

India

God's Work Is Being Done in India!

*by Peter Heyn, Pastor at Living Water Lutheran Church,
San Angelo, Texas*

Devoid of hope. Devoid of joy. That's the sad truth of the festivities that surrounded us during our 16 days in India. There are millions of gods in Hinduism, and yet none can even begin to help because none is real. And that is why the mission work of our partner synod, the Lutheran Mission of Salvation - India, is so vitally important.

India is a colorful nation. You travel through the cities, through the country, and you see Hindu temples, colored in beautiful pinks, oranges, blues, and yellows. When we first arrived, the Indians were in the midst of the 10-day Festival of Ganesh Chaturthi, a celebration that marks the birth of the elephant-headed deity Ganesh. He is the

god of prosperity and wisdom. It's a festival that is marked by music, drums, singing, and immersion of Ganesh idols in different bodies of water throughout the country. And it's empty. No matter how beautiful the singing, no matter how sincere they might be, it is praise to a false god, similar to the praise and prayers of the prophets of Baal and Asherah on Mt. Carmel.

We had the opportunity to visit a traditional Hindu crematorium, amidst Hindu temple-like surroundings. The families bring the bodies of their loved ones here. And yet there's no true hope. They might envision their loved ones will return to life as a reincarnated creature of some sort, but we know it's a false hope (see photo ►).

And Hinduism is not the only religious rival to Christianity. The nation has spent long portions of its history in conflict with the Muslims, or under their rule. In parts of Hyderabad, we could still hear the Muslim calls to prayer five times a day. Buddhism and Jainism also dot the landscape, not to mention the various forms

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From the Editor

*Rev. Thomas Heyn
Board for World Outreach
Administrator*



Pastor Peter Heyn recently visited India with Dan Browning and me. He writes about the many impressions made upon him by the rich and varied culture encountered in this world mission field. We hope you share his excitement about the needs and opportunities the Lord has placed before us. We appreciate your prayers for the work in our world fields and your financial support that makes this work possible.

"Proclaim good tidings of His salvation from day to day. Tell of His glory among the nations, His wonderful deeds among all the peoples" (1 Chr 16:23,24).





of Christianity, such as those which preach a prosperity gospel. But Hinduism predominates, especially in Hyderabad and Rajahmundry, where most of our mission work is done. In the midst of these false gods, it often felt like we were Paul in the midst of Mars Hill (Acts 17), surrounded by every god imaginable.

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What a joy to know the hope that we have in the God who is unknown to so many in India, the God that Paul preached. What a joy to visit the different churches and to hear and join the voices of those who know our true Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. What a joy to visit the different orphanages and to hear the orphans recite the different parts of the Catechism - the 10 Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, and the Lord's Prayer. To know that despite the difficult lives they live, they know the eternal hope that we share. What a joy to know that the all-powerful, life-giving Word of God is preached in India, and that our Hope in Jesus Christ has been made known. And what an encouragement to join with the Christians of India in growing in faith through God's Word, and to join them in singing God's praises.

One of the songs that the children sang at almost every location was entitled "Showers of Blessings". The children sing these words in verse one: "There shall be showers of blessing / This is the promise of love / There shall be seasons refreshing / Sent from the Savior above." The Lord certainly showered down blessings on us as we visited our Indian brothers and sisters in the Christian faith. He is showering down blessings on them as they share the hope that we have with those in the congregations, those in the orphanages, and those in India. May God continue to bless us as we partner with LMSI in sharing with the world the news of our salvation in Jesus Christ! It's a message that we, by grace, know. It's a message that many in India, by his grace, know. It's a message that many more need to know. May he bless the work of his church, as his grace is made known!

Ganesha, the god of prosperity and wisdom ▼



school children ▼



Bible women and gospel workers ▲

fishing boats on the Godavari River ▼



The Loss of a Gospel Worker, a Husband, and a Father

by Pastor Solomon Mamidi, president of LMSH

Mr. Godwil was a seminary student and also a gospel worker in Lutheran Mission of Salvation - Hyderabad (LMSH). His father, Mr. Samuel, is also a gospel worker in LMSH.

