

Malabar Mission Newsletter

Winter 2005

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Our Mission

The Malabar Mission Society is a group of Christians interested in assisting the Malabar Mission Circle in India as it shares the Good News of salvation in Jesus Christ along the Malabar Coast by supporting, with prayers for God's blessings,

- the spread of the Gospel, and
- the Circle's witness



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY IN MALABAR

- Rev. Dr. R. Miller, MMS Project Officer



There are so many children in India, and so many in Malabar! It is a pleasure to serve some of them in the name of the One Who said: "Let the children come to me."

We have been trying to do that in Malabar. Elsewhere in this issue there is a report about the Vacation Bible School efforts this year. The workers love to conduct VBS programs. They need no persuasion. It seems to brighten their ministries. And the results are really excellent.

Many years ago Mary Helen Miller started the nursery school work in Malabar, with the first school at Malappuram. What a success it turned out to be! Her Indian colleague, Mrs. Mildred Francis, was awesome in her dedication. Her body is now weaker, but in retirement her spirit still flames. The Malappuram school was meant for the poor, and were they ever poor! The ministry was therefore holistic—food, clothing and education combined. The school meant survival for some.

The nursery school seed, once sown, produced other schools. There are now also flourishing nursery schools at Calicut, Wandoor and Naduvil. Betsy Miller spent a summer setting up the Calicut institution. It is now not only self-supporting, but the income from the families of the children helps to defray other costs. In its early years the Malabar Mission Society also helped Betsy set up a nursery school at Kodaikanal, and now that has become three strong schools in Tamilnad.

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Anyone who sees the little children at Malappuram, all dressed up in blue and white uniforms, will agree that this is one of the most joyful parts of the work!

(Continued - See Children's Ministry on page. 2)

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY (continued from page 1)

The Sunday Schools touch many children too. Every Malabar congregation has one. They will soon be practising their Christmas programs. The programs go on for hours. The church is jammed. Indians love their children.

This means, of course, that children's work is also delicate. Muslim and Hindu parents are happy to send their children if they have the confidence that Christians will not take advantage of the opportunity to try to make their children Christians. But they do not mind, and many appreciate, that the children are introduced to Jesus, for Jesus has everyone's respect in India.

Children's work goes on outside these avenues, through personal contact. Itty Kutty was a Muslim girl at Malappuram. Mrs. Chellayan, the pastor's wife, befriended her. She had bright and shining eyes. And how she loved Jesus! She used to say to me, "I am always praying." It was true, but her family did not appreciate it. So when she reached the proper age, she was given as a second wife to a much older man, some distance away. I told Itty Kutty, "Keep the faith in your heart," but we lost track of her. The years passed. Last October we were in Malabar, in the area where she lived. Shortly after we reached home we received an e-mail. Incredibly it was from Itty Kutty, now in her sixties. She said how sorry she was to have missed us! That means nothing is forgotten, including the Lord Jesus. Sometimes you have to wait for it. You need faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

Please remember the Malabar Mission Society and the children's ministry this Christmas. ✨



Dr. Miller is greeted by some of the Malappuram Nursery School children while Rev. Titus and parishioner Mr. Balraj look on.

MALABAR MISSION CIRCLE'S 2005 VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL PROGRAM

- Emerald Schoepp, Newsletter Editor

Once again the Vacation Bible Schools were quite successful. A total of 25 camps were conducted—with five of the mission stations holding more than one VBS during this past year. That is commendable.

The per camp average cost was Rs.803, or \$27, and the per child cost was fifty cents.

Another astonishing and commendable fact was that Rev. Victor went out and conducted two camps on his own. This is the same Rev. K. M. Victor who is retiring at the end of this year from serving the MMS as the India Agent, who shepherded our major developments in the years 1988–2005.

There were ten other Gospel workers conducting these events as well: Rev. A. T. Baby, Mr. J. Devaraj, Rev. P.G. Henry along with Mr. Wilson, Rev. T. Joseph, Rev. Madhusoodanan, Mr. R. J. Richard, Rev. S.S. Oliver, Mrs. S.S. Shinmert and Rev. J. Titus. Some of these names are becoming very familiar to us. The VBS camps were spread over sixteen stations served by these workers.

