

# PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW



**VOL. XXV April - June 2015 No. 74**



**Synod**  
RESCUE  
**HOME**

**Rescue  
the  
Perishing!**

Presbyterian Review is a quarterly news magazine concerning the Life and Witness of the Church in Mizoram and other related matters, published by the Mizoram Presbyterian Church Synod.

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*Editorial***MOVING FORWARD WITH NEW CHALLENGES**

It has been 20 years since the Executive Committee of the Mizoram Presbyterian Church (MPC) had given the faculty of Aizawl Theological College the responsibility to run the Presbyterian Review which is the official organ of the MPC. As it had been the case in the successive years, with the result of some changes in the College's administrative responsibilities, the mantle of running the Presbyterian Review has been handed over from the last editorial board led by its Editor, Rev. Dr. C. Lalhlira to the new editorial board members.



It is with a combination of great passion and humble commitment that the new editorial board takes up the responsibility to move forward with the new challenges ahead. Through this journal we will continue to try to inform the readers about the life and witness of the MPC. This will include reports on the life and ministry of the MPC and also of the Church's ministry in partnership with other Churches and Christian Organizations at the national and international levels. In each of the ensuing issues we will also try to give special focus on one of the MPC departments or mission fields by which the Church has been engaged to address the mental, physical and spiritual needs of the people.

The Review, with its new colour-pages characterized by regular and special features, will certainly become more friendly and enjoyable to the readers. By God's grace the MPC in the north eastern corner of India, has been a dynamic church which is, in a special way, a living witness of the Body of Christ in the world. It is hoped that this journal will bring to the readers alive God's redemptive and gracious intervention in the affairs of humans today through the instrumentality of the life and witness of the MPC.

As we move forward to face the new challenges ahead, the new editorial board would welcome any comments and suggestions for the improvement of this journal. We wish you all a fruitful reading and divine blessing in your life and ministry.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, likely belonging to Rev. Dr. C. Lalhlira, the Editor. The signature is stylized and cursive, written on a white background.



**Rescue the  
PERISHING!**

## Synod Rescue HOME

*(De-addiction,  
Counseling,  
Rehabilitation  
& After Care  
Centre)*

**Introduction:** The Synod Rescue Home was established on 21st Sept., 1987 and was registered under the Charitable Societies Act XXI of 1860. There are two separate Homes for men and women and After Care and Vocational Training Center run by Synod Social Front Committee, Mizoram Presbyterian Church Synod. 15 bedded wing for women patients has been implemented on 12 Sept., 2000 and has been inaugurated by Rev. K. Lungmuana, the then Moderator of Mizoram Synod.

### *The Serene Campus*

### *The Office and Men's Home*

#### **MOTTO**

- 1) TO EDUCATE AND TAKE CARE OF PEOPLE ON ISSUES OF POLITICS, ECONOMICS, EDUCATION AND THE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL AFFECTS OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE.
- 2) TO HELP MENTALLY, SPIRITUALLY AND PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED PEOPLE TO LIVE A TRUE CHRISTIAN LIFE AND BRING THEM BACK TO CHRIST JESUS.
- 3) TO EDUCATE AND GENERATE SUBSTANCE ABUSERS TO SUPPORT THEMSELVES.





**Name of the center :**  
Synod Rescue Home  
**Undertaken by :** Synod  
Social Front Committee  
**Date of establish :**  
21st September, 1987  
**Location :** Durtlang,  
Leitan  
**Finance:** Mizoram  
Presbyterian Church,  
Synod.  
**Affiliated to :** The  
federation of Non-  
Governmental  
Organisation for Drugs  
Abuse Prevention  
(FINGODAP).

### *Women's Home*

#### **Course Description**

- The Course duration is normally assigned for 3 months and is extendable up to another 3 months in accordance with the need of the inmate.
- Admission remains opened to anyone and is done according to availability of seat.

**Daily Program :** From Monday to Friday the daily program prepared by the Office has been followed as far as possible. Therapy is administered to the patients through three foundational approaches: Christian Approach, Psychological Approach and Physical Approach. These approaches are used in personal and group counseling, work therapy, physical exercises, games, worship and Bible studies. Work Therapy is exercised every working day for those who are not engaged in personal counseling.



*The usual Daily Routine is as follows:*

- 6:00am: Tea
- 6:30am: Prayer Meeting
- 8:00am: Lunch
- 9:15am: Devotion
- 10:30am: Personal Counseling & Work Therapy
- 12:00pm: Noon Tea
- 1:00pm: Personal Counseling
- 2:00pm: Group Counseling/ Health Education
- 3:00pm: Bible Reading & Memory Verse
- 4:30pm: Dinner
- 6:30pm: Worship/Bible Study/Counseling
- 8:00pm: Mass Prayer
- 10:00pm: Light Down

### *The Chapel*

**Seat Capacity:** In the beginning 15 inmates were accommodated in Men's Home. However, as per the increasing need of extending the seat capacity, the Management Committee of 1997 had decided to extend the building in order to accommodate 20 inmates in Men's Home. It is extended to 25 beds in 2003 and to 30 beds in 2010. Recently the Management Committee of 2011 had once again increased the seat capacity to accommodate 40 inmates.

