

Dear brothers and Sisters in Christ,

It just doesn't seem that it should be September already! And all the issues with Covid has messed up all our lives and made it more difficult to keep up with everything.

But God is good and He is in control! This will eventually pass.

I wrote a little bit about that last month but want to continue that thought, especially in light of all that has happened this month.

For me I want things in life and ministry to be somewhat normal but I guess normal just seems to evade me at times. Or at least what I think normal should be.

I began reading through the book of Psalms about a year ago and do this every month. I am amazed as I read and reread how often David's life and others who wrote were turned upside down by events that were taking place. Many times we can read and hear the anguish and pain in the words that are recorded, David was not immune to problems. Yet even in the darkest times he always came back to the understanding that God was still his rock, refuge, fortress, deliverer, redeemer and very much in control!

God has not changed! He is still the same today and has promised His abiding presence as we face the trials of life! We have an amazing God!

You are so faithful to remember this ministry with prayers and finance and I want to say thank you for these. You make it possible for this ministry to continue and by God's grace it will continue to flourish.

May God bless you as you labor for his glory where you are.

Because of Christ, Steve and Niranjana

### **NIRANJANA'S NEWS**

A month has past with many changes and many trials. But God is an amazing God, who plans everything and everything is done in his own time as he did at the wedding in Cana.

I thank and praise him for giving me the opportunity to do his ministry according to his will.

### **PASTOR IN MAHILOOR CHURCH IS RESTING IN PEACE**

At the beginning of last month our one of the coworkers, Sutharsan, who is ministering in Mahiloor suddenly fell very sick and was taken to the local hospital unconscious. His blood sugar was extremely high, and blood

pressure was very low. In addition to this he his kidneys had stopped functioning and he had a severe infection which was affecting his entire body.

He was transferred to private hospital in Colombo to get advance treatment after only a couple of days. He was in the Colombo hospital for 6 days and died due to multiple organ failure. He had never regained consciousness. It was a great loss for the church and believers. But God has comforted everyone including his family members.

As per the instructions of founder and director of Lamplighters, I am much more involved in the church activities and with the help of church members; I will be for several months.

His wife Jino and children Seronica and Ebijen, want to continue the work of ministry in Mahiloor,.

Many things have to be rearranged in the ministry after the loss of the preacher. God is leading me with his wisdom and we are making the necessary adjustments and plans in order to manage things in the church.

Please pray for all the believers and workers in the church in Mahiloor.

### **SCHOOLS HAVE REOPENED**

The Government has reopened the schools with minimal students under the new hygienic conditions since the 10<sup>th</sup> of August.

Plans are for all restrictions to be removed and continue normal school activities from 2<sup>nd</sup> of September as no Covid 19 cases are reported in the society.

All schools schedules for the year have been changed which means more challenges lie ahead.

### **VBS THIS YEAR**

After the schools reopened all the private classes have been restarted as well. Parents have been encouraged to send their children to the classes without taking leave.

(Private tutoring is essential for the students to do well in their studies so the children would not be able to attend VBS and their classes, many of which are held seven days a week.)

Because of this situation we will face many challenges if we can have VBS this year. We want to restart the Sunday school programs in the churches again before we could have VBS but until now the government has not given permission to restart Sunday schools.

## **NIRANJAN'S PERSONAL NEWS**

My wife Sona has been suffering with pain in her backbone for 2 months.

We recently went for a medical checkup. After getting the X ray the doctor said one of her back bone joints is dislocated because of unbalanced walking and her body weight. They advised to reduce weight but if the pain increases she will need to go for surgery. Please pray for her to get completely healed.

(Sona's difficulty in walking is due to the leg surgeries she had to rebuild the leg bone. This went on for several years. The end result is there is leg bone but the leg is enough shorter she has to wear a built up shoe but walking is still off balance.)

## **STEVE'S NEWS**

Two of my daughters Sowmiya and Tharsha will start university on campus for a week and then have exams which will be online. Pray for them to remain committed to their schooling.

Still nothing from the U.S. embassy in Sri Lanka about Tharshini and Prashanth's visas. Everything is still on hold. Continue to pray for them.

It's been very difficult for me this month losing one of our preachers, who is also a nephew. He married one of Shanthi's nieces. But God is good and Niranjana is doing an excellent job of helping get things back to normal.

## **PRAYER CONCERNS**

1. Niranjana asks for prayer for wisdom as he leads the ministry there.
2. For Sona to be able to reduce her weight and for healing of her back without the need of surgery.
3. For the coworkers to cling to the word of God and faithfulness in service.
4. God's leading and blessing concerning Sunday school restart and for VBS.
5. Emotional healing for Jino and her two children at the loss of Sutharsan.
6. The church in Mahiloor for spiritual growth through this, and stability.
7. For my children, for their studies and emotional state of mind waiting for their visas to be approved.