

QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF INDIA



CMJI

CHRISTIAN MEDICAL JOURNAL OF INDIA

Volume 36.1 | January - March 2021

Renew & Restore



*Jeremiah
30:17a*



Join Hands with us in the Healing Ministry

CHRISTIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

CMAI is a national network of health professionals and institutions promoting a just and healthy society for all irrespective of religion, caste, economic status, gender or language

- CMAI has over 10,000 Christian health care professionals and over 270 institutions representing various denominations.
- CMAI builds individuals to be technically sound, spiritually alive, and socially relevant, in fellowship and with a Christian perspective on health and development.
- CMAI is the health arm of the National Council of Churches in India(NCCI).

WHAT DO WE DO?

- Build capacity to respond to the current and future health care needs
- Advocate for innovations, create evidence and promote policy change
- Work closely with the churches, civil society and the government
- Build alliances for health action on a national scale
- CMAI influences other networks and alliances on thinking change in health systems practices in India. We partner with national and international agencies to promote this objective.

OUR PUBLICATIONS

- Christian Medical Journal of India (Perspective)
- Life for All (Newsletter)
- Footsteps (Development) English & Hindi (A Tearfund publication distributed by CMAI)

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The core of CMAI is its members- individuals and institutions. Individual membership consists of five professional groups - Doctors, Nurses, Allied Health Professionals, Chaplains and Administrators. Each section comes together for conferences, workshops, a time of fellowship to learn from, to share with and to encourage each other spiritually and professionally.

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Building a just and healthy society

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COME JOIN US AS MEMBERS

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Friends at CMAI,
Greetings from Chennai!

Thank you for providing the link to current and past issues of CMJI. This has given us an easy window to read and appreciate many valuable articles. We can also see the hard work that the Editorial and production team puts into maintaining the quality and aesthetics of the journal.

Anne and I also thank you all for including our article "Did God send the pandemic?" in the current issue.

We share your concerns as an arm of the healing ministry, especially during this difficult time of a pandemic.

Warm regards,

Daya & Anne
P. Dayanandan



LETTERS / ARTICLES FOR CMJI

We invite your views and opinions to make the CMJI interactive and vibrant. As you go through this and each issue of CMJI, we would like to know what comes to your mind. Is it provoking your thoughts? Please share your thoughts with us. This may help someone else in the network and would definitely guide us in the Editorial team. E-mail your responses to: cmai@cmai.org

Guidelines for Contributors

SPECIAL ARTICLES

CMAI welcomes original articles on any topic relevant to CMAI membership - no plagiarism please.

- Articles must be not more than 1500 words.
- All articles must preferably be submitted in soft copy format. The soft copy can be sent by e-mail; alternatively it can be sent in a CD by post. Authors may please mention the source of all references: for e.g. in case of journals: Binswanger, Hans and Shaidur Khandker (1995), 'The Impact of Formal Finance on the Rural Economy in India', Journal of Development Studies, 32(2), December. pp 234-62 and in case of Books; Rutherford, Stuart (1997): 'Informal Financial Services in Dhaka's Slums' Jeffrey Wood and Ifftah Sharif (eds), Who Needs Credit? Poverty and Finance in Bangladesh, Dhaka University Press, Dhaka.

- Articles submitted to CMAI should not have been simultaneously submitted to any other newspaper, journal or website for publication.
- Every effort is taken to process received articles at the earliest and these may be included in an issue where they are relevant.
- Articles accepted for publication can take up to six to eight months from the date of acceptance to appear in the CMJI. However, every effort is made to ensure early publication.
- The decision of the Editor is final and binding.

LETTERS

- Readers of CMJI are encouraged to send comments and suggestions (300-400 words) on published articles for the 'Letters to the Editor' column. All letters should have the writer's full name and postal address.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Authors are requested to provide full details for correspondence: postal and e-mail address and daytime phone numbers.
- Authors are requested to send the article in Microsoft Word format. Authors are encouraged to use UK English spellings.
- Contributors are requested to send articles that are complete in every respect, including references, as this facilitates quicker processing.
- All submissions will be acknowledged immediately on receipt with a reference number. Please quote this number when making enquiries.

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EDITORIAL

O LORD, RENEW AND RESTORE US, WE PRAY!!!



Rev. Arul Dhas T.

In such a time like this, I am sure all of us have similar prayer in our hearts and in our mouths constantly. Burden in our land and specifically in our institutions is enormous and unimaginable. Earlier we talked about shortage of healthcare professionals; now we talk about oxygen, medicines and vaccinations in an unprecedented manner. Sometimes we wonder what is happening with our healing ministers and healing institutions. Fear, anxiety, sense of inadequacy and pain is in the air. What do we do as people of God, those who are called to work for the health of the nations? Whom do we go to?

Christian Medical Association of India through its member organisations and individual members are deeply concerned about the pain of people at the grassroots. The burden and the struggles of the mission hospitals are known to the network of CMAI to some extent. There have been significant attempts to address the crisis. In this year we have chosen “Renew and Restore” as the theme Healing Ministry week which will be for the yearlong reflections and actions. This will be the theme which will be followed in all the conferences, webinars, projects and programmes of our fellowship.

As individuals and organisations, God is inviting us to renew and restore what was broken down in the past. Very specifically, we are called to renew our relationships, partnerships, commitment to witness Christ’s love. In a culture of widespread selfishness, there is a call to restore love towards God and our neighbours in the healing ministry. This is the only way of salvation, healing and wholeness – the way of the cross, the way of self-giving.

The current issue of *CMJI* comes with regular features of devotion, articles and special notes which would be helpful for us to recommit for the ministry of renewal and restoration in healing ministry. Devotion is around the theme of ‘daily food’. The first article is about the healing ministry of the churches in India. The second article addresses on the responsibilities of the church and the society in healing ministry. Major characteristic of compassion which is the central force in healing ministry is focused in the third article. We also have details of how NCCI observed the Healing Ministry Week and how the healing ministry theme was developed. This issue also records a special dimension of the artistic expressions of the healing ministry. The editorial team is grateful to all the contributors of this issue who have placed their articulation in their unique way.

It is our prayer that we grow deeper in our understanding and practice of Healing ministry of Christ and the Church through this issue. May God continue to heal us and make us instruments of healing for so many in our land.

With Prayers of Healing,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Arul Dhas T.", written in a cursive style.

Rev Dr Arul Dhas T
Editor

HUNGER AMID PLENTY, MATHEW 6:11 GIVE US TODAY OUR DAILY BREAD

Healing is a broad term of the wholeness of a person's well-being in physical, social, economic, moral, political, and religious dimensions. If any of these aspects suffer, then all areas of life and society are affected because they are all interrelated.

In 2020, India ranked 94 in the global hunger index 2020 among 107 countries. Food security is the lifeline of human survival, and hunger and famine can create all kinds of pain, struggles, war, and conflicts. The UN-World Food Summit 1996 defines food security as,

“All people, all times have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy life.”

This means food stability, access, nutrition, and availability for a healthy life. But it is not happening to all, particularly for marginalized and poor people, due to unjust structures and uneven distribution of the wealth system. In India, some rich people earn crores of rupees in a day, but poor people and homeless people in the streets do not even have a full meal a day.

The world's hunger and famine crisis is human-made due to selfishness and greediness by few rich people and rich countries in the global north. Food crisis can be eradicated when just distribution of food is served to all people. Hunger brings untold misery and suffering to poor people, which is one of the key issues of conflict in society.

Mathew 6:11 talks about asking only for daily food. When Jesus was on earth, there was a sharp distinction between rich and poor in Palestine. Palestine was under the Roman Empire, and there were exploitations, suppression of common people mercilessly by the Roman govt. Innocent

people were killed ruthlessly. Therefore, people lived in fear. There were also many corruptions in the society, everybody working hard to become rich through unjust ways and means. For example, in the story of Zaccheus in Luke 19:1-10, a tax collector became a rich man due to unjust means of corruption; in Mark 11:15-19, the cleansing of the Jerusalem temple by Jesus pointed out the corruption and cheating of innocent worshipers in the temple courtyard.

