

Malabar Mission Newsletter

Christmas 2013



Vol. 20, No 3

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



PROJECT OFFICER REQUESTS PRAYERS FOR PROJECTS IN MALABAR

- Rev. Carlton Riemer

The April 2013, meeting of the Malabar Mission Society Board of Directors yielded five project areas on which to focus during my next visit to Malabar. To give time for progress on the projects before the November meeting, I visited in August and got to experience the "rainy season" in Kerala.

Two of the projects are:

1) Putting the Bible Correspondence Courses used in Malabar on computer so that students can take the courses online or through email. The Rev. Dr. Roland Miller, founder of the MMS and Program Advisor, wrote a new Bible Correspondence course on the book of Isaiah for use in Malabar. That course is available in English on computer documents. It is being translated into Malayalam by Mr. Samuel John. He is the son of a Lutheran pastor of the India Evangelical Lutheran Church and a 1992 graduate of Concordia University Wisconsin, a part of the university system of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. He worked in the software industry for three years in USA and sixteen years in India. He has friends and colleagues who are helping him work out how to make the courses available on computers in the Malayalam and English languages. Please pray for Samuel and this project which will make Bible Correspondence Courses appealing to more students and professionals in India.

We plan that one of the two new lady workers we are recruiting for the *Vanitha* Women's Reading Room ministry in Kannur will have responsibility for managing the BCC ministry. Rev. I. Titus, the MMS Agent, has been advertizing for this position. Please pray that a devout Christian worker skilled in computer technology will accept and be trained for this position. We plan that the other lady Gospel worker will have skills in social work.

2) Encouraging the planting of a new church in Kannur. Pastor C. Rejidas is assigned as a Probationer (similar to a theological intern) of the IELC to lead the church planting effort in Kannur. He prepared a one year plan to establish a new church in Kannur with at least ten members or three families by September 2014. He supported the goal with objectives and strategies. His plan includes visiting homes of non-Christian families, hospitals, and the jail, as well as arranging programs, lectures, lyceums and topic discussions in the Open Door Reading Room (for men) and the *Vanitha* Library (for women). Pastor Rejidas has also been assigned by IELC to be the pastor at Bethel, Naduvil, and Good Shepherd, Chengalvai. Please pray for Pastor Rejidas as he gains valuable experience by planting a church in Kannur as a probationer and prepares for ordination.



Probationer C. Rejidas and Soumya are happy with the new motorcycle provided by MMS for church planting in Kannur.

Rain every day in Kerala did not dampen the spirits of the Gospel workers in India, as they were challenged by these new emphases in our work together.

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In Appreciation

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



† Irene Raedeke

Mark & Monique Dickinson
Lowell Guebert
Lorna Pederson
Carlton & Arlene Riemer
Howard & Gloria Ulmer



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
P.O. Box 32045
Regina, SK S4N 7L2**

In Memory of Irene Raedeke

June 5, 1932—September 20, 2013

Irene and Ron Raedeke are important to us not because they were extraordinary people, but because they were ordinary people who did extraordinary things. When Rev. Ron was Evangelism Secretary for the Manitoba and Saskatchewan District in 1983, he went up and down to raise enough money to construct the Good News Centre in Calicut. It is still operating. Then when it was decided to start the Malabar Mission Society he did a huge amount of work to help get it going and served as its first president from 1990 to 1996, when he unexpectedly passed away. Through this entire formative period Irene was his colleague and co-worker, as well as spouse. She sat on the MMS Board from its beginning until her death in 2013 fall. She was a truly faithful servant who loved the mission of Christ and loved to make music in praise of His goodness.

I want to share one example of the kind of thing she did. The Bible Society of Saskatchewan, of which Irene was an active member, was having its two annual meetings in Regina and Saskatoon. I had passed on to Irene the information that Rev. K.K. Alavi, great Malabar evangelist among Muslims, required some Bibles for his work. She approached Rev. Ken Peterson, the Bible Society leader, and inquired whether a portion of the offerings might go to meet this need. Rev. Peterson agreed. The speaker for the occasion was Dr. Oswald Hoffman, the well-known Lutheran Hour speaker. At that time he had no idea where Malabar was or what we were trying to do there. However, in the middle of his stirring speech he suddenly threw his arms out and cried, "Remember Malabar!" We received the large amount of \$2765 for Malayalam Bibles! Irene was the kind of person you absolutely need if God's work is going to get done. If St. Paul had known her he might have included her name with Dorcas, Lydia, Lois, Eunice and others. One thing is sure—she is not "resting" there in heaven, even though she deserves to!

