

Teen Mania Launches History-Making Outreach Into Closed Nation

Ron Luce, founder and president of Teen Mania International, announced that the Dallas-based ministry will embark on a history-making missionary venture this coming summer to Myanmar, the nation formerly known as Burma.

The announcement was made live on YouTube from Myanmar with Luce informing ministry friends and partners that, "After 60 years of being closed to the West and to Christianity, Myanmar has once again opened its doors—and has invited Teen Mania International to come share the gospel of Jesus Christ with their people."

The unprecedented invitation came after Luce established a relationship with the Myanmar Evangelical Christian Alliance, a group representing 90 Christian denominations. Rev. Dr. Zin Hla, chairman of the alliance, told Luce that Teen Mania's partnership at this moment in time is an answer to prayer.

With a population that is 90 percent Buddhist, the vast majority of people have never heard the message of salvation. But Teen Mania hopes to change that July 16-30, 2015, with Mission Myanmar, which will have the added distinction of featuring the ministry's first Acquire the Fire (ATF) mass youth gathering on the continent of Asia.

While Acquire the Fire youth events are well known in North America—with 3 million teens having participated in 500 U.S. and Canadian events—this will be the first Acquire the Fire held internationally.

No stranger to big events, Acquire the Fire has reached crowds as large as 71,000 in recent years. In this case, Teen Mania

has identified a 10,000-seat venue for the historic event in Yangon, the nation's most populous city. Luce wants to fill it with Myanmar youth from villages near and far to attend the two-day Acquire the Fire event.

Teen Mania will rely on Global Expeditions, its youth missions division, to organize and lead the two-week outreach. The ministry has already opened registration to American youth pastors and their youth groups, as well as to teams from across Asia, to join this historic missionary outreach to the recently opened country.

In the past 28 years, the ministry has taken 76,963 teens into 67 countries to share the gospel—and have led 1.3 million men, women and children to Christ.

Some of the youth-led activities in Myanmar will include music and drama, children's ministry, sports activities and service projects, among others. The ministry believes that every expression of love, care, and compassion will communicate to Myanmar that God has not forgotten them.

Luce summarized the importance of this historic opening this way: "There are moments in history that arise for just such times. This is our moment to stand with the Christians of Myanmar. We can inspire their youth to live for something bigger than themselves, to take their nation for Christ, and to fulfill their destinies as tomorrow's leaders," Luce said.