The latest total seat capacity is as given below :

Men's Home	:	40
Women's Home	:	15
Total	:	55
Total No of Patients admitted from		
Sept., 1987 - June, 2015		
Men	:	3995
Women	:	609
Total	:	4604

### **Fee Structure:**

- Admission Fee 100/
- Mess Fee 1,000/(monthly)
- Security Deposit (Pocket Money 1,000/(minimum for a month).

### **After Care and Vocational Training:**

- Duration of Course : 3 months
- Training : Handicrafts (Cane), Computer, Driving, etc.
- Fee 100/per month.





**Workers :** Rescue Home is functioning under a Director. At present, there are 26 staff working under various capacities as listed below.

Director : 1

Office Assistant/Cashier : 1

Staff Nurses : 2

Security Guards (Men) : 5

Social Worker: 1

Peon : 1

Ward Attendants : 2

Security Guards (Women) : 4

Counselors : 4

Chowkider : 1

Driver : 1

Cooks : 3

**TOTAL : 26**

**Synod Rescue Home**

**Director: Rev. R. Vanlalnghaka**

**Contact: (0389) 2361133 (Office)**

**(0389) 2362035 (Director Qtrs.)**

**Email: [srh1987durtlang@gmail.com](mailto:srh1987durtlang@gmail.com)**

Consultation on  
**“CONTOURS  
 of  
 TRIBAL THEOLOGY”**

**Rev. Lalfakawma Ralte**

A motivating Consultation on Contours of Tribal Theology was organized jointly by Board of Theological Education of the Senate of Serampore College (BTESSC) and Mizoram Presbyterian Church Synod between 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> February, 2015 at the Synod Conference

Centre, Aizawl. The Consultation was attended by 22 delegates who flocked together from different states across North East India. It was hosted by Mizoram Presbyterian Church. Thanks to Tuikhuatlang Presbyterian Church for having received the delegates and for having attended to all the needs of the delegates during the whole programme of the Consultation.

Delegates arrived on Feb. 18 and on Feb. 19, Rev. Lalramliana Pachuau, Executive Secretary, i/c. Theological Education Board, Mizoram Synod led the inaugural session. A Key Note Address was given by Rev. Dr. Wati Longchar which was based mostly on Tribal Theology's Contribution to Contextual Theologies in Asia.

Four interesting papers were presented on that day. The first paper “*Globalization, Development and Indigenous People*,” was presented by Rev. Dr. S. Hayong (JTRS). The presenter was concerned on how globalization penetrated each corner of the globe and how the upper-class people have been exploiting the natives in the name of economic development. Tingneihling Chonglai (NIIPGTS) then presented “*Look East Policy and Tribals in North East India*” which brought to light ways in which care must be exercised like establishing interconnections beyond borders. This is because developmental initiatives which are insensitive to the way of life of indigenous communities have almost always produced undesired results and threatened their very survival.

The third paper was of Dr. Wati Longchar with a topic: “*Liberation Theology and Indigenous People*.” He stresses how disheartening to witness that the native people are made environmental prisoners in their own land because of globalization. He proposes that the indigenous theology has to be collective solidarity resistance for defense of the oppressed. The issue of space is captivatingly discussed in the paper. The fourth paper was,





“*Tribal Theology Now and Then: A Methodic Appraisal*” by Daniel Tikhir, (ATC) urged Tribal theologians not to be satisfied with their existing contribution towards the society but to take tribal theology to a new height since theology is an unending process requiring dialogue and constant evaluation of issues.

The next day started with a devotion which was led by Rev. Lalfakawma Ralte, (ATC). The leader of the devotion stresses the necessity of re-writing tribal history in order to claim the right of land ownership in a situation where tribals are given a history by foreign writers.

The first paper of the day, “*Justice and Peacemaking in Tribal Traditions*” was presented by Dr. Lalnghakthuami, (ATC) who raised three important questions, such as: 1. Is theologizing tribal heritage adequate for tribal liberation theology? 2. Does tribal theology promote Biblically sound theology? 3. Is it necessary to reinterpret the Bible from tribal perspective to fabricate a theological discourse on dominant Christian themes?

The second paper was Mary Chang s “*Interfaith Dialogue: Contribution of Traditional Nagas*”.

The paper highlights that in traditional Naga society human beings cannot live an isolated life without the presence of Divine and nature around and that their spirituality was based on inter-relatedness. The traditional religious Naga beliefs and practices provide us to rethink interfaith Dialogue beyond dogma, religious practices and anthropocentrism. The third paper, “*Positioning the Psalms Of Communal Lament and the Lived Experiences of the NE Tribals,*” was presented by Miss Rosy Zoramthangi, (ATC). The presenter discusses how the Psalms of Lament can be very well seen as a plea for help by the tribal community in the face of physical and psychological torment and that the Bible must be used to strengthen the weak so as to fight for their rights instead of reducing them to silent victims.

- Is theologizing tribal heritage adequate for tribal liberation theology?
- Does tribal theology promote Biblically sound theology?
  - Is it necessary to reinterpret the Bible from tribal perspective or fabricate a theological discourse on dominant Christian themes?



Rev. Dr. R. Zolawma, (AICS) then presented “*Tribal Ecclesiology through a Dialogue with Tribal Egalitarianism*” where he discusses how egalitarianism is relevant for tribal ecclesiology. The last paper was presented by Rev. Dr. C. Vanlaldika (AICS) on the topic, “*Reading the Mizo Ancestral Testament as a Primary Text for Doing Tribal Theology.*” He encourages the readers to discover their roots and be grounded in their own culture and traditions so that Ancestral Testament would become a valid source of information about tribal religion and about God.