For a person, a square meal is very precious for his/her life in a day. But many people during Jesus' time also lived in abject poverty without food. The food crisis did not happen in our time only but it was there during the time of Jesus. The Lord's prayer points out the unjust economic system in Palestine. In this Lord's prayer, Jesus did not say to pray for food for the entire life to eat, but to pray for daily ration only, not for a surplus but sufficient food for daily living. It does not say about the

accumulation of food for future use but to ask for everyday needs. In today's context of refugees, famine, and hunger, what this passage say?

The rich people live with luxury, and poor people struggle to get a simple meal; this is the reality of today's food crisis. Think of the beggars in the Indian cities! The same problem was there in Palestine in the first century CE, and thus, he teaches his disciples about sharing and not accumulating wealth with selfish motives. Few points we can ponder upon from this verse:

Food is the lifeline for humans survival: Without food, we cannot survive even a few days—all people working so hard every day and every

year for food. Without a house, we can stay in the street, but it is impossible to survive without food. Therefore, “food security” is essential for individual life as well as for

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the community. Starvation and shortage of food are the root cause of all kinds of evils and sufferings. When there is food security, there may be peace and justice in the society. Having sufficient food is better than possessing gold and silver.

No surplus collection: 70% of world resources is used by the global north with the population about 25 or 30% of the total world population only, and 30% resources for 70% people in the global south. People in the global south and the marginalized people cannot imitate the Euro-American lifestyle. "Give us daily rice/bread" points us to collect what is sufficient for our daily lives so that everybody will get their share of food for everyday living. This Bible verse rejects the selfish accumulation of food or wealth by wealthy people and no extra lavish spending. Exodus 16:4-6 tells about providing "manna" by God to the people of Israel in the wilderness. God

instructed the people to collect the "manna" only for their daily needs but warned them not to collect any extra except on the sixth day for the sabbath day. Those who collected extra were got rotten or spoiled the next day. Our mother earth produces plenty for everybody, but due to greedy and selfish ambitions, people do corruptions for the sake of accumulation. As a result, our mother earth is groaning, destruction of the planet beyond redemption, pollutions, and oppression of the poor are everywhere. **Sharing:** "Give us our daily food" points us to the sharing of resources with others. Today we live in a world of capitalist-market competition of profit-oriented society. In this globalized market competition, there is no profit without exploitation. People work with the motto of maximum profit with maximum exploitation. It is also individualistic competition, and there is no sharing of resources but the competition of individuals' accumulation



Just distribution of food may bring harmony, peace, and justice to the people in the community and eradicate hunger and poverty.

of wealth. Wealth is more valuable than human beings. Killing people for the sake of money or properties is found everywhere. There is no sense of loving attitude and sharing with others.

In this short devotion, let us learn that the food crisis and hunger are human-made. Conflicts and war create food crises, so also unjust structures and distribution of wealth and economy. Just distribution of food may bring harmony, peace, and justice to the people in the community and eradicate hunger and poverty.

Let us remember that food is the lifeline of human sustenance, sharing, and equal distribution with others will contribute to healing and wholeness in the community.

Rev Dr Limatula Longkumer
Dean, Research / SATHRI
Senate of Serampore College

HEALING MINISTRY OF THE CHURCHES IN INDIA

The contribution of the Missions of the 19th century and the Churches they gave rise to have been significant in bringing healing to the land. Moved with compassion, they shared the good news of eternal life in Christ with the people of our land. The good news they bore had at its core, the gospel of God's compassion for His people whom he had created. It is no wonder that the gospel, as it came to our land manifested itself in the care of the people in their temporal suffering and pointed them to the eternal hope.

The intervention was wholesome. In addition to the treatment of disease, it also addressed the roots of the perpetuation of poverty which has an intimate connection with disease. This resulted in the investment into education, uplift of women and children, economical development and affirmative action on behalf of the 'broken ones' in the margins. Many of the missions were situated in remote regions bringing access to healthcare and eternal comfort to those who needed it most.

These acts of mercy and service happened while the Government was investing in healthcare by starting big hospitals in the cities. The missions and Churches did not relegate the responsibility of care of the suffering to the Government only. They continued to care for the sick and suffering wherever they were placed, and also identified areas of great need to move in there. They brought to our land a type of care which manifested the love of Christ in deed and word.

Our discussions about the healthcare mission then should begin with deep thankfulness to our Lord and to those fine men and women who offered themselves as a sacrifice to the betterment of the health of the land. The churches have happy responsibility of making the young

people aware of the history of the missionaries who had invested their lives in transforming the lives in the locality.

The Present Scenario

The present is characterized by rising inequality in access to healthcare and the capacity to pay for it, brought out so well by the OXFAM report on inequality in its India Specific supplement. Paradoxically the rich have become richer during this time and there has been a contraction of the middle class, relegating many to the rungs of poverty. The pandemic has been a magnifying glass, revealing the existing fault lines between the rich and the poor. One of the sad narratives of 2020 carried on into 2021 has been that of the migrants and the farmers.

The report has also shown with clarity the gross inequality that exists between the so called upper castes and the 'broken' ones. Again the women from the 'broken people have suffered maximally'.

Certain groups have come out in brazen defense of the caste system and have begun to flaunt their so called superior position in society widening the gap to the detriment of the oppressed brothers and sisters and the minorities. In many States elections are being fought on Caste lines.

There has been an increase of divisive ideology fomenting hatred among people groups. There is a climate of fear and suspicion among the many communities that exist in the land. The mudslinging and sloganeering have come to new lows.

The medical fraternity is tired. The rising number of cases of COVID and the new variants ate bringing in a stain again on a healthcare system which is already frayed. The private health care systems initially withdrew from the COVID response. Some saw the profit that can be made and began to charge exorbitant rates.

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FEATURE

Some of our missions led from the front while many more did not have the resources and the strength to engage with the COVID. Many also turned down the governments call to help.

Both in the missions and in the Private sector, the poor could not really access health care during the COVID. The much maligned Government healthcare was their refuge. The COVID pandemic found that except for a handful of our missions, we were not prepared to respond especially for needs of the poor.

The present is also a time of opportunity as the Government has left the land wide open for private health care. In addition to the usual services we can invest in where the Government and other private agencies are not investing, especially in relation to geography, marginalized groups and areas like palliative care.

The Church of our Lord Jesus Christ is called to bring wholesome healing in this situation for the now and forever. Here are but some broad contours.

Forgiveness and Eternal Life

Travelling in a train one day I was in conversation with a young person about life and forgiveness, when a Holy man got in at a station and began to participate in the conversation. He mentioned that there is forgiveness in the ideology he taught too. At that point it was given to me to ask 'If there is forgiveness in our land, why is there a rebirth?' He did not offer an answer.

The people of our beautiful land are still seeking the answers to forgiveness and eternity. We have enjoyed abundantly the joy of receiving forgiveness and the hope of eternity.

Our engagement with this land then must bear this as the core issue. Surely there are immediate issues that we must attend to with urgency. However, the good news we bear is the power of God unto the saving of the life we deal with in the now and forever. We have this treasure in jars of clay – the treasure of the assurance of forgiveness and the glorious hope of eternal life through the Cross and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the only medicine that can heal the pathology at the core of our life.

Gone is the time to be reticent and defensive about this glorious intervention. Even as we have tried to 'beat around the bush', laws have been enacted to shut up the ministering of this good news. Let the church know that as it proclaims the gospel it is injecting a 'Life' saving medicine into the society around us, a society hungry and thirsty for forgiveness and eternal life.

Healing the Divide – a Matter of Access

Our lives are filled with many forms of suffering. This is common to all humans. However the poor experience in an amplified manner all suffering that is common to man. A woman with obstructed labor in a middle class and rich family and that of a woman in the same situation in a remote tribal hamlet in the hills are different with relation to healthcare access, transport, finances and in possible outcomes.

In our country there are vast geographical regions where healthcare access is very poor. Many such states have been termed the 'Empowered Action Group States and Assam' (EAGA). The healthcare indices, including the Maternal Mortality Rate are very high in these States.

In addition the overall healthcare indices of a State may not reflect deep pockets of healthcare deprivation. One has to search for this data district wise or taluk wise (granular data). The Government had recently announced a list of districts in the country where healthcare indices are dismal. These districts are called 'Aspirational districts'. The list is easily available online.

