



Namaste!

The Spice of Life Newsletter



1st edition March 2016 (Incorporating the Friends of Jagadhri)



Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand—Global Mission, P.O. Box 9049 Wellington 6141

Welcome to the first edition of Namaste! After many years faithful service, the Friends of Jagadhri decided to gracefully retire in 2014, and hand the responsibility for the PCANZ's support for mission in India to Global Mission. Since then, our partnership with the Church of North India (CNI) has continued to develop. One sign of this is the re-naming of our partnership with the CNI to The Spice of Life. This includes our longstanding partnerships in Jagadhri but has added more, with the potential to extend this further. This first edition of Namaste! builds on the many previous editions of the Friends of Jagadhri, and gives further information about the ways in which PCANZ Global Mission is supporting mission with the CNI.



Staff and students at Christian Hospital Jagadhri welcome members of the Going Global team

In November last year a team of eleven members from PCANZ visited India on a Going Global programme. Going Global is a programme of Global Mission and Presbyterian Youth Ministries (PYM) which gives opportunities for PCANZ members to participate in cross-culture exchanges hosted by our partner churches overseas. Seven young adults were accompanied by three members of Somervell Church in Remuera, and Global Mission Coordinator Phil King. The purpose of the trip was to introduce the team members to the history of New Zealand Presbyterian mission in India, to see the fruit of that mission, to meet and share with members of the CNI and to learn about the life and context of modern India. It was an amazing two week trip which had a significant impact on each member of the team. We visited historic mission areas in New Delhi, Jagadhri, Ludhiana and Chandigarh, as well as new areas in Pathankot and Palampur (Himachal Pradesh). In each location we were graciously hosted by the CNI or other members of the Christian community. As a result of this programme, the PCANZ's relationship with the CNI will grow deeper and stronger as our members gain a better understanding of the complex nature of Indian society and the challenge of Christian life and ministry there. See the autumn edition of Spanz for a story about this visit, on pages 24 and 25, or online at http://www.presbyterian.org.nz/sites/public_files/publications/spanz/

News From Jagadhri

Christian Hospital sees less activity these days, due to the changing nature of healthcare in India, with the Government offering improved standards of healthcare through public hospitals. Most of the activity at Christian Hospital centres on the School of Nursing which offers a Diploma in Nursing to 240 students.



Team members with sponsored nursing students in Jagadhri

We will continue to sponsor students at the School of Nursing through funds donated to the Doreen Riddell Scholarship Fund. Funds have accumulated in the Scholarship account, and we can afford to sponsor a higher number of students for a while. So we have agreed to sponsor eight students in the meantime; this will reduce as the course changes from three and half years, to three. We will review this annually to ensure sufficient funds will be available for future scholarships. All students belong to the CNI church and are recommended by their pastor and bishop for financial support. A 50% scholarship is given to each student. Donations are welcome if you would like to contribute to these scholarships. The students are: Shanu, Anjana Masih (1st year); Jyoti Masih, Shivani Masih (2nd year); Akansha Masih, Chhaya Mohan (3rd year); Poonam Rani, Priya Dass (internship).

A new and challenging experience for the team was a visit to a Leper Colony in Jagadhri, which Christian Hospital still supports. People with leprosy in India still live in separated colonies. This was a moving visit for the team, as we met the residents and their families, and observed them offering heartfelt thanks to Dr. Cecil Harrison for the care and support they receive from the staff of Christian Hospital. This Leper Colony has a long history of support from New Zealand, through the Presbyterian Church and the Leprosy Mission.



The leader of the Leper Colony in Jagadhri thanks the staff of Christian Hospital for their care



Kylie Windle, Brian Rowley and Elizabeth Peterson try out the new computer suite at the School of Nursing.

We were able to see the result of a previous donation for a computer suite for the School of Nursing; and agreed to contribute a further \$12,000 from Friends of Jagadhri funds to complete electrical and plumbing work in the flats that were built for staff and senior students a few years ago. Highlights of our time were participating in worship with the Christian students and hearing some of their testimonies; as well as sharing in an evening of music and celebration. Some members of the team had medical backgrounds and contributed in a combined class, teaching about their respective areas of work. This was a valuable time of mutual teaching and learning with staff and students, during which we also heard from some nursing students who gave excellent presentations on a range of healthcare topics. The team was graciously hosted by the Director of Christian Hospital, Cecil Harrison, and his wife Nayana, and warmly received by all.



