



# VOICE *of* SHALOM

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Dr. Paulus Thalathoti



We are very grateful and thankful to our Lord Jesus Christ, for the growth of the seeds that Pastor Mike Derstine, Lead Pastor of Plains Mennonite Church sowed last year. Pastor Mike planted gospel seeds through teaching and preaching from Matthew fifth chapter on the Beatitudes. Our 2013 US Team saw the Lord's hand on the PPMI ministry after hearing stories from these unreached Pastors in God's Kingdom.

Three months ago Sharon Swartzentruber, Sara Kolb and Sumatha Thalathoti sowed the seeds to Pastor's wives in the area of social arts and crafts in the discipleship areas a study of the book of Ruth. These sisters in Jesus are very blessed through the ministry and service of above US Team. We never expected this opportunity but when we are listening, following and doing according to the Holy Spirit's guidance, we are hearing good stories from them.

We are envisioning for 2014, with the help of prayer, to equip these Pastors in the area of Discipleship and witnessing for Jesus to the unreached people in the rural areas. We hope to help Pastors wives by providing each with a new sewing machine to help support their family and the ministry of their husbands. This will also involve other women in their congregations.

We appreciate and thank you for your generous help in all these years. Our good Lord has been very faithful to His Kingdom work through your generosity. Our PPMI mission program budget has grown to \$3,000 in 2011, \$25,211 in 2012, \$36,000 in 2013 and projected \$40,200 in 2014.

We continue to rely on each one of you through your prayers and financial support for further extension of His Kingdom work in the midst of millions of gods and goddesses on the PPMI mission field.



# PPMI – A GLIMPSE OF GOD'S WORK IN INDIA

by Dr. Conrad Swartzentruber

I sat and listened in amazement as one Peace Proclamation Ministries International pastor after another told his story of ministry in India. Rajiv told of the physical challenges in starting a small congregation with some neighbors throwing stones at the church. "We continued praying for all our neighbors and showing God's love to them," he recalled. After one family joined his church, the father recounted how he had participated in these oppositional activities. After seeing the congregation's response, his family accepted Christ. "Following Jesus is a continuous process," Rajiv reflected.

From July 31-August 12, I traveled with my wife, Sharon Swartzentruber, Noah and Sarah Kolb, and Sumatha and Paulus Thalathoti to the Hyderabad area of southern India where PPMI works, for a four-day pastors and wives retreat, and to visit several churches.

During the retreat, Noah gave a devotional each morning for both pastors and pastor's wives. The two groups then met separately for the rest of the day, Paulus and I with the men, and our wives with the women. We observed the pastors supporting each other through prayer and encouragement. For many of the pastors' wives, this was the first time they had attended a resourcing event. It was well received and one of our most significant contributions during the visit.

One common theme through the pastor's personal stories was of unique meetings with Christ, often through a potential tragedy or illness. Pastors gave up other more profitable career paths to serve as pastors. I was most moved by the frequent stories of open opposition to their work followed by a patient, loving response directed to those who opposed. In several stories, these Christ-like responses were the turning points in which significant oppositional leaders became pillars in the church.

Rao was born into a Hindu family. When he was 20, he was bitten by a snake as he worked in the fields. In the hospital, the doctor told him he had 20 minutes to live. In that moment, Rao remembered hearing about Jesus as a child and called out to Jesus at for the first time; he survived the snake bite and now states, "God saved me from the bite of this snake for a reason." Ten years ago, he started a small congregation of three members that has now grown to 30 members.



PPMI's role in these Indian communities is simple - providing encouragement, training and limited financial support for pastors and their wives. In this process, we learn much from our brothers and sisters in India and we are blessed by God in sharing our lives with others.

I left India with a deep respect for these pastors and wives ministering in settings with obstacles few of us can imagine. I was struck by their patience in the face of opposition, and challenged by the constant reminder of prayer. I was encouraged to observe a simple, profound faith in God to lead, protect and bless.

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