



It's happening!

Churches Together Fellowship - *a fast-growing nationwide network of churches*

Volume 1, Issue 1

February 2010

From the desk of Joel Onesimus

I thought of "blotting all my sin away" of not being faithful in my communication to you over the months and years. Truly, (I am due to inform you many months) I am repenting with sackcloth, folded hands, sitting in ashes and dust. I hope you would grant me the grace to continue as your friend and read this recent news update, both of my family and the Churches Together Fellowship Network.

With much gratitude both unto the Lord and towards you, I pen these few lines. If not, for His grace and your faithful support and prayers, I would not be where I am now.

Health : First of all, let me tell of my healing. After I was poisoned last year, everybody thought it might take at least six months for me to become normal again, but the Lord has given me a tre-



From left to right: Anu, Joel, Ashish, Blessy and Ankur

mendous healing. The Calvary has been always the centre of our resource, apart from the advice of doctors and friends. I returned to the office, ministry and routine life, without any difficulties within two months. I even visited the UK, attended a Lifelink conference, and visited a few cities. As many of you know, **Blessy** also had to go on medication for her

neurological problem and obesity, and since she is diabetic, life was very difficult for her. Trusting in God, being filled with the Holy Spirit, and speaking in tongues has marvelous results. Recently we had a total investigation on her health. The Doctor said she is out of danger, and there is nothing to fear. This is great news regarding Blessy's health.

Our Family



Ankur holding Joy

Ratna, our foster daughter has reconciled with her husband **Yesu Das** & in-laws. The joy is multiplied between the two families. She was also blessed with a son on November 26th, 2009, whose nickname is "**Joy**". Blessy and I might be the world's youngest grandparents, and we love it! She is back to her home after two months of staying with us, as it is an Indian custom that the first delivery happen at the parents' home (and the parents pay the bill). Surely it is our privilege, no regrets!



Proud parents with their son

In my first newsletter, I would like to thank our beloved apostle Philip Stanley and Sister Helen Stanley for their lifetime investment into my life and the work of the Lord.



They first came to India in 1958 by boat. Ever since then, they have been coming every year and have toiled to give birth to the work called "Churches Together Fellowship" along with my father, the late Pastor Y.S. Onesimus.

Truly, they are apostles called unto the nations. As Sis. Helen has been called to India, it has been my privilege to be one of their spiritual sons and to have been mentored for the work of the Lord in this country. I am indebted to them for their faithfulness.

Thanks a pile!

Our Family cont.

Ashish Monica, our oldest daughter is at university for a Bachelor of Business Administration. In the next few years, she is aiming to become an Indian civil servant (Bureaucrat). I do think she is going in the right direction for the King and His Kingdom.

Anugrah Aishwarya is at college in Hyderabad. For the state exams, she has to study for a mandatory 14 – 17 hours per day. She has a few health-related challenges,

as she had Dengue fever a few years ago, and the consequences of it carry on quite some years. For this reason, she is constantly attacked by typhoid and other problems. However, the Lord is her joy and peace. She recently testified to how she is committed to the will of God and pursuing her studies. I appreciate all those who personally counseled her through letters or when they visited our house. Thank you!



Anu, Ankur and Ashish

Ankur, a boy after my heart, is growing in all aspects of his life. Both the favour of God and men are upon him. I am proud to announce that he is first in his class among 60 students. He loves to play the drums in the church. I hope he will be a great musician some day!



Esther girls in their school uniforms

The girls are doing great in their health and studies. The school's principal sent a word of appreciation in regards to the improvement and progress they see in our girls. Some of these girls are doing great in the English-medium, even though they have been newly introduced to the English language. I did have some

heartbreaking events when some grown-up girls did not return to us after going to their mothers' for the holidays. The mothers would not let them come back to us; however I am hoping that the Spirit of the Lord is upon us to break this generational bondage. The present girls are younger and totally teachable.

