

Seeds on the Wind

NEWS FROM BETHANIA • FALL 2016

The Meaning of Bethania Kids

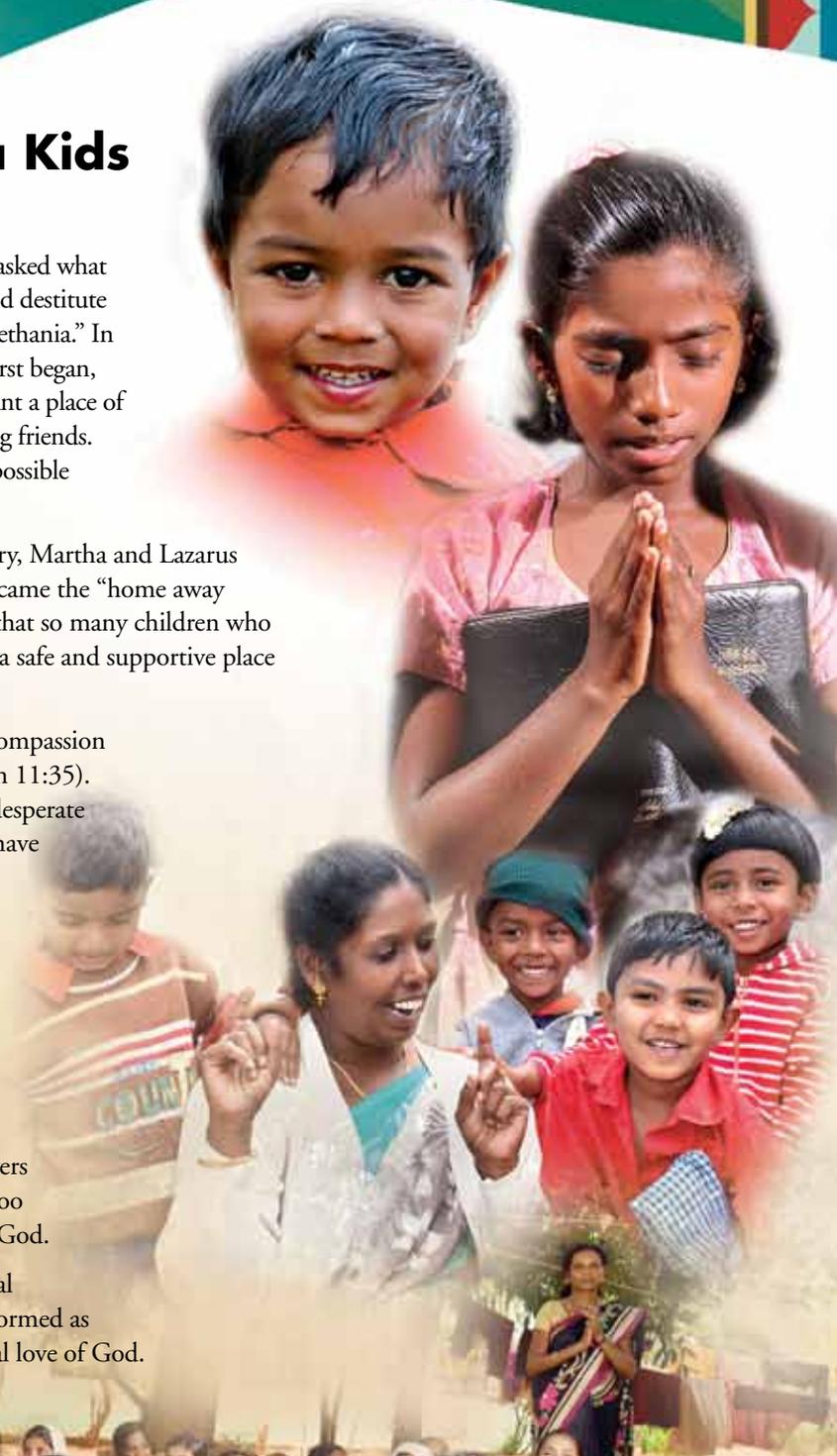
In 1987, when Dayavu Dhanapal, one of our founders, was asked what the name of the newly-formed ministry to help orphaned and destitute Indian children would be, without hesitation, she replied “Bethania.” In Tamil, the language of Southeast India where our ministry first began, “Bethania” is the translation of “Bethany.” To Dayavu it meant a place of hospitality and healing, a place where Jesus went to be among friends. What a perfect name for the beautiful work God has made possible through our Bethania Kids ministry!

