

PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW



VOL. XXIII & XXIV Oct 2014 - Mar 2015 No.72&73



**One section of
Synod 2015 session**

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The views expressed in this magazine do not necessarily represent the official position of the Mizoram Presbyterian Church; each contributor is solely responsible for the views expressed in his/her article.



Editorial:**SPIRITUAL REVIVAL**

The history of Christianity in Northeast India has documented a series of revivals that have happened in different places in the region. The people in the area have distinct cultural characteristics those are more or less similar to tribals in other parts of India, and native settlers in other continents of the globe. Such revivals have different manifestations following human emotions and desires. There might have been labels given to different church denominations in writing about revival movements in other places, but such things may not be applicable to the churches in Northeast India. The revival movements in this region is always charismatic in nature, and emotional characters are common as its expressions. Visions, prophecies, dancing, fasting, prayers and public meetings are also common features of revivals. Churches grow in terms of numbers and increase in financial contributions. Peace and harmony, zeal for spreading the Gospel are also very much prominent among them.

While lots of good results of revival and charismatic movements could be named, the negative points are easily pointed out. Usually there is freedom as the Holy Spirit moves, which is manifested among the people in intimate relationships. Such freedom could easily be used for committing evils such as sexual perversions, laziness to work, and so on. Visions and prophecies are also easily turned to threaten people or please others for one's own benefits, than to comfort them (as during the time of OT prophets, for example). Other critics (both Christians and non-Christians) would even say that there is no signs of decrease in corruptions in the form of financial malpractices, social evils and bad habits of drinking and taking of tobacco products in spite of series of spiritual revivals.

The churches in Northeast India should carefully and patiently reflect and research the movements. It is advisable that church leaders, researchers, and critics alike, should make slow reaction and adverse remarks on it, but rather to participate in it and guide the movements to harvest good results from it.



NEWS AROUND MPC

Quiz for Youth in Presbyteries within Aizawl City

The Synod Information & Publicity Department (Synfo) organized Bible Quiz for the members of Youth Christian Fellowship from October 31 to November 28, 2014. As many as 82 Branches from Presbyteries within Aizawl City area participated. The Quiz was kicked off by the Synod Moderator Rev. K. Lalhmuchhuaka at the Zosaphluia Hall at Mission Veng, Aizawl. The entire programme had been telecasted by Hruaina Eng, a television channel owned by the Synod.

P.C. Girls' School Day

The P.C. Girls' School observed her 11th School Day on October 15, 2014 at the School Chapel in Aizawl. The programme was featured by various items both by the teachers and students. The School has classes ranging from Class A to Class VIII, and are divided into sixteen sections. As of the current session, there are 453 students and 37 teachers in the school. Apart from its regular excellent academic programmes, the school is also widely known for its extracurricular activities, such as: music, theology, handicraft, etc. which make a school unique one.

Meeting for Pastors' Wives

An Annual Minister wives' meeting was held at the Pi Zaii Hall at the Synod Conference Centre, Aizawl on October 16, 2014. This was the thirty-sixth time. The programme is meant for enabling the pastors' wives to carry out their responsibility. This year, 132 pastors' wives from different pastorates and localities came together. Rev. Vanlalbela, a retired minister and noted speaker, addressed the meeting with a theme, "Pray unceasingly."



Presbyterian Women Fellowship (PWF) Biennial Conference

The Presbyterian Women Fellowship of the PCI held its Biennial Conference at Churachandpur, Manipur from October 24-26, 2014. The theme of the Conference for this year was “Rise Up and Build.” Mrs. H. Lalpianthangi, General Secretary and Dr.LalrindikiRalte, ATC delivered sermons; Ms. C. Lalneihthangi, Treasurer and PWF Standing Committee member led a session of Bible Study.

Fullness of Life Concert

An ecumenical musical concert called Fullness of Life Concert was held during December 1-9, 2014. It was mainly an inter-denominational choral competition. The concert was sponsored by the World Vision, and its Organising Committee was formed by representatives from myriad churches in Mizoram, which included: Presbyterian, Baptist, Salvation Army, UPC(NE), ECM. From our Church, 14 pastorate choirs contested the competition.

Short Term Missionary

The Synod Mission Board has appointed 119 men and women to serve in various mission fields as short term missionaries with effective from January 2015. The Orientation Training was organised for them during November 10-28, 2014.

Synod Moderator for National Integration

The Synod Moderator becomes a member of the State Level National Integration Council. The appointed was notified by the Commissioner & Secretary to the Govt. of Mizoram.

Relief Grant

Synod Relief Grant, amounted to Rs. 3,50,000/- was dispersed to families who were disturbed by physical sickness and various natural calamities such as flood, storm, landslide, fire, etc. during the last few months (i.e., June-October 2014).



Pro. Pastors' Orientation Course 2015

During February 10-14, 2015, Orientation Course was held at the Synod Conference Centre at Mission Veng, Aizawl. This short training course was conducted for 26 Probationary Pastors who have joined the pastoral ministry in January 2015. The inaugural-cum-welcome programme was held in the presence of the Synod Moderator on February 10, 2015. The Probationary Pastors were given training so as to prepare them for their ministry. On February 13, 2015, a session was set aside for an interaction with the Synod Officers, and a farewell session was led by Rev. Lalzuithanga, Sr. Executive Secretary on February 14, 2014.

