

## **Raw & Uncut: Stories of “GO” from 2025**

***Below are stories that we did not have time to tell through our messages or video announcements, but that hold power nonetheless.***

***May they encourage and inspire you.***

### **Manna Dream Center Shelter**

#### **From California to Fayetteville**

Donald came to Fayetteville after spending time in California, but struggled with finding employment and consistent housing. Despite these initial setbacks, he was welcomed into our men's shelter, and he quickly established a reputation as a hard worker with a positive attitude. Throughout his stay, Donald exemplified selfless service by putting in extra work in cleaning and maintaining the property. Because of the stability provided by a consistent and safe shelter, Donald was able to quickly find a job. Encouraged and equipped by Manna Dream Center staff, he progressed in his new employment and qualified for "The Lodge" program, which offered him more long-term housing. To this day, he stays in touch with Manna DC staff, constantly sharing updates in this exciting new chapter in his life. We are so proud of Donald and all that he has accomplished, and we pray God's blessing over him as he moves forward.

#### **Serving Those Who Served**

Elvis served in the United States military, but like so many others found himself unable to find affordable housing or consistent employment. Upon acceptance into the Men's Shelter, he found stability, community, and the integrated support he needed to change his life circumstances. An integral part of his journey while at the shelter was the coordinated assistance he received at the Day Resource Center, also known as Fayetteville Cares, which is also operated by the Manna Dream Center. We are happy to report that through the organization Veterans Services of the Carolinas, Elvis was able to secure stable, long-term housing. Elvis was a role model resident during his stay at the shelter, known for his candor and good manners. Here at Manna, it is a privilege and an honor to serve those who have so selflessly served our nation.

#### **Life-Change**

When Daniel first arrived at the shelter, he struggled with motivation and direction. Quiet and introverted, it was difficult for him to develop goals or find a job. Over time, however, and with much love and patience, the Manna Dream Center and Shelter team members opened his eyes to the reality that God has a plan for him, and he experienced a sense of rejuvenation in his life. Providing him not just a loving and safe

environment, but also the skills and connections needed to find employment, the Manna DC team gave Daniel everything he needed to progress into a new chapter. He landed on his feet at a long-term housing program with a renewed faith and a strong sense of determination. Daniel expressed great thanks to the Manna DC team for their love and support, and we are excited to see where God takes him next.

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## **Colombia STM 2025**

### **Javier&Vanessa: One for Yes, Two for No**

In one of the houses, a mother asked us to pray for her sick son. He is 18 years old and has been in a vegetative state his whole life. After we finished praying, I felt led to ask if there was any way to communicate with him. She explained that he responds by blinking, one blink for “yes,” two for “no.”

I began by asking if he could hear me. He blinked once. Then I shared the Gospel, telling him how much Jesus loves him. I asked if he believed in eternal life. One blink. I explained that eternal separation from God is also real, and asked if he wanted that.

Two blinks. Finally, I asked if he wanted Jesus as his Lord and Savior. One blink.

I prayed with him, and afterward his mother, who had also received Jesus that same day, began praising God, rejoicing that Jesus had saved them both.

To God be the glory.



### **Chaice: When we move, God moves.**

Three years ago, Chaice had never been on a single Short Term Missions trip. Ever.

Over the course of the 2022 ROC, however, he felt a calling from God to step out of his comfort zone, and he signed up for our trip to Guatemala in 2023.

He performed well, and the team leader recommended him as a co-leader for the following year.

Chaice accepted the offer, and co-led under Mike Krieg in Ecuador in 2024. The team performed excellently, and Chaice felt God's encouragement to step into even more. This year, Chaice led a Joint-Venture 3 Team Trip to Colombia (Ft Leonard Wood, Killeen, Fay). Over the course of their 6 days laboring alongside the local church, the team's ministry resulted in 189 decisions for Christ, the most salvations we have EVER seen in a Manna Filter of Hope trip. They also saw many wonderful testimonies and encounters (but you'll have to wait till the ROC to hear about those).

We are here to glorify God by equipping people to change their world, and plant churches with the same vision.

In 3 years Chaice went from having never even been on an STM, to leading our most successful Filter of Hope STM EVER!

All because he courageously stepped forward in faith when God said, "Go".

