

Seeds on the Wind

NEWS FROM BETHANIA KIDS • SUMMER 2020

Hold Hands with the Bethania Kids in India

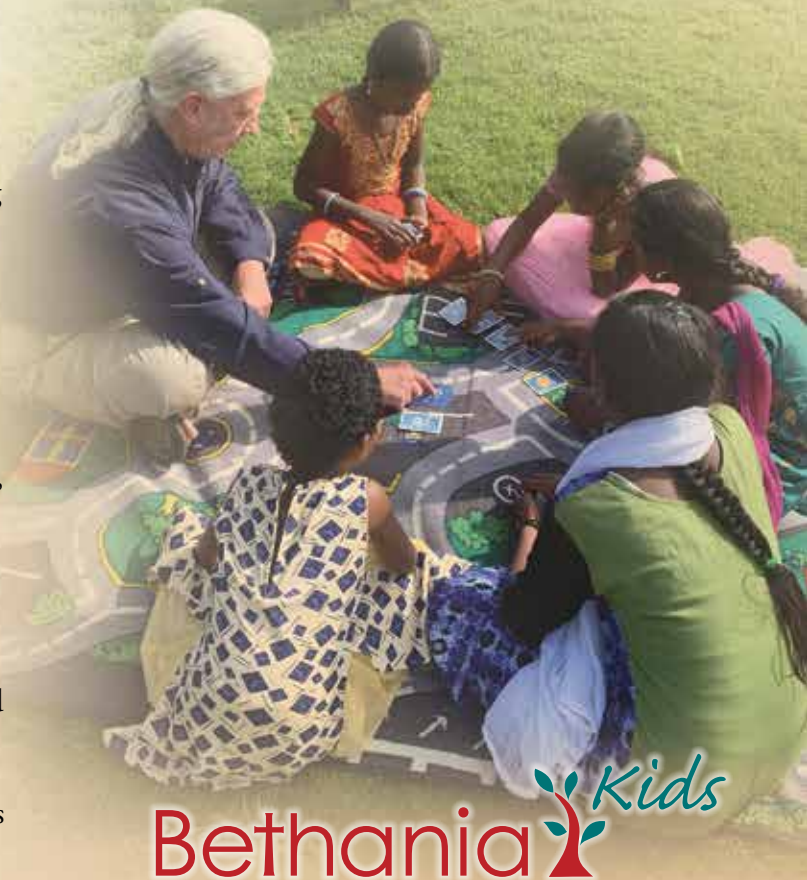
WRITTEN BY LARRY ZIMMERMAN

The world is changing faster than any of us could have anticipated, and so it is with Bethania Kids (BK). In February, my wife, Susan, and I traveled to India with friends Barbara and Jeffrey Wahlbrink. We spent much of our time visiting BK homes, care centers, special schools and women's programs. At every stop, we experienced the love of Christ, for which Bethania Kids is known. Later, we attended the Women's Health Conference in Kodaikanal, then participated in the dedication of the Annapoorani Tailoring and Embroidery Centre, a new Women's Empowerment Program (WEP) at Dayavu Home. Finally, we visited the site of the New Shalom Home in Batlagundu, which is gradually rising out of the ground. Praise the Lord!

When we returned to the U.S. at the beginning of March, we were confronted with COVID-19! Suddenly the world was turned upside down. In mid-March, we received reports of the first cases in India. Densely populated, India has many poor people living in makeshift housing with bad ventilation, lacking resources to isolate themselves from exposure. The health care systems have limited emergency care and health care workers, posing a major challenge.

The Indian Government took bold steps to combat the virus, ordering people to stay at home and shutting down trains, buses, major businesses, schools, and all hostels (including our homes). Each of the four Bethania Kids residence homes was directed to send the children to the home of any known relative or neighbor who could care for them temporarily. A few children who have no known relatives remain at each home. Our care centers and WEPs are also closed temporarily until the pandemic is over. Thankfully, our devoted staff are monitoring the safety and health of the children weekly and providing nutritional meals

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Bethania Kids

(Continued from cover)

and other support to them when possible. As of the end of May, there are no known cases among our Bethania Kids family.

The national government has now approached companies and non-profit organizations seeking support to fight the pandemic, including distribution of personal protective equipment and temporary use of project sites as hospitals and food distribution centers. Recently, Grace Home was selected as a potential hospital. We await further communication from local government offices.

