



GGMessenger

Fall 2021

Gilgal Gospel Mission: Preaching Christ and Planting Churches in India since 1974.



Arundathipalayam village

Preaching, Prayer, and Patience Planting Churches

GGM missionaries are encouraged to “Preach the Word; be ready in season and out of season” (2 Tim. 4:2) and they have been asked to reimagine how we fulfill our vision of Preaching Christ and Planting Churches. In earnest, our missionaries are reaching neighbouring villages who have not yet heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We want to share about three of these villages.

The Odaikandigai and Senter Villages are less than 5 miles from our Chengiagaram Church with about 60 families and 88 families respectively. They are from the Irullar caste community which is associated with snakes as a source of food, oil, and other material resources. Their typical diet also includes rats, squirrels, cranes, and other birds. In the caste system, Irullars are identified as Dalits and considered inferior by mainstream Indian society. Income sources are snake catching, woodcutting, and “100 a day” manual work, a state government initiative for the rural working class, doing street cleaning, sanitation work, and other manual labor jobs. Workers receive 100 rupees

per day (\$1.35) for 5-8 hours of work. Neither village has a school, church, hospital, or shops so villagers walk or use a bicycle or motorbike to travel 3 miles for these services. Ninety percent of people have only a primary education and youth are often addicted to ganga and other drugs. Extra-marital affairs are common, and alcoholism is rampant. The people of Odaikandigai and Senter have little or no exposure to church or the teachings of Jesus.

Reverend Appollos, GGM’s Chengiagaram Church missionary, has visited both villages since December 2020 to learn the culture and lifestyle. At Senter, several people have been responsive to the gospel message but are afraid to travel to the Chengiagaram Church for fear of being labelled “Christian” by the local village council and losing their government benefits. They said that if a church were built in their village, with the approval of the village council, they could participate in activities more freely.

God’s glory is evidenced by His taking what is small to this world and slowly growing it into something astonishing by His power (Matt. 13:31–32). Evangelism requires a patient labor by faith, trusting God knows how to spread and protect the gospel.

The Arundathipalayam village is 6 miles from GGM’s Ashok Nagar Church with about 45 families from the Adhidraavidar caste community. Most are agricultural or manual labor workers. Many are illiterate and the population is older. Many villagers struggle with alcoholism. There is no Christian church in this locality. Missionaries and seminary students have ministered in this village off and on for almost 18 years. More recently, Missionary Kuruvila Mathai and members of the Ashok Nagar Church established a weekly children’s Sunday school. Twenty-five children gather to read bible stories, learn bible verses, and sing Christian songs. The children are excited about these gatherings and their families have reported that this fellowship has been a blessing. Praise God, many people have expressed a desire for a church to be planted in the community.

WE LABOR IN PLACES that desperately need a gospel witness. Pray with us as we seek to walk in the power of God and build relationships with villagers. It is our prayer to start Sunday schools and congregations, provide tutoring for children, adult literacy programs, conduct medical camps and continue serving the spiritual and material needs of these communities. Our hope is that God will make a way to build churches in these villages to preach Christ to generations to come. Donation information is available at www.gilgalgospel.org/donate



Seminary Scholarships Yield Fruit

Students Sow Seeds of Faith

Martyn Ranjan Kumar

A first fruit at age 14, Martyn Ranjan Kumar became the first Christian in his village of 600 Hindus. The Word of God came to his village in 2015 by an evangelist with an offer to tutor children. Martyn believed on the Lord Jesus Christ and matured under his pastor's teaching. Martyn's mother, father and 4 siblings were Hindus, and he recalls praying that God would open their eyes from darkness to light that they may receive forgiveness of sins (Acts 26:19). Three years of prayer perseverance and God granted belief to his whole family. For years, they were the only Christians in the village and, while there was no violence, they were ostracized from weddings and other social events. The pastor was no longer allowed to pray in the village, but the Word of God could not be bound (2 Timothy 2:9). Today, 3 more families have been baptized.