“PI PUII IN” INAUGURATED

The Synod Moderator inaugurated a newly constructed Private Ward in the Synod Hospital on February 11, 2015. This new Private Ward was named “**Pi Puui In**” after missionary doctor, Dr. G.P. Roberts whom Mizo fondly called “Pi Puui.”

Mission Seminar

Mission Seminar was organised by the Missionary Training College, Aizawl on February 27, 2015 at the Synod Conference Centre, Mission Veng, Aizawl. The Seminar was attended by about 150 persons selected by the organisers. The Seminar was divided into three sessions. The first session which was led by Rev. P.C. Pachhunga, i/c Synod Mission Board of the Mizoram Synod. Rev. Dr. K. Lalrinkima presented a paper on the theme, “Missionary Training: Retrospect and Prospect.” The Second session was led by Rev. Lalchhuanmawia, Secretary, Synod Mission Board. Rev.



Zosangliana Colney, Director, Synod Multipurpose Training Centre, presented a paper entitled, “The Significance of Indigenously Worship in Mission.” The third session was led by Rev. K. Lalhmingliana. In this final session, the participants comprising of experienced leaders, pastors, elders and academicians in the field of theology and mission studies, mission thinkers and practitioners gathered from Aizawl city, discussed the relevant issues and mission questions raised by the presenters.

Charity Fund for Synod Hospital

The leaders of Central Women Fellowship Committee of the Mizoram Presbyterian Church donated sum amount of Rs. 6,23,133/- (Six Lakh Twenty-three Thousand One Hundred and Thirty-three only) towards charity fund. A short meeting was held for this on March 2, 2015. This huge amount was collected the Women Fellowship of various churches during 2014. The project has been initiated since 2012 to enable the Synod Hospital to render her mission to poor and destitute who could not bear the expenses of their medical treatment of their own. The Central Women Fellowship Committee, in its Biennial Meeting held recently, resolved to continue with the practice.



The Ninety-First Annual Synod Meeting of the Mizoram Presbyterian Church

- Rev.Dr. L.H. Rawsea
Aizawl Theological College

The Synod—the highest decision making body of the Mizo Presbyterian Church—meets on a yearly basis to review the mission attended to within the past year and to plan for the coming years. This year, the 91st Synod meeting was held at the *Mission Vengthlang Presbyterian Church*, Aizawl during December 3-14, 2014. The Synod undertook important decisions to strengthen and re-equip herself so that she would be engaged in a more meaningful and relevant mission within the coming years.

Rev. Lalrinmawia took over the charge of the Moderator from Rev. Lalmuchhuaka. Being an experienced pastor, the Moderator competently presided over the Synod proceedings as well as the various worship services. Elder, H. Zoliana, Synod Secretary (Senior) and Rev. B. Sangthanga, Synod Secretary (Junior) also carried out their duties efficiently at the meeting.

Delegates and Guests: It was officially recorded that 1913 delegates attended the meeting. 73 delegates were representatives from the Presbytery outside Mizoram and mission fields; while 12 were fraternal delegates from the Presbyterian Church of India Assembly. Rev. & Mrs. Neil Kirkham, Moderator, Presbyterian Church of Wales, UK attended the meeting.

Worship Services & Fellowships: Worship services were held every evening from December 9-14, 2014 for the general public. During the services inspiring sermons, reports and greetings were delivered by various persons. Rev. Zosangliana Colney, Director, SMTC rendered a message on the theme selected specifically for



the event namely, “Faithfulness.” Melodious choirs from within and outside Aizawl City enlivened the services and they were wonderful and soul kindling. Many of these choirs were from outside Aizawl city and it must be noted that these choirs were on par with the choirs from within Aizawl city.

On Sunday morning, i.e. December 14, 2014, the newly appointed Probationary Pastors were commissioned by the Moderator. The seventeen new Pastors were also ordained during this service. At the same time Certificates of Appreciation were awarded to the retiring pastors, namely: Rev. Dr. Vanlalchhuanawma, Rev. K. Lalhmingliana, and Rev. G.B. Kaipeng, as a token of gratitude for their faithful services rendered to the Church. The Lord’s Supper was celebrated in the afternoon service. An obituary to the late missionary Ms. Gwen Evans, fondly addressed as ‘Pi Hlimi’ by the Mizos, and to the late ministers, namely: Rev. Thansiam, Rev. Rohnuna, Rev. F. Laltlanthanga, Rev. Lalrodinga Sailo and Rev. Biaksanga, was observed. During the evening service, Rev. Lalhmuchhuaka, the outgoing Moderator delivered his Valedictory Sermon.

The fellowship programme was held in two separate ways namely in singspiration and in sharing and discussion. During the former there was a time of spontaneous singing and dancing even as the worshippers were led by the Holy Spirit. At the latter the delegates discussed a given topic, i.e. tithes.