A third commendable fact was of the 112 children attending the Calicut VBS, 81 were Muslim, and of the total 1,191 children reached through the camps, 44% were Hindu, 42% Christian, and 14% Muslim ✨

In Appreciation

Memorials and gifts honouring special occasions are welcomed by the Malabar Mission Society, and are used to support the Lutheran Church in India to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with those who do not yet know His love. All donations are receipted for income tax purposes. Special-occasion gifts and memorials will be acknowledged in future issues of the Newsletter.

Send your gifts to
The Malabar Mission Society
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BITS AND PIECES

- Recent word from Rev. Victor mentions there was a Sunday School Seminar in Wandoor for the workers in South Malabar.
- Rev. Victor recently visited Chengalai, where the new church is nearing completion. A compound will be built on all four sides of the church. The rain has been very hard, along with strong winds, but they believe they will be able to complete all the work in Chengalai within a month.
- The Malabar Mission Circle workers are looking forward to Dr. Roland Miller's visit in mid-November and into December. We ask your prayers for safe travel and a productive time for Dr. Miller, and for all the workers of the Malabar Mission Circle.
- Rev. Victor assures us that the Gospel workers are praying for all of us, and he is sending many thanks to the Malabar Mission Society for the support given to the Malabar Mission Circle.



CLOUDS ON THE HORIZON

- Rev. Dr. Roland Miller

Some of you may have seen the following release in the newspapers. I will quote it in full. The headline is "World Hindu Council calls for nationwide anti-conversion law in India." The item reads:

New Delhi—The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP or World Hindu Council) has called for a comprehensive law to ban religious conversions in India, as part of a new campaign to stem the increasing number of conversions around the country.

Addressing the media in late August, Mohan Joshi, national secretary of the VHP, said anti-conversion laws in some states weren't strong enough to curb religious conversions. At the same time two other associations allied with the VHP continued violent attacks against Christians—including the detention and abuse of Christian workers in Orissa State.

Readers should know that the VHP represents a minority of Hindus, but it is a powerful and growing minority. It is a black cloud on the horizon. Jesus said that we should observe the signs. We need to work hard and fast while the sun is shining. ☸

A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

Jesus Blesses the Children

People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this he was indignant. He said to them, "*Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.*" And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them. (Mark 10:13-16)

Jesus touches the children and blesses them. Although we may not be able to go to India and touch the children, we are able to "touch" them with God's love in Jesus through our prayers for the Gospel workers and through our gifts. These children of God are precious! Through the Sunday Schools, Vacation Bible Schools, Bible Correspondence Courses and other Christian literature the message of God's love in Jesus "touches" the hearts of God's children in India. There are many opportunities to assist the workers in the Malabar Mission Circle to teach the good News of Jesus and to proclaim the Gospel in their communities.

The children in India are eager to learn about Jesus. Read the stories about the Vacation Bible Schools and Sunday Schools. Review the list of opportunities to support the work of the Malabar Mission Society. Continue to pray for the Gospel workers in India, and the people they serve and touch, especially the children. At Christmas we celebrate the precious gift of God's love in the birth of Jesus. May our gifts of love at Christmas continue to celebrate the gift of God's love in Jesus. May our gracious God continue to bless his children of all ages and in all places!

Rev. Howard Ulmer



IN THE SERVICE OF CHRIST

- Rev. L.L. Guebert

Can you understand it? The Canadian government just announced that it will spend 1.1 billion dollars to support minority language education. How much is a BILLION?

A billion is a 'one' with nine zeros following it. I cannot visualize that amount of money. Can you? Try to break it down. If you were earning \$25,000 per year, it would take you 40,000 years to earn a billion dollars. Or would it be easier to visualize a town of 1,000 working people, each one earning \$25,000 a year. It would take all of them working a 40-year lifetime to earn a billion! It is almost impossible to visualize a number as big as a billion dollars.

