

# FAR AND NEAR

2020 | FIRST QUARTER



## VISION:

Christ's Transforming presence in Healthcare and The Nation through Christ centered Medical Professionals.



## *Chairman's Letter*

### SOVEREIGN GOD AND THE PANDEMIC

What is common in our overall response to the pandemic is the departure of rationality and reason! Even the most powerful nations are confused, overwhelmed and brought to their knees. This is unlike any situation they or their leaders have faced.

Several economists and business leaders are saying that the world will be a different place after the pandemic. They predict that the way we work and live will be different. I hope it will be different. Through our exploitative consumerism and material accumulation, we have neglected and been unjust to our 'neighbours'. We have laid waste our planet. Instead of being good stewards of the creation, we have tried to abuse our natural world, and we have mercilessly disregarded the animals.

Carl Safina, an ecologist and an author, says, 'Humans caused the pandemic by putting the world's animals into a cruel blender and drinking that smoothie'. What an indictment! In a connected world, we cannot act alone. Our actions have consequences. The boomerang we threw at the planet is coming back with its sharp edge pointed toward us.

So, this crisis should help us reflect on our lifestyle, our priorities and our relationship to each other and the planet. This also reminds us of the necessity to follow Sabbath rest in our lifestyle. This is to be a time when we desist from taking part in prevalent consumption-accumulation cycle, but a time when we reflect on

God's goodness with grateful hearts. It is said that the biggest beneficiary of this pandemic is the planet. With empty highways, lockdowns and collapsed air travel and disappearing hyper tourism, finally, the earth has some time to recover from the ravages that we inflicted - A Sabbath rest for the land.

The other aspect of the crisis is the fear and uncertainty surrounding the pandemic. As doctors and healthcare workers, we face a substantially increased risk of contracting the disease. Besides, our best laid plans are in disarray. Schools and many institutions are closed. Travel is restricted. Some of us face the prospect of being laid off from our jobs.

In these troubled times, Psalm 46, gives us a different perspective. The psalmist makes some important assertions:

Firstly, when significant threats and diseases come cascading down, God is our fortress, where we can always find refuge and strength. Since that is the only place of safety, we need not be afraid.

Secondly, where the Most High dwells there is a river in contrast to the raging sea. This river is for nourishment and for healing.

Thirdly, an invitation to come and experience God in all his glory and majesty. To see Him accomplish His purpose through all that is happening in the world is the most reassuring vision that we need today.

***Varghese Philip***





# Highlights from the Staff

## **ANUP KUMAR RANA: FIELD PARTNER - ODISHA**

Anup could visit colleges in Cuttack, Bhubaneswar, Balasore and Berhampur. He could meet some of the doctors in these places. He could also meet some first year students and minister to them.

## **BIBIN BENOY: FIELD PARTNER - KARNATAKA**

Bibin visited many fellowships and conducted a retreat at Belgaum where some allied health professionals attended along with the medical students. He also helped in organising a doctors meeting at Baptist hospital where the needs and activities of EMFI were explained by Dr Samuel Sidhartha. He spent time individually with a junior doctor in Baptist hospital whom he had known from their student days.

## **CHANDY ISSAC: ASSOCIATE FIELD PARTNER - KARNATAKA**

Chandy was encouraged to be part of a graduation ceremony where 10 of the students who fellowship in their house graduated and one of them won many awards academically. He writes, "We thank God for the opportunities for fellowship, study and service over these past few years in Bangalore and pray that they will seek the Lord's will as they move on into the next phase of life and career." He helped coordinate a one day retreat for medical students at Bangalore Baptist Hospital that had around 20 students attending. The meeting with some of the doctors in Bangalore was also a fruitful one where the needs of North Karnataka were presented by Bibin. The students of the dental fellowship that meets in their home took the initiative to reach out to the underprivileged during Christmas and so they visited a children's home and spent time with the kids there singing carols and organising some games for them. At one of their fellowship meetings they had a doctor couple from Herbertpur Mission Hospital come and share about the gross need for doctors in North India and highlighted the disparity in healthcare between the EAG states and the southern states. Some of the students have committed to serving in the north later this year.