Pastoral Concerns: As per the report of the Pastoral Committee, all the 54 Probationary Pastors were successful in their annual examinations. Seventeen Probationary Pastors were duly and solemnly ordained this year. Meanwhile, twenty-six young men were appointed by the Synod as Probationary Pastors, out of which six were candidates from the Synod Mission Board. The Synod has also granted permission to nine Pastors to pursue higher studies at the M. Th., D. Min. and D.Th. levels. Fifteen new Pastorates have



been created by the Synod, which signifies the rapid growth of the Church.

SOME RESOLUTIONS:

At the Synod various matters from Synod committees, boards and Presbyteries were taken up for discussion. The following are some of the important resolutions passed by the Synod.

Deputation of more pastors to wider ministry: The Synod expressed its willingness in principle to depute its pastors outside the Synod. It subsequently entrusted the Synod Executive Committee (SEC) to take necessary step towards this initiative.

Mission to Prisoners: A proposal was rendered towards the aspects of extending mission among the prisoners in Central Jail as well as District Jails, which the Synod had turned few years back. With regards to this renewed interest, the Synod entrusted the SEC to explore possibilities.

Monument for Rev. William Williams: The Synod resolved that better maintenance be provided for the preservation of a historical site at Kutbul River where Rev. William Williams, the first missionary had landed. It was also decided to prepare a valuable monument for the beloved Rev. William Williams.

Consultation on Church Vision: It was decided to organise a state-wide consultation on the vision of our Church. The SEC has been entrusted to do the needful.

Charity Fund for the Synod Hospital: Five different Presbyteries forwarded a common proposal of having Charity Fund for the Synod Hospital. This was a clear indication that members of the church have a grave concern over the financial problem faced by



the mission hospital at Durtlang. Resolution was passed in favour of the proposal and the SEC has been entrusted to take necessary action.

Nursing School to become Nursing College: The proposal to upgrade the Nursing School at the Synod Hospital from the status of Nursing School to Nursing College was discussed at length. As of now, the school is offering GNM course, and it was proposed to upgrade it as to offer courses on B.Sc. (Nursing). The Synod entrusted the SEC to take necessary action.

Partnership with Church of South India (CSI): The Synod expressed its willingness to have partnership with CSI. It subsequently entrusted the SEC to continue with the necessary steps it has been taking towards this initiative.

Diploma in Clinical Pastoral Counselling (DCPC) Course at ATC: The proposal to offer DCPC course at the Aizawl Theological College was agreed. The Synod entrusted the Synod Executive Committee (SEC) to look into the matter.

Aids to struggling Presbyterian Church of Myanmar: It was brought to the Synod that the Presbyterian Church in Myanmar, presently consisting of nine Synods has been undergoing financial crisis as their funding partners, such as: CWM, WCRC, CCA could not support them in recent times. The various proposals put up by the SEC concerning what the Synod must render to the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar were graciously approved by the Synod. The SEC has been entrusted to materialize the proposals.

Old Age Day Care Centre: Considering the pressing need of caring for the old aged people, the Synod took decision that an Old Age Day Care Centre be set up for those who need it. With this decision, the Synod is looking forward the first centre of this kind.



Charity Store: It was also agreed to open Charity Store where the well-to-do family could denote their used and used clothes and other things to those who are in need them.

Budget for 2015-2016: The Synod Budget estimate for the Financial Year 2015-2016 amounting to Rs. 2,20,16,17,000/- was passed.

Lastly, the host Church, Mission Vengthlang Presbyterian Church deserves special words of appreciation for their support and commitment towards the success of the meeting. It remains our prayer that each member will continue to bear fruit for the greater glory of God. The next Synod meeting will be held at the Tuikual Presbyterian Church. The proposed theme will be ‘Thy Kingdom Come.’ The Officers for the next Synod meeting are:

Moderator:	Rev. H. Lalrinmawia
Secretaries:	Rev. B. Sangthanga (Sr.) Elder.H. Roghaka (Jr.)
Finance Officers:	Rev. LalramlianaPachau (E/S) Rev. Dr. R. Lalbiakmawia
Statistician:	Elder Vanengmawia
Executive Secretaries:	Rev. Lalzuithanga Rev. P.C. Pachhunga



SERMON**COMMUNITIES
(Acts 2:42-47)**

-Neil Kirkham
Moderator

Welsh Presbyterian Church Synod

In a recent prayer handbook, the reader was challenged with a question: “What was the greatest difficulty facing any of the disciples?” While we ponder whether it might be persecution, torture, or execution, we turn the page to discover the answer, the greatest difficulty facing any of the disciples was how to get on with the other eleven.

Only Jesus holds them together. We read that it is not good for the man to be alone. Our problems in living is that we can’t live without each other (we are created to be inter-dependant) yet we struggle to live with each other, we are always falling out or competing. In Wales we recently celebrated the 300th anniversary of the birth of Howell Harris, one of the founding fathers of Calvinistic Methodism in Wales. He established the ‘Trefeca Family’ after a dispute with Daniel Rowlands. At it’s peak it reached 120 members, each with their various trades and skills. They held regular daily devotions and Harris’s leadership held them together. It lasted another 60 years before his death but dwindled and finally disbanded. We have never quite perfected community, yet the Church is at the centre of God’s plans for salvation. Bill Hybels in the USA often says, “the local Church is the hope of the world”. There is no other.