### **AND THEY BEGAN TO GATHER**



What began as a simple installation became a Spirit-led moment where a community not only received clean water but also encountered the living water of Jesus. One house in the Las Flores community was too small for our group, so we set up on the porch. Soon, neighbors, teenagers, kids, and their families gathered around, curious about what was happening. As the filter was explained and demonstrated, Ivan, one of our team members, began talking with them, inviting them into the moment.

This opened the door to share how the filter symbolized Jesus: just as it makes water clean and safe, He purifies our lives and offers living water that lasts forever. At the end of the visit, we prayed together, and nine people from that gathering gave their lives to Christ!

## **Dominican Republic 2025**

### **Josh- Finding a Best Friend in Jesus**

On our second day, we had the opportunity to visit the primary school near the local church, a spontaneous idea that Anna had mentioned in passing the day prior. The children welcomed us receptively, inviting us to play with them without hesitation. Despite the language barrier, the six of us on our team that day were able to create

meaningful connections with the children. Through games like volleyball, soccer, tag, and even braiding hair. We found a shared language beyond the language barrier.

As our time with them came to a close, we gathered the children around, Anna starting to share with them who she found to be her best friend: Jesus. By the end, more than half of the children raised their hands, deciding to invite Jesus into their hearts as their best friend, too. In that short time, we formed such genuine bonds with these children that they felt led to the most important decisions of their lives.

## **Cuba 2025**

### **Josh - Jesus is in Cuba!**

On our first day distributing water filters in Havana, Cuba, we met an elderly woman living alone. She had no air conditioning, no front door, and very few supplies. The water she had access to was so contaminated that it was making her sick.

As we explained how the water filter worked, she watched with delight, hope rising in her eyes. When I asked if she'd like to receive another free gift, she nodded. I then shared with her about Jesus. As I spoke, I could feel the Holy Spirit fill the room.

Through our translator, she said, "If this Jesus sent you here to help me and others, I want to know this Jesus." She prayed to receive Christ, and afterward, she wrapped our entire team in a grateful hug.

### **Daniel - Planting Seeds**

At the first house we visited, we met Beatrice, her brother Jorge, and her neighbor, America. They welcomed us warmly and engaged in great conversation. After showing them how to install the filter, we began sharing our stories and what Jesus had done in our lives. America was already walking with Jesus, but Beatrice was not. When the revolution deemed it unneighborly to attend church, she was only a child.

As we talked, Beatrice told us about her brother Jorge, who was in the other room. Since he was six months old, Jorge has been paralyzed on his left side and bedridden. Their mother, once an attorney, left her career to care for him, and after their parents passed, Beatrice became his sole caregiver. She explained that while she believes there is a god, she struggles with how a loving God could allow such suffering in her family's life.

We couldn't explain her suffering or make everything right, but what we could do, and what we did, was pray. We prayed for Jorge, knowing our God has the power to heal. We shared with Beatrice the story of Jesus, who took on suffering He didn't deserve to save us and bring us into a relationship with God.

Beatrice didn't give her life to Jesus that day, but that's the beauty of this work: we aren't the silver bullet. We trust that God is already at work in her heart and will continue to move through her relationships with America and other members of the local church.

## **Tamara IS IT THAT SIMPLE???**

The last house we went to on our third distribution day was occupied by a single elderly woman. Her daughter, who was a doctor, came to visit her. She stayed the entire time through the filter demonstration and the gospel presentation. The mom was a Jehovah's Witness, but the daughter explained that she did not have the same beliefs. One of our team members' mothers used to also be a Jehovah's Witness, so he knew the right passages to share with them to provoke deeper thinking. The entire time we shared the gospel, the daughter was sitting at the edge of her seat, listening very intently.

We got to the part of salvation and what it means to accept Jesus into your heart as your Lord and Savior in exchange for eternal life with Him. The daughter looked at us with tear-filled eyes and asked, "Is it that simple?" You could tell her question was filled with the realization that a relationship with Jesus is not a works-based thing, but as much of a free gift as the water filter we came to present them with.

After excitedly accepting Jesus as Lord and Savior, she began explaining that as a traveling doctor, she was in a patient's house the day before. She saw the water filter and asked her patient about it. The patient explained what it was and who came to bring it to them. As she left her patient's house, she saw our group getting onto the buses and wanted to ask us to come to her mother's house. However, she did not get the chance. BUT GOD.... He heard her heart, the unspoken request, and He sent us anyway. Not just for her mom, but for her as well. We not only had two salvations that day, but an eye-opening, tear-filled front row seat to how great God truly is.

