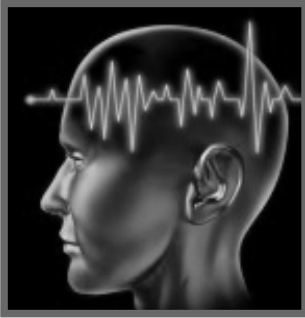




F A R & N E A R
D E C E M B E R - 2 0 1 3

SANCTIFIED BASAL GANGLIA?



Just the other day, we were in the process of buying some New Year's greeting cards. It was inevitable that thoughts of what the New Year holds for us crossed my mind. Students may think of exams, interns and doctors may worry about the PG entrance exams or who their life partner will be; some of us may brood over our children's future and their choices. On the national scene, many are talking about the possible new prime minister and the implications to minorities. We don't see the future, but we trust in Someone who holds the future. Yes, we must get down on our knees. There is an urgent need to mobilise prayer for matters large and small. We are not equal to the task ahead or to the demands; but we follow the One who loved us, who can make us 'more than conquerors'.

What do you do as soon as you wake up in the morning? Do you switch on the TV as soon as you get back from work? Do you drink water during a meal or after? These are all matters of one's habits. Habituation determines what one does in a host of situations: from the way of reading the newspapers to picking one's nose when no one is looking! What we do are characterised by intentional goal directed actions; however, a majority of our actions are automatic habitual responses to stimuli. "We are what we repeatedly do", said Aristotle; "Excellence then, is not an act, but a habit". (Book 2 of Nicomachean Ethics)

Researchers are beginning to understand that there is a definite neural basis for habit formation. Beneath the cerebral cortex sits a small area in the brain that scientists had not fully understood earlier. They knew the basal ganglia had something to do with Parkinson's disease when things went wrong. In his brilliant book 'The power of habit', Charles Duhigg (I just read this book and would strongly recommend this as the new year's reading!) quotes an experiment on mice conducted by researchers in MIT. Tiny probes stereotactically inserted into different parts of their little brains helped the scientists monitor the electrical activity as they raced through a maze. Initially in an unfamiliar territory, their cerebral cortex 'lit up' with activity as they had to make multiple choices. But once the pattern was set, the cortical activity appeared subdued, but activity in the basal ganglia increased. This pattern has been shown to be true in humans too. Once an activity is repeated multiple times, it is relegated to the domain of the 'habit loop'... and basal ganglia forms the head quarters of all habituations in the brain.

Paul the apostle alluded to this fact in his letter to the Corinthians: "I beat my body and make it my slave... so that I will not be disqualified for the prize." (1 Cor 9:27) If St. Paul were a professor at MIT, he would have probably said, "I train my basal ganglia through Godly disciplines to form Godly habits... so that I will not be disqualified for the prize". One problem of having a 'habit loop' is that 'automatic' behaviours leave us vulnerable to forming negative habits... (It may be procrastination of difficult tasks, leaving one's hostel room untidy or smoking). Old habits are never forgotten; but they are just overwritten when new ones are formed. But think of the tremendous possibilities of harnessing the full potential of the habit loop positively in a believer's life. It is an act of the will to submit to Godly disciplines. May we receive grace to identify areas in our lives where spiritual disciplines are harnessed to form Godly habits. As a medical or dental student, will you identify that new habit that you will embrace to overwrite the old one? It may be spending a little time regularly reading the word, in prayer or memorizing verses. As a doctor or as a professional, will you sit in the presence of God and seek His direction in this area before the New Year dawns? May we learn to say, "We will do what it takes to establish habits in this area or that". Maybe we can wish each other "Sanctified Basal Ganglia" as we enter 2014!

Dr. Naveen Thomas

OUR VISION:

To see disciplined doctors & dentists impacting & enabling a transformation in society through Biblical values by their service and witness.

Chairman's letter



REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS FROM STAFF

Anshuman Singh: Field Partner—Maharashtra

Anshuman was involved in organising a one day retreat in Andheri for the students and graduates of Maharashtra called the 'Doctors Life Support.' There were around 70 participants and the meeting covered topics like calling, fellowship and opportunities to build up the kingdom of God. The resource people were Dr. Naveen Thomas, Dr. Stephen Alfred and Dr. Manoj Jacob. Anshuman has been encouraged by the response to this meeting. Some of the graduates in Nashik have shown keen interest in being involved in the student work there. Though he faces struggles in making headway in some fellowships, Anshuman has been able to make new contacts in many medical colleges. Pray for Anshuman and his wife Alankrita as they expect their first child soon.