Acts 2 gives us a model, a frame work, for Church but even then it had its problems. Half the New Testament was written to combat them. Even Paul fell out with Barnabas and publicly corrected Peter. Yet we need an ideal to aim for, a vision to inspire us. 1 Corinthians 12 pictures a body, incomplete without every



member. One of the mistakes we have made in Wales was to give each church a minister. Many of the members who were previously exercising gifts of leadership, preaching, teaching or pastoral work, stepped back to let the professional take over. Hence we finished with one-man ministry. Lay people became disempowered, they ceased to grow with the result that few could hear and recognise God's call on their life.

In Llandudno we are trying to encourage all members to exercise their spiritual gifts rather than put all their trust in one professional minister. We have 6 people who are good preachers others who lead home groups and Bible study and others who visit the sick and elderly, of whom there are many! We need each other. We need each to be using their God given gifts to build up the whole body, all under the headship of Jesus, serving the same God in the same spirit. This is a picture of unity in diversity. The church was birthed by the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

The picture in Acts 2 is of: -

A Learning Church: They devoted themselves to the Apostles teaching, that means they were serious about it. This body of teaching is what we now have in Scripture. When we join the Church, we don't abandon our brains in favour of a purely mystical experience, focussed entirely on the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is the Spirit of truth.

In Wales, baptism and confirmation are often seen as a graduation, as if education finishes when we leave Sunday School. there is a story told of 3 clergy men who each had a problem of bats in the belfry. One tried poisoning them, another tried shooting them, but they both failed. The Presbyterian said, "It's no problem, we just baptise and confirm them and we never see them again." In our Churches I have come across some strange ideas. Some believe in reincarnation, some don't believe in any form of life after



death. Some think Jesus was a nice man, but a bit over the top. Many in our Churches have sought to undermine Scripture, they select the passages out of context to suit their argument and ignore the rest. We need to sit under Scripture's authority, not in judgement over it.

In Howell Harris's day people may have been illiterate but they knew the gospel. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God". We need to know and understand what it says. "How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word". (Psalm 119:9) That whole Psalm is about meditating on God's word and its benefits. Equally we have those who simply study and analyse sermon structure without thinking about what was said. In the PCW, before we had professional translators we used to have retired Ministers translating into English. Unfortunately they got too involved in the discussion and gave us a commentary. All we would hear is, "you can't say that, that's a load of rubbish, I totally disagree with that" meanwhile we would be screaming to him, "what did he say?" The question we should be asking is, "What is God saying to us in this?" The Creator of the Universe has a message for us, listen up, this is important. I am humbled and inspired by stories from the Bible Society of starving people in third world countries queuing for hours for a copy of God's word. I have a dream of people banging on my door, and the door of every minister, begging us to teach them more of God's word. That teaching has to be true to God, relevant to everyday life and anointed by the Holy Spirit it becomes life changing. Like Peter people should be asking, "where else could we go? You have the word of eternal life." And we're hungry for more. This year we ordained one new minister in Wales. We have three in training, but thanks to a programme funded by CWM we have more young people testing their call through apprenticeships and then going on to full time training. Things are slowly changing for the better.



A Caring Church

“They devoted themselves to the fellowship . . . they were together and had everything in common . . . They gave to anyone as he had need.” The Trefeca family shared everything together, a bit like a Jewish Kibbutz. We are a bit wary of this concept since it smacks of communism. However, in communism, it was compulsory, here it is done out of generosity of spirit. The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it. If God has blessed me, then I want to share that blessing whether material or spiritual. In Acts 5, Ananias and Sapphira were not taken because they withheld some of their money, it was theirs to do with as they wanted, but because they lied. They wanted to keep the money but also have the gratitude of the church, giving the appearance of generosity. In Britain now there are areas of poverty and churches have established food banks to feed the hungry. It’s scandalous is we keep God’s riches to ourselves. We need to be filled with that generosity of spirit.

Judging by the complaints received each year about the levy on churches, we still have a long way to go. PCW churches are sitting on 20 million pounds, saving it for a rainy day. I keep telling them, “not since the days of Noah has it been as wet as this”. By a rainy day they mean when a tile falls of a roof because sadly we have come to idolise our buildings; we need to use the money for mission. A few years ago I had three weeks sabbatical and went to a church near Liverpool. The people there collect food, clothing and furniture and distribute it to the community. As one man said, “God shovels it in and we shovel it out. And you know what we’ve discovered? God has a much bigger shovel”. There is also fellowship (*koinonia*). It’s not just what we share out together but what we share in together. We have a common need of Christ, a common dependence on Him for salvation, and a common purpose in making Him known.