Just outside of Jerusalem, Bethany was the town where Mary, Martha and Lazarus lived, and because of their close friendship with Jesus, it became the “home away from home” for Jesus and his disciples. How fitting, then, that so many children who might otherwise have no home are warmly welcomed into a safe and supportive place they now call home at Bethania Kids.

It was also at Bethany where Jesus revealed His profound compassion for human suffering in the simple words “Jesus wept” (John 11:35). As we read the heart-rending stories of hunger, abuse and desperate circumstances many of the children in Bethania Kids care have endured, we may not fully comprehend why God allows such suffering, but we know that He feels their sorrow and grieves for them. He also places the responsibility on us to follow Jesus’ example of caring for those children who are poor, homeless and in great need.

Just as Lazarus was given new life in Bethany, the Indian children who find their way to Bethania Kids are given a new life of loving care and a promising future. In addition, just as Bethany was the place where Jesus blessed his followers one last time before returning to His Father in heaven, so too the children of Bethania Kids receive many blessings from God.

Bethania Kids – a place for physical, emotional and spiritual healing. A place where miracles happen and lives are transformed as these precious Indian children experience the unconditional love of God.



Bethania Kids

Bethania Kids Keeps Moving Forward

LARRY ZIMMERMAN

On a recent trip to India, fellow Board member Dr. Ernest Hahn, our Development Director, Wendy Oesterling, (both of whom grew up in India) and I shared the joy of visiting our residence homes, care centers, rehabilitation centers, and women's empowerment programs. Accompanying us were Steve, Faith and Peggy Meizen, long-time Bethania Kids supporters. Steve also grew up in India, where his parents, grandparents and uncle and aunt were missionaries.

Before we left, I addressed our congregation at the Lutheran Church of St. Andrew in Maryland, saying I was visiting my 750 grandchildren in India. This was my third visit to our Bethania Kids ministries, and I have seen the spiritual, emotional and physical development of the children as they grow to be young men and women. The difference Bethania Kids is making in their lives is clearly evident. Through your support, our Bethania Kids are prospering. They are achieving good grades in school and are leaders in their classes, winning awards for academics, sports, arts, and citizenship. Many who were children upon my first visit have graduated from our homes and are now in secondary school, vocational training, the workforce, or college. Although I missed seeing them, it is exciting to see the plans God has in store for them. None of this would be possible without your continued support.

While in India we met most of our 85 staff members who care for our children, sharing their love and the love of Christ with the children. It is through their compassionate care that our children find joy, fulfillment and hope for the future. As our programs are assessed, several areas have been identified where

additional support and resources are needed. These include education scholarships and endowments, vocational training, library and Bible study materials, career centers, computer training, and an alumni network and newsletter to keep the Bethania Kids family connected. Stay tuned for opportunities to support these additional needs.

Many of you have asked about health care for the children. Our children receive bimonthly physical



exams, where height and weight are measured and plotted to observe growth. Doctors visit our homes periodically to check on the children. Board member Dr. Ernest Hahn reviewed both the physical and mental health services on our recent trip. As a result, we will be preparing an outline for the entrance examinations and protocols for continuing health care including vision, hearing and general health. Mental health is also of great concern since many of our children come into Bethania Kids care with a history of loss, separation, rejection and/or abuse, resulting in the potential for post-traumatic stress disorder and/or unresolved emotional trauma. Recognizing

the importance of strong mental health in the development of confidence and independence, Bethania Kids will soon introduce mental health training to the caregivers and staff at the residence homes so that they can recognize symptoms and provide support and, when necessary, seek additional counseling for the affected children.

Praise the Lord! Bethania Foundation, India just closed on the purchase of 3.56 acres of land in Batlagundu, which is on the plains in southern India. This will be the site of the new Shalom Home for Girls, which is currently located in Kodaikanal. The design will start with a Concept Report offering several options for

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the new home, all of which will meet the Indian Juvenile Justice codes. This is a big step forward for Bethania Kids. The budget for land, design, construction and furnishings is \$550,000, all part of our upcoming Comprehensive Campaign. Construction will not begin until the funds have been raised.

Odisha is our northernmost site, where we have Care Centers at both Cilpajodi and Dholdholi, both located in remote tribal areas. Construction has started on a new facility at each location, which consists of a 70 x 40 building with meeting space, offices, staff quarters, and storage. The new facilities will provide space for expanded vibrant programs that will support the entire community. Both projects are fully funded through the generous donation of two Bethania Kids families.

