

Jesus said to them, "Very truly I tell you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." John 6:32-33

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# CRISIS In India



The pastors Paul meets with regularly to disciple and train via Zoom have been hit hard. Most have no income right now. *Their families are hungry.*

**INDIA IS IN CRISIS.** According to a May 5th report from the World Health Organization, "India reported 378,075 (7 Day Moving Average - 7DMA) new cases accounting for 47% of new cases reported globally."

Indian writer and political activist, Arundhati Roy wrote, "It's hard to convey the full depth and range of the trauma, the chaos and the indignity that people are being subjected to."

"We do not have access to hospitals,"

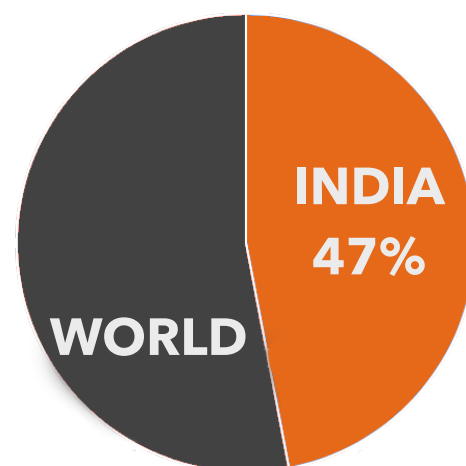
write [Paul and Molly](#), our partners in India, "They are either closed down, lacking resources or at full capacity."

In the state of Uttar Pradesh, one of the poorer states, local media reported that one hospital had 50 people queueing for each of its beds.

One nurse was quoted, "The condition is so horrible that so many people are dying on the street, in their houses, before they can see a doctor or even have a test. From early morning to midnight my phone keeps ringing. Desperate relatives and friends are calling for help: 'Please help me find

## GLOBAL COVID CASES

MAY 5, 2021



a ventilator, bed, a nurse, oxygen cylinder, medicine.'"

When Paul's mother was fighting COVID, he went to six hospitals before he was able to get her into one. Crematoriums are so overwhelmed, they've exhausted their supplies of wood.

Molly comments, "The Apostle Paul reminds us, our struggle is not of this world - we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but powers and principalities and the rulers of darkness of this present age." (Eph. 6:12)

(continued on p. 2)



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Paul's Cousin, mother of two who lost the battle with COVID-19.

## How has the COVID crisis in India affected our partners?

Strict lockdowns have resumed. Lockdowns are, “good and bad at the same time,” writes our Indian partner, [David Kumar](#), “Good because it cuts down the spread, and bad because poor people, daily laborers and small business people suffer a lot.”

The situation for families of the Modi Road slum where David and his wife, **Taru**, minister, is “very severe and dangerous.” Three of the four staff members of their Deepam primary school and women's center live in COVID “red zones”, but all are safe so far. David and Taru's sons both fought COVID and are recovering. David and Taru themselves haven't tested positive, but Taru has a bad cough. David is battling unrelated health issues at the same time.

Paul, Molly and their 23 children are locked down at their village home. Medicine and vitamins are not available. Vitamin C is gone or banned in some places. Praise the Lord, their miracle fruit trees - the ones that weren't supposed to grow in the soil at Paul and Molly's village home - are providing natural vitamins.

Paul's mom is now recovering from COVID at the village home with Paul and Molly and their children, but her time in the hospital was a real trial.



Paul's mother with an attendee of an outreach done by Paul's church. (2018)

“It's a real pit,” Molly said of the hospital, “It's not a place you'd want to be or want your family to be for sure.”

**“We want to do more Lord! Help us help your people!”**

Another COVID patient lay less than 3 feet away. They were separated by a curtain, which did nothing to muffle his screams. He screamed all night, then died. Paul's mom was up that entire night praying against the nightmare. “Get me out of here!” she pleaded with Paul.

Every day his mother was in the hospital, Paul's brother, Xavier, donned a hazmat suit and stayed with her all night. That was after Xavier had worked all day at the sports outreach ministry camps he runs. In Indian hospitals, there's no one to help patients to the (shared) bathroom, get food to them or give medicine, so family members must bring food and medicine to the hospital and play the role of nurses.

Now that she's recovering with Paul and Molly, she's a constant reminder and encouragement in the Lord to their 23 children. “It may be 6 months to a year before she feels



A virus hotspot in an Indian city, closed off by authorities.

much better,” Molly writes, “That was true for Paul and me.”

## Grieving 40 people they care about.

Paul and Molly learn of more losses every day. “It is too hard to even wrap our minds around and overcome our own grief,” Molly laments.

Forty people they care about have passed away from COVID, including pastor friends, church members and Paul's cousin, age 31 and mother of two. The pastors Paul meets with regularly to disciple and train via Zoom have also been hit hard. Most have no income right now. Their families are hungry. During Paul's last session, when Paul saw their faces on the screen, he knew they were suffering deeply.