## **Michelle**

I had never been on a mission trip before and first heard about the Cuba's Filter of Hope mission through ROC. My husband and I felt called by God to do this trip because it was very practical and had long-term implications (between salvation and the health benefits of access to clean water). I was very nervous spreading the Gospel for the first time and demonstrating the water filter, but Manna did an amazing job preparing me for this trip. I'll never forget my first woman that I helped lead to Christ. She was going through health issues and was missing her son and grandson, who had moved to the States. Not only did she accept Christ, but I got to pray for healing and for her relationship with her son and grandson. We cried together and shared a great hug afterwards. It was beautiful to see how two strangers could become forever sisters in Christ.

## **Jimme**

On day 4 of the trip, we met a lady who knows who Jesus is and had not professed Jesus as Lord and Savior. She shared with us that she wants to do more thinking about the gospel message and come to a decision on her own. She said next year, when the team comes back, she will be guiding people in her community to Christ. This visit really stood out to me because I believe that the Holy Spirit will work within her to reveal truth and give her humility to come to Christ and to share with others what God has done for her.

I thank God for giving me opportunities such as this to "go and tell" and to introduce people to Jesus, and give me the courage and boldness to speak up in a culture that

desperately needs to know who God is and how much God loves us. Now I'm more on fire to keep on going and telling people all over the world about how great God is.

### **Patrinia**

God, using Manna Church in Cuba to display His love

I was on Josh's team for the last day of the Filter of Hope Cuba Mission Trip. Lidia, a Cuban woman around 40 years old, invited us into her 1 room home. We listened as she talked about her family and life in Cuba. We did the filter presentation and began sharing the gospel when Lidia began to smile and speak excitedly! The interpreter told us that Lidia believed in Jesus Christ and had been praying that we would come to her home as confirmation that God was speaking to her about becoming a missionary. We prayed for her family and that she would continue to hear from God about what HE wanted her to do going forward. The Cuba mission trip allowed me to teach people how to use a filter to acquire clean water while also sharing the gospel of Jesus, " the ultimate life-giving water"!



### **Marcus**

The one story I'll forever remember....

There was a woman whom we initially came to visit. Shortly after we entered her home, her daughter arrived. We demonstrated to both of them the filter, and then we transitioned to the gospel. The mother wasn't interested in our message, given that she was a practicing Jehovah's Witness. The daughter, on the other hand, was filled with "inexpressible feelings" as she explained (laughter, tears, and joy). The daughter ended up accepting and confessing Christ. Earlier that week, the daughter saw us distributing

filters and wanted to ask for one for her mother, but didn't get a chance to. The Lord had other plans, but for her.

### **Aidan**

so i think this was the second day i was asked to share the gospel and the lady came to christ and normally the leader would lead the person in salvation prayer but for some reason i was lead into thinking of the salvation prayer said every sunday and as i was thinking of my leader said that he wanted me to lead the salvation prayer and that was my first time leading the salvation prayer in my life.

## **Panama 2025**

### **Sade - Until All Have Heard**

Our team visited a woman caring for her niece and nephews. From the moment we arrived, it was clear she needed more than a filter; she needed the hope of Jesus. Normally, we shared the gospel after the demonstration, but the Holy Spirit led us to pray with her first.

When we asked what we could pray for, she responded simply, "her health," and as Marolynn prayed, the Holy Spirit touched her deeply, and tears began to stream down her cheeks as God's presence filled the porch.

We then shared the gospel, starting from creation. When asked what she thought, she said, "I have never heard this before." Right then and there, she committed her life to Jesus as her Lord and Savior!

When we listen and obey God's command to "Go"! He moves mightily!

### **Marolyn - The Power of Prayer**

One day in Panama, Several families had gathered to receive their filters, and everyone was attentive during the demonstration. But when Thomas began sharing the Gospel, the atmosphere shifted.

One woman in particular had a very hard spirit. She glared and interrupted Thomas—at one point even shouting "No" and slamming the door. As this happened, our team and the local church member began silently praying.

Though she returned with the same hardened expression, Thomas pressed on, encouraged by Hector. As the others listened respectfully, Hector also began sharing with urgency. It felt like the longest Gospel presentation of the entire week, but persistence mattered.

In the end, the entire group, including that woman, prayed together. And I got to watch as her hardened expression transformed into a soft, warm smile.

