

Malabar Mission Newsletter

Fall 2011

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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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VACATION BIBLE SCHOOLS REACH HUNDREDS WITH THE GOSPEL

- Rev. Carlton Riemer, MMS Project Officer

Vacation Bible Schools are very effective evangelistic tools in India. And the Gospel Workers of the Malabar Mission Circle are wonderfully adept at using this tool for the spread of the Gospel and growth of the Church. They enter into this work with enthusiasm and joy.

In April 2011, 1419 children in Malabar heard and experienced the Gospel, all on a budget of Canadian \$800 or at a cost of \$10 per VBS "camp." The workers conducted their teaching programs in 31 locations. More than 420 Hindus and more than 270 Muslims heard the Gospel, many of them probably for the first time. More than 450 Christian children were nourished in the faith with the Word of God. And the Word of God entered the homes of these children, as they took the stories they heard and the songs they learned with them to their parents, siblings, and relatives.

The Rev. A. T. Baby reported the largest attendance of 103 children in Ambootti, near Sulthan Bathery. The largest number of Muslims (50) attended in Naduvil, where Mr. D. Wilson is serving as a probationer (intern). The largest number of Hindus (50) attended in Athanival and in Sharathkundu in the Wandoor pastorate served by the Rev. S. S. Oliver. At Sharathkundu all 50 children in the VBS were from Hindu background. In the Wandoor area Rev. Oliver is assisted by Evangelist Mr. C. D. Solomon. Mr. Solomon's wife, Sobhi Prabha, led the VBS in Sharathkundu.



Vacation Bible Schools are very effective evangelistic tools in India

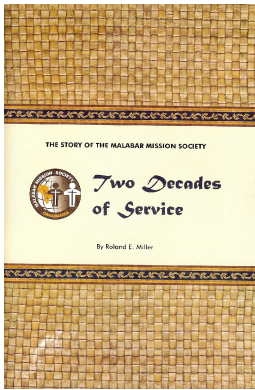
The congregation in Meenangadi had two "camps": one with all Christians (95) in attendance, and a second one with 2 Hindus, 1 Muslim, and 16 Christians in attendance.

Both of the Reading Rooms in Kannur held VBS: the Open Door had 66 attend (20 Hindus, 42 Muslims, and 4 Christians); and Vanitha had 34 attend (5 Hindus, 25 Muslims, and 4 Christians). Mr. C. Rejidas, a fourth year student at Gurukul Lutheran Theological College, who is being supported in his seminary education by MMS, helped with VBS while he was doing an internship in Kannur.

Mr. N. Shine Jose, the probationer (intern) at Vellarmala where the church building is located, conducted one VBS there with 20 Hindus and 5 Christians attending. He conducted another VBS in Chooralmala, where he and his wife reside, with 17 Hindus and 3 Christians attending. In eleven of the "camps" Christians were in the minority, and in 4 "camps" there were no Christian children in attendance.

In eleven of the "camps" there were more Christian children than non-Christians attending. Children in India are involved from a very young age in witnessing to non-Christians. And by God's grace they are wonderful evangelists!

May God bless the sowing of His Word in the hearts and lives of all those who attended Vacation Bible School in Malabar with a bountiful harvest. We thank the donors and supporters of MMS who make it possible for this ministry to take place every year. ❀



NOW AVAILABLE—THE STORY OF THE MMS

- Mark Dickinson

We are pleased to announce the completion, and immediate availability, of Dr. Miller's latest book, *The Story of the Malabar Mission Society: Two Decades of Service*. In the words of our President, Rev. Howard Ulmer: "[This book] is a history of God's love in action in India and in North

America. Dr. Roland Miller has told the story of Malabar, its development and remarkable growth during the last twenty years. The Pastors, Catechists and Gospel Workers continue to share the Good News of God's love in Jesus Christ to the people in India. God has blessed their courageous and bold witness to Hindus and Muslims in their communities."

Printed below is a short excerpt from one sub-chapter of the book – it is titled "2001 Key Events: Two Major Gifts Open A Mission Door."

Emil Brunner once said: "The church exists by mission as fire by burning." No burning, no fire. No mission, no church.

A mission society may also become dead coals if it becomes a status quo agency. This is particularly true for a society like the MMS that supports others. If the "others" let up, the Society's flame flickers. A partial answer to the cooling dangers inherent in regular supplemental support is new outreach. That is equally important for the Gospel workers in Malabar and for the MMS. For the Gospel workers new work reinforces their sense of mission and energizes their local outreach. For the MMS it prevents the dampening of spiritual fire by the drizzle of routine. More important, for those who do not know Christ it may open the

door to salvation and hope. But new work requires resources.

