

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

Gilgal Gospel Mission
Preaching Christ & Planting Churches since 1974

The fiftieth year will be a Jubilee year for you... Leviticus 25:11

Ministering through Multimedia

Churches and Christian organizations around the world have begun to embrace ways of carrying out the work of ministry through various media. The ministry of Gilgal Gospel Mission (GGM) is no exception. Our media ministry team came together at the beginning of COVID in 2020 and since then has played a crucial role in reaching broad audiences and transcending geographical boundaries. Our use of social media has also provided the means to minister with younger generations.

At the outset, like many Christian organizations, our communications were limited to phone calls and face-to-face meetings. With the advancement of technology, we began to make use of social media like Facebook, WhatsApp, and Skype. During COVID, when in person gatherings and communications were prohibited by government enforced lockdowns, we had to get even more creative. Like many around the world, Zoom meetings and live streaming became the norm for church services, special events, and ways of communicating the gospel to the people with whom we minister. YouTube was yet another unanticipated way in which we began to share the gospel message in an online space. To our surprise and joy, developing content and sharing it on online platforms has expanded our outreach and impact. (Continued on Page 2)

Hybrid Worship Service



President's Message

***The little one shall become a thousand,
and the small one a strong nation;
I, Jehovah, will hasten it in its time.
Isaiah 60:22***

GGM's 50-year journey is a testimony to God's faithfulness. The impact of this ministry is evident in the many thousands of people who have experienced the love of Jesus through GGM. This ministry began with a young newlywed couple in 1974 who took the vision of Preaching Christ and Planting Churches with boldness, courage, and determination to reach the unreached of Indian society.

Five years after its birth, in 1979, GGM was formally registered. Thirty years later in 2009, the Founder of GGM, Rev. Dr. Chelliah Russelliah passed away. Between 1979 and 2009, though he experienced sickness and disease, Rev. Dr. Chelliah Russelliah persevered against all odds. During this timeframe, over 15 churches were planted and established, several hundred seminarians graduated, and more than 250 people were baptized.

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Congregation members join worship in person and online

Ministering through Multimedia continued....

The media ministry team consists of a dedicated team of five volunteers who are both seminary students and the young adult children of GGM missionaries. Divine Kuruvila is the daughter of Pastor Kuruvila Mathai who serves at the Ashok Nagar church. Divine has coordinated the media ministry team since its inception. Senior seminary student Adwin Samuvel (BD 4th year) has also served on the team for the past three years. Divine and Adwin are joined by additional seminary students Berlin (B.Th 1st year), Rajkumar (B.Th. 1st year) and Kalidas (B.Th. 1st year). This team coordinates other volunteers such as seminary faculty who preach in a recurring English language web-based sermon series, and staff and missionaries who preach and teach in a Tamil language sermon series, and in children’s ministry episodes. Seminary students receive scholarships for the work they do in the media ministry. In addition to financial assistance, this experience also prepares them for their future ministries which will continue to rely on the use of multimedia.

As we celebrate the past 50 years and look forward to the next 50 years, we are grateful for innovative, and creative ways of doing mission work. The use of multimedia significantly extends the reach of God’s word to the over one billion people in India. We are excited about the new and creative ways the media ministry will continue to minister.



President Sunil recording for a sermon series.

President’s Message continued...

In the year 2020, after Christobel’s retirement and during the pandemic, Thehil and I took up leadership of GGM. We continue to be supported by our family, Thephil and Chris Roby, and the GGM India and GGM America Board of Directors. Together we continue to lead this ministry forward. It has been our great pleasure to serve for the past 4 years. We are so happy to be celebrating 50 years of ministry, and we look forward to the years to come. We thank all our friends and partners, many of whom have stood with GGM from the beginning or have joined us somewhere along the way. We thank God for your constant encouragement, prayers and support. None of this would be possible without every individual, family, and church that continues to believe in the vision of Preaching Christ and Planting Churches in unreached parts of India. Thank you for continuing this journey with us.

But by the grace of God, I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain, but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. 1 Corinthians 15:10.

Rev. Sunil Singh Nallathambi
President

Multi-Generational Leadership and Ministry Impact

One of the most endearing aspects of GGM ministries is its multi-generational leadership and impact. Not only did the founders of GGM, Rev. Dr. Chelliah Russelliah and Christobel K. Russelliah, pass on leadership of the ministry to their son-in-law Rev. Sunil Singh and daughter, Thehil Russelliah Singh, we also see this passion and desire to carry on the GGM vision over multiple generations in various parts of the ministry as well.