A common feature of these areas is that they have **poor access to healthcare**, poor roads and infrastructure, low industrial development and educational institutions. And on further demographical analysis they throw up the data which the missions and the Church already know – that they are inhabited by Dalits, Tribes people and remoter forest dwellers.

As study of urban slums too show that they are populated by poor people from similar backgrounds. In addition many studies have shown that the Muslim population figures among the poorest of our land. Working towards bringing access to healthcare in emergencies and to

If we as the Church would want to bring healing to our land we will need to focus our love and attention to these brothers and sisters of our land – the Dalit, the tribal, the remote forest dweller and the poor Muslim groups.

bring the good news of eternal health to these groups of our people is beautiful. If we as the Church would want to bring healing to our land we will need to focus our love and attention to these brothers and sisters of our land – the Dalit, the tribal, the remote forest dweller and the poor Muslim groups. It is here no one wants to go and we do well to remember the words of our Lord in the Nazareth Manifesto, repeated to John the Baptist – *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he anointed me to preach the good news to the poorand the good news is preached to the poor(Lk 4:16, 7:22).*

Wherever we are placed, the eyes of the Church are to be focused upon these groups to transform the deficit in terms of access to health, for the temporal and the eternal.

Healing the Deep Laceration

There is a deep laceration in our society, a non-healing gaping one that has lasted for millennia in our land – the abomination called caste based discrimination by birth. It is in essence a tool of economic and social slavery enforced by an ideology. This ideology is incompatible with the truth that humankind is created in the image of God and that of the new birth in Christ in which all people are saved into one Body and are members of each other. The stratification of people as higher or lower by birth gains sanction by another creation story and it will be idolatry if we meddle with it.

In our churches we have camouflaged this idolatry by lip service while at the same time actively encouraging it. We have founded separate congregations for the marginalized and seek to sponsor and train Pastors from the same to lead these congregations. We hoist the burden of caste based discrimination on our innocent children by lending them caste names in the school register. We covertly strengthen it by asking for caste in the time of marriage and by ensuring our children to marry within these boundaries. We form ‘small clichés within the churches of ‘our people’ and have prayer meetings’. Recently Church elections have begun to take so called caste overtones. The Pastoral Epistles’ guidance in choosing leaders is conveniently forgotten.

We have the excellent opportunity of using this huge resource to be a community which welcomes the broken in heart and mind to be able to take time and talk with the elders.

Our pioneers like William Carey and John Scudder recognized that the caste system is incompatible with the Church and undertook radical measures against it. When we became the united Churches we did so covering under our flowing robes, a deep wound, and the stench of which we are unable to cover though. We are unable to proclaim the new humanity in Christ Jesus. When we do preach the gospel we do so with this refuse in our hearts and the land is unable to look at an alternative in us for the social malady that been at the root of its poverty.

Every time the Church proclaims the creation in the *imago dei*, the new birth and the Body of Christ, the Church takes one more suture which brings together the gaping wound in the body. And it is this healing which will be the healing in our society. We have the medicine. We need to live it out and call the people our land into becoming an organ in the body of Christ and a member to us all.

Healing the Mind and the Feelings – Contentment and Counselling

We live in climate of consumption. Things change at a rapid pace. We are not even able to watch a video of a good song on our Lord without first encountering a commercial advertisement. Our preferences are being watched and our news feed is planned by analysts. As families we are withdrawing from each other into the virtual matrix.

When we emerge out of this we encounter a world which is speeding by. We are on the treadmill. We have to run or we feel that we will fall of the edge. Having then run the whole day, we seek solace from the bruises and cuts of daily life in the welcoming embrace of the virtual world that offers us unlimited fantasy, sex and violence.

Entire families live in this world. Parents are driven and in turn drive their children. Divorce in the Church is on the rise. Our prayers are for what we think is important for our children without pausing to ask what is important for Him. Our spirituality is often pursuit of the temporal couched in the language of prayer.

In is into this matrix we welcome the broken and bruised of this world who are alienated with a loss of identity, broken families, substance abuse and loneliness.

FEATURE

The Church of our Lord has enormous resources of the elderly members who have gone through life and have found that it is the Lord alone who can satisfy. We have the excellent opportunity of using this huge resource to be a community which welcomes the broken in heart and mind to be able to take time and talk with the elders. Spiritual counselling can be a very big investment the Church can make with its surplus of retired members and others who are interested. We could begin with the church community, and bring in others in the society with such needs. There are excellent counselling courses in the country who can train our members in this beautiful work through the blessed Comforter, the Holy Spirit.

The Celebration of Healing – our Mission Hospitals

What we have been taking so far is the work which the Body of Christ can do through its local churches. It is vital that we begin there. As we go about the work of wholesome healing there arises the need to do this in a coordinated manner which will address more difficult situations. This leads to what we can call 'Organized Christian Healthcare'.

It is interesting to note that 'Organized Christian healthcare' began in the monasteries during pandemics. The healing Church decides to form centers of healing where its trained disciples can concentrate efforts to help those who will need urgent, orderly and skillful care.

It is here we need those with the gifts of mercy and service mentioned as the gifts of the Holy Spirit in Romans 12. Because of the competitive exams we usually send children who are very intelligent to medicine. We will need however to see if this intelligence is associated with the gifts of mercy and service.

A mission hospital is a place where fifty to five hundred such brothers and sisters are in the active process of caring for the very sick and suffering all day and night! They are beautiful places. Each day begins in a chapel with a song of praise to our Lord and this is followed by many songs of praises as nurses and other workers sing and pray in the various wards and community projects. These places are like no other in the world just in terms

of the praise that rises up to our Lord each day into the spiritually barren landscape of our country.

Oh! There is this wonderful opportunity from the hospital attender, who wheels in the terrified patient on a stretcher, to bend low and whisper 'Do not be afraid! Jesus is here and we are here!' These words can continue to be repeated in the lab, X-ray room, consulting room, pharmacy, billing and registration and cash counters. All these places have the potential to be managed by disciples with the gift of mercy and service full of His love.

In the wards are those wonderful caregivers, our nurses who comfort and care more than any doctor can do. It is from them the sufferer comes to know about the love of the Lord. Oh! that we revive these centers of caring just for the beauty of them, centers where we can be with our brothers and sisters right in the moments of suffering and loneliness.

If they are not what they should be today it is because of our forgetting what is our 'family business of caring' and have fed the milk of competitive acquisitiveness to our children. Instead of feeding them with stories of our wonderful missionaries, we in the stupor of this world have fed them images of competition, wealth and greatness of this world. Is it we who have taken the place of the tempter and shown them the 'Cities of this world and their splendor from the top of our churches?!

It is because of lack of our children manning these places that middlemen and mafia move in and sell these properties. They are less to blame that the absence of climate of mission in our churches. We do well to get back to the biographies of our missionaries who brought wholesome health and make these stories widely known among our young. Each Church will do well to bring out a booklet or video of the missionaries, both from abroad and from India, who blessed the area.

The door to missions is wide open as the Government has opened up all channels to private health care. In a way just as in the time of the missionaries, the door to mission is wide open with some difficulties that are to be expected. There may come a time when this open door

Many of our healthcare personnel may be employed in the Government or Private Hospitals, We are called to be a witness wherever we are in integrity, skills, compassion, ethics and pro-poorness. We are called to shine in every place.

Each Church in addition has its own beautiful story to tell about its missionaries who have shown with their lives what it is to 'go' on hearing the great commission.

will close and health will come fully into the arms of the State. We will have to use a different way to show his love then. But as for now the doors for 'Organized Christian Healthcare' is wide open.

Many of our healthcare personnel may be employed in the Government or Private Hospitals, We are called to be a witness wherever we are in integrity, skills, compassion, ethics and pro-poorness. We are called to shine in every place. While being here we do well to be involved with the mission hospitals each of which we can imagine as a cluster of lights shining together. Our involvement can be through focused prayer, financial support, and short visits to relieve the ones woefully understaffed to give them a break, or to share some expertise and also learn from their lives. It could also take the form of a 'reverse sabbatical to the missions' for a year or to go for a longer period.

Mission Hospitals are like signposts and symbols in a world of relativity. We need them as reminders.