Left: Brittany Thomson leads a teaching session on asthma with staff and students at Christian Hospital's School of Nursing, while Ellie Archer, Mana Leasi and Vanessa Luke look on.

St. Thomas School

It is hard to describe the day we spent at St. Thomas School, Jagadhri. The school has been through a difficult time in recent years, with a power struggle affecting its place within the CNI, which led to dissatisfaction from staff and parents, and a distancing in the school's relationship with the PCANZ. While not fully recovered from this, changes within the diocese of Delhi, including the removal of the Bishop, have led to an improvement and during our visit the school was recovering under the leadership of interim principal Mrs. Poornima Lall. She was a ball of energy, and with her staff and helpers, organised an overwhelming day celebrating the breadth of the school's life. We arrived to a red carpet entrance, enjoyed a wonderful welcome on a massive outdoor stage in front of hundreds of students and staff, and were treated to a beautiful display of traditional Indian dance from a wide range of students. It was superbly done. This was followed by an exhaustive tour of the school, where we interacted with students in all aspects of the school's life in sports, art and science, as well as having time for personal interaction with senior students – before being whisked off to the junior school where we received more garlands of flowers from the primary age students, and officially opened their new playground.



Heather Laxon lights a commemorative candle at St. Thomas School in Jagadhri, with Acting Principal Mrs. Poornima Lal and Christian Hospital Director Dr. Cecil Harrison.



Some of the hundreds of St. Thomas school children who turned out to welcome the team

Later in the day the team met with staff who stayed behind after school to spend time with us. After a brief address, team members each joined a group of 10-12 teachers to share in conversation and learn more about the school; and share about our programme in Jagadhri. It was a truly amazing day which left the team feeling quite overwhelmed at the welcome and star treatment they had received. It is to be hoped that St. Thomas' is able to fully recover from its troubled recent past and continue to be a shining light in education and Christian witness for the CNI. If things continue to improve, it may be possible to once more offer scholarships for students from low income Christian families to attend the school. However, this is something we will need to assess in the future.



Kylie Windle speaking with staff at St. Thomas School, Jagadhri



Ellie Archer with one of the young St. Thomas students who greeted the team with garlands of flowers.

We also opened the newly named (although an older building) "Doreen Riddell Guest House." This is accommodation in the school grounds for anyone who wishes to go and spend time in volunteer teaching at St. Thomas'. So there is an incentive!

St. Thomas School is celebrating its 50th Jubilee on April 30—May 2 this year. Please advise Global Mission Coordinator Phil King if you are interested in going.

Support of Christian Schools in Pathankot and Palampur

In recent years, we have extended our support for the mission of the CNI beyond Jagadhri. We wanted to continue supporting the vision of providing educational opportunities for children from low socio-economic Christian families. However, as a result of the aforementioned changes that were taking place at St. Thomas's School, we needed to find other locations where this could be achieved. The CNI promotes scholarships for students through their PDS model (Parent/Diocese/Synod) with each party making a contribution. Church partners are invited to donate to this.



Hostel students at St. Paul's School, Palampur.



Team members with staff and students at Avalon Girls School.

Through the guidance of the CNI, we have established partnerships with two schools – Avalon Girls School in Pathankot, (Northern Punjab), and St. Paul's School in Palampur, (Himachal Pradesh). Somervell Church in Remuera is providing scholarships for hostel students at Avalon; and through the support of various donors we are also funding scholarships for boys at St. Pauls school hostel. These students come from low-income Christian families and some of them are doing exceptionally well in their school – without this opportunity, their options for escaping the poverty cycle would be very limited. Donations are invited to support these scholarships

The Going Global team had a great visit to Christian Medical College, Ludhiana. There they met with staff and joined with the Fellowship Team (chaplains) on their pastoral care rounds one morning. This was an inspiring and humbling experience for them. Here they are (right) pictured in the CMC Obstetrics Ward, named after New Zealand Presbyterian Beryl Howie.

All donations for PCANZ support for the Friends of Jagadhri will still be received by this office. Please donate to Global Mission, P.O. Box 9049, Wellington 6141; or online to 02 0500 86963 10. See the enclosed Spice of Life pamphlet for more details.



WHY AM I RECEIVING NAMASTE?

You are receiving Namaste! because you are on the Friends of Jagadhri database. It is difficult to keep up with the many changes of status, and changes of address, of people on the mailing list. We do not wish to send unsolicited mail. So please advise if you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, or if you would prefer to receive it by email. Send an email to phil@presbyterian.org.nz, or mail to Phil King, Global Mission, P.O. Box 9049, Wellington 6141

