

# Southwest India Christian Mission

## 2018 – 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter News

### Letter from the Mathews

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Greetings from the Mathew family. We thank you for your prayers and support for Southwest India Christian Mission. We appreciate your partnership to reach souls for Christ. Christians are celebrating, remembering the resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Because we believe in His resurrection we have hope of eternal life. But millions and millions in this country, never heard the name, Jesus, one time in their life. Millions are dying without hope.

The mission work is going OK. But the situation here is not favorable for Gospel work. Not much freedom to do evangelistic work like before. When we go for open air preaching in a village, fanatics sometimes come and tell us you cannot do it here. We have to take all our equipment, packets of New Testaments, Gospel tracts and portable PA System and go to another village. They are in gangs, and if we try to say anything against them, they will beat us, damage all our things, snatch the Bibles and burn the Bibles in a public place.

During the first two weeks of April we had VBS in eight places. At Bethany Childrens Home we had over 400 in attendance. In all the other places (churches) we had 70 to 95. This week (the third week of April) we are having VBS at one more church and that is all for this year. Including the initial attendance for this last week of VBS, we have had a total attendance of 1,088.

It is disappointing that our VBS attendance is down this year compared to last year, but competition for the children has become very great. Another thing this year has been the weather. It has been too hot - above 97 degrees. Some of the parents didn't allow their children to come to VBS for fear of heat stroke.

We had 9 baptisms last month. Open air preaching in villages, house visits and gospel tracts distribution are going OK, with some opposition. We used to visit hospitals and talk to the patients, pray for them and give them New Testaments, gospel tracts and food. Sometimes we were even able to give a little financial help to the poor and needy. But now there is opposition in the government hospitals from religious fanatics. Also, most of the private hospitals are owned by Catholics, and they won't allow us to



VBS at Bethany Childrens Home



Individual Classes at the Bethany VBS



Individual Class at the Tiruvalla Church VBS



VBS at the Kanakappalam Church

come to their hospitals and speak to the patients. Satan is the ruler of this world, and he is doing evil to stop the Lord's work.

Please pray for the mission work and for the preachers and Christians to be safe and stay faithful.

In His Service,  
John and Moni Mathew

### Bethany Childrens Home Registration

The government in India is requiring all homes for children to register and meet new, stringent requirements. John Mathew and PA George (George and his wife, Lissy, take care of the girls at Bethany) submitted the application for registration before the March 31<sup>st</sup> deadline. They are currently waiting for an inspection and approval of the application. Please pray for a good outcome.

### March Baptisms

On March 3<sup>rd</sup>, nine young women were baptized into Christ. Six were from Bethany Childrens Home and one from each of three congregations. Praise God that even though there is opposition, people are accepting Jesus as their savior.

### 2018 Furlough

John and Moni Mathew will be in the United States for about six months beginning the first of June. They will be visiting churches that they have not been able to visit for several years. After that, they will have a little over a month for rest and study.

### VBS in Kerala India

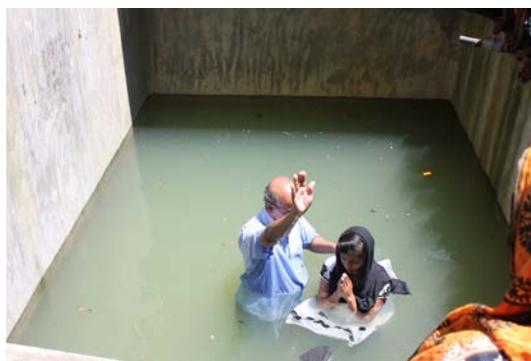
John Mathew started having VBS in the mission's churches in 1978. The program grew and in 2012 John and the VBS volunteers from the mission churches had the peak attendance of 1,750.

In 1978, no other churches had VBS programs. However, at the end of each of the mission's VBS sessions the kids march through the surrounding neighborhood singing Christian songs. As the mission's VBS program grew, other churches became aware of the mission's success and began to have their own programs. Today there are many churches with VBS programs both in the Tiruvalla area and in the Hi-Range.

In his letter above, John expressed disappointment that the VBS attendance wasn't higher. In addition to the added competition for VBS students, the Catholic school next to Bethany Childrens home had a program for their kids the same week as the VBS at Bethany. John also said that the Tiruvalla church lost some kids to churches that used vans to stop and ask any kids that looked like they were dressed for VBS if that is where they were going. When the child said yes, they offered them a ride and took them to their church.



Nine Young Ladies  
Baptized on March 3<sup>rd</sup>



Jency from BCH. She has a mother and married sister, but no father.



Feba from the Kanakappalam Church. She is a second-year nursing school student.



Rakhi from the Ponthenpuzha Church. She has a Masters degree in economics and is currently looking for a teaching position.