With Jesus, NOTHING is impossible!

### **Kayleigh - And They Began To Cry**

One of the houses that really stuck out to me was the last house we went to. When the gospel was shared, God used our words to affect this woman and her two kids, and they began to cry. After we spent a while at the house, they ended up all praying to believe in Jesus. But after we finished praying, we could see tears streaming down her face, and a smile of pure joy shone through her tears. It was a great reminder of why we went on this trip in the first place. The gospel is so powerful and can change someone's life forever in an instant.

### **Thomas**

I would have to say the highlight of the trip was watching that house of initially hostile people having their hearts softened and accepting the gospel. Their whole demeanor changed, and later in the trip, I met the same guy, Juan, who was as friendly as ever and had a great conversation with him. Really, it was great to see the light and brightness in the faces of our new brothers and sisters in Christ afterwards.

### **DJ**

I was in the group led by Bryson. On the 2nd day, if I recall correctly, we visited a home and presented the filter installation to a mother and her teenage son. It became very clear to everyone on our team that this wonderful lady was a follower of Christ and absolutely certain of her salvation. Bryson was the gospel presenter for that home, and on learning she was already saved, Bryson asked if he could present the gospel to her son, and he did so very adroitly. The son said he believed in God but felt he had done too many "bad things," and therefore felt he was destined for Hell. Bryson ministered to that young man, and he decided to follow Christ. What was so touching about this rather typical scenario was that from the moment Bryson began to share with the son, the mother was in diligent prayer. Her head bowed, her hands folded in front of her, she was crying out to God through prayer for her son to be saved. God answered that prayer. I was observing the mother during this time, and the joy she expressed when her son decided to repeat the prayer of salvation was extremely moving. She was a very demure woman and very quiet-natured, it seemed, but she was absolutely beaming and praising God at seeing her son get saved. It was a beautiful moment and just reinforced the power of a mother's prayers.

## **Dominican Republic Medical Missions**

During our medical clinic, we met a man named José who was struggling with serious heart problems. His condition had left him unable to work and afford medication.

After he saw the doctor and received prescriptions, I sat with him and listened as he shared how hopeless he felt. Several times, he said he wished he would just die. We cried together, talked about Jesus' love, the importance of a relationship with Him, and

how God never abandons us. We also spoke about the value of a church family and how God still has a purpose for José.

We prayed for complete healing, and José left with renewed hope in Jesus and a new church family! It was a powerful reminder that while we provide medical care, only God can bring true healing, hope, and joy.



## Filter of Hope



One of our dedicated partners in Pakistan leads 29 volunteers serving with our UPG program. They often make filter distribution trips lasting up to five days. To reach families in isolated

areas, some take trips of up to 40 days. Recently, a very unique distribution took place. After months of careful planning, 800 sanitation and solid waste management workers were given the day off to receive filters and even hear the gospel (above). The filters became like rock stars as the clean water was met with joy and many phone cameras (left). After meeting with each employee to give a filter and do a short survey, our Pakistan partner determined that around 25 employees had received Christ.

### **Panama: She Came Out Swinging**



Most filter distributions start out slowly with just getting to know each other.

Not with Darianna in Panama. Filter of Hope staff member Keith Back and some University of Arkansas students were caught by surprise. “We walked into her home and after exchanging names, she came out swinging.”

Darianna didn’t hold back. “All Americans are liars!” Darianna had dated an American man before discovering he had a wife and kids back home.

But she wasn't done. "Why is America trying to take away the Panama Canal?"

The team didn't want to get into a political discussion and thought the visit was going nowhere. But Keith says Darianna suddenly took the conversation another direction.

"She told us she had a dream the previous night that people would come the next day giving her two gifts. This was before we even told her why we were there and what we had to offer. We decided to share the gospel first."

Darianna broke down in tears. "She knew this was the reason she had the dream. She ended up giving her life to Christ."

### **A Discouraged Missionary, an Effective Filter, and Some Sage Advice**

Yombi, an indigenous missionary in eastern Cameroon, was at the end of his rope until Quentin offered him two gifts. One was a water filter. The other was a simple strategy.

God has used these gifts to transform Yombi's village.

### **No Fruit and Dirty Water**

Yombi had tried his best to build a ministry in his east Cameroon village, but there was no fruit. His family also suffered from having to drink dirty water.

Little did Yombi know that there would be one solution for both of his problems.

