

Seeds on the Wind

NEWS FROM BETHANIA KIDS • FALL 2023

A Greeting from the President

Dear friends,

I think we'd all agree that every child deserves to grow up having their basic needs met—not only having sufficient food, clothing and shelter, but also knowing they're valued, loved, and worthy of a bright future.

Millions of children across the globe are living in extreme poverty where these basic needs are not being met, and India is no exception. This can have a devastating effect on their overall health and well-being as studies show that development of the body and mind becomes significantly stunted when children endure long-term deprivation of their basic needs.

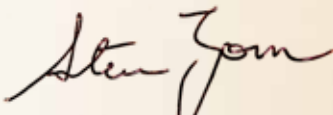
This is where Bethania Kids comes in! When a child comes to us, whether it's through a residence home, care center, or any of our other ministry sites, we take a holistic approach to the loving care they receive. This means we recognize the connectedness of mind, body and spirit, and we work to ensure their overall growth and development. Our dedicated India staff takes great care with our precious children's physical, personal, social, emotional and spiritual well-being.

Community partners enrich the lives of the children we serve. Our India staff recognizes that in addition to the loving care we provide, God also blesses our children through partnering connections within the local communities. Local church leaders and congregations are among these partners, giving our children a strong connection to their local faith communities while also providing excellent pastoral role models.

When you make a financial gift to Bethania Kids, you are investing in the power of God's love to transform the lives of these precious children.

In this issue of Seeds on the Wind, we present highlights of two programs offered through these community partners—a recent Vacation Bible School program as well as a staff training and development opportunity. As you read about the wonderful things the Lord is doing through Bethania Kids, I'm asking you to prayerfully consider a donation to support the work of our hands. Big or small, your gift goes a long way to furthering our mission to offer a brighter future for “the least of these.”

In His Service,



Steve Zorn, President



P.S. You can also make a gift online at www.bethaniakids.org/donate.

Bethania Kids

Vacation Bible School

One beautiful example of how Bethania Kids works together with community partners took place in the recent summer Vacation Bible School (VBS) programs given for children across our ministry sites. VBS supports the faith of our children while also promoting what Bethania Foundation India leadership calls “personality growth” through singing, dancing, storytelling, drama, and acting. Specially trained teachers led the programs for the children of our homes, while local pastors presented the material at our care centers. Together we reached an impressive 215 children in our day care programs located in Kodaikanal alone!

This was the first year that VBS was held at Shalom Home in Batlagundu, and by all accounts, it was very successful. The theme was “He Looked at Jesus,” featuring the story of Zacchaeus being blessed by Jesus’ invitation to join him.\

At Grace Home in Nagercoil there were six days of VBS. The theme was “The Blessed Generation,” which focused on the Beatitudes. A fun online segment took the children virtually to places mentioned in the Bible. The program also included a puppet show, crafts, story time, and memory verses.

Boys from Angel Home attended VBS at St. Peter’s Lutheran Church in Rajahmundry. They learned important teachings from the Bible as well as practical guidance on living a life of service, love, and compassion. The children enjoyed the singing, dancing, devotional messages, and missionary stories. All expressed joy and gratitude for the opportunity to attend.

Sixty to seventy children attended VBS at the Cilpajodi Child and Mother Care Centre in early June. This year’s theme was “Faith and Passion of God.” Each day’s lesson used a clothing metaphor and a related Bible truth (e.g., through his sacrifice, Jesus covers us with the garment of salvation). The children memorized key Scripture passages and learned songs of faith. At the end, the children received a special gift—a bonus reward for them!



Equipping the Staff

A distinctive hallmark of Bethania Kids is our continuing commitment to excellence in the care and education of our children. Because of that, the Bethania Foundation India leader, Dr. Gnanakan, organized a comprehensive staff training program during summer break. All childcare workers except the domestic staff were required to attend a ten-day staff refresher course from May 10th to 20th at Shalom Home in Batlagundu.

A concerted effort was made to partner with local organizations or individuals with expertise in the featured topics, who served as guest speakers or trainers. For example, the local Indian Red Cross taught first aid to the staff participants at the beginning of each day. A wide variety of topics was covered during the course, including educational psychology, personality development, vocational guidance, and communications.



Mrs. Florence Kodimalar, a staff member who attended the staff refresher course, wrote a glowing review of her experience. Here are some excerpts from her testimony:



It was very useful for me. I had a wonderful opportunity [to learn] about first aid, wound care, providing CPR, and care of injured patients with stretchers. It was a once-in-a-lifetime chance.

Through the session "Children's Ministry in New Normal," I learned the importance of educating children according to their age and how to engage them with creative activities.

The SWOT Analysis helped me discover my strengths [and] weaknesses and gain general knowledge and grow.

Spiritually I experienced a clear guidance that I [must] not only read the word of God but show it through my deeds when I care for the children, when I talk with them and teach them.

It is our fervent hope and prayer that the seeds sown in our staff during this course will continue to produce abundant fruit in the lives of the precious children we serve.

In Honor Of

Harlan
Steybi Benitez
Tristen Benitez
Ernie Hahn
Roland & Mary Helen Miller
Rex & Helen Ritchie
Finley Stemmler
Beckette Stemmler
Keira Swientoniowski
Blake Swientoniowski
Larry Zimmerman
Larry & Susan Zimmerman
Steve Zorn

In Memory Of

Glen Childs
Al Doermann
Marian Etzler Stup
Rev. Donald Finnan
Rev. Dr. Ernest Hahn
Al & Polly Hennig
Gene Hennig
Mark Hennig
Robert Hennig
Rev. Larry Meinzen
Adrian O'Connor
Jon Pankake
Jeevan Paul
Anita Trautmann



Nurturing and equipping the children and women of India to change their world through Jesus' love.

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

Bethania Kids Administrative Offices

PO Box 2140 • Winchester, VA 22604-1340

Phone (540) 450-2729/(800) 993-5179

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Final Day Celebrations

*Bless the Lord, O my soul,
O my soul, worship His holy Name.
Sing like never before, O my soul.
I'll worship Your holy Name.*

“Bless the Lord, Oh My Soul” by Matt Redman is an appropriate song of praise chosen for the Final Day Celebration at Bethania Kids day care centers, where kindergarten children proudly graduated into the 1st grade and public school education. Here we see children sharing what they have learned throughout the year in a colorful display of recitation, action songs, dance, and costumes that mark this very special occasion in their young lives. They are obviously having a good time, passing around the microphone and doing their best to perform well. A certificate and medal ceremony reinforces their success and encourages them to return to their home communities for a summer full of spreading grace.

Watching these children flourish brings joy to the heart of every parent, teacher, and supporter connected with Bethania Kids. Thank you, valued donors, for bringing another year of education and hope to “the least of these!”



Exciting News!



Bethania Kids is proud to announce that our strong fiscal management and proven commitment to accountability and transparency have earned a **4-star, 100/100 rating from Charity Navigator**, America's largest and most-utilized independent charity evaluator.

Four stars is the highest rating that can be awarded, and this score designates Bethania Kids as an official “Give with Confidence” charity, indicating that our organization is using its donations effectively and ethically based on Charity Navigator's strict criteria.

Go to bethaniakids.org/donate or return a check with the enclosed envelope. Thank you for your generosity!