The concluding session was held at 5 o'clock in the evening where Rev. Lalramliana Pachuau proposed a vote of thanks. After which all interested delegates were taken out for a dine-out in Aizawl city.

#### **Points to Ponder from the Discussions:**

- Can we formulate a distinct Tribal Theology from different tribal theologies?
- While we focus much on interaith dialogue, is it high time that we think of interdenominational dialogue?
- Can we dig out more Biblical basis for doing tribal theology?
- Tribal land must be protected at any cost including protest and the like.

## **REPORT OF THE 41<sup>th</sup> SYNOD LAY WORKERS' FELLOWSHIP ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING *Elder H. Lalnunthuanga, ATC***

The 41<sup>th</sup> Synod Lay Workers' Fellowship (SLWF) Annual General Meeting (also called Lay Day) was held with a grand feast at the Aizawl Theological College. Comprising of the non-ordained Synod workers within Aizawl city, it has around 800 members. The various Synod Departments take turn in hosting the Lay Day and it serves as a mean of fellowship and solidarity among the Synod workers. The theme of the Day, Revival today and Christian Workers aptly reflected the present spiritual renewal in Mizoram and the speaker was Elder C. Ngurthanthuanga. The Aizawl Theological College (ATC) and Synod Rescue Home (SRH) community members prepared the feast and gave their best efforts for the success of this meeting.



Aizawl Theological College, Synod Hospital and Synod Rescue Home detailed their buses for travel convenience. Registration begun at 10:30 till 11:00 am, followed by the morning programme led by Elder R. Lalmalsawma (Chairman, SLWF). Ms. Zoramthangi (Love Home) read the Bible and offered a prayer. Then, Elder Hmingthansanga (Secretary, SLWF) gave a report of the various activities of the SLWF while Elder HS Lalhlimpuia (Treasurer, SLWF) gave a financial report. A minute of silence was observed as a mark of respect to members who passed away.

Rev. Lalrinmawia (Moderator, Mizoram Synod) addressed the gathering and exhorted the members to work diligently so as to please God and the Synod. Then, Elder C. Lalmuankima presented a certificate of appreciation to members who were new pensioners. The Synod Higher Secondary School (SHSS) favored the occasion with a special number. The programme was followed by tea break.

**Date:** 29th May 2015 (Saturday)  
**Venue:** Aizawl Theological College  
**Host:** Aizawl Theological College and Synod Rescue Home

#### **Some activities of the SLWF**

- Free blood donation to Synod Hospital
- Donation in kind and cash to help the needy
- Giving Rs. 50,000/to families of every member who passed away



The afternoon session started at 1:00 and Dr. C. Biakmawia (pensioner) led the service which was meant for singspiration and listening to the theme of the Meet. The speaker delivered a meaningful and interesting message where his focus was the need to balance openness and cautions toward the revival movement. As was the practice, trophy was given to the best participating department and Mr. Rozama Chawngthu (Principal, SHSS) gave away the trophy to the ATC. Elder R. Rualkhuma (Vice Chairman, SLWF) proposed a vote of thanks and the afternoon session was closed.

This was followed by a grand feast at the ATC Dinning Hall. We give thanks to God for guiding and enabling us to observe Lay Day 2015. We also express our gratitude to the authority of the Synod Hospital, ATC and SRC for arranging the buses and the community of ATC and SRC for preparing the feast as well and for hosting the meet.

### 1. ATC Valedictory Service

1) The Aizawl Theological College had annual Valedictory Service for out-going students on 4/21/2015. The Principal of ATC, Rev. Dr. Lalhlira conducted the service and Rev. Lalrinmawia, Moderator, Mizoram Presbyterian Synod delivered valedictory messages for 30 BD and 25 M Th graduates. Which was followed by farewell dinner at the student s dinning hall.



2) The Missionary Training Center (MTC) conferred Certificate of Bachelor of Missiology (B.Miss) degree to 14 graduates on 22/4/2015. The service was conducted by Rev. Dr. K. Lalrinkima, Principal, MTC. Rev. Lalrinmawia, Moderator, Mizoram Synod



delivered a farewell messages and Rev. Lalzuithanga, Senior Executive Secretary gave away certificates to the graduates. MTC is affiliated to Senate of Serampore College (University) in 2013 and it was the first institute in India offering of Bachelor of Missiology course.

## 2. Mizo Bible Dictionary

The MIZO BIBLE DICTIONARY, which was prepared and published by the Synod Literature and Publication Board for the first time, was released by Rev. Lalrinmawia, Moderator, Mizoram Presbyterian Church Synod on May 6, 2015. There are 65 contributors and it has 883 pages, costing Rs.800 per copy.

## 3. New Presbyteries

As per the resolutions of Synod 2014, three new Presbyteries were inaugurated on May 3, 2015 in different churches. The new presbyteries are:

- 1) *The Aizawl Hmarchhak Presbytery*, inaugurated by Rev. Lalramliana Pachuau, Executive Secretary at Bawngkawn Chhim Veng Church.
- 2) *The Aizawl West II Presbytery*, inaugurated by Rev. Lalrinmawia, Moderator, Mizoram Synod at Chawnpui Church.
- 3) *Kolasib Presbytery*, inaugurated by Rev. Lalzuithanga, Senior Executive Secretary at Kolasib Diakkawn Church.