Fellowship should go deeper than conversations about the weather. When I went to Welsh lessons the teacher commented that I had a limited vocabulary. I told her that I know words like; *Iachawdwriaeth*, (salvation), *molwch yr Arglwydd* (Praise the Lord) but these words don't come up in conversations about the weather. In our conversations we rarely move from 'nice day, isn't it?' to 'how is the state of your soul?' Not unless you want to scare the life out of people. But conversation must move to that point. We must gradually build relationships of trust whereby people feel they can open up about things that trouble them. To quote Bill Hybells again, "true fellowship can revolutionize lives. When the masks come off, hearts get vulnerable, accountability is invited and tenderness flows." This is what the pioneers of our church did in their class meetings during the week. Not only does it lead to personal healing and growth but relationships are restored, vision is caught, plans and strategies take shape, encouragement flows and a body of people are raised up a spiritual army of prayer and active compassion to meet the world's needs. This is what we are trying to do in Llandudno through our small groups which meet in each others homes.

A Worshiping Church: "Every day they met together in the temple courts, they broke bread in their homes, and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God."

Worship is a natural response to knowing what God has done for us in Christ. Howell Harris was converted in Talgarth under the ministry of the Rev. Pryce Davies. He understood that he was incapable of meeting the laws demands and totally dependent on the grace of Christ. He knew what he was saved from and saved for.

We often say, "It is possible to be so heavenly minded that we are no earthly use." But equally C. S. Lewis said, "those



who make the greatest impact in this life are those who are most certain of the next.” Martyrs are the prime example. In mediaeval times artists painted graphic pictures of hell and its torture. I prefer to think of it being like a hamster wheel where we run for ever but peace and contentment are always just out of reach. Or imagine being on an island with just enough to satisfy everyone. But you can’t trust anyone. Everyone is out for themselves. You are completely alone. However you see it the Kingdom of Heaven is infinitely better and it is only possible because of Jesus. In Wales we have a TV programme called Dad’s Army. It is set in the 2nd world war in the UK. It features the home guard, soldiers who were either very young or very old, too old to fight. The leader is a Bank manager, and one of the soldiers is a very mournful undertaker from Scotland. Whenever anything goes wrong he delights in saying, “Aye we’re all doomed I tell ye”. And without Jesus, we are. Praise and thanks should come naturally and in the early church it is a mixture of the formal worship in the Temple courts and informal worship at home. Worship never ceased. they met daily, not just for one service a week. A sense of joy and gratitude, hymns, psalms and spiritual songs, were never far from their lips. Worship was never flippant or irreverent neither was it ever a chore. I can’t image them yawning or looking at their watch to see when it would all be over. We used to have an Elder in Llandudno who was visually impaired. He had a talking watch and every Sunday he turned up the alarm so that after one hour of the service, a voice would say loudly, “it is now 12 o’clock.” I was waiting for it to say, “time for the preacher to stop”. Nowadays I would need to go Africa or Mizoram to sense that spontaneous joy of praising God. It all stems from understanding how much God has done for us and what life would be like without him. Sadly while our communities slide to a lost eternity, many in our churches in Wales are arguing about the hymn tune.



An Evangelising Church: “and the Lord added to their number daily, those who were being saved”.

If the first the characteristics are about the eternal life of the Church this is about their impact on the world outside. I’m not sure how much the Trefeca family impacted life. They obviously attracted people to grow to 120 in number but I get the impression it was more of a semi-monastic existence and perhaps reflected Howell Harris’ disaffection and isolation after his fall out with Daniel Rowlands.

However, the inner life of the church should feed and empower its outreach. We work together in the power of the Holy Spirit to build up the body of Christ so that it impacts the world. True community itself is attractive. The world should look and “see how these Christians love one another.” It ought to be with the same love that Christ had but they also explained how it was all possible. In the next chapter of Acts we see one of the many wonders and miraculous signs done through the apostles when Peter and John bring healing to a crippled beggar. There was no silver or gold, but healing in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. The miracles affirmed the message and the messengers and in some cases preceded the message, bringing opportunities for the proclamation of the crucified and risen Saviour. The effect was that “everyone was filled with awe, they enjoyed the favour of all the people, and numbers were added daily”. Only God can save and add the numbers. Our part is to proclaim. Whether the Lord will add to our numbers daily is up to Him but we must engage in mission daily, not just for one particular week, not just as a special project, nor even for a whole decade, but daily. This is part of the DNA of the church. Last week I had the privilege of spending a day with 70 young people who are serious about their faith and were learning how to share that faith with others. Our youth service at Bala is doing an amazing work of leading young people to faith and making them into dedicated disciples of Jesus. Our problem is



in enabling them to find places in churches which refuse to adapt so that they can feel welcomed.

God is certainly moving in Wales. Things will get worse before they get better but there are signs of hope.

Authentic community draws people. It is one thing the world cannot do. It is up to us in the power of the Spirit to show them how.

(This reflection was delivered by the author on Sunday afternoon open air service while he was attending the annual Synod of 2014 during December 9-14, 2014 at Mission Vengthlang, Aizawl. Aizawl.)



A choir of Presbyterian Church Girls' school sang praise in one of the worship services during the Synod 2015.