Churches and Missions

Churches have the unique responsibility of nurturing the young ones in the missionary enterprise. To 'go' is a part of the gospel of our Lord (Mt 28:18-20). Each Church in addition has its own beautiful story to tell about its missionaries who have shown with their lives what it is to 'go' on hearing the great commission. In the Sunday Schools, Vacation Bible Schools and Youth Fellowships the Church has an unparalleled opportunity to nurture our children on these real life stories. Parents must be encouraged to consider missions as our normal enterprise. In such a climate of mission our young ones will rise to bless this nation.

Where Church administration plays a supportive and prophetic role the missions will thrive. If the Church administration begins to interfere in day to day running of the centers of 'Organized Healthcare' and making arbitrary appointments in such places, the situation deteriorates. On the other hand doctors resign from the hospitals for various reasons leaving the entire community in the lurch. The Church has to step in and try to somehow keep things

afloat. Humility of the Hospital leadership in dealing with the leaders of the Church makes the relationship a fruitful one.

Many a time, we are struck in trying to make a run down hospital functional. Often these places are mired in politics and land deals which may take a decade to be set right. We could work simultaneously on reviving old projects and starting new ones in places of greatest need

As with all issues in mission it will be best to start with people rather than projects. Couching the needs in prayer and asking the Lord to show the right people to start with will enable a transformation in the place. Starting just with money, politics and favoritism bring publicity at the beginnings but create much damage later.

The Power of the Holy Spirit

As we engage in mission we cannot forget that the Blessed Holy Spirit is Lord, being worshipped with the Father and the Son. It is He that our Lord said would lead us into all truth. It is He who gives us the call to mission and fills us with the fruit and gifts for the same. It is He, the living water who flows out from us who believe bringing healing unto all who will drink.

Mission then is done in the power of the Holy Spirit. This may need planning and methods. Above these stands our Lord whose Holy Spirit is not constrained by anything or anyone. He will blow where He wishes. He will bring glory to our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is with deep humility that the Church engages in the mission of healing. If done in just natural strength and method, it will become an endeavor which will have the semblance of the gospel while denying the power thereof. This will call for repentance in every one of us engaged in the healing ministry.

All Glory to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Dr Sam Siddarth
General Secretary
Evangelical Medical Fellowship of India

HEALING MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH AND THE SOCIETY: A PERSPECTIVE FROM A WOUNDED HEALER

I. What is healing Ministry?

Recently I was in a discussion in a hospital with a group of people on the theme: "Working among the sick and the suffering". Very quickly someone made a comment assuming that the whole theme is about the doctors and nurses and not about the other staff members. I was shocked to note that it took some time for the discussant to understand that everyone who works in a hospital is involved in the healing of the sick and the suffering. Healing ministry includes every dimension of work in a hospital, not just something done by the doctors and the nurses.

Healing ministry includes nursing, medical, allied health, administrative, pastoral and general dimensions. The word 'ministry' is used to denote that it is a service and not a business. It keeps the beneficiaries of the ministry in mind. In ministry, we do not talk about the profit. Our actions are not based on profit-motive.

Activities that lead to a healed state of mind and body could be classified as belonging to healing ministry. The purpose of this article is to discuss different dimensions of healing ministry from a Biblical and Christian perspectives. This will aim to clarify some of the misunderstandings on the way. This is particularly aimed at those who are involved in some form of healing ministry and feel part of the larger call of our Lord Jesus Christ "Heal the sick".

Our world is faced with lot of troubles. Brokenness, wounds, hurts and the pain and agony associated with them are so common every day. This happens in an individual level, group level and at a societal level. We hear in the news everyday so many of these stories



Rev Dr Arul Dhas T.

which need our attention. Our responsibility towards our fellow brothers and sisters includes responding to this situation of brokenness. The Christian message of unity, oneness, health is proclaimed on a regular basis to people in word and in deed. This continues to remain as the source of hope to all those who come into contact with it.

II. Biblical Mandate to do the ministry of healing

For those who are in the healing ministry, it is very important to trace the roots of our ministry to the biblical and faith-based background. In Exodus 15:26 we read as

God telling the people of Israel: "I am the Lord who heals you". Somehow through the history, this has become the fulcrum in which our healing ministry bases itself. As we read through the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament, we also see that God involves so clearly in the process of healing people.

In the revelation of the Son of God, Lord Jesus is portrayed as the healer. Healing ministry was one of the threefold ministries of Jesus Christ. Preaching, Teaching and Healing. Jesus did more than thirty healing miracles which are recorded in the New Testament. He also asked the disciples to follow his path of healing others (Matthew 10:1). It comes out so powerfully when we read that

Jesus sent the Twelve "to proclaim the Kingdom of God and to heal" (Luke 9:2).

Later we read clearly when the commandment was given to the church to follow the ministry, the church was called to be the place of healing. It was a community of healing – physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual. In James 5: 13-16 we read that the church has a special call to care for those who are suffering and those who

Our responsibility towards our fellow brothers and sisters includes responding to this situation of brokenness. The Christian message of unity, oneness, health is proclaimed on a regular basis to people in word and in deed.

We have seen broken homes, broken communities, wars. Unfortunately, in many of these agonies, Christians have been reason and cause. At the same time, historically, we cannot deny the great contribution Christians and Christian Church has contributed to the healing ministry in this world.

are sick. From the beginning, the church has been so cognizant of this ministry and has responded in whatever way possible.

III. Impact of Healing Ministry

In the ecclesiastical history, we can see that the church wanted to demonstrate its commitment to the sick and the suffering (Matthew 25:36 “I was sick and you took care of me”) through different means. The pastoral visitation, which emerges from Matthew 25, has become an important part of the ministry of the church. It is also important to note that Hospices are another expression of the response of the church to the Master’s command. The beginnings of hospitals in the western traditions also owe their origin to the roots of the command of Jesus.

How effective healing ministry has been in the past is an important question one needs to study. As the Christian Church, we thank God for the ways God has used us in the healing of so many in the past. We have histories of men and women of God who have facilitated healing at individual level and in corporate level. Of course, we are aware of the criticism that the Christian church has been the cause for so many wounds in individuals and communities. We have seen broken homes, broken communities, wars. Unfortunately, in many of these agonies, Christians have been reason and cause. At the same time, historically, we cannot deny the great contribution Christians and Christian Church has contributed to the healing ministry in this world.

IV. Indicators of Healing

When we say ‘healing’ what do we mean? What are the dimensions we include? Healing may be defined as wellbeing, wholeness and shalom. It encompasses different dimensions like emotional, physical, social and spiritual aspects of human experience.

Healing is achieved through repentance, forgiveness, reconciliation. Each of these is different level of human

unity and oneness. In a context of brokenness and hurt, the first step one needs to take is to repent. Repentance implies self-awareness, awareness about the other person, awareness about the divine expectations and awareness about harm/hurt that one has caused/inflicted. When we truly repent this may lead towards forgiveness. Forgiveness is letting go of another person of his/her mistake. Forgiveness often is one’s need than the need of the other person. When we forgive, we experience healing. Reconciliation requires two parties involved in the action to come to an amicable situation of acceptance. The wounds get healed if we forgive.

Healing is a state leading to justice. Sometimes, the perspectives of justice will be different among different people. The way we understand justice may be different from the divine perspective of justice. If I am healed, my heart will eagerly look for just actions with others. In other words, true healing will lead us towards justice.

Healing leads towards renewal and restoration. The past brokenness is changed and/or transformed. A new setting emerges. The broken bits are restored. This dimension is true in human-human, human-nature and human-divine interactions. God is involved in the restoration of our lives. As ministers of healing, we have the same mandate to renew and restore.

V. Channels of Healing

We may quickly conclude that hospitals, medicines, medical equipment and medical professionals are the primary channels of healing. Of course, it is true. They are channels of healing for so many people who are sick and suffering. However, I would like to include other channels of healing in this section.

- 1. Word:** God’s word is a channel of healing. It may come in the form of a book or sound. Similarly, even the words of human being are also therapeutic. In a world of sickness and suffering, many look for this channel of healing for their comfort.

