

Seeds on the Wind

NEWS FROM BETHANIA • SPRING 2017



A Year of Celebration

This year we celebrate 30 years of Bethania Kids ministry!

We are filled with gratitude to God for this unique opportunity to save, rescue and redeem desperate, disabled and often forgotten children in India, who would otherwise face a life with little hope or joy.

Thirty years ago as members of the Dhanapal, Granner and Hennig families gathered around a table to find a way to start and fund one home for orphaned and abandoned children in India, could they have imagined that the seeds they were planting would grow into a ministry that served 1,000 children in 18 facilities 30 years later? Bob Granner recalls that the only thing they were really sure of as they began Bethania Kids ministry was that they all felt led by the Holy Spirit to do God's work in India. It is that foundation of trust in God's omnipotent guidance on which the ministry was first built and on which we continue to build today, rising to the needs and challenges while also celebrating the many rewards and successes He has bestowed on our ministry and the thousands of His children we have served.

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Anniversaries provide us the opportunity to review our core mission, examine where our ministry stands today, and determine where God is leading us in the future. In this newsletter Dr. Gnanakan, the CEO of the Bethania Foundation, India, affirms the sustainable value of our mission statement: ***To nurture and equip the children of India to change their lives through Jesus' love.*** Our mission and purpose have served us well through these 30 years. Together, we stepped out in faith to accomplish what we perceived as God's will. That included opening care centers in Kodaikanal when the need was recognized, opening a new home for boys and one for girls after the 2004 tsunami, opening two ministries in the tribal areas of Odisha where the most basic needs of life were not being met and opening a home for boys in Rajahmundry to provide an alternative to life on the streets.

We are confident that God will continue to shine a light on our path and challenge us with more opportunities in the years ahead. Inspired by the profound faith and determination of our founders, we look forward to working together with you to follow where the Holy Spirit leads us in continuing God's work with children in India.

Looking Ahead

We are moving forward, stepping up to meet new challenges, and we want you to come along with us! We are at a very exciting time in Bethania Kids ministry, and the energy and enthusiasm for what is already happening and for what is to come is palpable. Within two weeks of being told funds were available, thanks to two of our very generous donors, the tribal communities in Odisha were clearing ground in Cilpajodi and Dholdholi for their new buildings. Both communities not only are involved in the construction of the new facilities and excited about the wonderful space that will be available for future programs and cultural events but also feel valued because Bethania Kids has proven their worth by making a permanent investment in their lives and futures. We also witnessed the joy and anticipation of the girls from Shalom Home on their first visit to the site of their new home in Batlagundu, where they will have adequate living space, outdoor space for playing and a permanent home. The staff in all our homes and care centers are looking forward to opportunities for additional professional training so they can provide the best care possible for our children. Much-needed computers, media equipment and Bible study materials are just some of the additional improvements already made possible through the funding of our Comprehensive Campaign.

Our mission of nurturing and equipping our children takes on new meaning in this quickly changing world. While our programs have proven success records, to insure our children's success in today's marketplace and technological world, qualitative improvements to our programs are now critical. Education is essential, as every one of our children and their families know. Investment in their educational futures through



scholarships, an educational endowment and vocational training will assure their success and honor their academic potentials.

Over the 30 years of Bethania Kids ministry, countless children, women and families have already broken the cycle of poverty and had their lives transformed. While our staff and trustees in India are the hands and feet that administer our mission, you—our sponsors, donors, churches and supporters—are also critical as it is your support that makes this ministry possible. Together, we will transform the lives of children in India through Jesus' love now and for generations to come.

Given recent news of India's denial of permission for a well-known charitable organization to continue its operations in India, you may be wondering about the future for Bethania Kids. The present government in India, just as ours in the United States, has made changes in its requirements and focus. The conduct of Non-Government Organizations (NGO's) has come under close scrutiny to assure they are conducting themselves according to Indian rules and regulations. Bethania Kids is very proactive in ensuring all of our care centers and resident homes are in compliance with the codes of the Social Welfare laws and maintaining our good status and ability to continue our ministry in India. In fact, Grace Home in Nagercoil was recently asked by the government to accept 11 additional girls from a home that lost its license since they believe the care given in our home is of such quality. In addition, Dayavu Home's status was upgraded to qualify for admission of additional boys. We praise God for so many blessings to celebrate!



Mission Strategy and Implementation

DR. P. JAMES GNANAKAN, CEO & EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, THE BETHANIA FOUNDATION, INDIA

We praise and thank God for the faithfulness of Bethania Kids in its three decades of dedicated service to Indian children who suffer the most deprivation, helping them to develop positively and become self-reliant. Bethania Kids mission statement—“*Nurturing and equipping the children of India to change their world through Jesus’ love*”—is not merely a directive but a mission that has been successfully implemented for 30 years with proven results. The huge child population of India is equivalent to the entire U.S. population and forms half of the Indian population.

