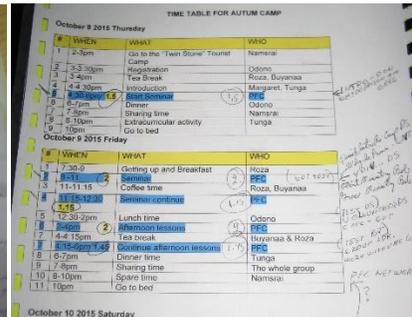
Greg really wanted to sleep in the Ger but it was still cold (power had been restored during the day) so he looks over to Bob and asks if he can sleep in his room again. Bob says again to Greg, "everything I have is yours." Greg says "likewise" and they team up again and both hit the hay. Don is next door and his power only recently was restored, but all is well. We wake up the next day and we were actually a bit *too* warm in our rooms the past night! A welcome change!



Chorus for "Above All"



Bob's notes for one of the modules



Don's notes for the assignments

Chorus for "Above All":

*Crucified - Laid behind a stone
You lived to die, Rejected and alone,
Like a rose, Trampled on the ground
You took the fall, And thought of me
Above all*

Day 5, Conference. Today we don't need to wear our long johns. That's nice! We still bundle up but the cold snap is gone and things are a bit back to normal. When we were driving to the camp a couple of days earlier we got about half way there and got out of the car to stretch our legs. The wind whipped up and about cut us in half (we didn't have long johns on yet) and we got back in the car shivering!

Today we focus on Leadership topics. This too turned out to be a smash hit as the attendees, representing many organizations, wanted to know how they could learn to work together in prison ministry.

Don again emceed the event, and we taught on The Five Levels of Leadership; Biblical Examples of Good and Bad Leaders; Everything Rises and Falls on Leadership; and Biblical Leadership Principles. This was joyously received.

Just before the Leadership we did a “Recall and Rewards” session where we ask questions taken from our previous training and those who get it right get a gift, either a PFC Prayer Pen, or a PFC Prayer Keychain. Don hosts this and Bob hands out the gifts and everyone enjoyed it. It was one more personal touch, one more fun time, one more special event that brought smiles to everyone.



Worship Leader Extraordinaire Bymbaa

We closed the conference like we close all conferences, with a prayer of commissioning. Greg describes what will happen, which is the people will come forward for prayer and anointing with oil. Bob leads in prayer while Greg and Don lay hands on each person and pray over them, anointing them.

This was a special time, as it always is, with new workers being commissioned into the white fields of harvest that is the prisons of Mongolia. We then had a healing prayer time, to the glory of God.

One special meal is our last lunch at the Camp. A roast goat was prepared, and Mongolians eat this with their hands and the juices slather everywhere. Well, the goat meat comes out after we’ve been served a large soup dish, then another dish of rice and vegetables and a meat item, *then* the goat! So the Mongol Bobsuren picks it up with his hand and gets down to business. The Mongolians loved it and our team’s strong bonds only got stronger! Bobsuren can eat with the best of them!



Bilky and Greg



Don and entourage



Roast Lamb, Finger Lickin’ Good!

The American team is surprised to see many tears as the conference came to a close. The Mongolians wanted it to continue! We are all touched deeply by the warmth of the Mongolian people. They live and minister in a harsh environment, yet they thrive and advance, and it is marvelous to see what God is doing in yet another corner of the world

where sin takes its toll among people, but God has a remnant that is carrying the gospel to reach souls in the darkest of places for the kingdom of God.

The conference host, Prison Fellowship Mongolia, presented the Americans with a model of a Ger, a coffee cup with the PFM emblem, and some hand-made gloves and scarves. Very touching!

We then depart for a quick cultural event. Bob and Greg ride a two-humped camel and Bob rides a horse as well. We observe “Turtle Rock” and enjoy the warming evening. Then it’s back to the hotel where we learn that Greg has the shakes and is cold and feeling not too well. Bob and Don gather around Greg for prayer. To God’s glory Greg is much improved the next day, and we all slept the sleep of peace in anticipation of going to minister at different churches the next day.



Turtle Rock



Greggis Kahn



The Mongol Bobsuren!

Day 6, Church (Sunday). After another great breakfast we head out to various churches. Bob leaves with Margaret and Greg and Don leave together to another church.

Bob goes with Gembaa, a former alcohol abuser who has an outreach to alcoholics. He and his wonderful wife Dowah have four beautiful children. They run a ministry where men and women with their children can find recovery and help in Christ. Bob tours the businesses they run to offset the costs of ministry, and also tours the rooms of the men and the women. It is an excellent work, complete with a butcher shop, salon, and shower facilities for the local neighborhood.