A Report on the 87th Serampore College (University) Convocation 2015

Rev. Dr. C. Lalhlira

The 87th Convocation ceremony of the Senate of Serampore College, the leading theological university in India, was held at the Orthodox Theological Seminary (Old Seminary) Kottayam on Saturday, February 7th 2015 at 3 pm. The Convocation ceremony was hosted by the Old Seminary, which is celebrating two hundred years of pioneering education work in the society. It must also be recalled that Serampore University was established in 1818 in Hooghly district of West Bengal. As of now more than 80 theological colleges in India as well as Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bangladesh are affiliated to the Senate of Serampore.

Pre-Convocation Programmes

Theological discussions, dialogues and seminars were carried from 4th to 5th of February as part of the convocation events. On 6th February 2015, a banquet was hosted by His Holiness Baselios Marthoma Paulose II, Catholicos of the East and Malankara Metropolitan at the Smriti Complex in the Seminary campus. The Hon. Chief Minister of Kerala Sri. Oommen Chandy and various distinguished guests and theologians from Asia attended the banquet. *Sargaarchana*, a Christian cultural experience was presented on Friday February 6 at 7.30pm, which was inaugurated by the Chief Minister.

Commemoration Service

As usual, a service in commemoration of the Serampore trio William Carey, Joshua Marshman, and William Ward, who had



given a valuable inheritance and a new way of learning theology and doing Christian ministry was held on 7th February 2015 at 8 am. The Rt. Rev. Isaac Mar Philexinos, the President of Serampore University presided over the service. His Holiness Baselios Marthoma Paulose II, Catholicos of the East and Malankara Metropolitan delivered the Keynote Address. The Catholicos attempted to underline the essential connection between theological studies and pastoral ministry for today's context. He was of the opinion that theological education in the Seminaries does not cater the actual pastoral needs of the people. He stated that "certain forms of theological education simply add to the elitism of clergy who set themselves apart from the people as a superior class." Quoting ordinary people's standpoint, the speaker said, "Some of the new pastors are unwilling to step down to the painful reality of the life of poor people and they do not want to soil their bright and neatly ironed cassocks." The Service was well attended one.

Convocation Ceremony

The Convocation ceremony, which held at 7th February 3 pm, was presided over by Bishop Dr. John S. Sadhananda, the Master of Serampore University. Rev. Helmut Grimmsmann, Secretary for Asia and Deputy Director, Evangelical Lutheran Mission in Lower Saxony (ELM) Hermannsburg, Germany, delivered the convocation address. Basing on the topic, "Let My People Grow," the speaker, who was one of the two awardees of the Degree of Doctor of Divinity (*Honoris Causa*) at the Convocation, described various stages of faith essential to the spiritual growth through theological education.



More than 1500 delegates from various theological institutions attended the convocation. Honorary Doctorates were awarded to Rev. C. Vanlalhraia and Rev. Helmut Grimmsmann in recognition of their services to the church and society. The following graduates received their degrees/diplomas in the convocation:

D.Th.	12
D. Min.	3
M.Th.	144
B.D.	842
B.C.S.	90
B.Th. (Internal)	74
B.Th. (External)	Nil
B. Miss	26 (all from MTC)
Dip. C.P.C.	18
Dip. C.S.	54
Dip. B.T.	1
Total	1,265

Another enlightening aspect of the Convocation was the Address of the President of the Senate which indeed reflects that the Senate of Serampore College runs the academic administration of all its affiliated theological colleges. The Address noticed that there are eight new Principals, Vice Principal, Registrar of colleges/ Seminaries/Federated Faculties under the Senate, such are:

1. Rev. Ms. Satvasheela Pandhare, Principal, United Theological Seminary of Maharashtra, Pune in place of Rt. Rev. Dr. Naresh C. Ambala.
2. Rev. Dr. Koshy P. Varughese, Principal, Dharmajyoti Vidyapeeth, Feridabad in place of Rev. Dr. P.G. George.



3. Rev. Dr. K.G. Pothan, Principal, Mar Thoma Theological Seminary, Kottayam in place of Rev. Dr. Gee Varughese Mathew.
4. Dr. Limatuala Longkumer, Registrar, NIIPGTS, W.B. in place of Dr. Samuel Longumer.
5. Rev. Dr. L. Haokip, Principia, MTC, Manipur in place of Rev. Dr. Kholi.
6. Rev. Dr. Solomon Victus, Officiating Vice-Principal, Tamilnadu Theological Seminary, Madurai.
7. Rev. Dr. Subhro Sekhar Sircar, Vice-Principal, Theology Dept., Serampore College, in place of Rev. Dr. Pratap Chandra Gine.
8. Rev. Dr. C. Lalhlira, Principal, Aizawl Theological College, in place of Rev. Dr. Vanlalchhuanawma.