God provided a resource for new work when the Naduvil outreach was started through the generosity of Trinity Lutheran Church, Rochester, MN. The possibility for new work was fanned into flame again by the largest single gift from an individual in the history of the MMS. That was a \$21,430.49 testament from the estate of Mrs. Helen Thomas in Killarney, B.C. Rev. Carl Borchardt was an instrumental figure in the grant. Immediate thought was given to the enlarging of our mission in North Malabar, and it was agreed that at least half the amount would be set aside for such development. The city of Kannur was prominent in the discussions. The Project Officer was encouraged to initiate a preliminary investigation.

Further cause for rejoicing came with the announcement of a second large gift, this time a generous donation of \$10,000 from a senior retired pastor, Rev. Carl Beiderwieden, resident in British Columbia. For a retired pastor the amount represents an extraordinary commitment. The full amount of this gift together with half of the donation from Mrs. Thomas now placed a new mission project within reach. "And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent?" (Rom. 10:15). Rev. Beiderwieden and Mrs. Thomas were enabling a new sending.

Please contact the Malabar Mission Society for a copy of this new book, *The Story of the Malabar Mission Society: Two Decades of Service*. A donation of \$10 will assist with the cost of printing the history book. THANK YOU again for your continuing prayers and support for the many faithful workers of the MMS. ❀

THE MALABAR GOSPEL MISSION SOCIETY MEETS FOR FIRST TIME

- Rev. Carlton Riemer

The Malabar Gospel Mission Society (MGMS) was formed about one year ago at the encouragement of the Malabar Mission Society in order to encourage evangelism and to meet government requirements for bringing funds into India. The MGMS had its first official meeting on May 24, 2011, in Kozhikode, Kerala.

The MGMS executive decided on signatures for bank accounts, times for meetings, a membership campaign, fund raising activities, and other administrative details.

The Gospel Workers of the Malabar Mission Circle met after the MGMS meeting. The workers reported on the worship and Sunday School attendance and on VBS statistics in their congregations and stations.

Mr. John Tennyson reported that 1,750 people were utilizing the Friendship Centre in Malappuram and that the new television set provided by MMS is much appreciated. They are outgrowing their seating spaces, so he is purchasing more chairs.

Bethel congregation in Naduvil has grown with two Confirmations and one Baptism. Mundakutty and Vadattupara reported a need for repairs to the roofs of their church buildings and parsonages.

The Gospel Workers also met on August 24, 2011. They made plans for a Youth Camp, a Women's Seminar, a Men's Seminar, a Sunday School Seminar, and a Family Convention. ❀

WORKERS GO AND COME

- Rev. Carlton Riemer



Miss Anila joins the Vanitha library and reading room staff at Kannur

A parting greeting in India is "Going, I will come again." In the past few months, the Malabar Mission Circle has experienced several changes in personnel as workers have gone and come.

The two lady workers at Vanitha, the women's library and reading room in Kannur, resigned because they have gotten married: Miss Lizzy on March 3 and Soosan George on June 20, 2011. In April Bency Baby began serving, and in August Miss Anila joined Bency on the staff. Anila is a convert from Hinduism, and Bency is helping Anila to grow in her faith, as she also shares her faith with others.

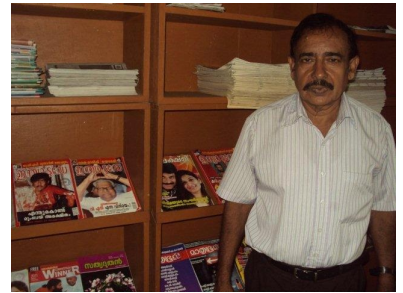
Mr. Safu Joseph left the Open Door Reading Room in Kannur, because he got a job in Bengaluru. Replacing him in August was Mr. Jayaraj. He is retired (age 64) from the government Central Excise office. He has been a member of the Church of South India (CSI) in Kannur. Mr. Jayaraj and his wife have two children who are studying in college.

In August Concordia Theological Seminary, Nagercoil, transferred Mr. N. Shine Jose out of Vellarmala to continue his internship in a congregation near Trivandrum. He has two more years to serve as probationer before he is eligible to be ordained by the India Evangelical Lutheran Church. The Rev. P. G. Henry, the retired pastor serving in Kalpetta and Meenangadi, is conducting services in Vellarmala on Sunday afternoons, after conducting two services in the morning.

The Rev. T. Joseph, pastor at the Good News Centre, Kozhikode, spent several weeks in Trivandrum at a cardiac hospital. He is back in Kozhikode now and is scheduled for heart valve surgery in early October 2011. Please keep him and his family in your prayers.

Mr. C. Rejidas did a four-month internship in Kannur starting in May 2011. With help from a leadership development grant administered by the Malabar Mission Society, he is now in his last year of studying for his Bachelor of Divinity degree at Gurukul Lutheran Theological College, Chennai. He looks forward to completing his program in April 2012, when he plans to continue his ministry in Kannur. He was the evangelist at the Open Door (Men's) Reading Room in Kannur for several years before he began studying at GLTC. While he was in Kannur during his internship, he worked hard to keep the reading rooms functioning, and he did much to recruit and train the new workers mentioned above.