## 4. Pavalai Meet 2015

The Synod Revival Committee convened the 2<sup>nd</sup> Pavalai Meet on May 15-17, 2015 at Khatla Presbyterian Church with the theme Living for Christ (Phil. 1:2). There are different speakers for sub-themes in different services. Pavalai Meet is known for spiritual meeting where there is no business sessions as the nature of Pavalai fellowship is for loose gathering of men of above 40s for spiritual fellowship. As of now, it does not have proper set-up and administration under the Synod, but take care by the Synod Revival Committee. In this meet, there were more than 1,223 delegates, who came from outside the city and stayed the night with families of the host church. There were hundreds of delegates from the city churches. As usual, Pavalai Meet ended with hours of singing and dancing and looking forward to the next meetings with anticipation.



### 5. Seminar on “Vision of the Church”

In pursuance of Synod 2015 Resolution, the Synod Executive Committee (SEC) convened Seminar on Vision of the Church in different district headquarters/capitals within Mizoram on June 30, 2015. The meetings were held as follows:- Aizawl District at Mission Veng Church; Champhai District at Champhai Vengthlang Church; Serchhip District at Serchhip Kawnpui Church; Lunglei District at Lunglei Chanmari Church; Kolasib District at Kolasib Diakkawn Church; Mamit District at Mamit Church. The following persons were invited to participated: All pastors/ministers, pro-pastors, and pensioners; Presbytery Moderators and Secretaries; pastorate Chairmen and Secretaries; Representatives of each local church; All committee members of hosting church. It was reported that the total number of participants in all six meetings rose to 1414 people.

## A BRIEF on PASTORS' REPORT on RETREAT

*Rev. Dr. L.H. Rawsea*

The Biennial Pastors Retreat of the Mizoram Presbyterian Church was held during May 12-14, 2015 at the premises of Aizawl Theological College, Durtlang. As many as 414 pastors and 55 probationary pastors attended the programme. The main purpose of this report is to recaptulate the main events of the retreat and to keep such events in record.

**# Day One (May 12, 2015):** The retreat started with registration of the names of participants in the afternoon of May 12, 2015 and reception programme which was held on the eve of the same day. In the reception, the Synod Moderator, Rev. Lalrinmawia led the meeting and gave a key-note address welcoming all the participants. The Synod Moderator noted that pastor s ministry is challenging but honourable task. He urged the pastors to aware of the significance of maintaining the sanctity of the church as the church have witnessed another wave of revival in recent times. He ended his address with the importance of showing mutual love among the pastors.



**# Day Two (May 13, 2015):** The second day of the retreat (*i.e.* May 13, 2015) began with devotion. In this devotion which was started at 7 O Clock, the main speaker of the retreat, Rev. Vanlalbela preached on the theme, Do Not Ashame the Gospel. The Speaker evidently identified that our present context is a time of trials and difficulties characterized by advancement in information technology, alarmedly permeated by a frame of thought and ideology springing from individualism, retarded by agnostic or atheistic worldview. Over and above this context, he stressed the importance of the pastors living out power of the gospel, which he believed is a victorious over those forces attacking our society.



Above: Rev. Challianggura;  
Left: Rev. Vanlalbela;  
Below: Rev. Lalchama (L)  
and  
Rev. Dr. Lalchhuanliana  
(R), two senior ministers

*A session in progress*



*A session in progress*



In the second session of the day, at 9: 00 am, Rev. Dr. C. Vanlalhrauaia made a presentation on the theme, Self-Discipline and Obedience. The presenter mainly discussed aspects of quality life, such as: punctuality, meaningful spending of leisure, abstinence from habits (chewing pan, smoking, etc.), personal behavior and character, family values, use and misuse of social media. He urged the pastors to maintain a high standard of moral quality. The presentation was followed by a lively discussion.

The whole next session in the afternoon was set aside for presentation and discussion on the issue of Social Media. In this session, Mr. C. Lalmachhuana, an expertise in the field of information technology, who has been serving the State Government as Secretary, Information Technology, presented a well-argued paper on the selected topic. After the presentation, the participants had interacted with the prominent techie by asking questions and sharing of their thoughts and concerns in the arena of information technology.

In the evening session, which was held after supper, Rev. Vanlalbela, the main speaker of the retreat delivered his second sermon. This time, his theme was Commitment in Today's Context. With his message mainly drawn from the life and ministry of the historical Jesus, the speaker challenged the pastors to broaden the horizons of their commitment in order to cope with the need of our situation.

**# Day Three (May 14, 2015):** The final day of the retreat was opened with morning devotion in which the retreat speaker delivered his third and final sermon. Rev. Vanlalbela, the former Secretary of the Synod Mission Board, spoke on the theme, Press On, Follow Jesus in His Foot Steps. The speaker reminded the pastors that glorious achievements in the past can be a stumbling block for pastors to move forward. He convincingly stated, What have been used as powerful instruments in the past, which gave also us a success in a particular point of time in one's ministry can be a hindrance. It is a temptation for every minister that he, instead of knelling down before our Heavenly God asking God's grace, reloads his old weapon and go ahead with it in his present endeavor.





In the forenoon session, Rev. Challianngura, an experienced minister made the final presentation of the retreat. His topic was on Pastoral Ministry and [Economic] Development. The issues and questions raised by the presenter sparked off a lively discussion.