The Bethania Foundation in India and Bethania Kids in North America have agreed to continue the salaries of our staff in India for their financial support while they do their best to serve our children and their families from a distance.

We are HOLDING THE HANDS OF THOSE IN GREAT NEED! If you would like to join us in prayer for the Bethania Kids family, please send your prayers to Larry Zimmerman at larry@bethaniakids.org, who will forward them to India. Since Easter we have been sending and receiving prayers to and from our brothers and sisters in India, and we hope to continue assuring them of our strong support for this vital ministry, even in the midst of this pandemic.



A Lifetime of Good Health for Women

Inspired by Board member Dr. Ernest Hahn in 2018, Bethania Kids began to offer information seminars to benefit Bethania Kids staff, children, and communities. The first seminar in 2018 focused on mental health, which was especially important as many of our Bethania children and staff have suffered trauma in their lives. This year's seminar on February 21 and 22 was entitled "A Lifetime of Good Health for Women." It was spearheaded by Board member Dr. Kristin DeHaven, a gynecologist from Virginia. She advocated for the topic of women's health as this subject is rarely discussed in India.

The seminar participants included members of the Bethania Kids staff, women from Kodaikanal (community and WEP participants), and girls from Shalom Home. In addition to Dr. DeHaven, the presenters included Dr. Hahn (Canada), Dr. Chris Meinzen (Colorado), Dr. Ruby Samuel (Nagercoil), Dr. Isaac David (Kodaikanal), and Selva Saroja (Counselor and director of Grace Home in Nagercoil). Other participants were Dr. Gnanakan (CEO) and Board of Trustee members Dency Michael, Josephine Selvan, and Ruby Kumar.

Each day, Dr. Gnanakan opened the seminar with a devotion, reading the Bible story of the woman who had suffered 12 years from a hemorrhage and was healed by Jesus when she touched His robe. Thus, attendees were reminded of the special compassion Jesus showed toward women with afflictions.

On Day 1, both the morning and afternoon sessions were attended by staff from Bethania Kids homes and care centers located primarily in Kodaikanal. A nice surprise came when all 48 staff members arrived wearing matching saris. Dr. DeHaven spoke about female issues, including medical treatments for common problems. The staff members listened attentively and asked many questions after her talk. The afternoon session included more information from Dr. DeHaven as well as presentations from Selva Saroja on emotional/spiritual health, Dr. Hahn on nutrition and hypertension, and Dr. Meinzen on strokes and heart attacks.

On Day 2, the morning session was attended by women from the Kodaikanal community, who were very engaged in discussions on women's health and broader medical topics presented by Drs. Hahn, Meinzen and Isaac. The afternoon session was attended by 30 girls from Shalom Home. Dr. DeHaven spoke about puberty and other women's issues, emphasizing the importance of consent for any sexual activity. Selva Saroja then spoke about emotional and spiritual health, followed by brief talks on general health by Drs. Hahn and Meinzen.

The program ended with the girls from Shalom Home performing dances, singing, playing instruments, and sharing memorized Bible verses and even a testimony. Dr. Meinzen reported that he felt this "talent show" was a marvelous expression of thanks from the girls which truly glorified God.



Dedication of Sixth Women's Empowerment Program

There was much joy and excitement on February 25 at the dedication of the new "Annapoorani Tailoring and Embroidery Centre" at Dayavu Home. This new Women's Empowerment Program (WEP) was made possible through a grant funded by Rajesh Subramaniam and Kraig and Beth Olejniczak in honor of the strong, influential women in their lives. Rajesh was inspired by his mother, Mrs. Annapoorani, and Kraig was inspired by his grandmother, Margaret Olejniczak. Rajesh has known Kraig and Beth since university days, and they have become enthusiastic supporters of the Bethania Kids ministry. When the Bethania Kids Foundation approached them about potentially funding a grant to create a new WEP and upgrade the other five WEPs, the Subramaniam and Olejniczak families were happy to do so. With wholehearted support from Dr. Gnanakan and the Board of Trustees, things came together quickly. The manager of Dayavu Home, Eduman Isaac, prepared an operating plan and remodeled space for a bright and cheery WEP facility. Mrs. Kasthuri was hired as the manager and teacher, equipment was installed, and 16 women from the community were selected as the first students.

Just as the initiative for this WEP was inspired by strong and influential women, it will in turn positively influence this generation of women and ultimately generations to come. We extend our sincere gratitude to the Subramaniam and Olejniczak families for a gift that will bring great honor to the memories of Annapoorani and Margaret.