Bob does a David and Goliath skit with the kids and everyone howls and laughs. Then Bob preached on “Another Chance,” the life of Peter who had it going well but dropped the ball and later found forgiveness and restoration and a future in Christ. A wonderful time indeed, with 50 persons in attendance. Bob did an altar call and at least eight persons, men and women, raised their hands to take Christ as Savior.

The church then had a luncheon, and Bob ate what he thought was beef. It was actually horse meat. Well, that’s a first! Very tasty!



Margaret ministering with Gembaa



Dowah and Gembaa



Bethel Church, 2nd Floor



Pastor Gembaa in ministry salon



Ministry Marketplace



Ministry butchers pork, beef, horse



"David and Goliath"



Bob preaching; Gembaa interpreting



Horse, Potatoes, Rice, Carrots

Greg and Don ministered at their church and tag-teamed the service and it went very well. Don shared on the farmer sowing seed from Mark 4:3. The farmer listened, he went, he sowed, and as volunteers we have to hear, heed, and do. Many ministry stories of Don's were shared. Greg shared from Mark chapter five and exhorted those present to godly living and being in ministry. There were probably 150 persons present. They went to lunch, and Don had eaten three bites when David, one of the PFM volunteers, came in and told him they had to leave now to go to another church where Don was to preach. So off Don goes on an empty stomach but full heart and preaches another full message at another church! There were about 75 persons there, communion was served and God was glorified! Of course all of us are thrilled to minister and we love the work of the Lord. To God be the glory, great things he has done!

Bob does some shopping (he always buys three bags of stuff while everyone else buys one trinket or handkerchief they can carry in their pocket). We rendezvous at the PFM

office for a Strategy Meeting with the team. This is an important meeting because the government may only be recognizing a few entities to conduct ministry in the prisons, and the government is not overly accommodating or welcoming of multiple organizations. Greg shares his suggestions and we may well have a plan. Bob recorded the minutes of the meeting, a full 4 pages, that was emailed to Sister Margaret and the PFC team. There was many important concepts discussed among all persons present.

We return to the hotel and collapse, but it's the rest of those who are satisfied with their labors, and we most certainly are!

Day 7, Travel. This is always the hardest part of the trip, saying goodbye. Sister Margaret and Odsuren pick us up for the brief ride to the airport. We share some more gifts and embrace. Sister Margaret is a rare jewel in the Master's crown. I found this article about her, written six years ago:

Wyndham-born woman Margaret Currie is helping thousands of Mongolian prisoners who have been separated from their families.

For 17 years, this petite Eastern Southland woman has taken on the role of sitting and talking with prisoners on death row, serving life sentences, awaiting sentence, or serving time for petty crimes.

"Three years after teaching English there [in Mongolia], one of my students needed help to visit her brother in prison. That's where I first met the prisoners and thought I could make a difference," Mrs. Currie said.

Since then, Mrs. Currie has been instrumental in the formation of a Christian humanitarian aid organization called Prison Fellowship Mongolia. Mrs. Currie was "mother" to about 8000 prisoners.

"Only about 300 of these are women. About 150 are youth aged from 15 to 18. All the other prisoners are men prisoners," she said.

There were 23 prisons in Mongolia housing inmates who had been sentenced and about 20 detention centers where people were waiting to be sentenced for their crimes, Mrs. Currie said.

Harsh sentences, comprising 20 or 30 years in prison, were handed down to criminals who had stolen a cow. This was able to happen because rich and wealthy people could influence authorities, she said.

"My role has been to visit the prisons and try to assess the needs of the prisoners and the deficits in their environment for human rights, as well as make it habitable and loveable," Mrs. Currie said.

Mongolian authorities had "opened their doors" and welcomed the work and programs of the fellowship.

"We are welcome to visit any prison and carry out any program" Mrs. Currie said. "When a man goes to prison, keeping contact with his family is pretty much impossible. The family is ostracized by the community and the children suffer," she said.

The general occurrence, after a man had been put in prison, was for his wife to take off and leave the children with the father's mother or father.

Returning to Eastern Southland for a break was a breath of fresh air for Mrs. Currie. "I hope that the people in Eastern Southland realize that they are living in paradise. There must be 56 shades of green in Gore" Mrs. Currie said.



We embrace and say our goodbyes and soon board the plane for Beijing, China. In the Beijing airport after an age of going through umpteen security checks and endless lines we make our way to the gate and board for the home stretch. We see innumerable high-rise apartments in Beijing. Interesting indeed!