## **DEVAKUMAR: COORDINATOR - TRAINING**

Deva took a series of bible studies in some of the fellowships in Chennai on 'Backsliding' and was very encouraged to see many students attending it. He along with his wife Nanditha could organise a marriage enrichment seminar in October that was attended by 5 couples who had a blessed time. In November Deva coordinated the one day retreat for medical students in Chennai called the DOWNLOAD. Incidentally this is the 8th year that this quarterly program (4 in a year) has been blessing the students on basic biblical doctrines. Deva also spoke at the CMC Pulmonology departments' family retreat at TWR. Deva also ministered at the PG fellowship of Telugu students at CMC where many of the young PG students (from AP & Telengana) are mentored by their immediate seniors who have been in mission fields and are now working in CMC. At some graduates fellowships at CMC, Vellore Deva spoke on the signs of second coming.

## **GEORGE SUCHIANG: FIELD PARTNER - NORTH EAST INDIA**

Along with his regular visits to the fellowships George could spend time with many of the doctors discussing their challenges and praying for them. He helped in arranging a retreat at Jowai where Dr Arul Anketell shared the Lord's word, which was a blessing to many of the doctors who attended. At one of the fellowships, George was encouraged to see even the PG students attending the prayer inspite of their friends having a fun time. Though there was curfew in Meghalaya and Assam, George could meet up with some of the students and doctors in these places and pray with them. In one of his travels the cab driver had an issue with the Police and they beat him up badly and took him away to the Police station and so George was forced to take another vehicle which was stoned by protesters and the entire wind shield was shattered. It was only the grace of God that he was not injured. On his visits to a civil hospital George was pained and angered to see the negligence and absence of Christian doctors there in the time of an emergency.

## **KT PAUL: COORDINATOR - NORTH INDIA**

KT visited many fellowships in Meerut, Ajmer, Udaipur, Delhi and Allahabad. He discussed the sacrifice of Jesus in these fellowships. He was part of the Christmas celebrations in some of these places. At Herbertpur, KT ministered in the chapel and also at the graduates meeting. He ministered and encourage many of the families on campus as well. KT spent time with some graduating students and recollected the faithfulness of God in the past and encourage them to trust the Lord regarding their future and to live out God's purposes.

## **LINU ZACHARIAH: FIELD PARTNER - TAMIL NADU**

Linu visited many fellowships and also spent time with students individually. In some of the places the students are unable to meet regularly either due to a lack of proper place to meet or the management/institutional restrictions. Pray that the Lord will make a way for the students to meet. Linu participated in many of the Christmas programs organised by the students and witnessed the blessing these programs proved to be to those who attended. In some of the fellowships Linu could share about the importance of walking closer with the Lord each day.

## **MICHAEL SUNDERSINGH: COORDINATOR - PASTORAL CARE**

Michael was involved in planning and organising the North India regional conference at Delhi. He visited Herbertpur, Dehradun, Ranchi, Tata Nagar, Madhepura and CMC Ludhiana and ministered to some of the doctors there and also updated them of the ministry of EMFI. Mike also conducted devotions for the leaders at the EHA office. He and his wife Grace are constantly working with young doctors helping them in marriage counselling and guidance. They also helped a few young couples who were having difficulty with bringing up their children. Michael is encouraged by the support of some of the local doctors in Delhi (young and old) in praying and supporting the student work in the city.



## M V RAO: FIELD PARTNER - ANDHRA PRADESH & TELENGANA

Rao along with his wife Dr Bharathi continue to visit the fellowships at Tirupathi on a regular basis and their home is open to the students and young doctors. Recently a doctor who is doing her peripheral posting visited them and spent a considerable amount of time discussing about the ministry among the students and how she can be of use in this ministry. Everywhere that Rao travelled he spent time with the doctors either in their homes or hospitals encouraging them and motivating them to be available to students. Large numbers of students attended the Christmas programs organised by the fellowships and were blessed. Rao accompanied one of the fellowship

students as they went carol singing to their faculty members houses and ministered to them.

## SOLOMON RAJU: FIELD PARTNER - ANDHRA PRADESH & TELENGANA

Solomon visited the fellowships at Ongole, Vijayawada, Nellore and Hyderabad. He spent time individually with many doctors in these places as well. He attended the Christmas programs at Nandyal and Kurnool. At Vijayawada and Hyderabad, Solomon was part of the planning meeting for the state along with Dr Samuel Sidhartha and some doctors from Aadhra Pradesh and Telengana.