WELCOME



In Honor of

Judy Fogle
Naomi Joy Granner
Bob Granner
Charu Jain
Beth Kroger
Lebanon Lutheran Church
Claire Wehrman Meinzen
Wendy Oesterling
Lisa Smit
Ravi Srinivasan
The dedicated staff of
Bethania Kids in India
Larry Zimmerman
Susan & Larry Zimmerman

In Memory of

Helen Campbell Graham
Glen Childs
Marian Etzler Stup
Gene Hennig
Mary Oesterling
Eruch Parbhoo
Mary Kay Parnell
Jess and Jeanne Skimin
Charles R. Stup

Sponsor-A-Child Highlight

We are ever grateful to our child sponsors who have continued their support during this pandemic. We are maintaining relationships with the children and eagerly await the day that they can return to our homes and care centers. Whenever possible, Bethania Kids staff visit the children who are cared for by nearby relatives.

One such child is 12-year-old Abhilash from Angel Home in Rajahmundry, who has had to return to a difficult family situation. After his mother died several years ago, his father was not able to care for him, so Abhilash was very grateful to be accepted at Angel Home. He is now restricted to the small house of his father, who has lost his job. Even with government assistance, there is not enough food to eat. Although he's a very smart boy, without guidance he struggles to do any school work during this time. After his morning devotions and household chores, he spends most of his time watching TV and playing board games by himself. Being very anxious to return to his "brothers" and kind caretakers at Angel Home, he prays for an early cure for COVID-19. ***Your gifts to Bethania Kids have made a substantial difference in his life. Thank you for your faithful support.***



Abhilash, 12-year-old, Angel Home in Rajahmundry

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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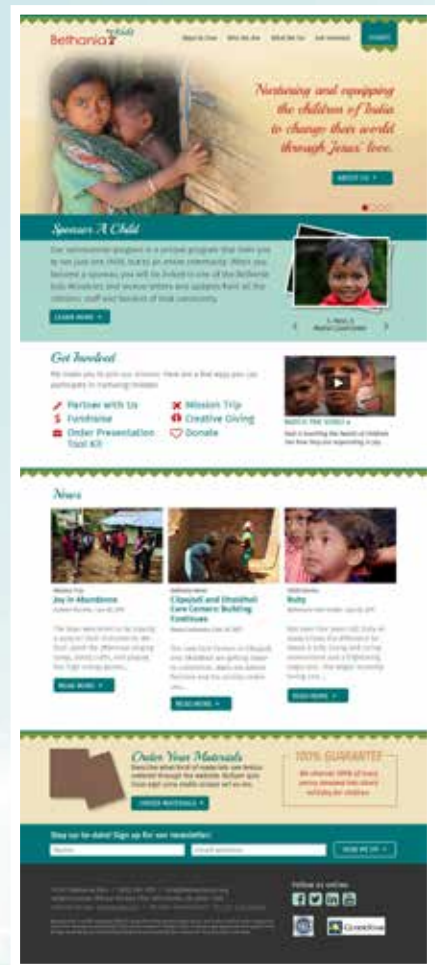
Call to Action: Help us Multiply the Ministry

For over 30 years, Bethania Kids has upheld a promise to send 100% of general donations to our ministry for children in India. The U.S. administrative and fundraising costs have been covered by the Board of Directors and Board of Advisors, whose gifts effectively “multiply the ministry.” While it is indeed wonderful to donate directly to the children’s basic needs, we also recognize the importance of spreading the Bethania Kids story to our faithful donors and beyond. Although we strive to keep such costs to a minimum (e.g., we have no brick and mortar office and benefit from board members who volunteer many hours of their time), we are currently facing a critical need for donations to the U.S. Operating Fund.

In particular, our Bethania Kids website is long overdue for an upgrade. *An improved website will make it easier for us to keep you up to date on current news and needs, have greater appeal to donors of all ages, and make it easier to access our website from either a computer or a cell phone. We expect to need \$8,000 for this project.*

Would you consider donating to our website upgrade fund? You may indicate “BK website upgrade” on the memo line of your check or you can visit our website at www.bethaniakids.org, click on the “multiply the ministry” photo and then scroll down and select “website upgrade” in the designation field.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements to our website? We’d love to hear from you! Feel free to contact Wendy, our director of development, at wendy@bethaniakids.org or (800) 993-5179.



Preliminary design for the new website home page