But some of us also have trouble visualizing much smaller amounts. For example, I was looking at the budget of the Malabar Mission Society. The total is a bit less than \$50,000. (It would take 20,000 MMS budgets to make a billion.) You don't have that much in your pocket either. How much is \$50,000? That would be fifty gifts of \$1,000, or one thousand \$50 donations.

Better still, think of it in terms of specific witness tasks as examples of costs:

- ✓ \$25 covers the costs of one Vacation Bible School where the love of Jesus is shared with children who do not know Him as Saviour. Sixty per cent of the children who come to VBS come from non-Christian homes.
- ✓ \$45 is needed for a seminar to train Sunday School teachers how to share the Good News.
- ✓ \$60 supports an evangelism worker witnessing in three villages for a month.
- ✓ \$60 prints all the Bible correspondence materials for a month.
- ✓ \$100 covers the cost of Vacation Bible School teacher training.
- ✓ \$200 prints all the lessons for 36 Vacation Bible Schools.
- ✓ \$250 trains the Gospel workers for a day (The three-day session is \$750.)
- ✓ \$300 supports a Bible Correspondence Evangelist for four months, and includes follow-up.
- ✓ \$500 will buy a TV and visual aids for the Kannur 'Open Door' project.
- ✓ \$600 makes it possible for all members in Malabar to come together for two days of fellowship and growth in a Spiritual Life Convention (biennial).
- ✓ \$1,000 provides for the professional training of the Kannur staff for work among Muslims.

Does it make sense to break it down like this? The important thing is to recognize that through these (and other means) the Good News of the love of God is being shared with people who do not know Jesus Christ.

These figures are meant to give you a "hands-on" idea of what various-sized gifts would cover. Naturally, the contributions go through the budget as needed to fulfill the mission.

God bless you for loving and caring, praying and sharing, and giving to the glory of God! 🙏

TRANSFER OF REINS FROM REV. VICTOR TO REV. JOY

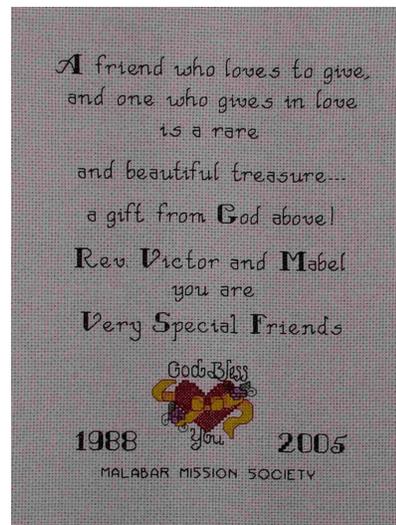
- Emerald Schoepp

On November 30, 2005 Rev. T. Joy will take over the reins from Rev. Victor as the Malabar Mission Society India Agent. Rev. Dr. Roland Miller will leave for India November 16 and will direct the change-over.

Rev. Joy has served as pastor, evangelist, professor, and president of the Concordia Seminary, Nagercoil, India. He is now retired and willing to accept this position from Rev. Victor.

We request our readers to remember these men in prayer as this transition takes place. There will be a period of adjustment for all concerned. Please also keep Dr. Miller in your prayers, as well, for safe travel, safety during his stay in India, good health and bodily strength as he attempts to accomplish the many tasks each one of these trips requires, patience, wisdom and understanding as he deals with every challenge, and then a safe journey back to Canada on December 7, where he will inspire many others to "work while it is day - ere the night cometh and no man can work." ✨

TOKEN OF APPRECIATION TO REV. VICTOR AND HIS WIFE, MABEL



When he is in India November 30 - December 7, 2005, Rev. Dr. Roland Miller will be presenting Rev. Victor and his wife, Mabel, this personalized stitching from the Board of the Malabar Mission Society. Watch for more pictures in the next issue of the Malabar Mission Newsletter. 📷

The **Malabar Mission Newsletter** is now available by e-mail in PDF format (requires free *Adobe Reader*). If you would prefer to receive the Newsletter in this format, e-mail your request to malabarmission@sasktel.net