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At our Dayavu Home in Kannivadi, drip irrigation was recently installed with the support of Fields of Hope. The results are evident as gardens and trees (mango, teak, guava and coconut) are being planted and nurtured. Thank you to Steve and Faith Meizen for their work in evaluating soils and preparing a plan for cultivation of the site. Thank you also to Dr. Gnanakan and the staff at Dayavu Home, who have managed these improvements.

In closing, I am pleased to report that Bethania Kids in North America and India have worked together to ensure there is transparency and confirmation in all our financial operations so you can be confident that your donations are wisely and effectively used. We thank you for your support. As the year comes to a close, please consider Bethania Kids for your year-end charitable donations.

Please visit our website at www.bethaniakids.com to learn more about our ministry and to donate online. May God bless you and the children and staff in India that God enables us to serve.



The Miracle of Manjula

Manjula has one of the most beautiful smiles in the world. It is a smile that reflects the transforming miracles she has experienced during her life.

Manjula is 19 years old, lives at our Shalom Home for Girls and works at the CSI Rehabilitation Center in Kodaikanal. Since birth, she has had to overcome some overwhelming challenges, including cerebral palsy and hemiplegia (paralysis on one side of her body) as well as a tragic early childhood.

Her father is not sure whether her cerebral palsy is the result of a difficult delivery or from being thrown into a well by her mentally unstable mother at 1-1/2 years of age. She was rescued by other people in her village and then lived under her paternal grandmother's care. Since her grandmother did not know how to care for her special needs, she was confined to the home and remained socially ostracized.

When she came to Shalom Home in 2011 at the age of 14, she was able to communicate her needs quite effectively and to understand and answer questions. However, she cried often and constantly drooled. She was extremely thin and anemic and unable to eat anything except rice. Academically she read at a 1st grade level, and her math was at a 2nd grade level.

Since that first day of Manjula's arrival, the loving, compassionate care she received at Bethania Kids has resulted in a miraculous transformation. She now attends the Rehabilitation Center every day for vocational training. All of the staff and her co-workers love her cheerful personality and her proficiency in making, counting and packing

paper bags made of newspaper and bowls made of indigenous tree leaves. She earns a percentage of the profits from the sale of the bags and bowls, which allows her some self-sufficiency as well as a strong sense of personal value and worth.

At Shalom Home she is a role model for the other girls as they witness her physical, emotional and academic progress. She has a very compassionate heart and shares in the joys and sorrows of her Shalom Home sisters. By the laws of Tamil Nadu state, the age limit for children at the home is 18. Since Manjula is 19 but unable to live independently, she is considered a volunteer staff member so that she can remain at Shalom Home.

Manjula loves being able to go outside after being kept inside her house for so many years. A high point for her is attending church, where she reverently kneels throughout the service and claps her hands during the songs. Manjula's new life since coming into Bethania Kids' care is a shining example of how God continues to work His miracles through this ministry.



Manjula makes, counts and packs bags made of newspaper and bowls made of indigenous tree leaves.



Creative and Fun-Loving Angels

Bethania Kids is blessed to have thousands of angels who support our ministry. We want to share with you just a few of our many angels who continue to amaze us with their creative and fun-loving ways to support Bethania Kids.

Ruth Koch is a very generous woman who uses her many artistic talents for the benefit of Bethania Kids. It began years ago when her daughter encouraged her to start knitting again while she spent hours with her husband as he underwent chemotherapy. She rediscovered the joy it brought her and went on to knit metal jewelry and felt wool, creating exquisitely finished handbags, bowls and scarves. For the past two years she has focused on creating beautiful works of fiber art, donating 100% of the proceeds from her annual sales to Bethania Kids. It brings Ruth joy and fulfillment to be able to pursue her art as a way of helping the children of Bethania Kids. We are deeply grateful for Ruth's continuing support.



St. Andrews Episcopal Church of Kent, CT Sunday School classes adopted Bethania Kids for their Lenten project. By doing chores for members of the congregation, these Sunday School children raised money to be used for new books in our Bethania Kids homes and care centers. Our Bethania Kids children always love new books, and they were very touched and thankful that children in the U.S. worked to raise money just for them.

