

Seeds on the Wind

NEWS FROM BETHANIA • DECEMBER 2014

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We at Bethania Kids thank you for your partnership in faith and sharing of God's light and love amongst the children of India. This summer I had the privilege of traveling to India to visit our Bethania Kids ministries and found God truly at work in every one of them.

A striking example of Christ's influence was found at Bethania Kids Grace Home in Nagercoil. There, 15 young women who "graduated" from the ministry returned to share their life experiences and love with our current resident girls. Each of the 15 had grown up in our Grace Home. These girls have risen out of the depths of despair and tragic family situations. They had experienced abusive family members and seen parents who died when they were just babies or young girls. Some had seen extreme poverty and suffered cold and hunger. Some lost one or both parents in the 2004 tsunami, and others had seen mothers who died from self-immolation—yet out of the ashes they rise!

While interacting with these young women, it became apparent that they were athletic, creative, intelligent and beautiful in both appearance and, more importantly, in spirit and soul. They now have completed or are in the process of completing their college or technical training. They already were or are now preparing to be nurses, engineers, bankers and tailors.

How had they overcome such difficulty and tragedy in their lives to reach their potential academically and radiate love in their community? From the patient nurturing, tender care and love of Christ fully shared by our Bethania Kids ministry leaders, dedicated caretakers and staff! Christ's love flows abundantly from you to our staff and to the children. "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." John 5:15

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Why did these women come back to Grace Home? Because it was their home! They came back to share their life stories and mentor the girls currently residing at Grace Home. One young woman felt so compelled to give back, she is now sponsoring a child currently living in the home. How fascinating to see our current resident girls flock around these young women who freely shared their life stories and love. These lovely young ladies were like beacons of light reflecting Christ's love to all – in their colleges, in their workplaces, in their communities and with the girls in Grace Home. "As water reflects the face, so one's life reflects the heart." Proverbs 27:19

What a magnificent example of the circle of life; the circle being God's symbol for life and love eternal. Former girls and boys of Bethania Kids ministries coming back to share and show Christ's love which they had received, and that had saved them. How amazing that this is happening throughout all of our Bethania Kids ministries!

Come with us and see what our truly amazing God is doing through Bethania Kids. Partner with us and bring more circles of life to fruition. We pray that God's eternal love spread and encircle all His children in our Bethania Kids ministries as well as the millions of children who still need our love and care. Amen!

Ravi Srinivasan
President



In this newsletter, you will be introduced to three remarkable young children who are currently cared for by our Bethania Kids ministries.

These very personal stories are filled with emotion, heartache—and ultimately joy. They represent the vast number of children who have previously graced our ministry, those who are currently experiencing this ministry, and those who are yet to come to us through our Lord's guiding hand.

When these three children, and many others like them, knew only fear, desperation and hopelessness, Bethania Kids was there for their refuge and protection. Safe, fed, clothed, and enfolded in God's loving and caring arms, they now have a chance to live, to heal and to hope. Through you, God's grace and love have reached each of these children.

*“You are my refuge and strength.
A very present help in trouble.”*

—Psalm 46:1

Bethania Kids “Creative Giving Catalog” is back!

The Bethania Kids “Creative Giving Catalog” is the perfect solution for gift giving to acknowledge those special people in your life, and is available online at <http://bethaniakids.org/creative-giving-catalog/>.

Our catalog is full of creative ideas for unique gifts in honor or memory of your favorite people and loved ones! Gift options include basic needs like food and clothing to sponsoring a child, or a home or school. There is something for everyone. As you contemplate a gift list this year, please consider donating from our “Creative Giving Catalog” today.

Jeyaraj

What happened to Jeyaraj is a heart-breaking story told all too often in India when a widow or widower remarries with the hope of providing a stable family life for themselves and their children.

Jeyaraj's mother died when he was just two months old. His father, a daily manual laborer, did his best to care for Jeyaraj with the help of his relatives. When Jeyaraj was 5 years old his father remarried a widow who had a son of her own. While caring well for her own son, she abused Jeyaraj. When his father was away from home, she physically beat him, left him alone in the house unattended and did not feed him. When it became life threatening for Jeyaraj, his father took him away from his wife and kept him in his work place. He did so until he heard about Bethel Home for Boys and asked if they had a place for Jeyaraj.

Jeyaraj is now an 8 year old 2nd grader. He is very small for his age and his face still reflects the cruelty he suffered. With the love and care provided by the staff at Bethel Home for Boys in Kodaikanal, he is slowly recovering from his physical and psychological traumas. He now has the chance to play and laugh with the other boys, which he missed in the early years of his life. He is a talented young boy, obedient and helpful in his own small ways, and very lovable.