“The pastors in India are surrounded by heartache, many in depression and PTSD struggling themselves to make it. We want to do more, Lord! Help us help Your people!” Paul and Molly's hearts cry.

Paul and Molly are praying for the resources to:

- » Give \$100 worth of basic food relief for 250 pastors, including those mentioned above. This would include some VBS kits for kids to access Biblical truths during these difficult times.
- » Give \$100 worth of basic needs and a VBS kit to the 200 most needy families in their church.

(continued from p. 2)

Why are they choosing pastors and believers?

They cite Galatians 6:10, “*So then, as we have the opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.*”

If you have the opportunity, would you consider helping our partners provide relief and the Good News for the hurting in Jesus’ name?

The involvement of ITMI supporters in India has been deeply appreciated.

Molly writes, “Thank you for all you do for us In Touch family-God bless each of you. Thank you for reading, praying, loving us in this time in your own trials. Know that we pray for you. God is on the move here, you are a big part of that!”

David says, “Right now our country is going through a great pain and grief, today we are fine but we do not know what holds for us tomorrow. **We need your prayers more than ever before, please pray.** Once again we humbly want to thank you for being true brothers and sisters in the Lord and great partners in building His kingdom in this very needy part of the world. Please convey to all our prayer partners and friends how much we appreciate all prayers and support.”

**Right now, an ITMI supporter has graciously promised to match all donations for India Relief and Evangelism up to \$25,000!**

That means right now, you can double the impact of your donation and [help our partners reach more people](#) with the hope of the Gospel and demonstrate the Lord’s love and concern for the suffering in India.

Summer Kelley, Steve Evers

# MEET BREAD OF LIFE’S

## Monika Bacik



Bread of Life’s Monika Bacik, pictured above with son, Niko, (right) and praying with a group of women from Poznan International Church (left) along with ITMI’s Brooke Nungesser, loves her work at Bread of Life.

## POLAND

MONIKA BACIK SANK INTO ONE of the empty swings on the playground.

Her kindergarten-aged son, Niko, had bounded ahead joyfully when they arrived and was already visiting his favorite equipment.

Monika brushed her blonde hair from her face. She needed to think. Just before she’d picked up her son from school, she’d gotten some troubling news. She’d lost her job.

In her earlier days, she’d worked as an *au pair*, then developed extensive experience in the travel industry, working in hotels in Poland and abroad and earning her International Tour Guide’s license. But when she returned to Poland, Monika discovered that these experiences she was so proud of did not impress employers in her home country.

What would she do now? As a single mom, she depended on the income of a steady job. She needed to come up with a plan - a good one - before her son grew tired of the playground.

But before she could even begin worrying about what she’d do next, her thoughts were interrupted by the ringing of her phone.

Seeing her pastor’s name on her phone’s screen, she answered the call.

Monika grew up in Poland, a Catholic country. She’d been raised with church traditions.

“Going to church was a habit,” she said, “I was not questioning the things I was doing, although there were many things I didn’t understand.”

As a six-year-old, Monika had asked herself, “Do I believe in Jesus?”

“I remember I felt deep in my heart that I did. I didn’t question anything. I was just following the traditions trying to get closer to God,” Monika remembers.

As a young adult in the travel and hospitality industry, she’d encountered cultures and people who believed other things. That made her start asking questions that led her to seek and research online. It was there that she met some believers who helped her grow and find the answers she was looking for. She joined a Christian Bible Study where her growth was accelerated.

“It got me,” she said, “I was on fire.”

After some time, she met some girls who were part of ITMI’s [Poznan International Church](#).

Poznan International Church is an



(continued from p.3)

English-speaking community in Poznan, Poland for internationals, pastored by ITMI's [Richard Nungesser](#).

Richard's wife, **Brooke**, writes, "Poznan International Church is what Richard calls an 'Oasis' for people that come from all over the world to either study, work, marry, or find refuge in Poland. And, for some reason, it has not seemed to matter to many of these foreigners that Poznan International Church is a Jesus-loving Christian fellowship. They still come from all walks of life."

Some of those "walks of life" include Atheists, Buddhists, Muslims and Hindus.

Richard and Brooke are also the co-founders of [Bread of Life](#), an organization that seeks to demonstrate and declare God's love by ministering to the forgotten and in need. Many from the Poznan International Church congregation find opportunities to put into practice what they learn at church by volunteering with Bread of Life.

Not long after she joined Poznan International Church, Monika started sharing food, drinks and Gospel at the local train station and helping with construction projects at the barracks, where Bread of Life held many of their outreaches.