With his pastor's help, Martyn attended a 1-year bible school in 2018 and then the Bihar School for Evangelism to earn a certificate. Of the 60 students, 2 were selected to attend seminary. Martyn was blessed by a GGM scholarship to pursue his Bachelor of Theology. When seminary students were homebound during the COVID lockdown, Martyn redeemed the time by tutoring the 50+ village children, ages 7-12. Parents welcomed the help since schools were closed and Martyn shared with them about Jesus. Martyn loved being with the children and he believes God put a calling on his life as a youth pastor. What a blessing to see the impact of a village evangelist and GGM sponsors who support seminary scholarships!

Maya Prabhaker

Maya Prabhaker's father, Mr Santram Prabhakar, introduced her to the Lord Jesus Christ. He was a Hindu but when he became sick in 2006 a Christian friend prayed for him and he was made well. Santram accepted Christ, went to Bible College, and ministered to others until 2009 when he went home with the Lord. The seeds of his faith were planted in Maya's heart, who is the only Christian of four children.



Maya lived in a hostel in her teen years and went to a Christian school where she met a mentor who preached and engaged in various ministries. This woman encouraged Maya to enter seminary. Maya is now 19 years old and in her 1st year at Indian Theological Seminary on a full scholarship. During the COVID lockdown, she reached out to villagers to talk with them about the Lord Jesus Christ. Some would listen to her and she prays that the seeds she planted will grow into belief. When asked about her favorite bible verse, Maya answered, "When I was alone or frightened, God spoke to me saying, 'I will never leave you and never forsake you, so I can confidently say, the Lord is my helper I will not fear what can man do to me.'" (Hebrews 13:6). Praise God for Maya's persevering faith!

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS who make possible the scholarships to prepare these seminarians for a lifetime of preaching Christ. Let us pray that your support will impact a number that no one can number!



Life During Lockdown

Supporting Our Children's Home Kids

The world as we knew it changed in mid-March 2020. The children at GGM's Children's Home left to visit parents or relatives when schools were closed for an expected two-week lockdown. Over 18 months later, schools remain closed and only 10th and 12th graders having state exams had opportunities for online and limited in person classes. All other children have received instruction primarily through prerecorded Whatsapp videos, government sponsored television, and print resources.

We have received widespread reports of regression in core subjects. Most of our kids are alone at home, without adult supervision, as their guardians are daily wage or essential workers. Children have been isolated from family, friends and teachers and their overall growth and development has been adversely impacted. We expect to be addressing the challenges that the kids have experienced for years to come.

Our Children's Home caregivers are Jacob and Blessy. We are so excited for Jacob's return to GGM; you may remember him as our 1st Children's Home resident. Jacob graduated from GGM's Indian Theological Seminary and worked for a ministry with the blind for several years. He has now returned to GGM and serves as boys caregiver and mission supervisor. Jacob and Blessy continue to be in touch with all our kids with weekly phone calls, and a scheduled group phone conversation where Blessy leads a short song and prayer.

Thanks to our generous Children's Home sponsors, we send monthly financial support to each of the children's families. We have coordinated grocery pick up and drop off times and families have been grateful for the nutritious food items they have received. Whenever it was safe, our caregivers have also visited the children and families in their homes, and we have invited children with their families to the mission campus for check-ins with staff including a visiting child psychologist. This enabled us to identify children who are ill, malnourished

or are otherwise in need of social-emotional or academic support. Thanks to these check-ins we identified Kavitha, one of our pre-teen girls, as severely anemic. We rushed her to the hospital for emergency care and by the grace of God, she is fully recovered.

By God's unfailing grace, there have also been opportunities for creativity and growth. Tulasi, one of our younger kids, who was deserted by her father at a young age and whose single mom was unable to support her, came to the home several years ago. During the pandemic, Tulasi was alone for long hours while her mother worked. After she finished schoolwork, she spent her time developing a new skill as a talented artist.

Another story of hope is that of Lavanya and Radhika who came to the home at age of three and seven respectively and graduated from college in the last few years. Recently, they were baptized and served God in two important capacities - Lavanya volunteered as one of GGM's online VBS directors and Radhika served on the front lines of the coronavirus pandemic as a nurse. We are so proud of their service and anticipate that they will continue to do great things for God.