Devakumar: Coordinator—Training

Deva was enabled to start a fellowship at a new college in Chennai with the help of a graduate who joined there as faculty from Andhra. The Lord's provision was experienced at the Pachalur camp as they began the Camp with water shortage. But the Lord sent rain after a gap of 3 months to suffice this shortage. The students were also blessed by the sessions by Dr. KV, Drs. Sunil & Joanna Gokavi, Dr. Chandra Singh, Drs. Deepa Singh & Dr. Susheel Tharien. The marriage seminar in August was a time of learning for all the four couples who attended it. One of the couples said that their time at the seminar was a 'life time investment.' Deva was also able to attend the hospital day at Scudder Memorial hospital along with Dr. Manoj and also meet up with some fresher students at a graduates home in CMC. The Lord has provided Deva & Nanditha with a good house to stay, pray for them as they settle into this new place.

George Suchiang: Field Partner—North East India

George has had an exciting time meeting with students of Shillong in their homes and interacting with their parents as well. He has been able to meet with a few graduates and be a source of encouragement and guidance to them as they face struggles in their family life. He was also involved in motivating the students and graduates in his territory for the Regional Conference at Dimapur. At the fellowship meetings in different colleges he has been able to cover topics like, 'Coping with Distress' and 'Love' and it has been a blessing to the students. The Biennial Conference at Dimapur was an eye opener for many of the students as they were not exposed to this kind of teaching. George has been keeping an open home and has been encouraged by the visits of many students who open up to him during their stay.

KT Paul: Coordinator—North India

KT has been covering topics like Gratefulness, Stewardship and Accountability in the fellowships that he has been visiting. He has also had a meaningful and nostalgic time, visiting some of the fellowships in Andhra Pradesh, encouraging the students and spending time with graduates as well. At Nagpur he was the resource person at an Evangelistic camp and was also able to minister to many students personally. KT was able to spend time with the Lord and recount His goodness in the past 20 years. He says, "I sometimes feel I cannot go on but the Lord does not let go of me. He wins and I give in."

Lindley Marquis: Coordinator—Karnataka

Lindley has been initiating interest in the study of the word of God in fellowships by motivating them to study books like Chuck Swindol's, "Joseph" and John MacArthur's, "Pillars of Christian Character." With much prayer Lindley was able to start visiting colleges again after his cervical pain worsened. He was able to visit fellowships in Mysore, Hubli, Kollegal and Dharwad. He was encouraged to see the fellowship in Hubli grow under the able guidance of Drs. Arlene and Ashley. Lindley requests prayers for new student contacts in colleges in Davengere & Tumkur.

Michael Sundersingh: Coordinator—Pastoral Care

Michael was able to meet with some of the Pastors in Delhi and also leaders of UESI, TAFTEE, EHA, CANA and WorldVision to help mobilize the city doctors for more involvement in the student work. He also visited some of the fellowships in Tamil Nadu to motivate them and help in Leadership building. He was also involved in organizing the leadership camp at Anaikatti for some of these students in August. He visited CMC, Ludhiana to facilitate the EU camp held there and also discuss strategies for organizing the EMFI Biennial National conference, Oct 2014.



Pratik Sindhu: Coordinator—Madhya Pradesh & Chattisgarh

Pratik has been able to visit the fellowships in Bhopal, Gwalior and Indore in the past months and has had a fruitful time with the students. He could help some of the students in overcoming some of their old practices. In spite of heavy rains he was also able to visit fellowships in Chattisgarh encouraging students and some graduates. Pratik has been encouraged to see the Gwalior students take their walk with the Lord seriously. He requests prayers for the new juniors who take up leadership in the fellowships and also for the fellowship students who face their exams, that they will be able to glorify the Lord even through their studies.