We welcome these new workers and pray God's blessings upon all those who serve in Jesus' Kingdom wherever God calls and leads them. ❀



Mr. Jayaraj joins the Open Door Reading Room staff at Kannur.

WE MOURN WITH THOSE WHO MOURN

- Rev. Carlton Riemer

We share the earthly loss and the eternal hope of The Rev. T. Joy and his family at the death of Rev. Joy's older brother. Mr. K. S. Tennison completed his life on earth on June 19, 2011. The funeral and burial took place on June 20 in Moolenkavu, Sulthan Bathery. Mr. Tennison was a retired school principal. He was the main author of the By-Laws for the Malabar Gospel Mission Society. He served in the Malabar Mission Circle in various capacities as an evangelist and teacher. May God comfort all who mourn with the sure and certain hope believers have because of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus from the dead. ❀

PROJECT OFFICER PLANS VISIT TO MALABAR

The Rev. Carlton Riemer has booked flights to arrive in Kozhikode, Kerala, India, on October 19, 2011, and to leave from there on November 12, 2011. His goals are to complete the evaluation of the projects undertaken by MMS and to work with Rev. Joy, the MMS Program Director, on plans for the future and a proposed budget for 2012.

He will speak at the Harvest Festival at Christ Lutheran Church, Wandoor, on October 23, 2011, and will attend the Malabar Mission Circle Youth Camp to be held on October 25. He will also attend the Family Convention to be held in Wandoor on November 11 and 12.

Please pray for health, strength, and traveling mercies for Pastor Riemer. ❀

GOSPEL FOR MUSLIM SOCIETY HOSTS MUSLIM CONVERTS MEETING

- Rev. Carlton Riemer



On September 7, 2011 the Gospel for Muslim Society held a meeting for Muslim converts in Uravakonda, Anantapur, Andhra Pradesh, India. Around forty people attended. The gathering was funded by the Malabar Mission Society. They had planned to invite more than 100, but the funds provided would not accommodate that many people.

The event began at 10 a.m. with an opening prayer by Pastor Mahammad Rasool, himself a convert from Islam and a son-in-law of the Rev. Shaik Ismail, the respected patriarch of these new believers. All four of Rev. Ismail's sons-in-law and his son are "leaders" of this movement under the supervision of Rev. Shaik Ismail.

After group singing and introducing the families, Pastor Sadik Khan prayed for the Rev. Shaik Ismail, the main speaker. His message of encouragement was based on the words of Jesus written in the Gospel of St. John 10:16 : "And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd." Shaik Shahanaz read the text in Urdu, a language spoken by many Muslims in India which uses Arabic script. The commonly used language in the Anantapur area is Telugu.

The menu for lunch was rice and chicken curry. The gathering included many opportunities for the participants to pray, praise God for their salvation, and to share their experiences of coming to faith and their struggles as they face opposition from the Muslim community.

They also discussed how they might reach more Muslims for Christ. Their prayers included intercessions for the Malabar Mission Society, the Rev. Dr. Roland Miller, the Rev. Carlton Riemer and their families.

Evangelists in the Gospel for Muslim Society go to remote villages monthly to show the "Jesus" film in Telugu. To do this they rent a film projector and equipment at a cost of Rs 4,000 (Canadian \$95) per event. They would like to purchase their own projector and equipment, including a generator, at a cost of Rs 130,000 (Canadian \$2,600), but the MMS has not had enough funds to

budget for this evangelistic resource. It remains on a Special Needs list.

The ministry reported 13 Baptisms since January 2011, and in August 2011" ten new Muslim families have been saved."

In the Fall 2010 (Vol. 17, No. 2) issue of the Malabar Mission Newsletter, Roland Miller wrote about Shaik Ismail's conversion and summarized his testimony. The Spring 2010, edition also featured this movement of Muslims and Hindus toward Jesus as their Savior

It is a rare opportunity and privilege to support a mass movement such as this in the mission of the church. May God grant us wisdom and open minds and hearts, as we respond generously to the needs expressed by these believers and evangelists to the glory of God and for the growth of the Church. ❖



The gathering included many opportunities for the participants to share their experiences of coming to faith. Rev. Ismail is on the right.

In Appreciation

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

... **In memory of:**

- **Betty Dickinson**
Mark & Monique Dickinson
- **Phyllis Guebert**
Rev. Dennis & Inez Papp
Irene Pergentile
- **George & Gladys Smith**
Sue Morrison

- **Rev. Oscar Sommerfeld**
Martha Sommerfeld
- **Violet Printz**
Foothills Lutheran Church
LWMLC, Calgary

... **In honour of:**

- **Elsie Ulmer**
on her 94th birthday:
Emerald Schoepp

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.