India’s first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, stated, “The wisest investment of any nation is to invest in its children since today’s children are tomorrow’s leaders.” His words were actually a contextualized version of the Bible verse from Proverbs 22:6; “Train up a child in the way he should go; when he is old, he will not depart from it.” This ministry has worked hand in hand with the Indian government, both conceptually and concretely, making a beneficial impact on the lives of Indian children, supporting this dimension of the country’s development. Above all, Bethania Kids has been greatly instrumental in extending the kingdom of God through these children.

Holistic development of the child:

Our services for the development of the focal point of our mission—the child—is holistic since our staff caters to the total development of the child using Jesus’ growth and development as our model. Luke 2:52 tells us “Jesus grew in wisdom (intellectual development), stature (physical development), and in favor with God (spiritual development) and of man (social development).” These four dimensions of developmental care are provided in all of our 18 care facilities.



Physical growth and development:

For physical growth, well-cooked healthy and nutritious food is provided to every child. Height and weight records are maintained, confirming that the children are physically growing strong day by day. Playground activities and play equipment facilitate this area of development. Several children under Bethania Kids care are outstanding in their sports and games every year. The medical care we provide helps children to be free from chronic diseases and identifies acute medical problems immediately.



Social growth and development:

Children in Bethania Kids homes and care centers are recognized by their teachers and members of their communities as being more socially engaged with a sense of responsibility and consideration of others. Christian principles such as ‘love thy neighbor as thyself,’ indoor and outdoor games, schools, church, and the guidance of Bethania Kids staff enable the child to grow into a well-mannered socially responsible adult but most especially a loving Christian.



Spiritual growth and development:

There are ample opportunities for the children to grow in the knowledge and love of Christ since His love is the very driving force behind the entire mission of Bethania Kids. This is promoted by several Christian education/nurture activities: daily morning and evening devotions, attending church and Sunday school, visitors preaching the word of God at a child's comprehension level, teaching Christian songs and music, and day-to-day activities of caring and sharing. All of these activities help to mold the child into a loving witness for Christ.



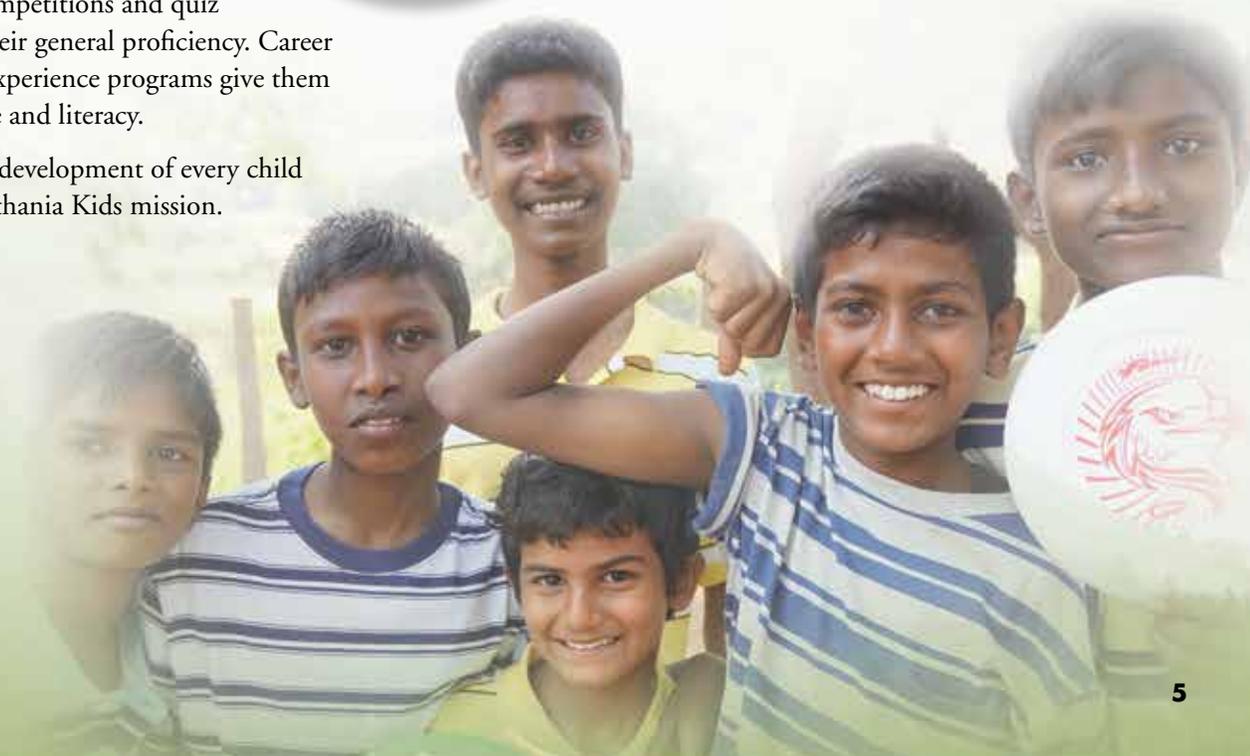
We, the Bethania Foundation, India—children, staff, trustees and the CEO—join together in expressing our deep gratitude to all the donors in North America for generously supporting this wonderful ministry during the past 30 years. Our Bethania Foundation members in India feel blessed to work closely with Bethania Kids in furthering the kingdom of God in India. We will continue to pray for Bethania Kids' President, Board of Directors, contributors and volunteers who play a sacrificial role in strengthening this vital ministry for our children in India.