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2. **Sacraments:** The protestant churches follow two important sacraments whereas the catholic church observes seven sacraments. Over the centuries these sacraments are used as the channels of healing. Particularly, Eucharist/Holy communion has been a source of healing to so many people when they experience brokenness. There is a mystery about the sacraments which cannot be completely explained. Sacraments are external expressions of internal grace, communion with the God Almighty.
3. **Music:** Music has been a channel of healing since the beginning. Music has some divinity in it. If our ability to appreciate children and music is lost, our humanity is lost. When a music instrument is played or when a song is sung, a particular part of our human being is touched, and it leads towards healing. It is a common knowledge that those who are tensed get relieved through the hearing of soft music. Of course, the type, quality and familiarity of the music has a role to play in the way it impacts individuals and communities. Music therapy is one discipline which is developed to address the health needs of people in certain contexts. Both making music and listening to the music have got therapeutic value. We see individuals, families, institutions and the society using this wonderful channel of healing in differing intensities.
4. **Art:** Art is an expression of human beings. There are different kinds of art works. Here again, both making of an art and seeing/experiencing as an end user of that art have got therapeutic values. We have seen that children who go through traumatic experiences get healing touch through this medium of art – in the form of pictures, etc. Adults who do not want to share their pain with others suddenly become so free by using some art medium as a therapeutic tool. Even in group therapy, pictures or artwork can be used to achieve specific therapeutic goals.
5. **Nature:** We cannot fathom the meaning and depth of nature. We, human beings, sometimes mistakenly think that the whole universe is anthropocentric. This may not be true. Whenever we see/interact/experience with the nature, we see a new dimension of our life and existence. Beauty, mystery, power, simplicity, complexity and even contradictions in the nature bring healing to us. Of course, we need a particular set of mind/perspective to tap into the healing resources of the nature. We admit that there are many aspects in nature which are not yet studied and understood. A quiet walk in the evening, an intense look at a calm lake, curious study of the sound of a bird and a relaxed rest under the shade of a tree are only few examples of the therapeutic power of nature. Many have experienced the effect of natural medicines for specific indications too. We thank God for the nature which is a channel of healing.
6. **Relationships & Humour:** We are familiar to the situations where relationships are reason for brokenness and hurt. It is also true that relationships can be reason for healing. True friendship, non-judgmental partnership, accepting fellowship, encouraging alliance and cooperative collegiality can be so therapeutic in the context of careless and callous attitudes. Maintaining healthy relationships and nurturing such ambience is part of the healing ministry. In many relationships, wounds and hurts are common. They may happen inadvertently or sometimes wantonly. In Isaiah 53:5 we read “By His wounds we are healed”. Christ’s wounds became channels of healing to many. We in the healing ministry also experience hurts and wounds many times. They can also, with Christ’s transforming love, become the channels of healing for others.

Humour is an occasion of laughter. It is an ability to see the funny side of the scenario, not being serious all the time. It releases much of the tight feelings and thoughts and even behaviours. In our conversations, humour, when used creatively and sensitively, can function as a lubricant for the smooth functioning of the group. In addition, much healing happens due to personal healing touch (not necessarily physical touch).
7. **Meaning, Purpose, Hope:** When life becomes an association of routine events, there is a possibility to lose the meaning of those events. When the burden of suffering overtakes the daily schedule, we tend to lack meaning in life. We are grateful to Viktor Frankl from the past century, for his contribution towards Logotherapy. He emphasised the need for meaning for the wholistic healing. When the suffering is so intense, when we do not see much progress and hope, it is possible that we get disillusioned. It is in such contexts, bringing back meaning, purpose and hope into the context could be a great source of healing.

VI. Healing in the post-pandemic Church

While we have the mandate to be part of healing ministry, from the beginning of 2020 onwards we have been facing a tough situation due to the Corona pandemic. Some of the activities which are found to be very important in healing ministry are forbidden today. Therefore, as the disciples of Christ, we are in a situation to identify different way of understanding those activities. I want to highlight the following four activities for our consideration: Not meeting together, No contact, Masking the face, No breaking of the Bread together.

All the above four have been integral parts of the healing ministry in the past. How do we minister without these? These obstacles have actually opened new ways of understanding with regard to the healing process and tools. In fact, we are learning how to communicate without seeing the lips of the other person; how to empathize without touching with the hand; how to share our togetherness and fellowship without physically meeting together; how even to experience the mystic oneness with the Lord without breaking of the bread by a priest/pastor.

Our experience in the past year has shown that we can still have a meaningful healing ministry in the midst of restrictions and lockdowns. The mandate of healing ministry has not stopped. The need for healing ministry rather has increased since there is more brokenness and wounds. As the disciples of Christ, we are invited to find new ways and expressions of healing ministry.

VII. Attributes of a Healing Minister

I would like to end this discussion with a section on the attributes of a healing minister. If we want to be effective ministers of healing, not only our methods, even our personal qualities need to be of some kind or quality. I just want to share about compassion, humility and sacrifice as critical attributes of a minister.

1. Compassion: It is an ability to be moved when we see suffering of the other person. Jesus through the parable of Good Samaritan demonstrated the dynamics of compassion so vividly. Our master also had this compassion adorned in him as he saw people who were sick and suffering. Apostle Paul emphasised this in his teaching so powerfully in his letters. Today the world looks at the Church with compassion as the indicator. Over the centuries, as the followers of Christ, we have shown compassion.

We are called to show this compassion even further in these challenging times.

- 2. Humility:** Another uncompromising quality of a healing minister is humility. This is an inner attitude. No one can see this in a person, only God can see. Often, we are fooled by some external signs which look like things of humility. This quality is needed to be one with the Lord. Only if we have this quality, God will use us in His own way. We cannot be complacent because God has used proud people also for His ministry. The joy is ours if we do the healing ministry with humility.
- 3. Sacrifice:** The general tendency in any human being is self-sustenance. Sacrifice is just the opposite. Only with the divine help we can have this attribute. If we have to heal others, we need to sacrifice ourselves. This was evident in the life of our Master; He had to sacrifice himself for the sake of the healing and salvation of others. In a culture of accumulation and finding profit, the healing ministry invites us for a life of sacrifice. The other person becomes first, not me.

It is my prayer that we as individuals, as institutions and organisations, as church and as a society will experience healing and be part of the healing ministry that God is involved in. God has kept so many resources in this area. We can be aware of these and work together to experience renewal and restoration in God's world. As individuals we may be wounded yet become healers. As a faith community, we are also wounded in different occasions through different means. When we allow our experiences to be transformed by Christ's love, we become healers in the hands of God.

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COMPASSION IN HEALING

Introduction

Humanity today is facing one of the biggest challenges of the century. The outbreak and spread of the COVID-19 pandemic has raised concerns of everyone across the globe. People are in dismay for what is happening around them. In such a context, one of the most important concerns over the world is discrimination and stigmatization associated with the pandemic. Those who have any association with the illness (people who are infected or suspected and the ones considered responsible for the spread of the virus) are often discriminated against and socially isolated.

In the past one year or so, there have been increasing cases of stigma and discrimination that often characterize the societal response including that of the church during the COVID-19 pandemic. Social media was replete with heart breaking stories about individuals and social groups who have become the targets of prejudice and discrimination and the consequences they undergo.

Such experiences have resulted in many people undergoing untold miseries. In fact, those who suffer from COVID-19 bear the consequences of stigmatization that is far more intimidating than the condition itself. Social rejection can negatively affect the physical and psychological wellbeing. As such people who have been directly and indirectly connected with the virus have been experiencing depression, anxiety, panic, and other related problems. All these ill effects of the pandemic when associated with the rising stigmatization and discrimination are expected to have far-reaching consequences for individuals, family and the society at large.

This calls for a ministry of understanding the struggles of the people, and engaging with them in further

exploration of their experiences. Christian ministry needs to create a supportive environment that could promote interdependence through a transformative approach of compassionate ministry.

In Christian caring ministry empathy is indispensable. Empathy as we know, in simple term is the ability to see others' world from their frame of reference. An empathic and compassionate Christian ministry includes compassionate presence in the struggle of the people, building relationships, listening to their fears, hopes and dreams, being attentive to all aspects of their lives. While the actual physical presence may be limited in the current situation, empathy can still be expressed through many verbal and non-verbal ways.

There are stories from different contexts and communities across the world that narrates about the increased practice of empathy during the current pandemic. However, the expressions of our empathy and compassion can sometimes be biased. In his book, *Against Empathy* (2016), Paul Bloom, argues that empathy suffers from deep-rooted biases. It is parochial. We only empathize with those who are within our communities, who are near to us, and similar to us. When confronted with realities of life, we tend to care more for those who are similar and within our circle. How true it is! Sometimes situations and circumstances come our way that we 'do not see' those who need our compassion the most.