During the peak Covid time in the month of April 2021, the president and the supervisors went to disburse the Covid relief fund received from the ELS. At that time, along with all the other gospel workers, Mr. Godwil also attended the program, but he was suffering with fever and cough, so we gave him some financial support and advised him to visit a hospital immediately. Eventually at the hospital, he found that he had Covid. He was admitted to the hospital and never came back home. On April 25, 2021, Mr. Godwil's wife, Prasanthi, heard the saddest news of her life. Her husband had died.

On June 10, 2014, Prasanthi and Godwil got married and were blessed with two children. Sruthi is now 8 years old and Paul is now 6. Prasanthi had never expected that she would be taking care of her children as a young widow. Yes, it is a tragedy, but she did not lose hope. She believes that her husband is with the Lord because of Jesus' perfect life, innocent death, and glorious resurrection. She trusts in the Lord for guidance and help.

To support her family, the LMSH has called Prasanthi to become a Bible woman. Now, besides taking care of her two children, Prasanthi is serving the Lord as a Bible woman by bringing the gospel from house to house. Because she has been going through a lot of hardships to provide for herself and her children, the LMSH has been providing her some financial help, but she still has a great need for additional assistance.*

Prasanthi's children ▼



A gift and a challenge

Our friends in India need to expand existing buildings and repair others to better train future pastors, house orphans, and provide houses of worship for their members. Total cost is approximately \$160,000. Hope Lutheran Church in Portage, Indiana, has given \$80,000 to start these projects. Can you or your congregation help to complete them? For more details, please contact Rev. Dan Basel, the ELS Giving Counselor at (507) 469-9656 or danbasel@blc.edu.

Please note

Anyone wishing to help with aid to Prasanthi may donate and indicate that it is for Prasanthi (or general humanitarian relief in India). See the information on Page 4 for more details about how to donate.

News From Other Mission Fields

CHILE—Pastor Mario Gálvez serves two congregations three hours apart. He preaches at the Linares congregation on Saturday afternoons, then returns home to Santiago for the Sunday service. He supervises one seminary student. Unfortunately, a second student has withdrawn from the church.

PERU—The pastors continue their work of reaching out to their community. Several building projects are planned or underway that will provide homes for worship and will help in the training of future workers. Two pastors continue to train leaders of the Shawi people. One of the Shawi villages recently enjoyed the completion of a clean water project funded by a special donor familiar with their need.

KOREA—The Korean pastors continue to seek new locations for outreach and work with the leaders of their churches to develop programs to better serve the people. They are considering expanding their program of training Korean students for studies in the U.S. at Lutheran schools.

LATVIA—Three men continue their seminary studies. Work continues with a new evangelism and apologetics center in a historic part of Old Town Riga. The pastors continue to seek ways to serve displaced persons from Ukraine who have settled in the area.

CZECHIA—The pastors are busy with a new year of classes at Martin Luther School. Other outreach opportunities are being explored.

UKRAINE—Administrators Nick and Kerry Laper are currently in the United States. The workers in the Gift of Life program continue to serve the needs of persons displaced by the war. At least two of the counseling centers are open and providing services and relief to displaced persons. The medical and dental mobile clinics continue looking for ways of offering their services. The Ukraine Crisis Fund was richly blessed and the campaign has come to a close.

How Can You Help?

Pray for each of the mission fields, for the national pastors of these churches as well as for the members of their congregations to remain faithful in their homelands that often do not welcome the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Pray for these Christian brothers and sisters who often do not have the kind of resources that are available to most of us in the United States. May the Lord continue to care for them and strengthen their faith. May God work all these challenges for the good of his people, as he has promised..

Please—prayerfully consider a gift or regular donation for the work in the various fields. Every field, and some more than others, have many needs where God's people can provide much needed assistance.

You may designate a gift to a particular field or project on the memo line of a check. You may also go to els.org and click on "Donate" in the top banner on the right-hand side.

For more information, please contact us in the following ways:

Board for World Outreach
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website: els.org/our-work-together/world-outreach/

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Thank You for Your Donations to the Ukraine Crisis Fund

We give thanks to our Lord for your generous offerings to the Ukraine Crisis Fund. Over \$280,000 has been gathered and at least half of this remains to be distributed as the crisis continues. At this time, we can say that the campaign for the Ukraine Crisis Fund has been a success and we are bringing this campaign to a close.

If you wish to continue to support the ELS work in Ukraine, we suggest you direct your offerings to the Gift of Life program that continues to offer help to those in need. We are always thankful for your support.