Intellectual/educational growth and development:

The admission of the children into standard schools, provision of all academic books, daily morning and evening study hours and tutors to help them do their homework and maintain high academic standards all are very beneficial for their intellectual and educational growth. Libraries with information and knowledge in multiple formats, essay writing, elocution competitions and quiz programs build up their general proficiency. Career guidance and work-experience programs give them functional knowledge and literacy.



Thus, the all-around development of every child is the focus of the Bethania Kids mission.



Celebration at Grace Home

It was a joyful day at Grace Home in Nagercoil when five of our girls learned they received scholarships from the government to further their education. These scholarships are awarded to those who achieve greater than 75% on their public examinations. Only 26 girls nationwide (in a country of millions of young girls) were chosen to receive this scholarship. FIVE of them were from Grace Home! We offer our heartfelt congratulations to P. Caroline Princy, F. Freeda Jasmine, S. Iswariya, Y. Steebha Marbi and Baji Mino Seji for their diligence and hard work in their studies and wish them every success as they pursue their chosen fields of higher education.

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Do you like to knit?

At 7000 ft. elevation, it gets very cold and rainy in Kodaikanal, particularly during the months of November and December. One of our board members, Claudia Trautmann, would like to provide knit hats for the 250 children in our Early Childhood Care Centers to keep them warm and healthy. If you like to knit and would like to be a part of this “hands and heart” project, please let Claudia know at claudia@bethaniakids.org.



Thrivent: A Great Friend to Bethania Kids

Thrivent Financial is a financial services organization that helps Christians be wise with money and live generously. For more than a century they've helped their over 2 million member-owners make wise money choices that reflect their values. Thrivent has been very generous to Bethania Kids over the years. In 2016, we received over \$23,000 in outreach funding from Thrivent based on recommendations from Thrivent members who participated in their Thrivent Choice® program. Since January, we have already received over \$4,800. Additionally, we have received over \$40,000 in matching funds from donors who are also Thrivent Financial Employees.

For our donors who request the matching funds and to those Thrivent members who direct Thrivent Choice Dollars®, we are immensely grateful. These funds supplement both our India and operating fund budgets, enabling us to stretch our precious dollars even further.

If you are an eligible Thrivent member with Choice Dollars® available to direct, please consider selecting Bethania Kids, or if you are a Thrivent employee, please consider asking for a match of your donation.

Thank you to all of our donors and to Thrivent Financial. Your support is invaluable in our ministry—changing lives through the love of Jesus!



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 Benjamin David Meier
 Bill Meister
 Clarence & Emma Rittmann

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.

Bethania Kids Administrative Offices

PO Box 2140 • Winchester, VA 22604-1340
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In Celebration of Bethania Kids' 30th Anniversary

Bethania Kids was “born” towards the end of 1987, and therefore we are excited to celebrate our 30th anniversary this year! We are working on a few fun elements to pay tribute to our history as well as inspire us with a vision into the future. The celebration will center around Bethania Kids Anniversary Sunday—to be held in India and North America on September 24, 2017. We are seeking churches that would be willing to feature Bethania Kids during their worship services on this day, perhaps by showing our latest video, hosting a short presentation, or designating offerings.

If your church would be willing to participate, please contact our Director of Development, Wendy Oesterling (wendy@bethaniakids.org).

In addition, save the date for the Gene Hennig Memorial Bethania Kids Benefit! This will be held at the stunning James J. Hill Center in St. Paul, Minnesota on October 13, 2017. The event will feature a silent auction, cocktail reception, keynote speaker, and plenty of entertainment. More information will follow on our Facebook page and through email newsletters. You can also contact board member Kate Teece (kate@bethaniakids.org). It is sure to be a great evening to raise funds and awareness about Bethania Kids while we also remember one of our founders.