Solomon Raju: Field Partner—Andhra Pradesh

Solomon was able to visit the fellowships in Kurnool, Anantapur and Nandyal in the midst of heavy rains and encourage them and pray for the students appearing for their exams. He has been helping students study the Book of Job and the life of Joseph in the fellowships. He also motivated and accompanied some of the students from the fellowship to attend, SHILOH—the missions conference conducted by CMC, Vellore. He requests prayers for the state as there is political unrest. Kurnool and Anantapur being the main districts of Rayalaseema face the brunt of all agitations.

Malsawmliana Darlong: Field Partner—West Bengal

Malsawma has been able to minister to the fellowships in Burdwan, Siliguri and Bankura in the past months. He has been able to study the Attributes on God along with the students in these fellowships. His time at Purulia with Drs. Famkima and Joydepa Darlong was encouraging. He also motivated two of the Junior doctors from TLM, Purulia to accompany him on his visit to the Bankura medical college. The students had a wonderful time of interaction with these doctors. His visit to Prem Jyoti hospital in Jharkhand with Dr. Manoj was a blessing. His wife Martha & baby Benson have returned to Kolkata after the confinement.

Malcolm Johnson: Associate Field Partner—Andhra Pradesh

Malcolm and Uma were unable to visit many fellowships due to heavy rains and exams. They visited Hyderabad, Khammam & Warangal however and spent time with Drs. Rajaram & Hannah Paul, who lead the fellowship there. Malcolm motivated the fellowship students to attend SHILOH and Uma accompanied 7 of them from Adilabad for this missions conference at CMC, Vellore. The students had a blessed time.



Farewell to Drs. Anil & Shalini

Dr Anil and Shalini's life and work has exemplified the motto 'not to be served but to serve'. With determination, selflessness and courage, they have pursued their calling. They completed their UG and PG courses in CMC Vellore - Shalini in Obstetrics and Gynaecology and Anil in Paediatrics, and subsequently public health. Starting off in 1998 in Utaraula and then in Chatrapur, they transformed settings where hospital deliveries were taboo, trained dhais not allowed to assist deliveries, and untouchability rife, into a campus where more than 1500 caesarean sections were conducted, and deliveries increased by 350%. Being a HIV prone area, they embarked on education on HIV prevention. Together they planned a Reproductive and Child Health Project in that area, coordinating with the government in the training of health professionals. Anil also worked in EMFI for three years, helping with Training programs. They have contributed generously with their time, wisdom and support and have been a blessing to many. Please remember them in prayer as they move to South Sudan, Africa where they hope to pioneer a medical training program.

Marriage Enrichment Seminar 23rd to 25th August 2013

Four doctor couples attended the Marriage enrichment seminar in August at SU Cornerstone retreat centre at Chennai. The resource people were Capt. Jacob & Mrs. Rani Jacob (Chennai), Mr. Peter & Sally David (Pondicherry), Mr. Moses & Dr. Mrs. Kalavathy Moses (Chennai). Some of the topics dealt with at the seminar were: Blueprint of Marriage, Love Languages, Intimacy, Conflict Resolving, Parenting, Family altar etc.



GROUND REALITIES—WHEN THE TYRE HITS THE ROAD

I am Dr. Mathew Cherian, an interventional radiologist working at the Kovai Medical Centre and hospital, located at Coimbatore city in Tamil Nadu. I joined this hospital 23 years ago with an interest to start a Department of interventional radiology and over the last two decades we have one of the best departments in India. I found favour in the eyes of the administrators and I believe this was the result of trusting in God and believing with absolute certainty that He wanted me to be here and that in this place I was serving the Lord himself.

Interventional radiology provides minimally invasive solutions to major surgical problems. A patient can come with subarachnoid haemorrhage secondary to ruptured intracranial aneurysm and interventional radiology techniques allow us to block the bleeding aneurysm through a femoral artery access without opening the skull. It also allows us to treat complex vascular malformation and manage an ischaemic extremity by angioplasty and stenting.

After passing my MBBS I was led to join the cardiology department at the Southern Railway headquarters hospital in Chennai where I got interested in catheter-based techniques. Later, when I did my radiology in JIPMER, Pondicherry, I also realised that God had given me a special talent in handling catheters and wires. I knew that this was by His grace and so I taught these techniques without any barriers to my students.