## *Adios Devakumar*

Mr Devakumar (Deva as he is fondly called) retired from active service with EMFI from January 2020. He has been with EMFI for the last 19 years.

Deva joined EMFI on 1-04-2001 after taking his VRS from the Pharmaceutical company, Hoechst in Marketing and Sales Dept.

Deva was initially appointed as a field staff for Chennai, Tamil Nadu. But seeing the need of the ministry, he started travelling and covered the entire state of Tamil Nadu. As the work in AP started expanding he started visiting colleges in AP also encouraging the students and doctors there. He helped in conducting the state level missions camp at Pachalur along with CFH, Oddanchatram twice a year. He initiated a structured program for medical students called PLUMB LINE in 2007 on basic biblical doctrines. It was later re-christened as DOWNLOAD and has since been very popular among the medical students in and around Chennai. It is a one day retreat conducted once in a quarter and it was started in 2012 and has been going on consistently for the past 8 years. Of late this model has been replicated in other states like Karnataka, AP - TS and a few states in the North East as well. One of the main ministries that Deva and his wife Nanditha have been involved over the years which has impacted many young doctor couples is the Marriage Enrichment, Parenting and Pre-marital seminars. Building up a strong families on biblical principles has been the focus of these seminars and it has had a profound impact on those who have attended it.

Deva is a very energetic and fun loving person with a deep love for the Lord. His passion for the Lord and his work is infectious.







Deva writes, "It has been the sheer Grace of God and HIS unmerited favour upon us as a family. What a journey! What a Privilege! What an amazing God! This journey has not been a solo run but has been a walk with a great bunch of a very gifted field and office staff, some wonderful leaders, lovely families and friends, needless to say my own family and the extended family who stood by me in intercession and encouragement. There is no retiring from HIS Kingdom business.... I hope to still Study, Teach & Travel under the Lord's direction.

*I Covet your prayers for me and the Family.*

*May God Bless EMFI that it may continue to be a small 'voice' in our beloved nation."*

Here are some of the excerpts of what people said at his retirement prayer meeting in January

*Deva is a fun loving person with a deep passion and commitment towards the Lord.*

*My interaction with Deva annan started even before I joined EMFI in 2002, when he came to Pallavaram to conduct a bible study for doctors. I still remember what he preached on that day. It was about Noah's ark – a story we have all known from Sunday school days. But he gave some statistics about the measurements of a Ship that needs to be sea worthy and compared the proportions to Noahs ark and showed how meticulous and sovereign the Lord is. I have not forgotten that since.*



*We will miss the infectious laughter and the many moments of fun over a cup of Chai with Deva.*

We as a family thank the Lord for the years of faithful, fruitful service that Deva has rendered to EMFI. We pray that the Lord would continue to use him in all his future endeavours.

## *Pray for*

2nd - 4th April: *Karnataka State Conference at Bangalore*

10th - 12th April: *Tamil Nadu State Missions Conference at Pachalur, Oddanchatram*

14th - 16th August: *EMFI Biennial National Conference at Hyderabad, Telengana*

## *Praise God for*

- The many students who were blessed by the Christmas programs conducted by the various fellowship groups across the country.
- The 30 students who attended the two Institute of Medical Missions (IMM) programs conducted at Asha Kiran Hospital, Lamtaput, Odisha in March.



# *Ground realities - where the tyre hits the road*

## A CASE FOR WILDERNESS

I sit in a cold room in a near dilapidated house typing away on my keyboard. There is a silence that envelopes this time of the day after children are tucked into bed and the rigmarole of daily routine is laid to rest. I open my Bible and reflect on what the Lord reveals through His word. I sit in His cosy warm presence away from all the hustle bustle of people, technology and distractions. I am alone with the Lord and these are the most precious moments of the day. He cautions me, encourages me, chides me and sustains me. Never does He abandon me as filthy as I am in my sin. It is these moments I long for the whole day. As C S Lewis says, "The thoughts and concerns pounce upon me as wild animals and this time gives me the strength to shove them back and listen to the still small voice."

The one thing that keeps me ticking in a small mission hospital in Maharashtra is this time. The reason I believe this is the place for me is also because these still moments- wilderness moments with Him. If I can call them, are aplenty here. When resources are scarce, the bustle of camaraderie is little and buzz of gadgets is only occasional, our hearts find less reasons to be lost and hence find their rest in the only place possible- in Him. Well there may be many who can find time for the Lord in the midst of chaos and turbulence. But for me, in this wilderness I can hear Him the clearest.