Submitted by Rev. Dr. Roland Miller

My memories of Irene start in 1959, when we visited Regina during our first furlough from the India Mission Field. Irene and I had a special bond, as our 3 month old baby girls, Betsy and Jeannie, were born on the same day! We were warmly welcomed into their home for what were to become frequent visits after we returned from India and moved to Regina 17 years later.



From Left to right: Mary Helen Miller, Irene Raedeke, Phyllis Guebert, Linda Howell, Marj Tiefenback and Lorna Pederson. (Photo taken May, 1993)

Irene was a doer! An active volunteer in her many fields of interest including the LWML, musical performances, community events and missions she was always ready to support and enable these activities. Irene had very special talents, not only in music but artistically as well. She was a great organizer and natural leader. In fact she did everything well. Always hospitable she was ready to host out of town board members; many such gatherings ended in her home with enjoyable social evenings and a wonderful meal—boy, could that woman cook!

Irene gave of her many talents in the formation of the Malabar Mission Society. I remember especially the gala given for the first general meeting in May, 1993. Irene arranged wonderful exhibits of the work in Malabar. The ladies on the board all dressed up in Indian saris and felt we provided a proper exotic ambience for this occasion. We were all very excited about this great beginning to the support of the Malabar Mission!

REV. TITUS, MMS AGENT, PLANS AND LEADS EVENTS IN MALABAR

- Rev. Carlton Riemer

Rev. I. Titus is taking to the position of MMS Agent very nicely. He started in May 2012, while he still had full responsibilities at his pastorate in Malappuram. He retired from that on May 31, 2013. At our first meeting together in August 2013, he showed me three note books containing his record of every phone call, contact, meeting, correspondence, etc. he has had since he became MMS Agent. He was prepared with a written plan for his activities in 2014. He and his wife Flory are living in a rental home in Kozhikode. It is comfortable, attractive, and well-maintained. Together they are visiting all the MMC congregations on Sunday mornings and getting to know the situation of each congregation. He also offers a class on stewardship for the members.



Rev. Titus and Flory welcomed Rev. Riemer to their rental home in Kozhikode.

I attended several leadership training seminars planned by Rev. Titus. The first was on August 3rd for women in MMC. The theme was "Women in Society and in the Church." My opening devotion and Bible study were based on passages mentioned in the Isaiah Bible Correspondence Course in which Isaiah speaks to and about women. Attendance surpassed expectations with 65 attending (in spite of the rain).

Rev. Titus chaired the meeting of the Gospel Workers of MMC on August 7th. I gave greetings from the MMS and solicited their help to reach the goals that MMC and MMS made together. Rev. Titus and I explained the five projects that were the focus of my visit. The Gospel workers in MMC have recommitted themselves to reach the evangelism goals they set.



Rev. Riemer presses the "Start" button

On August 12th I officially inaugurated the new computers in the lab of the Henry Otten Memorial English Medium School in Wandoor by pressing the "Start" button of one of the computers. The computers were provided by the MMS and a special donation. The school has 1,200 students (most of them are Muslims) with 54 teachers and 24 other staff. They are launching a fund raising effort to raise \$85,000 to build a much needed additional classroom, auditorium, and offices.



Students at Otten Memorial School learn to use the new computers.

Readers may make donations toward this remarkable and unique ministry by designating their gift through MMS for the Otten Memorial School Building Fund.

Rev. Titus, Mr. Solomon, and I visited the Christian Welfare Centre in Malappuram on August 12th. The hospital addition is getting very close to completion. The interior rooms were being tiled. On behalf of the MMS, I presented funds for a new Electro Cardio Gram machine to Dr. Sophia John in the presence of the staff.



(Left to Right): Mr. Solomon, Rev. Titus, Rev. Riemer and Dr. Sophia John

We also visited the Friendship Centre Reading Room in Malappuram, and I saw for myself the crowded conditions in the centre, especially in the evening. As many as 2,000 people (many of them Muslims) are coming monthly to read newspapers, periodicals, and books on secular as well as Christian subjects. Due to family needs, Mr. Santhosh, the son of Mr. John Tennyson, is helping with staffing the centre.