To overcome such problems, we need exposure to the stories and narratives of others' experiences. Such narratives and testimonies are powerful. And they can come only when we start talking with and seeing each other. This calls for a relational ministry.

Don S. Browning, a pastoral theologian, argues that "empathy is a moral and relational skill, not simply a

All these ill effects of the pandemic when associated with the rising stigmatization and discrimination are expected to have far-reaching consequences for individuals, family and the society at large.

matter of inner comprehension of what another says.” He sees ministry as communication and empathy as a form of communication. For him, “empathy contributes to an experience of community at the level of interpersonal relationships.” This happens in the context of trusting one another, which leads to the formation of personal bonds that can have their own value even when, “no change or cure seems possible.”

The ultimate goal of Christian ministry is to bring about healing in every dimensions of life. In the context of stigma and discrimination, a compassionate approach to healing ministry can promote deeper relationships; motivate individuals to learn more from one another; deepen understanding of each other’s lives; and build trusting relationships. This can promote reclaiming personal identities, create supportive communities, rediscover the importance of interdependence and bring about holistic healing.

A key term that is being used in the Bible denoting empathy is compassion. This is particularly projected in

the ministry of Jesus Christ. Matthew 14:13-21 describes the “Feeding of Five Thousand.” The Key idea here is the quality of compassion that Jesus had. Compassion is one of the characteristic attributes of God; it is also a quality that we have been given in our nature as people created in the image of God. And so we need to act upon this quality. Jesus’ compassion moved him to do things for people, irrespective of their identities. And we need to nurture this quality.

As the day was closing in, the people needed something to eat. The disciples advised Jesus to send the crowd away to the nearby towns so that they could find some food. When Jesus enquired whether they could do something for the crowd, the disciples were worried that they had only two fishes and five loaves. While they seemed to be concerned for others, it appears that they were more concerned for themselves. While the disciples were concerned about the needs of the people, there is something ironic in the disciples telling Jesus to send them away. When Jesus was moved by compassion to



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There may be times in our ministry when we will be confronted with tough situations of choosing who to care for and where to go. At such times, may the undivided compassionate heart of Christ be ours too.

help, the disciples needed a little more of that compassion. Rather than telling Jesus to send the people away they could have asked Jesus to do something.

Jesus said, “you give them something to eat” as if he was saying, “If you are concerned for them, feed them.” It is one thing to be sympathetic and feel sorry for others. And yet it is another thing to be concerned about the needs of others and act upon it. There may be times in our ministry when we will be confronted with tough situations of choosing who to care for and where to go. At such times, may the undivided compassionate heart of Christ be ours too.

Dear friends we are always happy to witness the compassionate ministries that CMAI continues to extend towards individuals and communities over the years. Your thoughtful and empathic gestures in various ways deserve deep appreciation. Through the words of Jesus to his disciples, let us once again be reminded that along with the expressions of our concern, let us continue to take the responsibility to act compassionately towards the various needs of the people irrespective of their status and identities.

Prayer

Almighty and loving God, we thank you for this new day that you have granted unto us. Thank you for the opportunity to be a part of this morning devotion along with the staff of the CMAI.

We want to pray for your blessings and protection upon the lives of the staff members. We particularly pray for Ms. Shimy Mathew & Mr. Amen Xavier and daughters Sharon & Shawna, also for Ms. Shalini Dayal & Mr. Henry Dayal, and daughter Sabrina. We pray oh God that you would protect these individuals and families from all known and unknown dangers around them. May you provide all their needs as they continue to serve you in different capacities.

God our healer, we offer before your throne of grace, the lives of Ms. Imtinen’s father, who has undergone eye surgery and is recovering, and also Mr. Blesson’s father who is not keeping well. May your healing touch be

upon them and let them experience your healing power in every dimensions of their lives..

We pray for the Care Project Recruitment. We especially pray for those intending applicants to come with the right motif, and also for those responsible for the selection of candidates to have the ability to discern your will in the entire process. We also pray for the new nurses who have already started their service, we pray that you would instill within them the kind of compassionate love that you had.

We want to continue to give thanks and pray for our member institutions: Schieffelin Institute of Health-Research & Leprosy Centre, Tamil Nadu, and St. Catherine’s Hospital, Uttar Pradesh. We pray that through these institutions many needy individuals and communities may be blessed.

We thank you for being with us all through this devotion. And now as we end this time of devotion and go into the world, to face the challenges that await us, May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God, and the Sweet communion of the Holy Spirit, rest and abide with us both now and always.

Amen

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NCCI'S OBSERVANCE OF WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY (UNITY OCTAVE) ON 18- 25 JANUARY 2021

Unity Octave or Week of Prayer for Christian Unity celebrated every year from 18 to 25 January is an occasion for all over the world to unite in prayer, to remember one mission that we are all involved in, and to work out strategies in which we can continue to work together all through the year.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2021 is prepared by the Monastic Community of Grandchamp. The theme that was chosen, "Abide in my love and you shall bear much fruit", is based on John 15:1-17 and expresses Grandchamp Community's vocation to prayer, reconciliation and unity in the church and the human family.

NCCI Sunday is an annual feature of NCCI, and it is observed every year during the week of prayer for Christian unity (Unity octave). It is celebrated by the constituent member churches, their local congregations, regional councils of churches, related agencies, theological seminaries and other ecumenical organisations. It is a time to celebrate ecumenism locally with a special emphasis on reflecting local issues from the perspective of justice, equality and peace. It encourages people to work for harmonious community living.

Christian Medical Association of India (CMAI) observed the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity on the 22nd of January 2021 organized by the Chaplains Section with around 80 people attending online and Live telecast on Facebook.

CMAI's mandate is to work with the church and is the official health-related agency of the National Council of Churches in India. As CMAI works towards making health, healing and wholeness as an integral part of Church's ministry programmes like Unity Octave Worship with other like-minded organizations and churches bring out its essence.

The meaningful prayer fellowship was conducted on a virtual platform with participation from National Council of



Rev. Asir Ebenezer

Churches in India, Catholic Health Association of India, International Council of Medical and Dentist Association, Evangelical Fellowship of India, Mission Hospitals in India and churches.

The worship started with greetings and welcome by both the General Secretaries of CMAI and NCCI, Dr. Priya John and Rev. Asir Ebenezer respectively. Thanksgiving prayer was offered by Fr. Dr. Matthew Abraham,

Director, CHAI. Intercessory prayers were offered by Fr. George Kannanthanam, Secretary, CHAI, Dr. Santosh Mathew, Training Coordinator & South Asia Regional Secretary, Rev. Anita Julias Khristy, Director for Diocesan Counseling Centre, CNI, Gujarat Diocese, Ms. Elsy John, Secretary, Administrators Section, and Rev. Dr. Abraham Matthew, Executive Secretary, NCCI. Rev. Vijayesh Lal, General Secretary, EFI delivered the sermon on the theme, "Abide in my love and you shall bear much fruit" (cf. Jn. 15:5-9). CSI Synod Youth Department, Satribari Christian Hospital, Guwahati and CMC Ludhiana presented prayer songs that enlightened the spirit of the participants. Ms. Imtinenla Aier, Secretary of Chaplains Section, CMAI thanked everyone who were part of the worship and encouraged to conduct more of such programmes in the future. The worship concluded with Rt. Rev. Dr. Sharma Nithyanandam, Bishop of Vellore Diocese, CSI, offering the closing prayer and benediction.

"The allegory of the fruit reminds us that we are what we are depending on where we are rooted. The theme of this year's week of prayer for Christian unity is an invitation to be rooted in Jesus so as to enrich the cultivation and nurturing of life flourishing contexts and situations. It is desired that coordinated initiatives of Christ-communities will ensure such a culture and nurture life-flourishing as the essence of sustaining creation."