Zoe Lee, a senior at Oak Hill Christian School in Herndon, VA, organized a 5K Race for students and their families as a fundraiser. Her teacher, Kelly Lawyer, is a long-time SAC donor and visitor to Bethania Kids in India. It was at her recommendation that Zoe contacted our Bethania Kids staff to gather more information about the ministry, which she then shared with her fellow students. This prompted them to designate 100% of the 5K proceeds to Bethania Kids! The students and their parents gathered at 8 am at Burke Lake Park in Fairfax, VA, to learn more about Bethania Kids and then run the race. It was a great time of sharing and fellowship with these wonderful young people.

If you, your church or even your group of friends would like to hold an event in support of Bethania Kids, we have resources available for you. Guidelines for organizing events like the 5K run, a complete guide for holding a church event, Sunday School materials and much more are available. We would love to share what we have!

Call 800-993-5179 or contact Wendy Oesterling at wendy@bethaniakids.org.



Ways to make your gift to Bethania Kids go further

We greatly appreciate all of our donors who make this ministry possible. Here are several ways you can make your donations go even further!

AmazonSmile: Each time you shop at Amazon, 0.05% of your purchase will be donated to Bethania through the AmazonSmile program. The Bethania Foundation has a unique AmazonSmile link that makes it easy for people to find and support our mission: <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/36-3557140>. When you access AmazonSmile this way, you are immediately given the option to set up automatic support for The Bethania Kids Foundation so that you can continue to donate to Bethania each time you shop on Amazon.

Thrivent Choice: All Thrivent clients have access to Thrivent Choice dollars, which can be directed to a charity of your choice. By choosing Bethania Kids, your Choice Dollars, combined with those of other donors, have totaled over \$24,000 this year alone! You can direct your dollars through your account on the Thrivent website or by calling 800-847-4836 and asking to direct your Choice Dollars to Bethania Kids.

Thrivent Gift Matching Programs: If you are a Thrivent employee, you have gift matching opportunities. Thrivent matches 1 to 1 for employees and 2 to 1 for employees who are also on the Bethania Kids Advisory Board. These generous matching opportunities greatly enhance your gifts, particularly if you are a board member.

Employee Gift Matching Programs: Many companies offer gift matching programs. Bethania Kids has benefited greatly from gift matches from Pfizer, GlaxoSmithKline, Freeport-McMoRan, Prudential and others over the years. Your personnel department can provide you with the necessary information.

In Honor of:

Bethania Publications Team
Roz Burger (Birthday)
Victor and Marilyn Gebauer
Marilyn & David Granner & family
Jon Heerboth
The Hennig Family
Rev Lawrence Meinzen
Wendy Oesterling
Lisa Smit
The PerfectConnection
Dorinda Werner
Larry Zimmerman

In Memory of:

Les Bittner
Helen Black
Irene Vivian (Naumann) Cotter
Carol Hagstad Gallo
Norman N Gilbertson
Judy Graham
Doc & Christine Granner
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Gene Hennig
Dr. Martin & Gladys Kretzmann
Dale Lehn
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Rev Gerhard & Nellie Oberheu
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Charles Ransler II
Jothi Soundararajan
Ruth Spray
Hattie Whittington
Jean Alderman Wolfe
Eleanor Zelliott

Giving Tuesday - November 29, 2016

After Black Friday and Cyber Monday, there is Giving Tuesday. This is Bethania Kids' first year to participate in this exciting online fundraising event. Since its beginning in 2012, Giving Tuesday has been a great opportunity for people nationwide to show support for their favorite charities with online giving opportunities. We are thrilled to be involved in Giving Tuesday and hope you will partner with us on this special day. Stay tuned for more information in the coming weeks.



Mark your calendars!

Bethania Kids is a Christian mission bringing wholeness and hope to poor, abandoned and disabled children in India, equipping them to share God's love.

We channel 100% of every penny donated into direct ministry for children.

Bethania Kids is an IRS registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit and benevolent organization.

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We Give Thanks!

Our heartfelt gratitude to The Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML), Chesapeake District, who recently awarded a grant of \$5,000 for Bible study materials for Bethania Kids ministry sites.

All of our homes and care centers share the love of Christ through daily devotions, Bible study, prayer and Christian education. This is our mission: to nurture and equip the children through the love of Christ. Our resourceful staff do a wonderful job of fulfilling this mission without the benefit of adequate Bible study materials, particularly in their local languages. This grant will provide necessary materials and equipment to support the teaching and training of our children.

We are so grateful for LWML's support of God's children in India!



Edi Collis, member of the local LWML group, and Pastor Mark Hricko of the Lutheran Church of St. Andrew, Silver Spring, MD, are pictured presenting the check to Larry Zimmerman, President of Bethania Kids, on Sunday, August 14.