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When she answered the phone, Monika's pastor, Richard Nungesser, told her that he appreciated all Monika had done for people from Poznan International Church and Bread of Life. He told her he knew she was busy with work, but he had something to ask.

He asked if she would be interested in a part time job working for Poznan International Church.

"I remember how happy I was because I could clearly feel that it was God leading me," Monika recalls.

Calling Monika when she was

sitting in the park, wondering what to do with her life, was in Richard's words, "God's perfect timing."

Eventually, Monika transitioned into working as a full-time missionary for Bread of Life as an Events and Project Manager.

But that transition came with the need to take a step of faith.

"It was quite challenging when I stepped on the open waters to become a full-time missionary, where I'm not getting paid by my organization but I need to encourage people to be willing to be part of our mission and contribute. I've never heard about such a way before, as in Poland it is not common at all. I didn't know how to do fundraising myself and whether I could be successful. So I do it by faith, trusting that God will satisfy all our needs. And as I haven't reached my goal yet, I also feel happy and satisfied and thankful for everything I receive. It is a blessing to see that we are not alone in our mission and that people come on board with us, choosing what we do as something they value."

Five years later, Monika still loves her work with Bread of Life. Now, with the support of ITMI's Bread of Life donors, Monika works alongside Richard and Brooke to organize big events, recruiting and lining up volunteers, artists, local businesses, schools, city authorities and media.

"We do things that are more meaningful than just a job itself," she says. "I'm not only involved with the church and Bible studies but I also get to see life transformation of others."

At one of Bread of Life's summer camp outreaches for kids, Monika met a lady from one of the nearby villages who shared a broken and heartbreaking past full of loss and pain, but still had a loving heart full of compassion.

"She was so hungry for Jesus," Monika remembers, "She invited me to her home to read the Bible



Monika and a team of Bread of Life international missionaries pray for the homeless - many unbelievers - living on abandoned land after sharing food and the Gospel with them.



Monika and Brooke exemplify joy in Christ while delivering food and Good News to those in need.



Monika and her son, Niko, delivering clothing for the needy.



Monika serving at week-long Tydgien USA summer camp outreach for kids.



# From the Director



## DEAR TEAM: "I Felt Like a Failure"

It was a voice I knew very well. The tone and accent were familiar sounds that I had spent a lot of time with. Almost immediately, I was concerned. I knew it was Paul, our partner in India, from the caller I.D. on my phone. It sounded like Paul's voice, and yet there was something different and even ominous about this voice from other side of the world. Paul was not only physically ill, probably due to a second bout with COVID-19, but his voice carried a tone that was noticeably weary. Unable to get out into town to get tested once again for COVID, Paul was trying to deal with his sickness the way most do in third world situations – tough it out.

Paul's weariness was not just physical, it was more than that. Paul has been standing in the gap, against a medical and emotional tsunami for over a year and a half. India is really hard, on its very best of days. Add a pandemic and everything about life just ratcheted up a hundred fold.

In his attempt to answer my questions about what he and Molly, their family and their church are experiencing in the latest and even more intense wave of lockdowns and virus contamination, Paul very calmly said, "...I felt like a failure..."

Anyone that knows Paul knows that, in so many ways, he is an overachiever, on so many levels. Who of us could parent 23 children - 19 of them teenage girls who have experienced more of life's underside at a very early age than anyone should. Parenting is just one of Paul's many hourly responsibilities. He is also a pastor and church planter in a third world country that is bent on making life miserable for anyone who doesn't subscribe to Hinduism. This feeling descended over Paul in the midst of his earlier-in-the-month episode of calling every medical person he and his brother knew, just to find a single hospital bed where his COVID-stricken mother could get help. Dressed in a hazmat suit, he drove his deathly-ill mother from hospital to hospital, only to be unable to even get in the front door. Yet, after Paul had opened up his heart and shared the enormous burden that he carried, he quietly yet quickly began to share that the horrid conditions in the hospital they were finally able to get his mother into, Paul and Molly made a decision to bring his mom and dad to their village compound that houses Paul, Molly and their 23 children, in order to protect and care for these simple yet faithful servants of God. Paul was not seeking any recognition from me for this sacrificial act of honor and care, he just wanted me to know that in all the trauma and all the deaths, and all the sickness and all the loss, he, Paul, has seen something that he deeply wants more, much more than he wants to escape the current onslaught, and that is he wants to be... *sweeter*.