I find my work rewarding because many times I know that there is no other way a patient's life could have been saved. When a patient came to us with a stab injury where his vertebral artery was cut into two, the only way his life could have been saved was by embolization. I realise God's hand helping me through out and this helps me stay humble. I identify myself with Christ in my work and testify his faithfulness. Sometimes, God gives me the opportunity to share with a patient. Once there was a patient who came to us childless for 14 years because of tubal blocks. The blocks could not be opened due to extensive damage of the uterus. I prayed that God would touch her uterus and miraculously 10 months later she delivered a baby boy. God actually does not even need me to treat a patient and yet in his kindness uses me to bring healing to people.

I often find people crippled by the feeling that they are not in the right place. Learn to rest on the Lord, knowing that if you're not in the right place, the Lord himself will move you out. Like Jonah, God will create a storm in the sea and we should be willing to jump out. I believe that we are called to be blessing, this is a promise God gave Abraham and I believe it holds true for all of us even today.

Dr. Mathew Cherian, Kovai Medical Centre, Coimbatore, TN.



A case of Middle Cerebral artery Aneurysm treated by Coiling

Family News

New Arrivals

Drs. Shankar Babu & Mary (Hyderabad) was blessed with a baby girl Aletheia on 9th of August

Drs. Pradeep & Chandrika (AP) were blessed with a baby boy Hannu on 10th August

Drs. Solomon & Vennela (Vishakapatnam) were blessed with a baby girl Shammah on 20th September

Drs. Vijay & Parvathy (CMC, Vellore) were blessed with a baby girl Aradhana on 11th November

Wedding Bells

Dr. Maharajan wed Ruby on 26th September at Mumbai

Dr. Guru Prasad wed Dr. Sindhuja on 7th October at Chennai

Dr. Freeda weds Dr. Arthur Amit on 21st December at Chennai.



Weekend retreat for medicos of West Bengal at TLM Hospital, Purulia

Drs. Famkima & Joydeepa Darlong facilitated a weekend retreat. It was a unique time with no main speaker, theme, registration fees, or big crowd. The students had a break from their campus life, everyone spoke, opinions rolled out, and the small groups functioned effectively. Barbeque, Pictionary added to the bonding.

OPPORTUNITIES

Scudder Memorial Hospital is a 200 bedded Multispecialty Mission Hospital in Ranipet, Vellore District serving the people since 1866.

It requires committed Christian believers to work in the following positions.

Anesthetists – MD / DNB / DA

Ophthalmic Surgeon – MS / DNB / DO

Orthopedic Surgeon – MS / DNB / D. Ortho

General Surgeon – MS / DNB

Medical Officers – MBBS

Male Secretary & Female Receptionist (Christian Couple preferred)

Attractive Features:

Active & Vibrant doctors fellowship.

One of the fastest growing mission hospitals but still committed to the core calling of serving the poor through the healing ministry of Christ.

A good atmosphere for learning & growth.

Sponsorship for higher studies

Good schools nearby for children's education

Rent free accomodation with 24 hours electricity.

Salary:-

PG Degree - Rs. 54,134/-, PG Diploma : Rs. 43,705/-, MBBS:Rs. 28,208/-

Contact :

Medical Superintendent.

Mobile No. : 8925943001, 8925943002, 9715573768, 9894772075

e-mail : rao693@rediffmail.com,

samdent.raj@gmail.com

Web site : www.scudderhospital.org





every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.
James 1:17



Pre-marital Seminar— 28th September

For Praise & Prayer

The 900 odd students who attended the SHILOH missions conference at CMC Vellore (3-6th Oct). That they will remember the commitments they made at the conference.

The 30 students from different medical colleges in Chennai who attended the one day retreat called DOWNLOAD (22nd Sep & 1st Dec), that their zeal for the Lord will continue to burn strong

For those who attended the North east Regional conference at Dimapur (11th—16th Oct)

The students who attended the leadership program at Anaikatty, TN (8th Aug)

The students who attended the Pachalur Camp, TN (15th—17th Aug)

The 40 odd students and doctors who attended the first Regional conference at Mumbai (2nd Oct)

The Consultation on strategic planning for EMFI at Chennai (23rd—24th Nov)

The dedication service (24th Nov) of Drs. Anil & Shalini Cherian. They leave to Sudan in January.

