

HOPE FOR CHURCHES: UPDATE FROM OUR CHURCHES & BIBLE COLLEGE

HOPE COMES IN LOTS OF DIFFERENT SHAPES AND SIZES!

January has flown by at Hope Gardens but, once again, it wasn't a smooth start to the year. Amongst other things, there has been continued disruption due to local lockdowns which our children, pastors and staff team have had to navigate. Schools were closed, churches closed, services disrupted and Omicron continues to impact many communities we serve. It may be out of the press but **the scars of coronavirus are extremely evident in the communities that we serve.**

We continue to bring hope through the compassion of our pastors, the comforting advice from our nurses, the surprise food parcel at the front door and the reassurance to families that the school fees have been paid. Enjoy reading how our **Hope for Churches programme** has been supporting their diverse communities and congregations and how we are training the next generation of Christian leaders.

Thank you for your continued support



Rhema & Kay

VANAKKUM! NEWS FROM RHEMA REVIVAL BIBLE COLLEGE



Please welcome our students for 21/22 who have made many sacrifices to study with us this term. **Please pray for their family situations.** Many students are facing battles with their family as they are being pressured to give up their studies and work so they can contribute to the family finances which have been so hard hit during the pandemic.

The first semester was unsettled with eight students unable to take up their places due to changes in their circumstances as a result of Covid. **Please pray for these 7 students** that one day the obstacles to their learning will be lifted and they may have the ability to study Theology.



Congratulations! With such a disruptive 12 months for our students we are delighted that our students are working so diligently, have passed their exams and are now reaching and exceeding their target grades! The second year can be a bit challenging for our Tamil speaking students as it is taught just in English rather than English and Tamil so language skills are also tested.

From the class of 20/21 : 3 of our students have already found work and are involved in ministry along with their pastors in their home towns. Honest Addhi (pictured on the left) is working in a junior ministry role in Chennai, Samuel is doing tribal ministry in Nilgiris and Syamili is engaged in general church ministry assisting her Pastor in Kerala. **Please pray for them.**



Fellowship: Covid restrictions have been in place and at times the students have been able to attend church services outdoors. Celebrations have continued but inline with restrictions. Students were able to take a break from exams and attend the Vaigai Dam retreat in January. Fellowship was shared at the "Pongal" celebrations allowed to take place outdoors this year.



Outreach is a vital part of our student's training. As part of their degree the students work alongside our pastors in their social welfare ministries. Due to the pandemic our students have been working in the community supporting our vaccination programme, running food banks and going on home visits as part of our food parcel distribution.

NEWS FROM OUR CHURCHES



BRINGING HOPE



We are delighted that our 20 churches can be used flexibly throughout the week for outreach so many of our community can benefit from our facilities.



Cumbum Mettu Church: I love this photo it captures our outreach perfectly! Our after school club in the church which is also in the same space as the sewing institute. The team now offer after school sewing sessions to the children giving them new skills and earning potential for the



KR Thoppur: Rev Simon's church shows a familiar scene to so many of our churches. Food parcels are on hand at our food bank distributed to the children and local community. **Please pray for this community where many families are suffering with their mental health, their finances and struggling with their addictions.**

EXPANDING OUR MINISTRY

Vasthi and Gold explain why it is so vital that we reignite our ministry in Theni.

"We really give thanks to God for Theni. After the challenges that Pastor Andrews faced locally we had to stop serving this area during lockdown. Great news! Under the leadership of Appa and Amma (Archbishop Samuel and Saguntha) we have reopened the church! We rid the building of snakes, made the space safe and kickstarted our ministry. We opened a food bank, employed Mrs Rani to lead our children's work and started services. Miraculous things are happening. 135 meals were served at our church even though we only thought 60 would come! It is very challenging being a christian in this village, there is trouble and persecution but we stay strong so we can help the marginalised and be here so that everyone can experience God's love"



Spotlight on Sathyamangalam: Godson is an Alumni and he is now working as a pastor in Sathyamangalam district among very poor people living in the hills. The entire region is a dense forest area in TamilNadu and they do not have proper electricity or transport facilities. **This is a challenging ministry** and we ask for your prayers, we are supporting this new ministry by providing food parcels.



Hope is a retaining wall: Update from Kerala! Rev Robin's retaining wall was built in perfect time to protect the church and his home from the heavy rains that come annually. October was particularly challenging this year but the wall you funded has worked!

Please pray for his ministry and for his recovery after a minor bike accident which required stitches on his leg.

Hope for Churches: Bringing Hope to Tamil Nadu and Kerala: Creating church plants, supporting pastors and training leaders of the future.



20 churches serving communities



Church and community building projects



Outreach programmes for the vulnerable

**Q&A ON ZOOM!
24TH FEBRUARY 6PM**



Got a Question about Hope Gardens? Join Vasthi and Gold in the Rhema Gardens via ZOOM as they answer your questions. Email Hilary with any questions you may have and register for your zoom details here: info@hopegardensindia.org