The Address also indicated that confirmation of affiliations was made during the academic session (2014-15) as the following:

1. Calvin Institute of Theology, Hyderabad was confirmed as B.D. in English medium.
2. Faith Theological Seminary, Manakala, Kerala was allowed to offer M. Th. programme in Christian Ethics; Clark Theological College, Mokochung was also allowed to offer M. Th. courses in New Testament and Communication.
3. Bethel Bible College, Guntur becomes a centre for B.C.S. and Dip.C.S. programmes; Andhra Christian Theological College, Hyderabad for M.C.S.; Kerala United Theological Seminary, Trivandrum, B. Miss.
4. Saccidananda Dharmasastra Vidyapeeth, Raipur becomes an examination centre for Dip. C.S. and B.C.S.; Mobile Theological Seminary, Haflong, Assam becomes Dip. C.S. and



B.C.S. centre. Bible Students' Fellowship of Bangladesh (BSFB), Dhaka becomes Dip. B.T.

The *Presbyterian Review* congratulates all those who received their degrees, especially our ministers. On the recommendation of the Senate, the Master and the Council of Serampore College have conferred Rev. C. Vanlalhraia, the Former Moderator, Secretary, Senior Executive Secretary of our church, the **Degree of Divinity** (*Honoris Causa*). Rev. L.H. Rawsea, the Manager of the *Presbyterian Review*, was awarded the Doctor of Theology. Rev. Laldingluaia, Lecturer in Aizawl Theological College, also received his degree, *i.e.*, Master of Theology (in Christian Theology subject) at the Convocation. One out of the fourteen Senate Prizes for 2014, *viz. Rev. Dr. Mohit K. Pramanik Prize for Excellence in Field Work* was awarded to Lalhunthara, Aizawl Theological College, who is presently serving as Probationary Pastor at Zohmun Pastorate. It must also be pointed that the President of the Senate, in his official address, acknowledged the valuable service and commitment of Rev. Dr. H. Vanlalauva, who served as Dean of the Department of Research/SATHRI till March 2014.

The Principal, the Faculty and students of Orthodox Theological Seminary deserve special appreciation for the hospitality and excellent arrangement for the Convocation. Finally, the Mizo community living in the Kottayam and its neighbourhoods must also be appreciated for their beautiful display of *cheraw* on the eve of Convocation and for their kind hospitality shown to the delegates from the home state.



Felicitation to Rev. Dr. C. Vanlalhruaia

The Mizoram Presbyterian Church has yet another reason for joy and jubilation as the Senate and Council of Serampore College honoured one of its ministers—who had served the Church as Moderator and Senior Executive Secretary – Rev. C. Vanlalhruaia with a **Degree of Doctor of Divinity** (*Honoris Causa*).

Rev. C. Vanlalhruaia was born on October 15, 1941, to Mr. Chala and Mrs. Chawngbuangi at Hmutha village in Mizoram. His family moved to Sesawng village where he had his primary education. Though there was no further educational institution beyond primary school in his village, a burning passion for learning sent him forth to the neighbouring villages and even outside the state for higher education. He did Class IX at Marian Hill School at Jowai, Meghalaya, and in 1963, he joined Class X at Ram Krishna Mission High School at Cherrapunjee where he was believed to be exposed to the theological environment as he often met with a couple of theological students from Mizoram. Unfortunately, he was forced to leave the school along with other forty-one Mizo students by the ethnic tension occurred in the school.

On June 6, 1965, Rev. Vanlalhruaia was baptised by Pastor Lalchama at Thingsulthliah Church. While the local Pastor baptised him, Rev. Vanlalhruaia had a sort of mystic experience. He heard a voice in his imagination challenging, “Are you willing to serve me?” And he surrendered to Christ saying, “I will sacrifice the whole of my life unto you.” That was the turning point for Rev. Vanlalhruaia to be in the service of God. In the following year, which was the doom year for the whole of Mizoram as insurgency by the Mizo



National Front and the counter-movement by the Indian Army broke out, Rev. Vanlalhruaia applied for theological education at the Aizawl Theological College and he joined the College in 1967. As many other beginners, Rev. Vanlalhruaia tried hard to adapt the scientific method of theological studies, and he was adjusted later after the first year of his study. In 1970, he was graduated with a diploma called, “College Diploma.” After which he tried and successful for the degree of Graduate in Theology (G. Th.). And after few years, he completed B. Th. and B.D. courses as external candidate under the Senate of Serampore College.

On completion of his first theological diploma and degree, Rev. Vanlalhruaia was appointed as Probationary Pastor in 1971 to serve at Chalrang Pastorate under the care of Pastor Biaksanga. In the same year on May 11, he married K. Vanlallawmi. They are now blessed with three sons and one daughter. While his supervising Pastor stayed at the Pastorate station, Rev. Vanlalhruaia stayed at Chawngtlai, another village within the pastorate which gave him a greater freedom to serve almost like a full-fledged minister. In the following year, Chawngtlai where he stayed was adjusted to Khawzawl Pastorate, and then he was under the care of a new pastor. After having completed his probationary period with many experiences, he was ordained in 1974.

He was posted first at Champhai Vengthlang Pastorate during 1975–1984 where he had experienced many theological and doctrinal challenges as it was the heyday of the sectarian movements led by Vanawia and Rorelliana. On the completion of his term at Champhai, he was transferred to Chanmari Pastorate at Aizawl. With his profound pastoral skill, he combined well the ministries of the youth and women wings while maintaining cordial relationship



with the elders. He also maintained amiable relationship with the Synod Office as well as other ecumenical partners. He held many important positions while serving at Chanmari Pastorate. Few notable ones are: Synod Secretary (1987-1989), Synod Moderator (1989-1990), Treasurer, BSI Aizawl Auxiliary (1985-1987), President, BSI, Aizawl Auxiliary (1987-1990), Leader, Central KTP (1988-1990), Chairman, Mizoram Church Leaders' Committee (1990-1992), etc.