The marriage seminar at Chennai (6th—8th Dec)



North East Regional Conference 11th—13th Oct 2013

The family of Christian Institute of Health Sciences & Research (CIHSR) had the opportunity of hosting the North East EMFI Biennial Conference from the 11th to 13th October 2013. Just, as in any family, some worked harder and longer than the others but everyone got involved at the end and we can proudly say “we did it”.

The theme for the conference was “He must increase and I must decrease” (John 3:30). The students outnumbered the graduates as usual. The resource people were Dr. K. Muralidhar from Tamil Nadu who spoke on the significance of the Word of God, Dr. Manoj Jacob who spoke about Whole Person Care, Dr. (Mrs) Jameela George, Director of “The Centre of Bioethics” (TCB), New Delhi who spoke about ethical issues of health care practices such as surrogacy, abortion, euthanasia etc. and finally Pastor Kedo Peseyie who exhorted from the Word of God.

We heard real life stories from Rev. Dr. Chingmak Chang, the founder of the Eleutheros Christian Society (ECS), Tuensang, Nagaland, Dr. Nelson Vashum from Comprehensive Health Service and Research Centre (CHSRC) at Ukhrul, Manipur and Mr. Armstrong Pame IAS, who constructed a 67 kms road, popularly known as “The Peoples' Road” through the dense forest from Tamenglong town to Tousem SDO (Civil) Headquarter and from there another 28 kms to connect with the road from Kohima to Assam. The Cultural night on the 12th October was an evening to remember. The campus children sang their songs in the company of the Nagaland Chamber Choir. The CIHSR Ladies Choir led by Dr. Sushil Daniel, a young ladies quartet singing “Jerusalem” and the Nursing students staging 'the Prodigal son', besides the rest.

The hall was aesthetically decorated, the sound system good and the food was great; thanks to the few tireless workers of the CIHSR, “We did it.”

- Dr. Viu Meru

Thomas Sydenham (1624-1689)

Thomas Sydenham (1624-1689) was a Christian physician, known as 'the English Hippocrates' and 'the father of English medicine'. He wrote:

"It becomes every man who purposes to give himself to the care of others, seriously to consider the four following things:

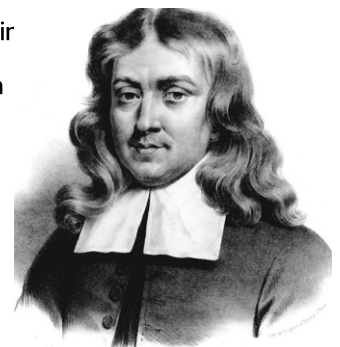
First, that he must one day give an account to the Supreme Judge of all the lives entrusted to his care.

Secondly, that all his skill, and knowledge, and energy as they have been given him by God, so they should be exercised for His glory, and the good of mankind, and not for mere gain or ambition.

Thirdly, and not more beautifully than truly, let him reflect that he has undertaken the care of no mean creature, for, in order that he may estimate the value, the greatness of the human race, the only begotten Son of God became himself a man, and thus ennobled it with his divine dignity, and far more than this, died to redeem it.

And fourthly, that the doctor being himself a mortal man, should be diligent and tender in relieving his suffering patients, inasmuch as he himself must one day be a like sufferer."

We in EMFI believe these principles should shape the Christian practice of medicine today specially in India.



Inviting articles for VOICE

This is to request you to share your experiences and learning with others in the fellowship through the pages of "Voice". As you know, Voice is produced with the intention of inspiring, igniting and initiating thought, prayer and action for the glory of God. Your views and responses are crucial to this process. Please e-mail your experiences, stories and reflections to Dr. Anna Mathew at voice.emfi@gmail.com. The themes for the year 2014 are given below alongside the last date for receiving articles.

Voice March 2014 - The Doctor's Professional Life - 10th January 2014.

Voice June 2014 - The Doctor's Personal Life - 10th April 2014.

Voice September 2014 - The Doctor's Family Life - 10th July 2014.

Voice December 2014 - The Doctor's Church and Social Life - 10th October 2014.

