

Malabar Mission Newsletter

April 2017

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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



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Malabar Mission Newsletter

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VACATION BIBLE SCHOOLS SHARE GOSPEL

Rev. Carlton Riemer

In April 2016 the Malabar Mission Society helped 890 children hear the Gospel through Vacation Bible Schools held in the Malabar Mission Circle. We thank our supporters for the donations that made 19 VBS camps a reality. Did you know that each donation of \$16 makes one VBS possible? In Malabar this year the children learned Bible stories and songs from congregation members—and then carried the Gospel into 518 Hindu, 72 Muslim and 300 Christian homes and families. Children can be very effective evangelists!

Rev. A. T. Baby and his members in Sulthan Bathery held VBS in five locations with a total of 311 children attending, most of them Hindus. The congregation in Meenangadi led by Rev. P. B. Bennet had the largest attendance at one camp with 98 children: 53 Hindus, two Muslims and 43 Christians. In Kalpetta Rev. Bennet led a VBS for 36 Christian children. Evangelist Richard held three camps in the Chooralmala area with 76 Hindus, 14 Muslims and 29 Christians enrolled for a total of 119 children. Rev. Rasalayyan (in Naduvil), Rev. Raju (in Mundakutty) and Evangelist Solomon (in Peragamanna and Sharathkunnu) each had two camps with a total of 62, 73 and 47 attending respectively. Rev. Oliver's congregation in Wandoor held a VBS for 30 Christian children. St. John Lutheran Church, Malappuram, held one VBS with 47 Hindu and seven Christian children attending. Evangelist Pradeep in Vadattupara held one camp with 30 Hindus, 5 Muslims and 25 Christians attending.

This example by numbers of Vacation Bible Schools sponsored by one congregation may inspire North American congregations to conduct more than one VBS per congregation each summer!

May God bless the learning about Jesus and His redemptive love, so that the Holy Spirit creates and strengthens faith in the hearts of these children. May that faith bring joy, peace, and eternal hope to them, their families and their communities.



VBS students at Sharathkunnu

In Appreciation

The Malabar Mission Society sincerely thanks the following donors, who have so generously given special gifts.

In Memory of:

✠ **Edith Currie**

from Ken Currie

✠ **Selma Weiss**

from Harold Weiss

✠ **Oscar Sommerfeld**

from Martha Sommerfeld

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.

Send your gifts to:

The Malabar Mission Society,

P.O. Box 32045

Regina, SK S4N 7L2

We encourage our donors to send their gifts directly to the post office (address above) in Regina. For Canadian donors, gifts may also be made through Canada Helps. However, Canada Helps receives a percentage for their services.

Malabar Mission Society Annual General Meeting

April 29, 2017 at 11 a.m.

Mount Olive Lutheran Church

2015 4th Avenue North

Regina, SK

*All regular and honorary MMS members
are invited to attend*

AN OVERVIEW OF RECENT WORKERS' MEETINGS IN MALABAR

Lorna Pederson

I am grateful to the MMS Board for giving me the opportunity to be MMS Project Officer. My first visit to Malabar in this role took place November 15-30, 2016. On November 22 I attended my first Workers' Meeting in Kozhikode. Rev. Joseph led the opening worship and Rev. I. Titus, India Agent for MMS, chaired the meeting. As you can see from the picture, I received a royal welcome and was presented with a lovely shawl.



Malabar Gospel Mission Society (MGMS) workers with Lorna Pederson, Project Officer for MMS

All of the pastors/workers reported on the activities in their respective congregations as follows:

- **Rev. Joseph, Good News Centre, Kozhikode:** Some 22 to 23 people attend worship. Rev. Joseph conducted three baptisms in 2016.
- **Rev. Rasalayyan, Naduvil and Chengalai:** Five families (16 people) attend worship in Naduvil while one family attends worship in Chengalai. The area is sparsely populated and Rev. Rasalayyan is visiting in distant places to gather people for the church. He would like to restart the tailoring school in Naduvil.
- **Rev. A. T. Baby, Moolenkavu and Sulthan Bathery:** Twenty-four families (90 people) worship at Moolenkavu while 14 families (about 90 people) worship at Sulthan Bathery. Rev. Baby's outreach effort in the colony is being challenged due to political issues.
- **Rev. S. S. Oliver, Wandoor:** Christ Lutheran Church in Wandoor has 12 permanent families plus visitors while Thiruvalli congregation has five families. Seven adults were confirmed in Wandoor in 2016. Confirmation classes and Sunday school take place at both churches, and both churches had one child baptism in 2016. Rev. Oliver does home visits and family prayers.
- **Pastor Richard, Choralimala:** There were five families here, but only two very committed families were attending worship. MMS has decided to discontinue this mission station at the end of March 2017. The building, used as a chapel, belongs to the tea plantation and has no utilities. Also, Pastor Richard's health is very poor. MMS is very grateful to him for his years of ministry, dating back from before the time MMS was formed.
- **Pastor Bennet, Kalpetta and Meenangadi:** Some 40 to 60 people worship in Kalpetta, while 50 to 70 people worship in Meenangadi each Sunday. Confirmation classes, Sunday school and Bible studies are conducted in both congregations. As Pastor Bennet does Bible studies and visits in surrounding areas, he has requested a motorcycle.

• **Rev. Raju, Mundakutty:** Here 28 families (100 people) attend worship services. Sunday school, Youth League and Women’s Society meet regularly. Three members were confirmed in 2016. Due to structural problems the old church has been torn down and the congregation is worshipping outside the parsonage. Construction is ready to start for the new church, for which the congregation has raised 4 lakh. (One lakh is about \$2062 CAD.) The congregation is counting on MMS to provide the remaining 5 lakh to complete the structure. During my visit to Mundakutty, I was given the honour of unveiling a plaque representing the cornerstone.