Rev Asir Ebenezer
General Secretary NCCI

RENEW & RESTORE, THEME FOR 2021

The world today is experiencing yet another devastating pandemic where the outbreak of COVID-19 has left humanity helpless and seeking for a cure, renewal and restoration. COVID-19 is a real threat to everyone in the planet with risk involved. The pandemic as we know affects the poor, the marginalised and those with co-morbid conditions disproportionately. The world and the people are still in a process of adapting themselves to what is considered the 'New Normal'. COVID19 has swept over the face of the earth resulting not only in the death of loved ones but also causing the world to undergo through a serious social, psychological, spiritual and economic crisis. There were no last goodbyes for many to their loved ones that left them with regrets, deep pain and a lot of unanswered questions. In this context, the chosen theme for the year **"Renew and Restore"** taken from **Jeremiah 30:17a** which reads **"But I will restore you to health and heal your wounds"**, **declares the Lord** is not only apt but relevant.

The word 'renew' means 'to make new again.' The word of God is central to renewal. It is the foundation on which, any activity of renewal by the hand of God is predicated.

Cambridge dictionary defines 'restore' as "to return something to an earlier good condition or position." Someone has written on restoration and I quote, "restoration means that we don't just patch up the surface and hope for the best, but rather that we dig down deep into the crevices and cracks of devastation and begin the process of restoring them." Therefore, it comes as a reminder that a renewed heart leads to restored life with the joy of God's salvation. Joy in one's Saviour and the hope of eternal life.



Ms Intimenla Aier

We believe in God who not only heals and restores us but also renews us. The Word of God says, those who hope in the Lord shall renew their strength (Isaiah 41:31).

Success of a person is found in the heart, as Jesus stated that *'the fruit of life comes from our heart'*. This calls for a transformed and renewed heart; a heart that has the desire to surrender and submit to God's will and purpose. Heart reveals our true condition as God is not looking at our appearance but our intention.

Jesus says, that our heart is in the place where we store our treasure - our values, our desires, our love. At such a time as this, people not only need financial or physical support but also long for inner healing. We believe in God who not only heals and restores us but also renews us. The Word of God

says, those who hope in the Lord shall renew their strength (Isaiah 41:31). In the process of renewal, God abolishes the old things and makes everything new. He can do something fresh for us and that we can never imagine. 'Behold, I will do a new thing...I will even make a road in the wilderness and rivers in the desert' (Isaiah 43:19).

Prophet Jeremiah talks about warnings of God's coming judgment for the people of Israel but he also has a message of hope for the future. The message of hope for Israel's future is seen through chapter 30 to 33. The afflictions and distresses of the Jewish nation are expressed by sickness, wounds, and bruises and so their prosperity, both spiritual and temporal, is signified by health. Through these chapters, prophet Jeremiah refers back to Moses' prophecy where the people of Israel had broken the covenant and gone into the Babylonian exile. However, God would not abandon His people but rather He would renew His covenant with them and bring restoration of their heart giving them hope and a future. God's promise of healing the wounds and forgiving His people and bringing them into a comfortable living still stands as we seek for renewal and restoration.



It is always God's plan to renew and restore individuals, the society, the church and all of His creation. Restoration of health and healing of the wounds as mentioned in Jeremiah 30:17a can also be understood from different dimensions. Health can be understood beyond our physical conditions and it can also be understood as health of the society that we live in, health of the church and our surroundings. Healing of our wounds reflect the struggles and the pain we go through. In the midst of all these distress, our God have promised us with a Hope and a future which can be attained through faith in His Son Jesus Christ.

Matthew Henry writes in his commentary opines, "I will restore health unto thee. Be the disease ever so dangerous, the patient is safe if God undertakes the cure. Upon the whole matter, they are cautioned against inordinate fear and grief, for in these precious promises there is enough to silence both." Renew and restore is a reminder that those who have hope in God will not be afraid of the future or trouble that threatens them. No matter what comes, whatever difficulties or dangers, God will bring healing and restoration. Be encouraged to know

that when God heals and restores you, He brings you out better than you were before, and you will find that relationships will become beautiful.

The global disruption caused by the COVID-19 has brought about several effects to the world and the society. With the sirens of the pandemic and all of its associates, it calls every believer to come together in faith and raise symphony of prayers for God to renew and restore our world today. For our every hope lies in God alone and He is our only source of all goodness and mercies through the challenging times that we are faced with.

In the writings of Fr. George Kanantham, "In a struggling family, be the hope. In a troubled community, be a warrior. In a shaken Church, become a pillar of strength. For a sick person, be a caring companion. For a hungry family, be the bread. For a poor world, be the refuge."

Ms. Imtinenla Aier
Secretary, Chaplains Section, CMAI

MUSIC & WORSHIP FOR THE HEALING MINISTRY

Waymaker Cover by Mokokchung Town Baptist Church Worship Team



Mokokchung Town Baptist Church or MTBA as commonly known, is a local church for the Ao community located at the heart of the Mokokchung town, Nagaland in the Northeastern part of India. The Church has association under Ao Baptist Arogo Mungdang (ABAM) with more than 7700 members based at Impur.

The Ao community there is blessed to have Impur Christian Hospital, an institutional member of Christian Medical Association of India, established by the Missionaries. It is the oldest and the only hospital attending to the sick and suffering of people within the district and even to the neighbouring districts. Over the years it remained as the only hospital as other Government and private hospitals have been established. We praise God for these provisions for our Ao community.

This year during the celebration of Healing Week, the Chaplain Section of CMAI graciously extended an invitation to the Mokokchung Town Baptist Church for participating in the worship programme. The request was to presenting a special song and share a video to be played during the virtual event.

At first, recording a group song in a time where restrictions on movements was announced felt a bit of a challenge. However, as we all are aware that even during these tough days, God has opened many new and creative opportunities for the Arts and Music ministry all over the world. Therefore, the Worship Team took this as a great privilege and honor wherein a great possibility to witness to many was right in front of us.

So the worship team decided to bring together all creative resources and create a good quality Music Video. However, to come up with a decent video in a short span of time was never an easy task. But thanks to our worship team's quick response in mastering the song that in no time we were able to make a huge difference in the success of the production quality of the video.

The commitment of all youth members who came in willingly with their self-taught expertise for assisting in audio recording, videography and editing of the overall video made us all very happy. The wonderful crew members and committed youth leaders extended their support to a large extent which made the video

recording possible. The crew members selfless efforts and dedication towards the given task made it possible to go beyond comfort zones with a single motive to praise God with talents.

As we continue to face the pandemic threat, our spirit of oneness in Christ and support for one another should be audible and clear. Many of the young people in the country are facing untold issues and it is our prayer that the listeners be motivated and their spirits uplifted. The love of Christ we have is the only fitting and matchless tool to effectively respond to any form of challenge we face. As the Word of God says that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ, so nothing should stop us from sharing the love of Christ.

We are thankful to CMAI for the opportunity to witness with our music across the country and beyond. The youth of this generation are blessed with talents and unlimited resources. Expressing through creative arts and works of paintings, doodling, music, speech, handicraft etc brings an element of beauty and surprise, thus nurturing their talents and promoting their works with a proper guidance

is of utmost priority. This has always been a venture Mokokchung Town Baptist Church has undertaken by incorporating them in our ministry. As the word of God says, *“every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the Heavenly lights...”* James 1:17.

The world we live in is filled with people who needs hope physically, spiritually and mentally. God's love and care for His people can only be made known when skills, talents and abilities are imparted with love without any reservation, distinction and discrimination. Therefore, let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Galatians 6:9

The Mokokchung Town Baptist Church worship team and all our members would like to pronounce abundant blessings and God's sustenance on Christian Medical Association of India at all times.

Mr Monglier
Assistant Pastor
Mokokchung Town Baptist Church

e-CMJJ on CMAI Website

Dear Members,

CMJJ as a quarterly journal and an official publication for Christian Medical Association of India, with its online presence today, brings a much wider reach, diversity, and a global reach. The print run of CMJJ, for recent editions, due to the pandemic was held up by the editorial team and the leadership. We regret the inconvenience and wish to inform that we are working to provide our members with the printed copies of the editions.

Please fill below form to download CMJJ

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Access to e-CMJJ

In order to read and download e-CMJJ on website, we have initiated a simple process. We require a Simple form to be filled up with Name and Email address, thereafter, you enter the Download Center.

Authorship

We accept primarily original articles authored by those who are closely involved with the theme of every edition. So, we also encourage you to come forward and contribute with an article for CMJJ.