Please contribute articles (from 500 - 1000 words) sharing your experience. We are looking for your real personal stories rather than theoretical discourses.

Even retelling a single story will be worthwhile and will bless those who read. Do remember to include a soft copy of your recent photograph along with the article.

TREASURER'S NOTE

Dear Friends and Partners with EMFI, It is a pleasure to connect with you as the new Treasurer. While I know it is a joy to serve, it also holds a challenge to work with very limited resources! I believe it is a journey of faith. Not many an entrepreneur will understand how a faith ministry works... or has worked for the last 39 years!

I understand there are 2 factors....

- 1) The commitment of a faithful constituency and
- 2) The Lord's grace and timely provision.

This is a simple call to continue to be faithful in your regular contributions and pray for the ongoing work. I will be in touch with you periodically.

May His Kingdom come!

Dr. Grace Thomas,
Nilambur, Kerala

Financial Update

July
Income 596100
Expense 591503

August
Income 537332
Expense 653682

September
Income 551550
Expense 580711

October
Income 684749
Expense 562899

Dr. Grace Thomas has taken over from Dr. Justin Paul who stepped down as Treasurer after 4 years. We are grateful to God for Dr. Justin's sincere involvement.

Published on behalf of EMFI by
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REFLECTIONS FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY

As we come to the close of yet another year, it is an occasion to celebrate the Lord's goodness and faithfulness. As a team, we experienced in abundant measure His presence, His providence and His provisions. Thank you all so much for standing with us in this important ministry of shaping 'tomorrow's doctors', thereby also impacting health care practice in our nation. We consider it an honour and a privilege.

The various state and regional conferences, seminars and training programs went well. Special mention must be made of the Maharashtra state conference which was a landmark event after the ministry in the state was reinitiated with Anshuman and Alankrita moving into Mumbai last May. There were tears of joy and gratitude in Anshuman's eyes as he proposed the vote of thanks at the end of the program. Around 40 doctors and medical students from different parts of the state attended and most were keen to involve and take the ministry forward.

The 3 events as part of the Alongsiderz initiative to accompany and journey with young doctor families has been well received. We are also hoping, God enabling, to have (in partnership with ICMDA) the first draft of the Bible study materials for medical students ready by the end of the year.

In recent weeks, the term '**Kingdom of God**' has been coming to me with a fresh emphasis. Going through the gospels I realised that it was central in the teachings of Jesus. The term is used about 80 times in the 4 gospels (including Kingdom of Christ, Kingdom of heaven which possibly are interchangeable terms).

When Jesus taught His disciples to pray "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"... was He only referring to the final establishment of the Kingdom in all its fullness or was there something in the interim period?

From my reading I am reasonably convinced that each of us has been chosen and given entry into His Kingdom to be His representatives in this age and time. We are not 'ordinary Christian doctors' but there is a higher calling that each of us has been invited to. There is a 'meta-narrative' to our lives.

Jesus' teaching to "Seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness...." implies that this should be our primary agenda to further His Kingdom purposes in the respective areas of our calling. It could be in a mission hospital, in a private practice or teaching hospital or serving the Government. Each of us may need to wait on the Lord and interpret for ourselves what it means in our own special settings of work.

What an honor... but also what a sacred responsibility!

Each of us is accountable to God for all the skills, talents and gifts He has given us that we may put them to full use in His Kingdom purposes. Life cannot be frittered away in self-centred pursuits alone.

May David Livingstone's life slogan "I will place no value on anything I have or may possess except in relation to the Kingdom of Christ" become ours too as we step into the New Year 2014 with all its exciting opportunities and possibilities for the Kingdom of our Lord. The EMFI team will value your continued prayers and support as we press on seeking to do His will and be a blessing.

Manoj Jacob

Those wishing to contribute can send your Cheques/ DD's/MO's in favour of 'Evangelical Medical Fellowship of India' to the address given below, or make electronic/Bank transfers:

State Bank of India A/c No. 10021817300

(Branch code: 2288, IFSC: SBIN0002288)

HDFC Bank A/c No: 04921000009885

(Branch code: 492 (IFSC: HDFC0000492)

Important: Please Call/Text/Email us after you make the transaction.
09176215489/90. emfihq@gmail.com