

Seeds on the Wind

NEWS FROM BETHANIA • SUMMER 2009

Dear Friends,

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ. Once again on behalf of the 1,000 plus children and staff of Bethania Kids in India and on behalf of both our Indian and US Boards of Directors, thank you for your love and commitment to the ministry of Bethania Kids. It is a blessing that you have chosen to partner with us in sharing Christ's love and it is our hope that you will be blessed by this publication.

One of my favorite Bethania Kids promises is that our organization channels 100% of every penny donated into direct ministry for children. We are able to keep this promise because of the faithfulness and generosity of our Bethania Kids Advisory Board. Over one hundred members of this board are engaged in a variety of occupations and come from many different states across the country. Individual Advisory Board contributions range from \$500 per year to \$50,000. This board contributes 'work, wealth and wisdom' to our ministry. Members advocate for our ministry in their geographic area; provide wisdom regarding the building of new partnerships with individual families, churches and schools; and, as a group they personally cover all administrative expenses of our foundation. Without the vision of these individuals, we could not keep our promise of 100% ministry-use for all general contributions. Though these individuals seek no publicity or recognition for their zeal, we commend and thank them for what they have allowed God to bestow upon this ministry.

Jesus taught the principal of influence this way, "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house." (Matthew 5:14-15) Truly, our Advisory board is a leading example of this principal in practice within our ministry. In the words of Charles H. Spurgeon, these individuals have been "refreshing to us, cheering to saints, useful to sinners, and honoring to the Savior". In the same way, let us all be "a city set on a hill" giving light to all!

With gratitude for your faithful partnership with us,

Todd Heidelberger, President
Bethania Kids

Help Us Help Kids

We channel 100% of every penny donated into direct ministry for children. How can we do this? Read on!



Bethania Kids

Lighting Some Of The Darkest Corners

A few years ago, the afternoon worn on as a young boy named Parthiban sat in a dark corner of his home. An autistic young man, incapable of caring for himself, Parthiban was lonely as he waited for a family member to return home. His village of Poombarai is one of the oldest tribal villages in Kodaikanal's upper hills region. Because the village is so remote, its people are strongly rooted in ancient Hindu traditions, and families are often suspicious of outsiders, especially Christians.

With no hospital nearby, medical care in this region is primitive at best, and because pre-natal care is lacking, there is a high incidence of cerebral palsy. Local schools have little to offer for disabled children, and most families consider it a waste of time to do anything to help them.

Yet God seems to have shined his light on our path, and has guided us to this remote village. Bethania Kids

has opened a Special School in Poombari for a handful of children challenged by cerebral palsy, mental retardation, and other disabilities. Paramadas, a young missionary familiar with these far-reaching areas,

together with his young wife, Amala, a trained nurse, and Jay Elias, a licensed physical therapist and a graduate of Manipal Medical College, have won the respect and admiration of village leaders not only in Poombarai but also in Mannavanur, Kavunji, Poondi, and other outlying areas of the Kodai Hills.

Because of Jay's medical training, many come to him for help. Though he is licensed as a physical therapist and assigned to work with the Bethania children, he is trained to recognize a wide range of medical conditions: broken limbs, potential heart problems, even tumors that may be malignant. Jay never turns anyone away. When he is faced with a problem beyond his scope, he invariably calls a local clinician or arranges a trip to a nearby hospital for an x-ray or a consultation with a specialist.

Sometimes Jay's approach to such problems is at variance with local community leaders. Kuppeswami is a tribal village soothsayer who said recently to Jay, "Whatever you want to do in our village now, you will succeed!" Jay did not know at first how to respond. This simple man is often called upon to announce a successful pregnancy for a childless couple or to heal an old man's tumor with some magical potion. Yet, in spite of cultural differences, Jay, Paramadas and Amala, along with the other staff have always shown respect and humility toward these tribal people and their traditions. As a result, we are blessed that community leaders have welcomed Bethania care-givers.

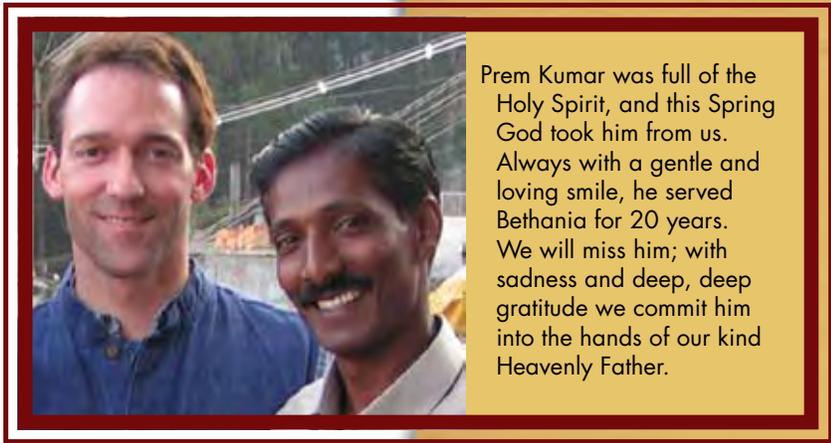
Once, the family of Parthiban had refused to allow their son to come to our Center because they felt ashamed. Now, Parthiban's grandfather proudly walks with the boy to the Bethania Kids Center each morning.