In the afternoon, Rev. Dr. Tlanghmingthanga, Registrar of the host college, led a session called, General Discussion. In this session, a number of questions and issues, collected from the participants beforehand in writing, were read out, deliberated upon by the participants, and in some cases, as directed by the meeting chairman, were clarified by the Synod Officers. From the atmosphere of the discussion, one can unmistakably judge that the participants highly valued such session as it provided them with a rarest space to express their views and concerns in the presence of their fellow-pastors as well as the Synod officers.

The Farewell and Concluding session was held after supper. Rev. Lalzuthanga, Sr. Executive Secretary, i/c Pastoral, had the final touch. While thanking God for such a great time of retreat, he requested all the pastors to safeguard the sanctity of the church and wished them all the best for their future ministry.

### **A REPORT ON CALVIN STUDY SEMINAR AT SERCHHIP PASTORATE *Rev. Dr. H. Lalrinthanga***

A seminar on *Tunlai Harhna* (Revival Today) was jointly organized by the Serchhip Vengchung Pastorate and Calvin Study Centre (CSC), Aizawl Theological College on June 6-7, 2015 with the approval of the Faculty meeting. The seminar was held on June 6, 2015 (Saturday) at Serchhip Vengchung local church. The CSC official team was led by Dr. T. Vanlaltlani, (Director, CSC, ATC), other members were Rev. Dr. Lawmsanga, Mr. Thankima (Librarian) and Rev. Dr. H. Lalrinthanga. More than 200 members from different local churches attended the seminar.

Morning session was chaired by Rev. C. Lalduhawma, Pastor in-charge in which Rev. Dr. H. Lalrinthanga presented a paper



on *Harhna leh Kohhran* (Revival and the Church). The paper highlighted the history revival in Mizoram. Presentation was followed by discussion in which comments and questions were raised from the members. The resource person made his final comments and answering the queries.

After tea-break, the seminar was chaired by the Pastorate Chairman and Rev. Dr. Lawmsanga presented a paper on *Harhna leh Khawtlang Nun* (Revival and Social Life) followed by discussion. The presenter pointed out clearly how the revival has impact on the social life. A number of questions were raised and then the resource person gave his final comment on the paper. The seminar was ended at 3: 30 in the evening. The CSC officials from ATC preached four times each in different local churches as arranged by the Pastorate Standing Committee.



We thank the Serchip Vengchung Pastorate Standing Committee, local churches and members of the Pastorate for their hospitality and warm welcome during our stay in the pastorate. We enjoyed the spiritual life of the churches which reflected in the church services. We give thank to the Almighty God for his guidance and protection throughout the seminar.



## RESOLUTIONS OF THE 256<sup>TH</sup> SYNOD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The 256<sup>th</sup> session of the Synod Executive Committee of the MPC sat during June, 2-4, 2015 at the J.M. Lloyd Hall, Synod Office, Aizawl. Some of the agenda which were pending further approval in the upcoming sessions of the SEC, were referred to concerned Committees, Boards or the Officers Meeting for consideration and necessary action. Some important resolutions were as follows:

1. As suggested by the Officers Meeting 5:32 of 2015, the word Officiating in the Baptismal Certificate, which referred to the Minister administering the baptism, shall be omitted when the Baptismal Certificate is reprinted.

2. As suggested by the Officers Meeting 8:25 of 2015, the present Superintendent of Hmangaihna In, Ms. Laldawnkimi, was reappointed for another term, i.e., 2015-2017.

3. As forwarded by the Synod Partnership Committee, recognition of the Synod was given to the Ramthim Veitute Headquarters, Champhai.

The SEC  
decided to  
forward the  
following proposals  
to the Synod Meeting  
2015:

1. An improved grants for students and trainees under the different institutions of the Synod.
2. Formation of two Mission fields – Arunachal North Mission Field and Arunachal West Mission Field – from the present Arunachal and Assam Mission Field West.
3. Synod status to Manipur Area.

4. The proposed draft of the Officers Meeting regarding the Daily Allowance given to students under the Synod who went for further studies was accepted.

5. The Recruitment Rules and Schedules of the Synod Service Rules, which was revised and corrected by the Synod Service Board, was approved.

6. Ministerial guidelines for Pastors serving in the metropolis of India were accepted.

7. The draft proposal of the Presbyterian English School Manual was accepted.



8. The proposal of the Synod Property Committee to dedicate the Hall that will be constructed in the Synod land at Bawngkawn in memory of Rev. William Williams, the first missionary to Mizoram, was accepted.

9. Youth Recreation Centre Plan and Estimate along with the application to seek funding by the CKTP was accepted.

10. The terms of Partnership with the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar which was drafted by the Officers Meeting in consultation with the representative of the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar was accepted.

11. Monetary grant of Rs. 20 lakhs was sanctioned to the Phai Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar for procuring land.