Throughout the COVID-19 lockdown, children are one of the most adversely impacted groups in the world. The youngest generation will never forget the loneliness and isolation that became the new normal for so many around the globe. Mid-August we began staggering the children's return to the Home. We hope to have everyone back before a possible 3rd COVID wave. GGM is committed to providing care, support, and love through all possible ways. We rest in the hope that it is God who watches over the children, and we trust and believe that He will continue to do so.

Do you receive GGM's email newsletter?
Send name & email to ggmleslie@gmail.com
or text/call 724-689-9843!

Building GGM Ministries

Despite the pandemic, we praise God for donors' faithful support to meet ongoing ministerial needs and provide directed donations for building projects. Little by little God is providing for much needed infrastructure. We share projects that require additional funding.

In the Mulapalayam village, 20 families have worshipped in a rented room for 7 years. After many years of prayer, God provided for the land purchase and building began with a large gift by a Glen Ellyn, IL family. How the church members rejoiced! The church is halfway done; \$20,000 is needed to complete construction. We trust that the God who brought us halfway will see us to the end.

Another project is at the Adayapulam church. Ten years ago, a St. Charles, IL family sponsored the church building in memory of their son who unexpectedly passed away. In 2019, they wanted to support the growing congregation and construct a church compound wall. The pre-pandemic quote was \$6500 but wall construction was



Missionary quarters expansion project.



Students praying over the plot of land where the woman's dorm will be

delayed due to the pandemic. Now labor and material costs increased resulting in a \$1500 deficit to complete this project.

A capital expenditure, required by GGM seminary's accrediting agency, is a separate, 3500 sq. ft. women's residence hall. Currently, women reside in the main administration building in a small room partitioned into sections housing up to 10 students. It is our prayer to construct this dorm to train many more women for ministry. A family has donated \$50,000 to cover almost half of the construction costs! Join us in prayer for provision to complete the funding.

Lastly, we have prayed for years to expand missionary quarters for most families who reside in a 250 sq. ft., two-room apartment behind the church which is roughly the size of the average American family room. We hope to add at least 300 sq. ft of living space costing an estimated \$9000 per house. This would be such a blessing to our families!

IF YOU OR YOUR CHURCH are interested in raising the funds or donating towards these important needs, contact Thehil at 312-885-3059 or ggmthehil@gmail.com. We are happy to schedule Zoom calls, which can include brethren from the ministry which you will support.

President's Message...

Throughout the COVID crisis, the world has experienced immeasurable fear and suffering. We are passionate about serving the most vulnerable among us in these challenging times. A 2nd COVID wave hit India in March raising the documented death toll to 425,000+, though reports say it could be 10 times higher. We are getting through this situation only by the grace and mercy of God, and the love and support of the body of Christ around the world.

GGM continues preaching Christ and planting churches despite lockdowns by expanding our internet outreach. We developed socially distanced village ministry programs, conducted online seminary education, continue to provide for Children's Home kids in their own homes, and educate primary school kids at home. We organized an online missionaries' conference, VBS, preaching and youth events, and more, all of which gave us the opportunity to share the gospel, pray and fellowship together. Please watch a short video of the past year's events by visiting our website at www.gilgalgospel.org.

gilgalgospel.org. As we enter a post-pandemic world, GGM will continue to minister both through in-person ministries, village churches and through further expansion of our online outreach.

Finally, we are so grateful to every individual sponsor, church, seminary, and organization who provided for 2 COVID relief outreaches to 1850 households in our villages. In 2020, \$9,500 in groceries was distributed, and in 2021 \$9,000 provided 2 months of food to those in dire need. Missionaries have reported increased openings for dialogue as people felt supported during difficult times. Thank you so much for your support!

Thank you for standing with us throughout these challenging months. Your support has been invaluable. As soon as it is safe, we hope you will visit us on the mission field. Thank you and God bless you!

Grace and peace, Rev. Sunil Singh Nallathambi, President

