



# Grace

December, 2016

Dear Praying Friends,

“Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help, who rely on horses, who trust in the multitude of their chariots and in the great strength of their horsemen, but do not look to the Holy One of Israel, or seek help from the LORD.” Isaiah 31:1

**P**raise God for bringing us to the end of another year that was filled with challenges as well as many blessings!

In our past newsletters we have focused primarily on inviting you to thank God with us for the blessing we have received in the past months. This time, I am hoping to revisit our past events that brought us closer to His goodness and mercy.

2016 has been an eventful year. Government regulations have changed overnight and we at times, have felt cornered. In the month of February, an international agency that was partnering with us in providing for the holistic development of the children from low financial backgrounds was asked to withdraw support. Many



activities that were meant for the development of the child had to be withdrawn. Our workers and children continued to attend the centre.

However, our balance funds soon depleted. I had to painfully decide to lay-off nine of our Child Development Workers.

As the crises of funds continue to become graver, the leadership of GBCJ has encouraged its workers and members to raise support locally and indigenously. It was a blessing to be a part of a three day Marriage Seminar which was held in the month of March. Our local churches and their members contributed with their finances and labour. Families that attended the seminar were blessed.



Classes at the college have been regular. Our students have grown spiritually. Students who graduated in May are currently serving in their local churches. Do pray with us as we reach out to families through our week-



end ministry. Our students have built bridges with a few families in the neighboring villages. Students are currently preparing for Christmas carols, which they

sing in the homes of friends of the college. It is a joyous experience.

Currently, our students are also involved in farming. Since we do not have much land, we have rented our neighbour's vacant land. We are praying that the yields, mainly vegetables, will help us in generating finances for student support.



Our Churches in the states of Bihar, Jharkhand, Bengal and Odisha are maturing. Our leaders are steadily leading them into a deeper knowledge of God. Many families have boldly proclaimed the gospel among their neighbors and relatives. This has led to the steady rise of churches in all states. In bordering Odisha and Jharkhand, a recently inaugurated Church has reached its capacity to accommodate members! We are now involved in starting a daughter church.

In Bihar, with the recent floods, our members were adversely affected. Stagnant water in the area has caused illness and a rise in water borne diseases. Praise God for the provision of mosquito nets for the needy. We soon hope to be able to distribute them.

Testimony:

*Hello! My name is Sudhir Marandi and I come from a small village in Odisha. I am married and am blessed with a beautiful daughter. My parents and my two siblings also live with us. We stay together. My father and I are farmers and farming and rearing animals has been our source of income. My wife and I are the only educated members in the family.*



*I come from a Hindu, animistic family. I used to worship the spirits. My mother was an alcoholic and my father, a violent man. We did not have peace in our family. My parents had sent me to a nearby school that had a hostel facility. But since I used fall sick frequently, I was sent back home. I suffered with severe stomach aches. My parents took me to the witch doctor, who asked for a chicken to be sacrificed. I was not healed. After a while, I started losing my mind. I was slowly beginning to become restless and unstable. No amount of medicines, sacrifices would help.*

*While I was restless and frustrated, I met my aunt who had recently become a Christian. She told me how her life had changed after she came to Jesus. Her testimony gave me hope. I started reading the New Testament. But I was scared of making the spirits angry. My aunty took me to another believer's house where I stayed for a few months. Believers from the local Church prayed for me, and I started to feel better. I was beginning to experience peace. The more I read the Bible, the better I felt. On June 20th, 2010, the Lord saved me in His grace. I felt his love and was free.*

*Every day I would spend time reading the Bible. My Pastor would spend time teaching me from the Bible. My family slowly came to know the Lord. I thank God for freeing me from the bondage of sin. Currently, I am studying at GBCJ, to prepare myself to go back to my people group and testify and teach about our risen Lord Jesus Christ.*

Prayer Points:

1. For the upcoming outreach programmes to be held by the students of the college.
2. For the children and their care givers of all our centres.
3. For the spiritual and physical well-being of our staff workers.
4. For the various financial needs to met.

May the remembrance of the birth of Christ and His redemption bring us closer to Eternity.

Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year!!

Cecil