12. Aizawl Theological College was permitted to purchase a new bus.

13. The proposal of the Synod Education Board EC to grant permission to the following churches/Pastorate to open a Presbyterian English School was accepted:

- |                           |                            |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| a. Cherhlun church        | b. Khawbung Vengpui church |
| c. Sairang Dinthar church | d. Tualte church           |
| e. Phainuam Pastorate     |                            |

## **STANDING WITH CLIMATE WARRIORS: A FACE TO FACE WITH CLIMATE INJUSTICE (CWM F2F Programme in Fiji and Tuvalu)**

*Mimi Lalruatsaki, MTh.*

We see a drastic change in the paradigm shift of mission towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, wherein mission is no more of an anthropocentric-orientation, but more of a cosmic focal orientation with a more wider and multi-dimensional perspectives. As a result of this, the Face to Face (F2F) programme of Council for World Mission (CWM) tried to enable the young theologians from different parts of the world to stand in solidarity with the climate warriors in the Pacific Islands and to understand climate change as a justice issue which affects disproportionately the communities at the margins. This is part of CWM's campaign to re-vision mission in the midst of empire by accompanying the victims in their attempts to create life-affirming communities.



**Journey:** I began my journey on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2015 from Aizawl and reached Pacific Theological College on 21<sup>st</sup> April. It was a great experience and excited journey to meet new friends (participants) in the airport; we were searching for each other whom we never met.



**Orientation and Seminar:** Before we begin our placements, we were given orientation at PTC by different professors on Pacific context, their culture, theology, and women condition etc. We also had creative Bible study. Apart from these, we had been given a chance to learn from Museum visit and Slow Food (a response to food security and globalization, social empowerment education programme) and visiting slum area that are affected by climate injustice. We always had debriefing and evaluation session soon after we came back from our placements. We also learned some of the local language of our placements (Fijian and Tuvaluan languages), cultural practices which are strictly observed in the village-wearing *sulu*

(wrapped around cloth), way of sitting in the floor, local drink (*kava*), manners and etiquette etc. Face to Face invite all the participants in cultural, social, theological and contextual realities to understand, to motivate and to engage with the realities on how the fullness of life is being denied to the large majority of the world's population. It seeks to not only expose but also engage in cultural, social, theological and contextual realities so that we might grapple with and be motivated by the world around them.

### CWM Face2Face

#### Programme Highlight

**Date:** 21 April – 3 June 2015

**Host:** CWM in partnership with the Pacific Theological College, Fiji and the Ekalesia Kalesiano Tuvalu, Tuvalu

**No. of participants :** 11 (from India, Taiwan, South Korea, USA, Philippines, Zambia, Sri Lanka and Kiribati)

#### **Scheduled events:**

- Orientation
- Solidarity visits to different island communities
- Online Diploma Programme in Ecojustice Ministries,
- Participating in a conference on Climate Change at Fiji.

**Re-route Theology:** As we were divided into three groups under three professors, I am one of the three members of Dr. George Zachariah and the assigned topic were Church, salvation and humanity. The people who are suffering the climate injustice are looking towards God in their struggle and it is a great challenge to reroute theology from the Pacific Islands.

**Ecclesiological Understanding of the Islanders:** In the Pacific

**First placement-Kiuva:**

- They strongly practice their traditional way of life. Each clan organized early morning devotion (around 4:30 Am) and we led the programme everyday. Every Monday is observed for community work and we too participated.
- We got lots of information from our own family host about the affect of climate injustice. During high tide the water comes up to the village although they have sea wall funded by the government of People's Republic of China.
- They plant mangrove trees in some part of the sea wall to protect from high tide and soil erosion.
- With one week experience we learned many things about the community life and witnessed the climate change through their help. During this first placement we were not given any particular topic for research from the CWM programme secretary that like we were assign later.

Islands, the life of the community and the fellowship of the believers (the church) are in-separable. Whenever the community resides, church is the center which links them together in one accord and all the communities face every day challenges and their journey together. They stand firm in their faith amidst doubt and fears in their struggle for life. Recently, Tuvalu celebrated 150 years of Christianity on the Island; even after so many years, their faith is not diminished, rather they live in harmony and unity. But while the church is inseparable from the society, it still lacks in dealing with the welfare of the community because their under-



*With Kiuva village Chief*



standing of the church goes straight to the spiritual nourishment alone. In that point, promoting awareness of the environmental concern must be taken seriously. Taveau Teii, former minister of natural resources in Tuvalu Government mentioned that the industrial countries are the main producer of green house gases and emission. And he does not believe that climate change can be stopped. The only hope he has is to delay the time of the disaster and the immersion of the Island. However, the church seems to ignore the situation (the climate issue) where they are living.

### Second placement-Tuvalu:

- A neighbor country of Fiji, Tuvalu is a Polynesian island nation located in the Pacific Ocean, midway between Hawaii and Australia. Funafuti is the capital which is only 2.4 sq.m.
- Life on the islands is simple and often harsh. There are no streams or rivers Increasing salination of the soil threatens traditional subsistence farming and climate change could see the islands swamped by rising sea levels.
- Re visited another island called 'Vaitupu' which experienced cyclone pam just one week before we visit. Many houses were damage and even their waiting shed in the wharf and some of the graveyard was also damage. The sandy beaches of Vaitupu on the western side of the island eroded.
- In this tour we could visit 'Punatau' the old settlement of Vaitupu and a stone which was used for chopping head was still standing; and also we went to the only Government Secondary School.
- We celebrated the 150<sup>b</sup> anniversary of the first arrival of Christianity to Funafuti. We could attend the choir competition and the big feast.
- We had a time to visit many islets and witnessed the two islets which were recently drowned under the ocean.