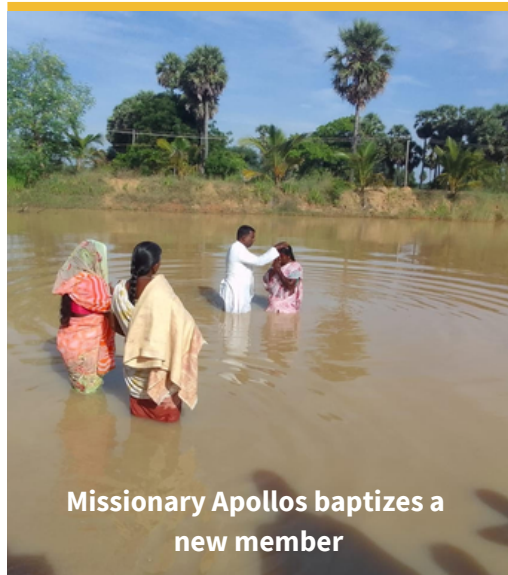


In GGM's Indian Missionary Church (IMC), children from the churches of Chengiagaram and Harichandrapuram who once attended Sunday school, and faithfully came to the Children's Rally year after year, and then taught Sunday school and provided after school tutoring services as teenagers, now serve as elders and provide leadership to their congregations alongside the pastor. Now, these adult members testify to the nurturing environment of GGM churches in which they were raised and how it instilled in them a desire to continue serving in ministry. Several of them now serve as Sunday School and Youth Group Coordinators. Their continued involvement is a testimony to the lasting influence of GGM's early efforts in these communities.

We see similar multi-generational leadership and impact at GGM's Indian Theological Seminary (ITS). Alumni of the seminary, who were once students themselves, are now instrumental in guiding the next generation. Notable examples include Jason and Silvia, who were brought to ITS by alumni Chandran (Class of 2003), and Lalramnghak (Class of 2000). Our alumni's commitment to passing on the torch reflects the deep-rooted connection they maintain with GGM and ITS.

Another noteworthy example is Jacob, who along with his wife Blessy, serves as caregiver at the Children's Home. Jacob also serves as missionary at the GGM church in Kollumedu. Jacob was raised at the Children's Home, attended ITS for seminary, and now is an important member of the staff team. We are so grateful for his continued passion for carrying out the vision instilled in him at a young age.

These examples highlight the multi-generational impact of GGM, where those who were involved as children or the children of those initially involved have grown into leaders who continue to contribute to the mission, ensuring that its legacy endures and expands.



How Has Mission Work Changed? Ministering with a 21st Century India

The vision and mission of Gilgal Gospel Mission (GGM), to Preach Christ and Plant Churches, has remained unchanged for the past 50 years. However, how we do the mission work, and the approaches used to reach the unreached continue to evolve. This growth reflects a response to the needs within the communities we serve, especially regarding the ministries of Indian Missionary Church (IMC) and Indian Theological Seminary (ITS).

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Area Coordinator David Raj
leads worship

GGM's IMC missionaries serve in various rural contexts. They understand the local culture and speak the language. This cultural familiarity allows them to connect quickly and deeply with village communities. Despite the sacrifices involved, such as living in remote areas and adapting to sometimes unfamiliar local customs, these missionary families are dedicated to serving Christ. Their efforts have led to numerous baptisms and the growth of new congregations. With mission work now extending beyond the outskirts of the city of Chennai to include more remote parts of Tamil Nadu, and neighboring states like Telangana, and Orissa, the needs of both administering these churches and innovating new ways of doing mission work have grown.

To meet these needs, one significant change to the way we do missions is the introduction of Area Coordinators. Area Coordinators are senior missionaries who provide leadership, guidance, and mentorship to more junior missionaries within a geographical cluster of mission centers. These coordinators visit the mission centers more frequently than Sunil can do on his own and provide guidance to more junior missionaries in addressing day-to-day concerns. They also gather the missionaries in each cluster for monthly small group prayers and meetings to make plans for shared events, and other ways in which the various churches and church plants can collaborate. We have seen an increase in missionary morale, and creativity in doing mission work together, because of the work of the Area Coordinators.

Another area that new ways of doing mission have been introduced is GGM's Indian Theological Seminary. ITS has always served as the backbone of the church planting ministry. ITS students are charged with establishing a congregation before graduating. They typically do this by engaging in weekend ministry at an assigned village. They also work closely with missionaries and church members, participating in annual Gospel Campaigns that provide hands-on experience in rural ministry. These experiences equip students with practical skills and deepen their commitment to missions.

In more recent times, ITS has begun offering various extension and online programs. Over the past several years, various members of our rural churches have assisted missionaries and seminary students in ministry activities. As a result, ITS introduced several certificate and short-term distance and online programs for congregation members interested in receiving basic theological education. This has enabled us to recruit lay leaders and train them for mission work too. We have seen an increase in participation and attendance of village communities after providing basic training to lay ministers. Mission work is even more effective when missionaries, seminary students, and congregations work together to reach the unreached.

These are only two examples of the ways in which GGM has grown and innovated how we do missions today. We look forward to another 50 years of growing and responding to the needs of the communities we serve, as we seek to Preach Christ and Plant Churches with the unreached.



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