Advertisements

We invite institutional members to advertise in CMJJ and other publications. Please write to us at cmai@cmai.org and we will contact you within two working days.

Past 5-Year Editions

We are excited as you view both new and old editions (2015-2020) of CMJJ. In case you require older editions please send an email to communication@cmai.org

We on behalf of CMAI editorial team, thank you for being our support and helping us in building a just and healthy society.

Regards

Editor - CMJJ
Head Communications - CMAI

WE ARE LOOKING FOR Assistant Secretary, BNESIB, Nurses League

The Christian Medical Association of India (CMAI) is a national Christian NGO and fellowship of 273 Christian Hospitals and 10,000 Christian Healthcare Professionals in India. Its Board of Nursing Education South India Branch (BNESIB) under the NL of CMAI offers GNM, ANM and Post Basic Diploma Courses. BNESIB has a vacant position of an Assistant Secretary.

Name of the Post:

Assistant Secretary, Board of Nursing Education South India Branch (BNESIB), Nurses League (NL), CMAI

Post open: One

Location: Bangalore

Last Date for Application: May 10, 2021

Nature of the Job: Full time; to coordinate the activities of the Board. Shall be reporting to the Secretary BNESIB.

Age: Minimum 30 years

Qualifications: B.Sc Nursing with five years' experience

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*Advertise in the Classified Section in the CMAI newsletter – LIFE FOR ALL,
and on our CMAI website: www.cmai.org*

Take bold steps for change. This is what Mahatma Gandhi taught us. Christian Medical Association of India, established in 1905, was one such bold step taken by the missionary doctors who dared to serve this country. Even today, young doctors, nurses, allied health professionals, administrators and chaplains have followed the trodden path of the missionary movement which was started 115 years ago.

One cannot do it alone. But together, we can. If you are a medical or nursing graduate, if you are a professional in the health sector or a theology graduate, you need fertile ground to sprout and bloom.

CMAI is a large Christian membership organisation in the Indian health sector. We offer training programmes, platforms for sharing knowledge, opportunities for leadership building, and avenues to excel in your career.

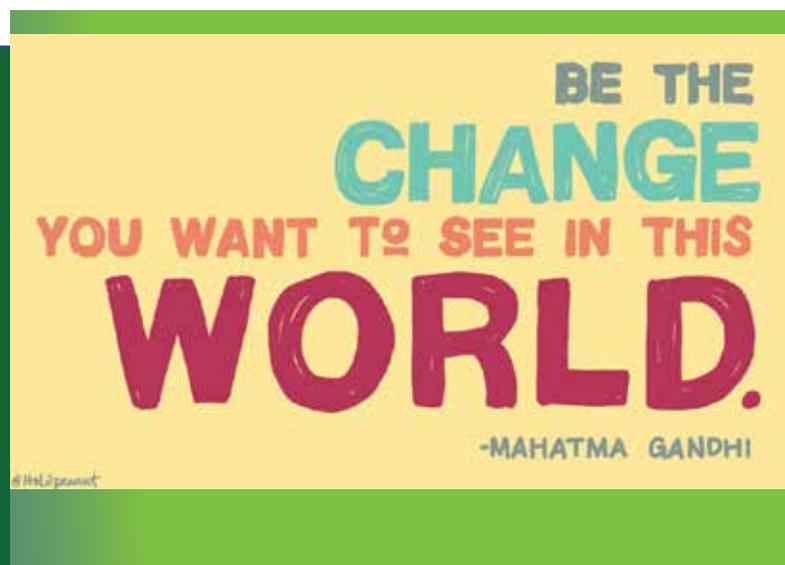
If you haven't become a member, become one today.

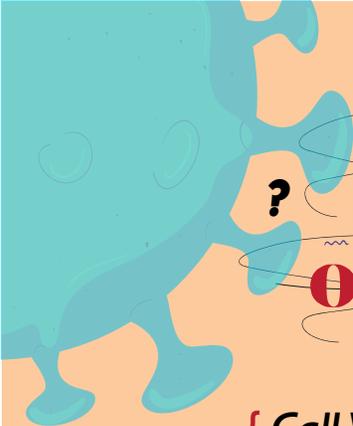
CMAI member institutions work in the remotest parts. You will see a different geography of India where people suffer due to lack of proper medical care, children die of malnutrition and young mothers who need education in rearing children.

Dare to reach out to the place where people with commitment such as yours are needed to make a change.

YES,
It possible! You are needed indeed.

Write to us:
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cmai@cmai.org

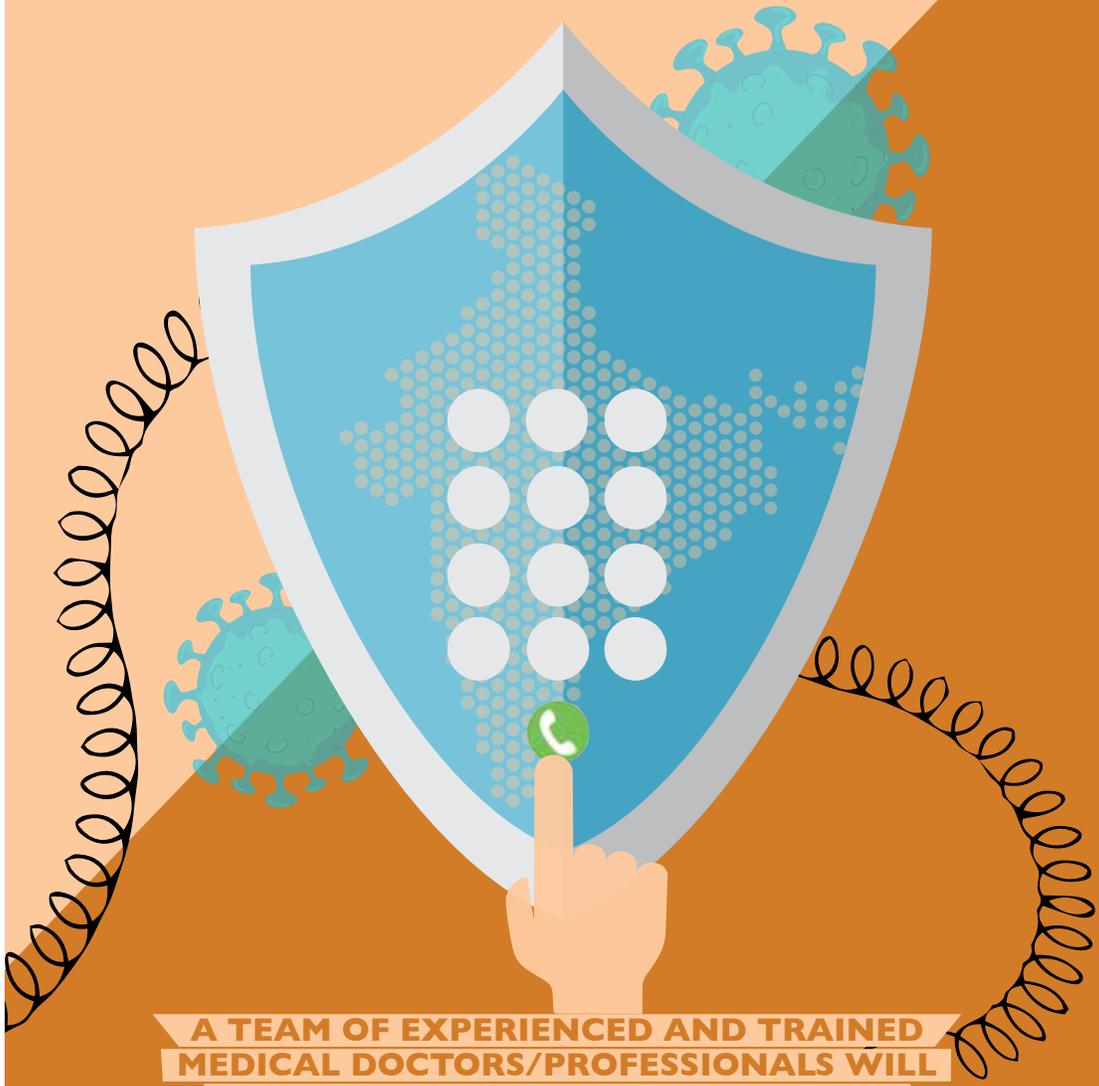




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