*Climate Change Effect*

Likewise, the people of Kioa who are migrated people from Tuvalu (particularly the Vaitupu village), keep aside on the climate issue from the church. For them church is the only place to worship on Sunday. Daily devotional observations show their regular and serious duty to their spiritual life. The council chairman strongly emphasizes this by saying, Cyclone, tsunami etc., can destroy this place, but one thing will not change/destroy (one thing- spirit of Vaitupu). This village has experienced drought for seven years; in which, the council chairman said they still believe in God that he can provide for their needs. The spiritual life of the villager is strongly depending on the power of God.

When the position of the church is seen, the community hall (*Maniapa*) always comes next in the pacific island. Sometimes it can be seen *maniapa* as the church because it has lots to do with their faith. Siose said that *maniapa* is the church because whatever is done in the church is also done in *maniapa*. But the church is always higher than *maniapa*, however *maniapa* has to parallel with the church. *Maniapa* cannot overtake the church. The church members always pray for the physical reaction for the community. The church can dissolve the reaction of *maniapa*, however, *maniapa* issue cannot be taken into the church. Like the pastor, the chief too has a big responsibility for the spiritual life of the people by giving advice to them. Pastoral service is done inside the church and outside the church by the chief.





### Anthropological Role in the Context of Climate

**Injustice:** The Tuvaluans strongly believes that God is the creator and human are made in His image and are the steward of creation (Gen 1:28). When we had a tour to different islets, we went to a place where many birds and their eggs could be seen. We found a bird egg and a newly born bird; instead of taking for themselves, they just leave them to have their own life, also the same is true for the starfish etc. They do not go beyond their needs. Love is one of their important principles which is visibly seen; they do love their neighbor, community, as well as other creation. The smiles on their faces, the hands they stretch out, the hearts which welcome us, clearly demonstrate their value of life; they do not practice independent/individual life with a possessive mindset. The Prime Minister of the country encouraged us to see the faces of the people, not only the devastation. In the farewell session at Vaitupu village, one old man shared that the service they rendered to us was accepted as a service to God.

### Last placement-Kioa:

- A long journey by bus, ship, carrier and motor boat for around 15 hrs.
- The participants stayed together in the community hall and the village women were preparing our meal.
- Every morning we had devotion with the council member and all the programme was set by them.
- Most of the day we had house to house visits and we spend two days for community workbuilding sea wall.
- In this village we could witness the unity of women and a very unique remark was women do not experience violence and only one rape case they could remember.
- In their spiritual life, they observe strictly family devotion as well as prayer timemorning, noon and evening prayer. Even children have their own prayer time.
- In this village different bells are used for information: local drum for women and children, cornshell for men, and church bell for worship.



The role of human over the creation is seen mainly in two ways from the people. One group strongly accepts humans are ruling over the creation and can do anything what they want; the other group sees themselves as a steward towards other creation. One interviewee believed that human are the main cause of pollution and says, We don t listen to God to keep environment clean. We condemned the nature and we are sin . Another interviewee also says, Humans commit sin to creation; by polluting the sea, and humans kill the sea creatures and also pollute and destroy the land. We are corrupting God s creation and sin against Him .

**Conclusion:** By dealing with the given topic through personal experience with the local people, their understanding differs from one view to another. At the same time, they have similarity with their concept of the church. They strongly believed that church has to do with their spiritual life alone; it does not touch the welfare issue. Therefore, church exists in exclusion from community welfare. It is now important for the Pacific island church, also the world wide church, to enlarge the scope of mission which should be no longer limited to human beings alone their spiritual, physical, social, political and economic welfare but includes nature and the whole eco-system, which is part and parcel of God s creation. Also in their understanding of salvation, many people understood salvation for the soul or human alone, and they exempt other creation. Although some accept salvation is for other creation, it is difficult for them to believe in its re-creation and re-orientation form the present status. This may be due to their terrible experience of climate injustice and their lack of adequate knowledge for its control. Therefore, the churches have an unaccomplished agenda in bringing climate injustice to the awareness of its people and thus enlist and educate them to stand in the fore-front of this vicious and atrocious battle for the re-creation of this world.

Last, but not the least, I give my heartfelt thanks to God for his guidance and providence especially during the programme. Also I give thanks to Aizawl Theological College faculty and to the officials and authority of the Council for World Mission for approving and acknowledging my interests and application and enlisting me in this programme.



# EXPLORING & HUMAN MIGRATION & TRAFFICKING

(CWM F2F PROGRAMME IN THE NETHERLANDS)

*Vanlalhriata, MTh.*

**Introduction:** At the very outset I would like to convey my sincere gratitude to the college authority for selecting me to be one of the participants of CWM Face to Face programme which was held in Netherlands. The Programme was hosted by *Kerk in Actie* of the Protestant church in the Netherlands (PCN), CWM Europe and CWM Empowerment and Training in close collaboration with organizations actively working with migrants and undocumented people and those that have experience trafficking.

**Brief Introduction of the PCN:** The PCN came into being in May 2004, through the merger of two churches of the reformed (Calvinistic) tradition and one Lutheran church: the Netherlands Reformed Church, the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, and the Evangelical - Lutheran Church in the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

## PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

- Week 1 April 13 –19) *Arrival and Introduction to Netherlands Cultural Awareness, Visit to Parliament, and Church, Team Building, Understanding Of Church Situation, Understanding of the Mission Context*
- Week 2&3 (April 20–May 1) *Location Placement part 1*
- Week 4 (May 2) *Mid term Evaluation Faced Issues, Theological Reflection, Social and Cultural Issues*
- Week 5 & 6 (May 6-7) *Location Placement Part 2*
- Week 7 (May 18-2) *Presentations & Certification preparing a reflective essay, Presentation, Evaluation, Certification & Cultural Nights*
- Departures May 23-24

The established church in the Netherlands after the Reformation was Calvinistic. It had adopted the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of Dordt. When the Netherlands became a monarchy in 1815 the king gave it a church order and it received the name of Netherlands Reformed Church. This action of the state was one of the reasons for two splits in 1834 and 1886. The two groups that separated merged in 1892 to form the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands.