The translation of this "sweeter" is this. In the midst of personally losing 40 family members, friends and ministry associates to COVID this last year, Paul has seen where people really are in life and their faith in our God. The great preacher, Charles Spurgeon once said, "The Christian need not dread sickness, for he has nothing to lose, but everything to gain by death." Paul has seen some lose their Christian facade when sickness or trouble became overwhelming. He has also seen some starving, suffering great loss and from their death bed just get... *sweeter*. Paul's mom is one of the *sweeter* ones. This godly, dear saint was on the verge of death, yet she was and is *sweeter* in her response to everyone. She is using this situation to glorify God every chance she gets. Paul believes that those who get *sweeter* are "decreasing" (Jn 3:30), so that the flow of the fruits of Christ's Spirit increase, flowing more freely from them. Paul, though weary from the pressure of the tsunami, didn't want out of the storm, but he did want to be *sweeter* in all his interactions. The great thing we learn when we mature in the Lord, is that we cannot truly create the fruits of the Spirit, they must be generated from the Spirit who lives within us. Paul knows and trusts the Lord. Paul knows the truth as shared in Lamentations 3:22-23,

***"It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness."***

Shall we all commit to being "sweeter", no matter what is before us? Shall we increase our prayers for our brothers and sisters who, on the frontline, carry loads that we cannot begin to understand? Shall we consider how God wants us to help the multitudes of needy pastors, believers and even the unsaved during this time of need? Thank you for loving us and the sweetness of your demonstration of love for God's people...yet may you be by God's grace, even *sweeter*.

In His Service,



Paul, Molly and some of their 23 children on their village property.



(continued from p.4)

and find explanations for situations she faced.”

The woman was on a journey to find Jesus. Now, this village woman is “on fire” for the Lord. “She is a light to many,” says Monika.

The divine meeting blossomed into a beautiful friendship. Monika often drives to the woman’s village and the pair talk, read, pray and laugh together.

“I don’t know who inspires who more,” Monika says, which shows her heart for real, redemptive relationships.

“Monika’s passion for Jesus and His saving grace drives her life,” Brooke comments.

A big part of Monika’s job is being heavily involved in Bread of Life’s *Betlehem z Bread of Life*. Bethlehem is a large event that invites the entire city to bless families whose children face major health challenges each December. Thousands of Poles clamor to get involved with this cause around the holidays. They may come because they want to feel good about helping someone, but in the process, thousands hear the Gospel declared during this event, at the same time as they are seeing it demonstrated through the followers of Jesus’ love

and care for the sick. People from the city also have opportunities to get to know and build relationships with Bread of Life staff and volunteers and get involved with the organization’s year-round outreaches.

“Monika is never shy to tell everyone she meets about Jesus,” Richard Nungesser observes.

In 2020, Monika’s role changed as the COVID-19 pandemic forced Bread of Life to cancel or adapt many events and hold them online.

“But what I love about our organization,” Monika explains, “is that we are not afraid of changes and we always try to adjust our action to a present situation. So we put some of our projects aside and we use all our energy to help people affected by this new situation.”

When she faces challenges, Monika reminds herself that it’s an opportunity to glorify the Lord. “I always tell myself that if it was easy or obvious, then God would not reveal some great testimony. While I wait for His solution, I do my best.”

As quarantine, lockdown and food crisis became part of everyday language, Bread of Life pivoted to amp up their already robust food distribution programs for the needy.

Monika was right in the thick of it, distributing food at the food banks and distribution points, helping raise funds and donations that would fuel the outreach.

“Monika always has time to help someone in need,” Richard says.

Monika has followed the Lord’s leading, found her calling and is serving Jesus faithfully. Her ministry allows many to seize redemptive opportunities through events planned and organized. Those same events allow her to find and minister to those in need, build redemptive relationships and tell people about Jesus and the relationship He wants to have with them.

Monika still needs a few more supporters to stand with her and, as she says, “choose what we do as something they value.”

If you value reaching the hurting and lost for Jesus, would you stand with Monika as a monthly supporter?

Even a small monthly donation would help Bread of Life and enable Monika to meet the financial obligations a single mother has while serving and loving the broken.

-Summer Kelley, Steve Evers

## FOR PRAISE

1. Kumars - India - Graduates who encountered Jesus during a tailoring course, now earning income.
2. Zambia - Lusaka Bible College - Opportunity to pass along what they’ve learned from SALT training with Steve to other believers in Petauke, Zambia.
3. South Sudan - Lazarus - Discipleship and follow up with people from previous outreaches planned for June 2021.
4. Poland - Nungessers - Celebrating 20 years on the mission field this year!

## FOR PRAYER

1. India - The Lord to be glorified, many reached for Him during this crisis, protection, comfort and relief for His people.
2. India - David, Taru, Paul, Molly - Health and healing from various health challenges being faced by all four.
3. Poland - Nungessers - For COVID restrictions to lift, allowing outreach camps and retreats this summer.
4. S. Africa - Charl van Wyk - Daughter, Roberta, positive for COVID and family quarantined.
5. Zambia - Leach - A fruitful time for Johan amid the Lord’s change of plans. Johan was unable to board his plane to the US from South Africa.



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