The Lord has been faithful in fulfilling each detailed need of this home. Some individuals are so faithful in sponsoring the entire home. As well, God has provided £40,000 to buy their presently rented home and the negotiations are going on. Prayers are requested supporting our desire.



The Moses leadership home {boys}

We started out with 12 boys, but are now down to three due to the naughtiness of some of the boys. Some of them ran away and some had to be sent home. I still believe in raising up more boys, keeping the future of the Esther girls in my mind, as India still practices arranged marriages. I have not had any promised funds for this home, but the faithfulness of God is always keeping our needs fulfilled.

Left: Moses boys in school uniforms

“Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.” Proverbs 22:6

Local Church

The Bethel church is still gathering in the rented tin shed, yet we are growing both in number and in maturity. The number of children has grown to 1200, still meeting in different centres for not having a place large enough to gather, and of course, due to a lack of transportation as well.



A Sunday morning service



Some of the local junior church members gathering on a Sunday morning

The youth ministry and the women's ministry are growing stronger. We still believe for God to bless us with some heavy resources to buy the function hall, where we are now worshipping.

I don't know from where the help will come, but surely it will come from the Lord. The function hall owners have been very favourable with us, and have not once increased the rent in the last twelve years! Interestingly enough, the new building that they are building on the property (which has a capacity of 1500 people) is very much suited to our needs - for church gatherings, the Bible school, the hospital, the office, and possibly even some other ministries!

Churches Together Fellowship Network

The Lord has enabled us to reach 11 of the 24 states in India. We have a vision that in the next ten years, we will train and mentor apostles and their five-fold ministers in each state and strengthen the existing churches with sound doctrine.

Since the network covers thousands of miles, we are planning to decentralize the leadership into four field areas, each covering a few states.

The vision 2020

Since half of our churches are located in Andhra Pradesh, we will still concentrate our efforts there to equip those pastors who have entered the ministry with little biblical knowledge.

Our task is three-fold:

- 1) By the end of this decade, to train 1000 young people through high standard Christian education in the Bible schools
- 2) To connect regularly with the existing pastors to teach them how to do the work of the ministry. We also hold conferences and publish

quarterly magazines containing substantial teaching material for the equipping of both Christians and Christian leaders alike. These are efforts to unite everyone, facilitating both fellowship and impartation of the vision.

- 3) To reach our communities in word and deed (social work)

The Bible schools

We have changed our strategy with the Bible schools to facilitate the expansion of Churches Together Fellowship Network and to meet the needs from different states.

We have started *small satellite* Bible schools in each different state, offering one-year courses in their own language. At present, we have nine satellite Bible schools in the following places: Rayalaseema, Telangana, Coastal Andhra, Punjab,

The present field areas include:

- North India (*Jammu Kashmir, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Uttaranchal and Rajasthan*)
- Central India (*Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra*)
- South India (*Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Orissa*)
- Northeast India (*Nagaland, Assam, Mizoram, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh*)

I am praying that the Lord would send more national and international friends interested in investing their time, teaching and resources into the different states, possibly concentrating their efforts to a specific field area. As for Blessy and me, we want to continue serving as a liaison connecting the need to the resource.

Gratitude!

I want to humbly thank the individuals and church fellowships that have invested their lives, resources and ministries into us. Surely your reward is going to be multiplied both on earth and in Heaven, because you have invested in good soil and in something that has an everlasting value. Without you, none of this would be possible!



This year's students in Hanamkonda

Delhi, Rajasthan, Northeast, Haryana, and Gujarat. The students are an integral part of the local churches, rather than being campus-centred. They are sent out into the city both to live and work among the people in their spare time.

Philip's National College of Prophetic Ministry

(Hanamkonda) Our school here at the headquarters has become an English-medium college as of this year, taking students from different states, especially those from the satellite schools interested in pursuing a three-year Bachelor's degree in Systematic Biblical Studies. We are trying to work on getting accreditation from inland universities or from abroad. Also, we are working out the course syllabus with the help of Trinity School of Theology in the UK.