OTHER EVENTS HAVE HAPPENED IN MALABAR

- Rev. Carlton Riemer

The Family Convention was held in Sulthan Bathery on November 9th and 10th, 2013, with 191 participants from the congregations in Malabar coming together for fellowship and spiritual growth. The theme was "The Church in Society." It featured guest speakers, and the local MMC pastors had responsibilities for other parts of the program. A musical group from the Christian Media Centre in Chennai performed, and singers and instrumentalists from the MMC congregations used their talents to glorify God. Rev. Titus distributed Christmas cards and gifts from the MMS to each of the workers. Rev. C. Pares, the Acting President of IELC, attended.

On November 13th, Rev. Titus and Mr. Solomon traveled to Anantapur, Andhra Pradesh, and met with the workers of the Gospel for Muslim Salvation and Welfare Association. They now have 34 workers in their ministry, twenty of whom are new workers since 2010. Their ministry resulted in six baptisms on October 10th, 2013.

Rev. Titus and Rev. Dr. J. Siromony led Bible studies for laypeople of MMC on November 26th, 2013, at Kalpetta. The 12 participants expressed special thanks that they were asked about the growth of the Church in Malabar. No one had asked them that question till now. They showed genuine care for the spread of the Gospel in Malabar. Rev. Titus mentioned that this meeting with the lay people made his “best day” as the MMS Agent so far.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

JESUS - SAVIOUR



God created Adam and Eve and placed them in the Garden of Eden. After they rebelled against God, they received the promise of a **Saviour**. This promise was renewed many times throughout the Old Testament, especially by the prophets. For many centuries God's people continued to wait for the promised Messiah. Although God's people continued to sin through their selfish actions, God was gracious and merciful. At times their sinfulness was punished. His messengers continued to provide guidance and direction. God continued to love and care for his people.

At the right time (God's time) he sent his Son to be our **Saviour**. God's messenger, an angel of the Lord, appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name **Jesus**, for he will save his people from their sins." (Matthew 1:20-21) The mystery of the birth of Jesus, the incarnate Son of God, is indeed a miracle that we believe in faith. We trust God's powerful word and promise. We are humbled by his love and mercy.

Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Jesus, our Saviour. Do we believe "he will save his people from their sins?" On Good Friday Jesus died on the cross for the sins of all people. On Easter morning he rose from the grave to proclaim his victory over death. His victory provides assurance that we will also rise to be with him in heaven. God calls his people to live for him, serve him and praise him.

The opportunities to share the Gospel are enormous! Daily pray for the workers. May God continue to bless the workers and the proclaiming of God's love in **JESUS**, our **SAVIOUR**. Your faithful prayer and financial support are sincerely appreciated.



Who's That Tapping on Your Shoulder?

By Brian Wonnick, Development Officer

Someday, when each of us claims our heavenly reward, who will we meet in Heaven? Many of us speculate on who that might be. The great musician, J.S. Bach, in one of his works says, "And I will see my Saviour, face to face." Certainly, there is no fonder hope for any of us, but to see our Saviour face to face. Rev. CFW Walther also mused about the same question, and said something that really grabbed my attention. He said, and I paraphrase, "Oh, what a wonderful day that will be, when someday in Heaven, someone you don't even know will tap you on the shoulder and say, 'I am here in Heaven with you because of a gift you left in your will, a gift that ensured the spreading of the Gospel. I heard and believed in His Saving Word, and I am here to join you in Heaven. Oh, what a joy that will be to see our Lord Jesus face to face!'"

Everything we receive is a gift from God to manage for His purposes. And the most special of all His gifts is the gift of faith in Christ. Giving, and continuing to grow in our giving becomes a response from a grateful, thankful heart.

As the years go by, our estate grows through His blessing of our plans and efforts. When working through our estate plan, we naturally leave a good portion to our family, and loved ones. Here's a question: did you miss including someone? Could that someone be the Christ Child, whose birth we will shortly celebrate? Christ is the other child in your family.

Seek His guidance through prayer and wise counsel. Prayerfully consider the Malabar Mission Society as a recipient of a bequest gift from your estate. Do you feel the tapping on your shoulder from a brother or sister in Christ from India? Now, take the next steps to meet with your legal and financial advisors to put a bequest in place, using such gift planning options as a gift of real property, life insurance, publicly traded shares or mutual funds, annuities, RRSP's and RRIF's.

What a JOY that will be!

NOTE: Brian Wonnick is available for gift planning assistance.