When Yombi needed to travel to the city for a pastor and missionary conference, he decided to visit an experienced pastor and missionary named Quentin. Quentin is a member of the Cru Church Global Movements staff in Cameroon and a Filter of Hope UPG (unreached people groups) partner.

"Yombi shared his frustration as a missionary without impact. His family was also struggling with poor health due to the environment and contaminated water."

Before he left, Quentin gave him a Filter of Hope water filter and explained that it would last 10 years if he took proper care of it. "And I added that not only could it filter enough water for his family, but he could share the clean water with his neighbors."

### **No One Stays to Talk**

Back in the village, Yombi and his wife started going house to house to offer clean water. A woman started giving clean water to her baby. “She started telling other women in the market how her baby was better since he started drinking it.”

“The women lined up at Yombi’s house asking for filtered water.”

But Yombi’s ministry didn’t improve. “People were stopping to get water, but they didn’t stay long enough for Yombi and his wife to have any time to talk with them.”

Quentin decided to visit him in the village a couple of weeks later. “Many people were excited to get clean water, but Yombi was still frustrated.” After listening, Quentin thought of a solution.

“I told him to only begin filtering the water after someone had arrived.”

It’s safe to say Quentin’s simple strategy made a difference. In a relatively short time, Yombi and his wife led 48 women and children to Christ.

“There was even enough time to follow up those who made the decision to accept Christ. Yombi and his wife are meeting frequently with four of them who are speaking more and more about their faith to others.”

### **The Ministry Multiplies**

About a month later, Quentin visited Yombi to see the ministry in his village for himself.

Yombi introduced Quentin to three women outside his home. “I started sharing about the story of Jesus and the woman at the well. After discovering that they were believers, I explained how this woman brought others to meet Jesus. Then I challenged them to do the same.”

While Quentin was waiting for a ride to another village, one of the women, Ndipayuk, brought back seven other women.

“It was a wonderful time. When the women started leaving, I asked Ndipayuk to wait and I taught her how to share Jesus with her friends.”

Ndipayuk was elated. “Tomorrow morning I will be the first person at the market. I will sell my goods fast so I can talk to as many of my friends as possible about the gospel.”



*Some of the eastern Cameroon villages are difficult to reach because of traditions and native religions. They are also an oral society.*



*Quentin, second from the left, gets a photo with villagers at a recent filter distribution in Cameroon.*

**PROEM**



### Story #2

Nazar Leshchuk's journey from Rowne, Ukraine to Tomaszow, Poland is a testament to resilience and hope. Before turning 18, he was sent by his parents to leave his war-torn country for a safer future. Came to Tomaszow in the Fall of 2023 with no family, by himself and another friend. He started living at Proem Help Center and last year joined our first edition of residency program called Proem Life Academy. He has been actively involved with Proem's worship band, youth meetings, Ukrainian Kids Club and Zako camps. "During my residency at Proem I have learned to take responsibility for my life", he says, "and realized what my strengths and weaknesses are which helped me to reevaluate many things about my life". Nazar continues to work with Proem as second year resident.

### Story #3



Jakub and Aneta Asiedu came to Tomy Christian Fellowship on one Sunday morning in the Spring of 2025. He came from Ghana and witnessed a miracle of healing of his father through prayer of evangelical Christians when he was a child. She came from a traditional Polish family. They met in college in Lodz and have been married for over 25 years. This year, in a time of crisis they found Tomy Church online and came to Sunday morning worship. He was struggling with problems at work. She was struggling with cancer. Through counseling he overcame his problems at work and she faced surgery with a sense of God's presence in her life and fully recovered - doctors have found no cancer in her body! He got baptized 3 months ago and she is getting baptized in 2 weeks. They are both a living part of Tomy Church today, serving in guest services on a regular basis.

Additional stats:

Journey to Bethlehem - 11,900 people 2024/2025, 115,000 people since the beginning 12 years ago  
Road to Jerusalem - 4,500 people in 2025, 40,000 people since the beginning 11 years ago



FLORENTYNA S IDŁO a testimonial

Four years ago, I went to the Proem Zako camp for the first time – and that's when it all began. I met amazing people there who invited me to the youth meetings called Flow, and it was there

that my relationship with God really started to grow. A year later, I joined the Proem Edu school, and I had the opportunity to talk with many wise people, and grow in my faith. PROEM has been such a huge blessing in my walk with Christ!