Besides the Calvinistic mainstream there had also been an Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Netherlands since 1556. In the aftermath of World War II there was an increasing awareness in the two large Reformed churches that their continued separation could not but affect the credibility of the gospel. In 1961 a group of 18 young theologians, all working in ministries on the frontiers of church and society, called on the synods to set out on a common journey. Discussions began.

In 1986 the two synods declared that they were in a state of union. Soon after, the Lutheran joined the Together on the Way process. It was decided that a new church order was necessary, based on an ecclesiological vision rather than a collection of pragmatic arrangements. This church order was adopted in 2003. It declares, among other things, that the church shares in the expectation of the people of Israel and therefore, as a Christ-confessing community of faith, seeks dialogue with Israel. It also clearly expresses the place of the church in the oikoumene. In addition to the three ecumenical creeds and the above-mentioned confessions the church also accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and Luther's Catechism.

The PCN has adopted the presbyterian-synodal model of church governance with a board and a moderator and general secretary. Its national office and service centre are located in Utrecht.



*With the Moderator of the PCN*

The missionary and diaconal work of the PCN is carried out in cooperation with several smaller churches in the Netherlands, under the banner of *Kerk in Actie* (Churches acting together). The PCN has 2.1 million members, making it one of the largest religious denominations in the Netherlands, with nearly 1800 local congregations and over 2200 ministers. About 600 of the Protestant ministers are pastoral workers in care facilities, at prisons and judicial authorities, and in the armed forces.



**The Report of the Placement:** I was placed in the Harlem City for four weeks to Work with the organization called Stem in de Stads. Mostly we spent our days in Anloop centre which is the free cafeteria run by the Stem in de stad, for the homeless and migrants community that they might come and spent their days with others happily. We serve tea and coffee to the visitors of the centre, moreover we sit with them and talk with the if they were willing to. We were also help in the office by receiving and giving out the money for the migrants. We sometime have outreach programme and we visit the night shelter for the homeless, the drop in center for the drug abuse, visiting the Scharlaken koord whose works are linked with the prostitutions and human trafficking in Haarlem city.



*Anloop Centre free Cafeteria for homeless and undocumented people*



*Dinner with the assylum seeker*



We also visit the farm where the migrants are working to earn their bread. Indeed they need to work hard for their survival in Europe. We are not confining ourselves only in Haarlem city, but also we went to Amsterdam to have discussion with Fairwork organization regarding the Human trafficking. Also we witness the ministry of Salvation Army among the prostitutes in Amsterdam. On 10<sup>th</sup> May,

2015 we went to Schiphol airport where the government have detention centre. It was quite touching and we had a time of prayer and singing, we waves our hands, blowing whistle so that they may see us and they may understand that there are someone who welcome them in the country.



**Critical Analysis:** I am happy that we are being placed in Stem in de stad in Haarlem, we learn many things over there, I live with the undocumented people under one roof, I am happy that I could encounter them in a meaningful way as we were living in a same house. I can feel what struggles they are going through, it does certainly develops my empathy towards them as well as I have better empathy for them.

I really appreciate the sacrificial heart and the dedication of the workers in Stem in de stads, I give high regards on their humanitarian concept that they have showed to the marginalized and vulnerable section in the community. The selfless life and the care for others is noteworthy. The relationship between the staff and the workers in Stem in de stads and the homeless people are good.



While there are many positive things to say I also would like to state some of the negative comments. During my stay in Haarlem for four week, I saw that everyday some people came to the Anloop centre as a volunteer, I do appreciate for their voluntary good works. But at the same time, there less youth participation as most of the volunteer are pensioners or retired from their job. If there are more youth volunteer it would be better.

The other thing I would like to mention is that the limitation of the organization called Stem in de stad, even though they help the needy people in tremendous ways we still see the inadequacy of their help. Many people are still out of their reach. It is obvious that the



migrants and the victims of human trafficking are vulnerable group in the society, they need special treatment and care. But it is also a fact that they cannot always treated as they need to be treated due to shortage of human resources and financial resources as well, the same scenario is also

seen in the ministry of Stem in de stad, though they want to stretch wide their helping hand to the marginalized, in many areas their insufficiency is seen.

**Conclusion:** We were working and done study among the illegal migrants and victims of Human Trafficking, presently there is a big debate in Parliament in this issue, whether the government will accept those people or not. The church always welcomes them but from my observation later it may be a bothersome for the country. Many people think Europe is a bed of roses, but in reality many people are struggling for their survival especially the people who migrated to Europe to seek their fortune. Therefore it is needful to have thorough study beforehand whether the company or the place where they are going to work is safe for them or not for those who try to work in Europe. After spending six weeks in Holland I realized a new that God's grace upon the Mizo and Mizoram Presbyterian Church is worth to remember and we must be grateful for what we are.

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