

# *Lamp Lighters World Ministries*

## *Newsletter March 2021*

What a month this has been! Heavy ice, snow, and bitter cold, I'm glad that it is behind us! So many have suffered in all this nation wide. I can't really complain other than I got tired of being at home and having to cancel a Sunday morning service.

By God's grace though the Covid situation seems to be improving, enough so that our city council has allowed our mask ordinance to expire, just pray things continue to improve. So many have been away from church for so many months it's bound to have an negative affect.

I really feel we need to pray seriously about this as it has now become habit for so many to just be at home and watch church on TV. At least many are doing this and some have health issues which required it. My concern is where is the fellowship and community of other believers which we all need to survive the onslaught of attacks from Satan?

Between Covid and weather the church as a whole is suffering. I continually encourage our church to call members who can't come or aren't coming to let them know that the church is concerned about them. I hope that all of you are doing the same.

One thing that has been good is the faithful support that you have given to Lamp Lighters through prayer and finances. You are such a wonderful blessing and vital part of this ministry I hope you never feel you are taken for granted.

May God continue to bless, protect and use you to His glory for His kingdom.

Because of Christ, Steve, Niranjana, and Sona

### **NEWS FROM NIRANJANA**

God allows everything in our lives and this ministry for his glory and also the goodness of us his children.

His ways are higher than our ways and thoughts. If we just humble ourselves before him and he will use us in his ways which we never expected, even miraculous ways.

We just want to love him with all our heart, soul, strength and mind. He uses us for his name and glory. We must obey his words and have faith in him that he will always do what is best!

## **UNEXPECTED CHANGES IN MINISTRY**

In the beginning of second week of February we received some news about misbehavior of our preacher Vijayakumar who had ministered with us for 18 years in Periya Neelavanai.

After we investigated about the incident we found some issues and it has spread among the non believers in the area too.

It has gone throughout the area and because of this a great deal of harm has been done to the church's reputation and also is a disgrace to our Lord Jesus Christ. He has left the church immediately according to the instruction of brother Steve.

Currently he is separated from his wife Ananthi and their children. He needs to repent and come back to his right mind. As of now he is still denying that anything was wrong.

Steve's comments: This situation has been devastating to me as Vijay has worked with us the longest of any of our preachers. Not only was he a coworker he was a good friend.

He is the one who lost many family members and church members in the tsunami of 2004 and remained in ministry through these years at Periya Neelavanai.

Please pray for him and his family as well as the church to recover from all this.

## **CHANGE IN COWORKERS LOCATIONS**

We found many unfair activities and even misleading of the church believers in each church after pastors have left the church.

So we have decided that moving our pastors from one church location to another may be necessary. As this is a new procedure of course there were pastors and also church members who didn't want this to take place for various reasons. This has been put on hold for the time being but still feel it is the best way in the long run.

Steve's comments: The issue comes from the very real temptation for a pastor to feel the church belongs to him and he can do as he pleases. And also the practice of the church believers to hold them in awe as God's anointed, and therefore never question anything they say and do.

Shanthi and I had been considering this before we came back to the States in 2016, thinking we would only be here a short time and then implement this on our return.

Of course that hasn't happened, but there is a lot of validity in doing this and we believe it will be of benefit for growth in the churches over the years.

Along with this is the need to disciple more church leaders and workers.

### **DAY OF PRAYER AMONG COWORKERS**

This past month we held a day of fasting and prayer among all the coworkers in Lamp Lighters. This was done in light of the recent problems with one of the coworkers. And also the need to remind everyone with who the church belongs to and our responsibility as workers in the kingdom of God.

### **BIBLE STUDY FOR WORSHIP LEADERS**

A special Bible study was conducted for worship leaders who wish to lead in worship on 26<sup>th</sup> of February. Many participated from all our churches.

God blessed us with a good study. Which was lead by a pastor friend of brother Steve and ours Gerald Joseph form Batticaloa.

### **PRAYER CONCERNS**

1. For new preachers and families for Mahiloor and Periya Neelavanai churches.
2. For unity of co workers and their commitment in the ministry
3. Need prayers for the believers to look to the Lord Jesus not men.
4. For acceptance for the proposed changes in the ministry.
5. For Niranjana and Sona as they face the difficult challenges of ministry.