In the gospel of Luke, John the Baptist gets an extraordinary introduction. After mentioning the biggies in politics, (Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate) administrative (Philip and Lysanias) and religious (Annas and Caiphas) heads of the day, the author almost with a sense of sarcasm mentions that the word of the Lord came to John in the wilderness (Luke 3:1-2). The political leaders and the spiritual gurus of the day totally missed what God wanted to do for that generation. But a simple man anointed and set apart from childhood away in the wilderness eating locusts and wild honey sensed and perceived God's move. Similarly we see Moses in the wilderness meeting God in the burning bush (Exodus 3:3). We know David seeing God's hand in the forest saving him from the Lion and the bear (1 Samuel 17:34-36). All the cloud of witnesses before us had these decisive wilderness experiences with God that shaped their future in a radical fashion.

As a generation that lives with unrelenting notifications and non-stop exchange of information, moments of stillness are difficult to come by. Sitting alone with the Master and finding His will is becoming a tougher challenge. As we are busy checking our Instagram and WhatsApp status, the movement of the Spirit is difficult to sense. The most important criterion to decide where I should spend my life for a Christian can be narrowed down to a simple question- "Where do I meet my Lord the best? ". If we listen to Him enough and obey, we can win the world for Christ. But the essential prerequisite is shutting the world out and letting Him in. All education, qualification, missions, needs, evangelisation are an outcome of the wilderness experience with God.

My tryst with Indian medical missions was purely God ordained. After my internship I was preparing for Civil service examination, when a few seniors of my fellowship forced me to attend a missions workshop in Ashakiran hospital in Lamtaput, Orissa. When I went back to my work and made major life decisions, that experience helped me a lot. I gave up the idea of civil services realising God's call on my life. I joined the same hospital as junior doctor and those were the best days of my life. In Ashakiran, I enjoyed the most intimate moments with God and those moments taught me to make Bible-based decisions for the future.

I invite all my younger generation to come and taste those intensely close moments with the Lord. Away from the rat race of PG and the avalanche of digital disturbances to places quiet and calm, and meet the Lord. For me, it was Mission hospitals and for others it may be some other place. But go we must into those small still avenues of Spiritual encounters that will transform us to His likeness forever.

Then history will say that when the country was being troubled with unnecessary legislations and being divided along various lines, the word of the Lord came to us in the wilderness.

**Arun Gautam**



**Arun Gautam**





## Opportunities

### *Van Allen Hospital, Kodaikanal, Tamil Nadu*

Van Allen Hospital was established in 1913 by a group of Christian missionaries as a place where people could receive quality medical attention in a picturesque setting of comfort and care. Located in Kodaikanal, Tamilnadu, at an altitude of about 7000 ft in the Western Ghats, we are nearly 100 kms away from the nearest available tertiary referral centre.

Building upon our 100-year foundation, we continue, in the spirit of Christian service to provide the best in medical services to all who walk through our doors. We currently offer acute medical care, mother and child care and orthopaedic and fracture care.

Specialities Required:

**1. Obstetrician**

**2. Physician**

A vacancy has arisen to commence ASAP to provide obstetric and general medical care. While this is a long term vacancy, candidates who are interested in short term positions can also apply. Salary will be decided upon qualification and experience. Free accommodation will be provided. Kodaikanal International School offers a considerable scholarship for children of doctors working at the Van Allen.

Interested candidates can contact

Mr George Paulose.

Mobile: 8589989894

E-mail: vanallenkodi@gmail.com

### *Institute of Medical Missions (IMM) at Asha Kiran Society Lamtaput, Odisha - March 2020*







# *Reflections from the General Secretary*

---

## *Grace*

---

Dear Brothers and Sisters

Let me first wish you with the greeting in 1st John, *'Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well.'*

The well-known passage on our Lord's discourse with Nicodemus in John's gospel has been a great comfort to many down the centuries. It has been an anchor to the troubled soul. To those buffeted by waves of guilt, doubt and sin, to those who look for Life, the words of unconditional acceptance by our Lord have been a safe vessel in the storm.