• **Rev. Regidas, Chelior and St. John, Malappuram:** An average of 70 people attend worship in Malappuram while three families attend church in Chelior. Sunday school, youth and women meet regularly, with each of these groups responsible for one worship service per year. One baptism took place in 2016.

• **Evangelist Pradeep Kumar, Vadattupara:** Nine families (15-20 people) attend worship services. Mr. Pradeep did one baptism in 2016 and is preparing a second person for baptism. Sunday School is taking place.

• **Evangelist C. D. Solomon, Sharathkunnu and Peragamanna:** Fifteen families attend Sharathkunnu while eight families, plus a new, ninth family, attend worship in Peragamanna. Mr. Solomon does home visits. Both of these churches need fences to protect the properties.

• **Rev. I. Titus, Kannur:** Rev. Titus has done survey work and started a congregation at Vanitha in Kannur. Church attendance has been low but has now grown to 14 people.

Rev. Titus also reports that the office for MGMS (Malabar Gospel Mission Society), of which he is president, is located at Vanitha in Kannur. The office is open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Mr. Jayarajan Paul, who serves at Open Door, is secretary, and Mr. C. D. Solomon is treasurer. Rev. Titus wears many hats, filling the roles of MMS India Agent, Kannur pastor, BCC (Bible Correspondence Course) Director, in addition to the MGMS presidency. So far he has been unsuccessful in finding replacements for the positions of Kannur pastor and BCC Director.

I am very happy to know that the work is going forward and efforts are being made to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ under the able leadership of Rev. Titus and all the faithful workers of the MGMS. Thanks be to God.

Remember In Prayer...

Pray that the Lord would bless the work of the pastors/workers in the Malabar Mission Circle so that more people become believers in Jesus through the working of the Holy Spirit.

Pray that many children will attend the Vacation Bible Schools in April so that the seed of faith may be planted in their hearts and minds.

Pray that the Lord will provide a committed pastor to shepherd the newly planted church in Kannur.

Pray that the Bible Correspondence Course (BCC) will be a tool to lead non-Christians in India to Jesus.

Pray for the Lord's protection for all Christians, Christian churches and workers in India, especially in Kerala and Anantapur, that no harm will come to them.

Pray for Dr. Sophia and the Christian Welfare Centre in Malappuram, that there will be adequate business to pay the bills as false rumours have caused lower patient numbers and for reliable management.

Pray for adequate funds to continue the support of the Malabar Mission Society in Malabar and beyond. Also pray that funds will be found to finish the Mundakutty building project and other requests for maintenance and repair.

We Thank God ...

- For Merceda Schmidt and her faithful support as she celebrates her 100th birthday on April 10.
- For the generous support in providing a borewell and wall at Kozhidoke.
- For Ms. Lorna Pederson, Project Officer, for her faithful service.
- For Rev. Dr. Roland Miller, Program Advisor, for guiding and leading the Malabar Mission Society.
- For the many congregations and individuals in Canada and the United States who provide financial support for this mission and ministry in India.

CELEBRATING BAPTISMS IN ANANTAPUR

Christmas 2016 was a special time of celebration in Anantapur. Not only were people celebrating the birth of Christ, they also celebrated the baptism of at least 20 individuals. The Sunday school children acted out a skit depicting the birth of Jesus and entertained with song and dance as well. There was surely rejoicing and celebration in heaven on those days! Anantapur also marked a special church anniversary at Raketta church in early March.



JEWEL OF INDIA, TEACHER EXTRAORDINAIRE—DR. HILDA ISAAC

Mary Helen Miller



Shortly after their marriage in 1987, missionary daughter Elizabeth (Betsy) Miller Dailey and her husband, Philip, went to India to teach in her old school in the mountain village of Kodaikanal. Ever since her early teen years, Betsy had dreamed of returning to India to work with poor children in villages near where she lived. In 1989, with financial help from a fund set up in memory of her maternal grandmother and with the support of local churches, she started an all-day nursery school and day care (called a crèche in India) located in an empty bungalow formerly owned by the Swedish Mission.

Betsy was fortunate in finding the perfect person to help her: Mrs. Hilda Isaac, a neighbour who was a trained nursery school teacher. The two women worked together building a program to meet the whole needs of the child, with nutritious meals, clean clothing, and personal hygiene training in addition to educational and spiritual development.

Most of the children's parents were poor laborers who worked long hours in nearby forests gathering wood. Previously, small children had often been left alone, or in the care of older siblings who had to stay home instead of attending school themselves. With continued support of community leaders, and some funding from other agencies, including the Malabar Mission Society, the program grew to include three more crèches in their area as well as classes for local women in nutrition, child care, and sewing.

When the Daileys had to return to the States in 1996, Betsy assumed the role of fundraiser while Hilda continued the work in India. As her exemplary work with poor families became recognised statewide, the Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church asked Hilda to set up and run two more crèches, in the area near her home village on the southern coast of Tamil Nad.

We were thrilled to receive the news recently that Hilda's dedicated and ceaseless work for poor children has been nationally recognized. Last year the government of India brought her to New Delhi, where she was presented with The Jewel of India award and The National Mahila [Woman's] Gold Medal.

The Jewel of India is the last word in public recognition of exceptional service and performance of the highest order, without distinctions of race, occupation, position or sex, in any field of human endeavour. Hilda Isaac received this for "exemplary service in education and health care to the poor." The National Mahila Gold Medal Award is given for women's empowerment and social work. In January 2017 Hilda also received an honorary doctorate from the seminary of her Lutheran Church in Tamil Nad.

We congratulate Dr. Hilda for these well-deserved honours!