Bethania Kids has taken Jeyaraj under its wings. He is now sheltered and protected so that with God's grace and mercy, he can heal and become whole again.

AS TOLD BY RUBY KUMAR,
BETHEL HOME FOR BOYS, KODAIKANAL





Sorna

“My father used to touch me in a horrible way. He started this when I was 10 years old. I was tense all the time. Many nights my mother wouldn’t sleep properly. My mother cried and was worried about my life. I was afraid of the loneliness. All the time I was in dreadful fear. After coming to Shalom Home for Girls I feel happy. Fear left me. I am not afraid when I am alone. I am able to concentrate on my studies and improve my education. I pray for peace in my family.”

Sorna endured extreme poverty, a father’s alcoholism, physical abuse and sexual molestation. For Sorna, the physical abuse began when she was a baby with her father hitting and kicking her. The sexual molestation began when she was just 10 years old. Her only protector was her mother who was also physically beaten, especially when trying to protect Sorna. She was such a young child experiencing no joy; only abject fear, loneliness and hopelessness.

But God had other plans for Sorna. Today, at 12 years old, she is safe from her father. She sleeps, not in terror, but surrounded by her caring and supportive friends at Bethania Kids Shalom Home for Girls in Kodaikanal. She does not worry about food to eat because she knows she will have three nutritious meals every day. She is able to go to school and study without fear or distraction. She lives in God’s love, embodied in the gentle care and counseling she receives from the staff at Shalom Home. We pray as our Heavenly Father holds Sorna in the palm of His hand, that she will heal completely and thrive in the safety and protection of His care.



Salaith Priya

Salaith Priya is a quiet, composed young lady who came to us from the Kodaikanal area nine years ago. When you see Priya now, you can hardly tell that in her early years, before she came to us, she suffered all types of extensive physical abuse from her father. If I say her name, she will giggle and in the sweetest voice say, “What is it, Amma?”

Priya came to Dayavu Home with her older sister Sathya, and younger brother Pratap. Their father is in and out of jail and no one knows the whereabouts of their mother. The awful memories of being in their home surface now and again, and Priya tells us how her father would be angry and beat the children and their mother. The children would hide in a loft in their one room house, or under their bed as soon as they heard their father coming into the house. There were times when he would find them, hit them with a piece of wood, or worse yet with a burning piece of wood. He broke Priya’s arm when she was about two, and she still has pain in that arm at times. There were days when their mother would borrow rice from the neighbor to make food for the family or ask another kind neighbor for money to buy a bun and tea for dinner.

In 2006, Bethania Kids’ Miss Dency Michael asked if we had room for two girls to remove them from an unstable family situation. We did, so both girls were brought to Bethania Kids Dayavu Home by their grandparents. Both girls had burn marks on their faces and arms. We took them to the local doctor, who prescribed vitamins and an ointment for their faces. The children received counseling at the Christian Fellowship Hospital as well.

Although her parents are alive, Priya calls Bethania Kids Dayavu Home her “home”, since there is truly no home for her to go to. She is a good sport, helping out wherever she can, and doesn’t visibly show signs of sadness when the other girls go home for vacations or when they have visitors. Priya has progressed to 10th grade and wants to become a teacher some day.

Priya was baptized and wants to be confirmed. Psalm 23 has been a source of comfort and joy to her. When I recently commented that her scars were almost all gone, she said, “The ointment the doctor gave, eating good food and receiving loving care has made the scars go away, Amma!” We thank God for the healing that has taken place in Priya’s life and pray that she will continue to be a blessing to others.

PRISCILLA DHANAPAL MOHL
DAYAVU HOME, KANNIVADI



Truly Amazing and Resilient

MICHAEL MORELLI

On a recent mission trip, we visited and worked with many of our Bethania Kids children and staff at a number of our ministry locations in India. While interacting with these beautiful children, we often inquired how they came to be part of our Bethania Kids ministry. Each shared a unique story. We learned directly from some of them that they previously experienced the loss of family and loved ones due to natural disasters, extended illness, death, and divorce. Some endured various forms of physical, mental, emotional and sexual abuse. Others experienced various forms of rejection and abandonment, and still others experienced tremendous fear, isolation and the reality of being discarded and being on their own. Life on the open streets is challenging for anyone, and even more so for a child who has no one to appropriately guide and/or care for them. They were on their own; no one to see if they had food to eat, something to drink, a place to sleep, or that no one would take advantage of them or their unfortunate situation.