“Music Explosion”

Every year, we invite many people to join our Bible students in a 40-days of crash-courses in music. At this event, they also learn about praise and worship, while developing their skills in music. We have been doing this for several years now to im-

prove the worship in our churches and others. Almost all over Andhra Pradesh, representatives from rural and interior churches attend these courses. Although it is quite costly (around \$5000), the Lord has never let us down in this endeavour!



People on stage during Music Explosion

The Stanley Mission Hospital

The hospital is continuing to reach poor and needy sick people, from both far and near. Our primary vision was to help give medical guidance, as this profession is being exploited and the main victims are Dalit. We are encouraged, both by seeing the results and the provision of the Lord. We still need more resources to help strengthen this ministry of caring and healing the broken, since we are limited in our services by our lack of equipment. We are continuing with the vision of

doing medical outreach to different slum areas in our city, and this has opened doors for us to introduce a children’s ministry and home prayer groups in these areas. We are SO thankful for the teams of people who help us with these camps! We also continue to explore more opportunities for the women who are involved in sex work. Our staff is facing some challenges, and at the end of the day, we are only winning a few to the Lord.



A patient being seen by Dr. Ranesh



Our dentist treating a patient

Sewing Centres

The sewing centres are continuing to train these women and we are exploring what else we can do to help them gain new skills, like detergent-making, pickling and embroidery. There is a need for more sewing machines. Please continue to pray for these vulnerable women.



Acknowledgement

This first-ever newsletter has been prepared by Shona Black, from Canada (which might explain some of the weird spellings). “Sona” means “gold” in our language. As one of the wise men offered gold unto Jesus, she is a living sacrifice to the work of the Lord.



“Reaching everyone, everywhere, anytime, by all means.”

Summer Ministry



Children at one of the Bible Club Centres

Teachers Training Program:

Again this year, we are partnering with **Seva Bharat Hyderabad**, from whom we have been receiving resources for several years in reaching the children in our country. Almost every church in CTF is growing because of the children's ministry. This summer, we are training 800 summer camp teachers nationwide and we have applied for the support from SBH.

Summer Vacation Bible Clubs:

The previously mentioned teachers will be reaching 50,000 children in 800 centres this summer in the 10-day camp. Please pray for the mechanisms of these camps, for the leadership, for the salvation of the children, for good weather, and that the anti-Christian elements would be blinded from seeing this harvest. Please also pray for more fully-dedicated volunteers and for the church growth that is happening.

Adult Literacy Centres:

By the grace of God, we have been teaching illiterate people how to read and write Telegu, both in our churches and in our neighbourhoods. Every year, we teach around 3000 people throughout Andhra Pradesh. Thirty people are enrolled in each centre for a two-year course. This year also, we have requested Seva Bharat to grant us more material to run these programs. Please pray that this ministry will continue unhindered as it is a tool to reach out to non-Christians with much effectiveness and to serve the community. At the end of the day, they fully understand the salvation message because they learn to read using the salvation story, and we introduce Bible vocabulary in the style of "A for Adam, B for baptism" .



Coming up in 2010...

Future events include:

- **Summer Bible Camps** (April)
- **Music Explosion** (May)
- **Premarital Counselling Course** (May)
- **Youth Quake** (Sept or Oct)
- **Victorious women's conference** (Nov).
- **Regional Study Seminars** (to be determined as the Lord provides the opportunity)

Glimpses of life in Hanamkonda:

The Bible students inside and outside their classroom and our children worshipping the Lord

*"Our vision is the nation,
Our passion is souls."*

Please contact for more information:

Churches Together Fellowship

Post Box 125
Hanamkonda, 506001
Warangal, Andhra Pradesh
INDIA

Phone: 91-8703-290-550 (Office)
Phone: 91-9989-766-407 (Mobile)
E-mail 1: jonesimus@yahoo.co.in
E-mail 2: yjoelkjpgm@yahoo.com