By God’s grace our bags make the trip too – the terminal we departed from was five miles from the terminal we arrived at! The Delta team at our gate made some calls and we indeed got our bags. We settled in for the long ride home, satisfied that we had done the will of God and made a difference in the lives of many (as they had in us) and we look forward to returning to this rugged land with a people who love the Lord and love the work of the ministry. World without end, amen.

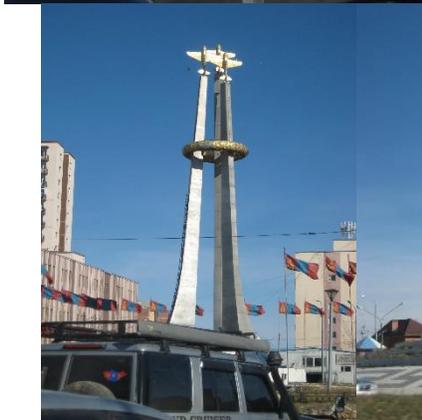
Some Favorite Pictures







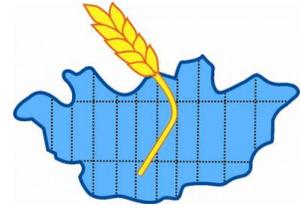
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Prisoners For Christ



Prison Fellowship Mongolia

Camp Seminar

Theme: LOVE MERCY

8-10 October 2015

Introduction: This Report is to express our very sincere and grateful thanks to you and JCS for the large donation of money transferred to us to assist the organizing and implementing of the PFM-PFC Training Seminar this month October 2015. We Praise God for His wonderful provision and grace and results!

It was Sam Biro of JCS who had met the Director and Founder of PFC Greg von Tobel, and recommended PFM invite him to bring his team of trainers for our very first camping Seminar.

Venue: Twin Rocks Conference/ Tourist Camp located 65km from UB City on the Terlj Road South. This Camp was opened one year ago and has successfully accommodated Conferences since then. There are both Ger and House rooms with heating available, a large dining hall and a seminar room. Also Sauna and Massage facilities in season. The weather was rather cool for the foreign visitors.

Finance: The original camp tariff was quoted as 80,000 MNT per bed [\$40] per night but half price was charged because our PFM Board member was close friend of the Director! Even this charge was too high for our attendees so we levied 15,000 MNT per person [\$7.50] and did not charge the Trainers [Greg, Bob, Don]. With 2m MNT from JCS and 3m MNT unsolicited from Australia and NZ [total of \$2,500] we covered all expenses. We are happy to furnish all expense invoices upon request. Travel to the Camp Site was by hired bus two ways without charge to campers. We also paid one-way travel costs for 11 attendees from other centers: KharaKhorin, Erdenet, BagaNuur, MongonMort, Darkhan

Attendees: The Prison Visiting Volunteers NGO's invited to attend were members of 22 groups providing 41 delegates. The official number attending including PFC and PFM teams was 52.

Training Topics – Outlines for Prison Ministry and Leadership shared with this report.

Some Negative Responses: Too short; Not enough Sharing time; Not ideal season for Camping; First night electricity outage because of large fault in Terlj Village.

Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow

Overall Positive Response was “EXCELLENT Seminar” -

Participation 100%

What the Campers Felt and Shared:

“We were all so blessed Campers and Trainers!”

Great Fellowship!

Happy Campers!

One in Faith and Purpose!

Much Joy!

Anointed trainers!

Loving relationships!

Too good to stop!

Praise and worship inspiring!

Teaching exactly on target!

Wonderful testimonies!

Laughter was good medicine!

New information!

Very clear teaching!

Warm rooms!

Good Food!

Translators very good!

Wonderful Fellowship!

New friendships!

Friendly Foreigners!

Camp Site very comfortable!

KhorKhog meal perfect!

Everyone smiling!

Understood many new things!

Joyful! We want to have another Seminar next year!



Photo 1 – Starting seminar

Photo 2 – Worshiping God



Photo 3 – Sharing time

Photo 4 – Praying

Prepared by Margaret Currie ED PFM 15 10 2015



Dedication

***This PFC and PFM trip report is dedicated to
Lakhagvasuren***

A 32-year old ex-prisoner, on the day of his release, at the Prison Fellowship Mongolia offices. He was led to Christ in prison by the PFM team in February, 2015. He came to see Sister Margaret before his journey many miles south to be reunited with his mother.

This is why we do what we do.

...I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Matthew 25:36