I learned of one child's mother who had been seriously ill for an extended period of time. The husband and the father of this child was so completely selfish and indifferent to his spousal and parental responsibilities, that he suggested the mother end everyone's misery and suffering by doing away with herself. While in a deeply saddened and equally dark mental state, this child's mother did just that by way of self-immolation. Most unfortunately, this child viewed her mother's death first

hand and shared that experience with me. One can only imagine the burdens and scars carried by this precious child and others like her. After her mother's death, her father remarried, and her stepmother wanted nothing to do with her. This poor girl was abused in all sorts of ways until she was completely discarded and left to fend for herself on the streets. God have mercy!

These children crave adult attention, kindness and love. They just want to hold your hand, place an arm around you and say: "I like you, and do you like me?" to which our natural reply is: "Of course I do, you are why I am here!"

It is truly amazing to see how resilient children can be. Upon joining our Bethania Kids family, some were initially reluctant to engage anyone, particularly adults. But our other Bethania Kids children will not allow these precious souls to remain detached. Instead, they wrap themselves in the Christ-like loving kindness they learned from our dedicated staff, and reach out to their new brother or sister. They make sure this child is comfortable, share their own life experiences so he or she knows they too walked this terrible path of loss and abuse, and they too understand!

The laughter, energy, obvious joy and love these children shared with us and one another touched us profoundly. We cried each time we departed a ministry location. In just a few short hours, we truly connected with these precious children—deeply and completely—through Jesus' remarkable love!





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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

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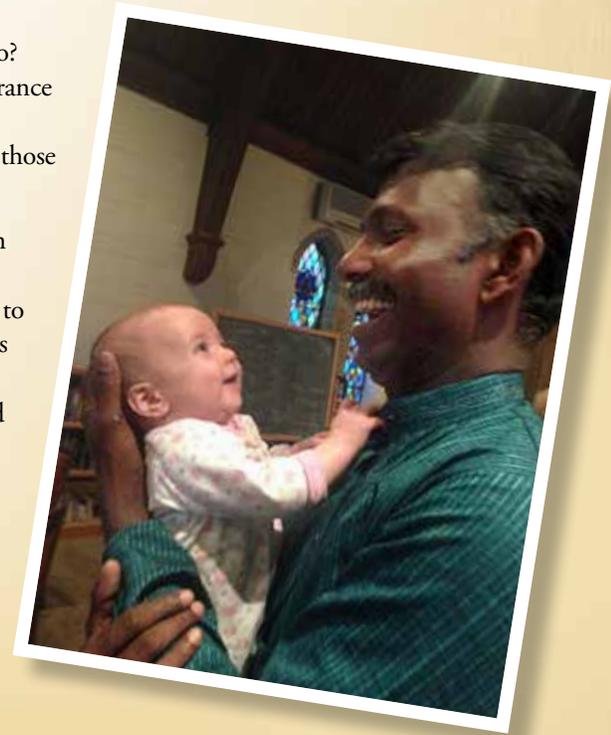
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Children Are So Vulnerable

If you saw a small child sitting alone in a cold, snowy parking lot, what could you do? The child would be very cold... would need warmth and protection, food, and assurance of safety. Ultimately, he would need a place to sleep, clothing, medical attention, education, and a community in which to belong. The needs of this child are exactly those of each of our Bethania Kids children.

Paramadass is a Spirit-filled worker with our children suffering from cerebral palsy in the upper hills of South India's western ghats. He ministers in the small town of Poombari; however, this September and October, he traveled from Washington DC to Los Angeles, speaking at over 40 venues, in a Tour of Love For Children. Paramadass says, "We are a great team that our loving God is putting together! What a joy to bring the love of all our Bethania Kids children to our wonderful church pastors and supporters in the United States! Thank you my dear brothers and sisters."

Tour director Hans Granner, says, "I have been to India one time in my life, when I was 12 years old—the exact time of the 2004 tsunami. I'm now 23 years old and what a joy it's been to travel with Paramadass and share the Bethania Kids story across the United States. We are asking our Lord to help us find sponsors for every one of our Bethania Kids children right now. Not long ago I was a child and needed someone to care for me—what a blessing I had a home and parents. Children are so vulnerable! Please help us reach our goal by sponsoring a child today. Together, we are truly changing the world through Jesus' love!"



Bethania Kids is registered with the Combined Federal Campaign!

This year, Bethania Kids registered with the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) which is a donation method for Federal workers nationwide to donate to their favorite charities through payroll deductions. If you are a Federal worker, or know someone who is, please check us out at: http://www.cfctoday.org/_root/index.php?content_id=5182. Once you locate your local campaign, you can donate through payroll deductions directly to Bethania Kids. Our CFC number is: 85433

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