

Regional Update

Southern Asia & South Pacific

November 20, 2014



GRACE COMMUNION
INTERNATIONAL

India: Annual Gatherings Celebrate God's Grace

Early in October, both pastorates in India celebrated our blessings of living in a personal relationship with our awesome Creator of the universe. Members from across southern India met on the outskirts of the historic city of Mysore in a new Christian retreat facility where everyone could stay on site. Fine meals were catered by the kind and attentive staff, and the upper level conference hall easily accommodated the 50+ in attendance.



The highlight of the week was the appreciation expressed to pastor Joe and Joanna D'Costa on the celebration of 25 years of employment in the church. Although the actual date fell earlier in the year, this was the most appropriate time to mark the occasion. On behalf of Pastor General, Joe Tkach, Mission Developer, Rod Matthews, presented them with

watches and a plaque commemorating the milestone, and then the local church leadership acknowledged their years of service and care with a locally crafted plaque and flowers. The D'Costas also celebrated their 34th wedding anniversary during the festival and were presented with a special cake which everyone sampled and enjoyed.

A stimulating session of the Life Club (a personal development and speech club) and an afternoon of swimming in the pool of a neighbouring resort capped the activities. Although the site is on the banks of the picturesque but fast-flowing Cauvery River, it isn't suitable for safe swimming.

The northern pastorate's meeting place was a retreat centre on the outskirts of Hyderabad – living in villas and dorm accommodation, enjoying catered meals from a varied and excellent menu, and meeting in a quiet rondavel a ten minute walk away in small glen with a picturesque lake. Some had travelled from far north India and overseas including the USA. The festival enjoyed a range of speakers including messages on the challenges of sharing the gospel in a modern Hindu nation while facing some associated legal





restrictions. Everyone laughed and learned from the movie night feature – a personal story of missionary work in New Guinea called “The Pineapple Story.”

Early one morning about half the group beat the heat and got their exercise by scaling a rocky



hill near the site. The pastor of a small group of churches

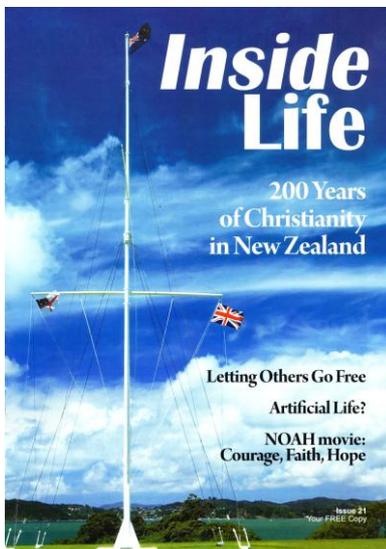
several hundred kilometres north of Hyderabad who is building a relationship with our church there, attended as much of the festival as he could and another young man who took great effort to seek us out as a source and beacon of Incarnational Trinitarian Theology thoroughly enjoyed his time with everyone.



New Zealand – Celebrates 200 Years of Christianity

On December 25th, New Zealand will celebrate the 200th anniversary of the first time the gospel message was preached on its shores. Events leading up to this historic occasion are remarkable. Did you know:

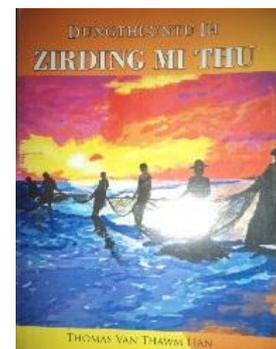
- the preacher was Samuel Marsden, the chaplain from the convict settlement at Port Jackson, New South Wales (now Sydney)
- he became chaplain on the recommendation of William Wilberforce, famous anti-slave reformer in Britain
- he had learnt the local Maori language before he arrived in New Zealand for the first time
- on his first voyage he introduced sheep, cattle, pigs, poultry, horses, goats, dogs and cats to New Zealand, all on a single journey, a veritable “Noah’s ark” said a sailor. The Maori were amazed.
- the spread of Christianity in New Zealand is credited largely to the indigenous Maori peoples.



Don’t miss the absorbing story beautifully related by Rex Morgan, Auckland pastor and office manager, which featured in our NZ church magazine *Inside Life*. Go to www.insidelifelife.org.nz and click on “Our Cover Story”.

Thanks for Falam Chin Literature

The Discipleship 101 course is now in print in the Falam Chin language of northern Myanmar! After being translated by GCI friend and partner Van Thawme Lian, we recently printed 2000 copies which he has shared with pastors, students at the seminary where he teaches and other interested Christians. When someone receives rare Christian literature in their own native language, their thanks can be quite effusive. Van Thawme Lian has shared the following letters he received:





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“Study to shew thyself approved unto God...” (2Tim. 2:15)

MOTTO:

The word of God
for the work of God

PURPOSE:

“meet for the
Master’s use.”

THEME:

“study to shew
thyself approved
unto God”

To/ Grace Communion International
Myanmar & USA Australia

Subject : Thank you Note

Dear Sir,

Greetings in Jesus’ name.

It is with a great honor and heart-felt thanks to write to you for the supply of Christian book in our dialect through Mr. Thomas Van Thawm Lian. The book entitled (*in our local language*) “**Dungthluntu ih Zirding mi thu**” has been provided free of charge to us with 8 copies and we would like to appreciate and thank to Grace Communion International for making this precious book available to our language. It indeed blesses our hearts and we believe that it will be a blessing to whoever reads.

We also would like to thank to Mr. Thomas Van Thawm Lian who translated the book in our language and also faithfully distributed to us free of charge. We appreciate his hard labors in translation and faithful distribution. May God bless him and also bless Grace Communion International richly.

In His service,
Mr. Lal Biak Tluang

President

BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL ACADEMY

Kalemyo, Myanmar.





GOSPEL BAPTIST CHURCH

Myoukchawtaw (Zonnam), Kalay Township, Sagaing Division, Myanmar.
 "Leitlun hrang thuthangtha" Mak. 16:15

Letter no. 162

Date: 1 / 11 / 2014

To.

Grace Communion International

USA Australia



Subj: Books provided free

Respected Sir,

We, Gospel Baptist Church, received 60 copies of book, topic "Dunthluntu ih Zirding mi thu" free from Mr. Thomas Van Thawm Lian. Thank you so much for your helps which enable us to receive these books. We thank you also to Mr. Thomas who faithfully distributed to us without costs. The books are very good and help all of us to grow our spiritual lives. Thank you so very much!

God bless you.

U No Han Bil

Chairman
 Gospel Baptist Church
 Zonnam

U Sat Tai Thang

Secretary
 Gospel Baptist Church
 Zonnam

--Rod Matthews