



# India Outreach Newsletter

April 2014

## OPPOSITES & SIMILARITIES...

....in India – the trip of a lifetime!

By Lori Gritters

I've been playing a lot of the opposite game with our grandkids. Riding down the road I say "dry", they say "wet", hot – cold,



dirty – clean, small – large, day – night, short – tall, dark – light, crowded – spacious, foreign – familiar, orphan – family, wicked – righteous. Many of my ideas of what to call out next originate from our recent trip to India with Deane & Donna Wassink, on behalf of

Georgetown Church. The land and culture of India are quite opposite ours. It became obvious the second we stepped off the plane. Delayed for 24 hours because of blizzard conditions in Chicago, we finally arrived to the heat of India (and this was their cool season! The men even wore earmuffs to protect their ears from the 80° chill!) After spending 56 hours en-route, we didn't even know if it was day or night, and even though we arrived in the middle of their night (Sat. night/Sunday AM!), our Indian friends were there to greet us with flowers, coffee, and a welcoming crowd. After a 3 hr. bus ride and a couple hours of rest, we found ourselves in church with a large number of dark Indian Tamil-speaking Christians. My husband preached, with Pastor Paul Raj interpreting sentence-by-sentence. They sang in Tamil, accompanied by guitar and keyboard. Children sat on the floor, adults sat on chairs, men on one side, women on another. Walking home to the guest house, we felt like every one of our senses was being assaulted by change. It seemed everything was opposite. Yet by the end of the day my heart and mind found in all this strangeness, something actually quite familiar. Could it be that there were some synonyms here after all? *One faith, one hope, one Lord, one God and Father of all (Eph. 4).*

**"But we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word."  
Acts 6:4**

sphere of God's church. You navigate amongst friends. And even though it takes a while to get acquainted with people, you start on common ground. It's amazed me all my life. And it was no different on this trip to India. Day 1, stepping off the plane, we were met with love and prayers. It continued for the entire couple weeks. We worshipped together, prayed together, met in conference together around talk of God's glorious church, walked together, fellowshiped together in sweet communion, ate together, and went to villages together where we witnessed God's people reaching out to the Hindu community to bring the truth of salvation in Christ alone. Yes, every time we stepped out the door we saw opposites – India is a crowded country with lots of people and animals and noise, dirt and heat – but when we went to the sanctuary, we indeed went to the sanctuary. It was a refuge where believers of like faith gathered to hear Christ speak. And we were thrilled to be there together. One woman took the garland gift hanging around my neck and stretched it over her head to include herself. We hugged people we didn't even know and could barely communicate with, because we knew each other in Christ. It was a beautiful experience.



Visiting the English speaking congregation was an extra treat. The same oneness was there but the opposites were fewer. We spoke the same language, sang the same songs, and could communicate on many subjects that were dear to the hearts of all of us. These college students and medical professionals gather regularly for worship and Bible studies and are eager to learn and live all of the Reformed faith in a country that is primarily Hindu.

As we rode through the streets one day,



Spending all my years in the home of a pastor, I have always said that there's something unique about moving around in the

the thought came to me that unless God intervenes, most of the people we saw on the streets would be perishing someday. There is urgent need for God's Word to go forth. Both the Tamil and the English congregations are intent on being a beacon of light in the spiritual darkness of India. They are concerned for people in the misery of paganism, and pray often that God will use them to be messengers of the truth. We live in an environment very opposite of the Indian Christians, but we have the same God, Who gave us the same Word with the same command to be witnesses of Him (Is 43, Acts 1) Whether our neighbors are Hindu, atheists, nominal Christians, or believers, let's be encouraged to call them to *"hear, while I with grateful heart record what God hath done for me"*.

### Did You Know...?

**Most Indian children say "hi," "hello," "uncle," "aunty" and "how are you?" in English.**

**In India it is considered disrespectful to call older people by their first names. Names for older people are prefixed with "aunty," "uncle," or the local terms for older sister or older brother, if there is not a large age difference. Unlike the West's use of these terms, they don't necessarily connote biological relationship in India.**

**In Tamil Nadu, where the language is Tamil, "hello" is Vanakkam.**



*Vellore is located in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu*

## From Grace Foster Home...

### ...The First Steps to a New Home!



Imagine waking up one morning and being told you have to move. Not in a month, not in a week, but having to pack everything you own and be out within a few days. Now, imagine that it's not only you that have to move, but 50 children as well. The challenge comes not only in packing everything and moving, but finding a home in a short time that will accommodate the needs. This is something the Grace Foster Home has had to face too many times since its beginning in 2007. Since they don't own a permanent residence for the children, they are forced to rent homes in the area and are at the mercy of Hindu landlords, who may decide on a whim they want them to vacate for ANY reason at all.

There is a solution. A few years ago Pastor Paulraj, through donations, was able to purchase a 2+ acre parcel of land in Vellore, which they aptly named "Eden". This piece of land is indeed a paradise for them, an opportunity to build a



permanent, safe and secure home for the children. The Grace Foster Home committee of Georgetown PRC, with the support and approval of the council, has decided to assist the Grace Foster Home with raising the funds needed to build this home. Approximately \$100,000 is needed to complete the project, but preparations are already being made and plans drawn up with the help of an American engineer living in India, who is helping them free of charge. The new foster home will consist of 2 buildings, one for the boys and one for the girls, with a common room for Bible studies, etc. What a blessing this will be! Please pray for Pastor Paulraj, Kasthuri and the Grace Foster Home committee in their fundraising efforts, so they can soon provide a real home for the children in a safe environment, away from those who would intend to do them harm. If you are interested in donating a financial gift, please send your contribution to:

**Georgetown PRC India Outreach  
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