Nicodemus asks, *'How can these things be?'*. Looking at the previous verses we can reframe the question as to ask *'How can I, who have been born only in the flesh be born again of the Spirit and enter the Kingdom of God?'* To many brothers and sisters among the students and others this is still a question. Sometimes, even those who know these things begin to have doubts when going through spiritually difficult times. Our Lord's answer is given in verses 10-15.

***You are Israel's teacher and you don't understand these things?***

We can be teachers of ethics and sound doctrine and yet not understand the way of the Kingdom.

***'Very truly I tell you, we speak of what we know, and we testify of what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony'. I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things?'***

Our Lord tells us that our problem is that we don't accept his testimony. In the context it would mean that we do not accept what he says is the answer to the question *'How can I who have been born only in the flesh be born again in the Spirit and enter the Kingdom of God?'* We have to begin by believing the simple and straightforward answers that he gives us.

***No one has ever gone to into heaven except the one who came from heaven – the son of Man.***

It is only the Son who had the answers to the question. He is the one who came from heaven. It is his place. To questions about his place, only he can give the answers. Conversely, we cannot listen to any answers to this question, whether they be from another human, the philosophies of this world, the doubts that the devil places in our minds or those that arise from our conscience and its dictates. There is no other candidate for showing the way except our Lord Jesus Christ. What he answers to this question is our answer and none else.

***'Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes may have eternal life.'***

This verse is our Lord's answer to the question *'How can I who has been born only in the flesh be born again in the Spirit and enter the Kingdom of God?'* It refers to something which has to take place to him. *"Lifted up"* primarily means his death on the cross according to John 12:32-33. It is his death on the cross and the resurrection that makes the one born only in the flesh to be born in the Spirit and to enter the Kingdom of God.

***What is it that we believe?***

The belief that our Lord Jesus died for our sins is the bedrock. The application of this truth is to believe what has happened to us because of his death and resurrection. According to what he has said as an answer to Nicodemus' question, we also believe that because of his death and resurrection we have been born again and have entered the Kingdom of God! Man, devil and the self can say otherwise, but our Lord's word stands against all these. He has told us that only he knows how we can enter and has shared it with us. Let us stand firm in Him.

***'What shall I do if I sin again?'***

That is a different question. It has a different answer. The previous question has only one answer and let us root ourselves in it before we attempt to answer the second.

*Sola Gracia!*

***Samuel Sidhartha***





EMFI WELCOMES YOU TO THE

# BIENNIAL 2 NATIONAL 0 CONFERENCE 2 0

13TH - 16TH AUGUST 2020  
HYDERABAD, ANDHRA PRADESH

BLOCK THESE DATES IN YOUR  
CALENDARS AND PLAN TO BE THERE.

## Financial Update

MONTH	INCOME	EXPENSE
NOVEMBER	681443	880945
DECEMBER	1292376	878879
JANUARY	797289	906172
FEBRUARY	659658	757101

Those wishing to contribute can send your cheques/DDs/MOs in favour of 'Evangelical Medical Fellowship of India' to the address given below or make an electronic/Bank transfer to:

State Bank of India

Current A/c No: 35465591006

(Branch Code: 2288, IFSC: SBIN0002288)

HDFC Bank A/c No: 04921000009885

(Branch Code: 492, IFSC: HDFC0000492)

You can also make direct online payment by visiting our website [www.emfi.in](http://www.emfi.in) and clicking on the DONATE NOW button\*

\*EMFI is charged 2.5% service charge for every transaction

\*Please call/Text/Email us after you make the transaction.  
09176215489/90, [emfihq@gmail.com](mailto:emfihq@gmail.com)

## Family News

### BIRTHS

- Drs Chandan and Rebecca (CMC, Vellore) were blessed with a baby girl on 1st February 2020

- Dr Vineeth Gladson (Kerala) blessed with a baby boy on 17th March 2020.

### SAD DEMISE

Miss. Arpita the younger daughter of Dr Isac & Dr (Mrs) Vijila (Kodaikanal) went to be with the Lord on 22nd February 2020. Please remember this dear family and pray for God's comfort & healing.

Published on behalf of EMFI by

Dr. Samuel Sidhartha – General Secretary

Address: EMFI, 4th Floor, Rainbow Vikas, No: 9, Varadarajulu Street, Egmore, Chennai – 600008 Email: [emfihq@gmail.com](mailto:emfihq@gmail.com)

Phone: 044-28361507