Subash, a five-year-old, severely afflicted with cerebral palsy, was unable to hold his head up straight when he came to our Center two years ago. He wept constantly and his mother was terribly distressed. Now, with daily physical therapy and loving care, Subash is happy and strong! He is very bright and cheerful with his classmates and teachers, always smiling and having fun.

It takes a lot of patience to work and live in such a community. Our Team leaders need not only professional skills, but must also be totally committed to Jesus Christ and put on the armor of faith every day. Paramadas and Amala have dedicated their lives in Christian service. Bible readings, spiritual songs, and celebrations of Christian festivals are essential aspects of the program. Originally coming from Hindu backgrounds, Paramadas and Jay have a particular understanding of the traditions and practices of these tribal villagers. Jay took the name Elias (the Aramaic word for Christ) at his baptism and has become strong in his faith.

Through kindness and humility, our Bethania Kids workers are respected in this strongly Hindu community, and the Holy Spirit is opening many hearts to Christ! So, His light gently and lovingly shines in the darkened corners of this village. As we think of God's grace in the tribal village of Poombari, we are reminded of the words of John's Gospel: "The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it." -John 1:5



David Granner with Prem Kumar

Prem Kumar was full of the Holy Spirit, and this Spring God took him from us. Always with a gentle and loving smile, he served Bethania for 20 years. We will miss him; with sadness and deep, deep gratitude we commit him into the hands of our kind Heavenly Father.

In Honor of:

- Linda Arnoldussen
- Rev Charles & Natalie Beyer
- Carla Claussen
- Karen Contag
- Katherine Nicole DeVries' College Graduation
- David & Marilyn Granner's 22nd Wedding Anniversary
- Ken Gremel
- Fred & Edith Haecker's 52nd Wedding Anniversary
- Bill & Nina Heidelberger's 50th Wedding Anniversary
- Max Heidelberger's High School Graduation
- Polly Hennig
- Lindsay Taylor Morgan's College Graduation
- Ken Pannier's Birthday
- Carol Peterson
- Tatum Smith's Birthday
- Studio Go Kids – Cross of Christ

In Memory of:

- Walter Durr
- Catherine Ebaugh
- Louise Hagen
- Gertrude Johnson
- Bernard Lutzke
- Rev. Luther Meinzen
- Bridget Lucy Winik
- Dr. Harry Wise



Jay Elias gives medical care to a Poombari boy.



Subash



Parthiban



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

100% of your contribution will be used directly for children's ministry in India.

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What Partnership Can Accomplish

We recall with gratitude the impact of two women who shared a common bond of love and devotion to the children in our Bethania Rehabilitation Center in Kodaikanal, South India over the past twenty years. Louise Nelson (*upper left*), an American, and Rajeshree Jayachandran (*below*), an Indian, represent widely divergent backgrounds.

The daughter of Pennsylvania farmers, Louise Nelson was brought up to be self sufficient. She persevered to earn a degree in physical therapy, and spent much of her life in this profession. Staunchly independent, yet always compassionate, Louise brought determination and tenderness together whenever she touched a disabled child.

During the 1990's Louise helped Bethania open our first Rehabilitation Center for children with cerebral palsy and served as a mentor for most of the caregivers who hold leadership roles in the Center to this day.

Despite her social responsibilities as the wife of a prominent South Indian business man, Rajeshree Jayachandran carried on at the Bethania Kids CP Center where Louise left off, sharing her compassion and Christian commitment to disabled children. Together with her husband, Rajeshree worked to expand and to develop this Center as one of the best equipped and professionally advanced facilities of its kind in South India.

Recently over a thousand people gathered for a program featuring the inspiring songs and dances of the forty-five children from Bethania's CP Center and other musical groups. No one noticed the disabilities in any of our talented Bethania Kids with their beaming smiles and bright-eyes. Their joy is made possible because Christians across the globe have had a vision of partnership to change lives through Jesus' love.

Louise and Rajeshree now wear crowns of everlasting life, sitting at the throne of their Lord. Louise passed away at her home near Buffalo, New York, in the Spring of 2008. Rajeshree was taken suddenly this Spring, 2009, after only a brief illness. May we also allow our Lord to channel his love through us, so that we might continue the work of these faithful women--to nurture and care for special-needs children.