After serving nearly two decades as pastor, both in rural and urban areas, in April 1992 he became the Administrative Secretary of the Southern Area of Mizoram Presbyterian Church. After serving at Lunglei for six years, he returned to the Synod Office, Aizawl, to be the Senior Executive Secretary of Mizoram Synod. He held this post till 2000. He served at Mission Veng Pastorate for a year; and he went for retirement.

As the secretary and Moderator of the Synod, he initiated measures to strengthen the finance of the Church. Under the leadership of Rev. C. Vanlalhruaia, the Mizoram Synod allotted Rs. 20,000,000/- as capital amount of the Synod Reserve Fund which has now been increased to many more. Mendus Building at New Street Mission Veng, Aizawl, was built with the funding from CWM Self Support Fund. A large part of land belonging to the Synod Hospital had been occupied by the military force of Assam Rifle since the insurgency movement in 1966. With his timely and stern efforts, ownership of the land has been given back to the mission hospital. During his tenure the Serampore Convocation was hosted at the Aizawl Theological College in the year 1988 by the Mizoram Synod for the first time in North-East India. As Chairman of Mizoram Churches' Leaders Committee for three



consecutive terms, he contributed a great deal to promote unity and ecumenical cooperation among the various denominations of Mizoram. Together with all the leaders of the churches in Mizoram, he played a major role in the passing of the Mizoram Liquor Total Prohibition Act in the State.

Under his dynamic leadership as the Senior Executive Secretary of the Mizoram Synod he was instrumental in having representations of youths and women in the highest decision making bodies of the church including the membership in the Synod. He promoted working relationship and deeper partnership with various churches such as the Presbyterian Church of America, Presbyterian Church of Wales, the Council for World Mission, and many other church bodies. As the Executive Secretary in-charge of the theological education, he initiated the development of the Post Graduate and doctoral programmes at the Aizawl Theological College.

Rev. C. Vanlalhruaia has been actively associated with the ecumenical bodies in the North-East India Christian Council (NEICC), Bible Society of India, and Churches' Auxiliary for Social Action Committee (CASA). In the NEICC, he served as the Chairperson of the Church Union Committee. While he served as the President of Aizawl Auxiliary of BSI, the Auxiliary topped the list of ten largest contributors for the BSI ministry and built the Auxiliary building with four flats. Under his leadership, the service rendered to the rural areas in the state by CASA of Mizoram state is aptly recognized and appreciated both by the people and the state authority. Recognizing his significant contribution towards the development of the theological education in North-East India, the



Council of Serampore College appointed him as its member for a term (1998-2003).

His ecumenical and social involvement and commitment to theological education deserve recognition and appreciation both by the Church and society. He has authored as many as 18 books and booklet primarily for text books and study purpose on his credit; he wrote more than 50 essays and articles. His pastoral leadership, able administration, reformist agenda coupled with personal integrity, diligence, punctuality and transparency commend respect and honour by the church and government of Mizoram.

Rev. C. Vanlalhruaia is also known for his strong desire to maintain dignity and justice for the church. It was in 1990 that he – as the Moderator of the Mizoram Presbyterian Church Synod – was invited by the state government to celebration of the national Independence Day at the 1st A.R. Ground, Aizawl. On the arrival of the venue, the receptionists of the function pointed him an ordinary seat where children folks were sitting. He rejected them by arguing “C. Vanlalhruaia can take his seat here, but the Synod Moderator will not. You have invited the Moderator, isn’t? So, I’m going back!” And the Receptionists replied, “Sir, where shall we arrange seat for you?” Rev. Vanlalhruaia told them, “I [the Moderator] must have a seat not very far from the Chief Minister’s.” Seat was then arranged accordingly. Hereafter, the state officials become more well-mannered than ever to the ecclesiastical dignitaries.

Rev. C. Vanlalhruaia really deserves to be presented by the President of the Senate to receive the coveted Degree of Divinity (*Honoris Causa*) from the hand of the Master of the Senate, in the following words:



The Senate and the Council of Serampore College
heartily welcome
the Reverend C. Vanlalhraia
into the honoured and distinguished fellowship
of the graduates of the College.

In honouring him,
we are honouring our own founders,
our alma mater, and her countless alumni
who are engaged in issues of
peace, justice, dignity and equality.



(The Editorial Board of the Presbyterian Review is proud of and congratulate Rev. C. Vanlalhraia for having been awarded the degree of Doctor of Divinity (*Honoris Causa*).



THE 2ND PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL MEETING-CUM-CONSULTATION OF INTERSERVE INDIA

The Synod Mission Board of Mizoram Presbyterian Church hosted the Second Partnership Council Meeting-cum-Consultation of Interserve India during February 18-19, 2015. It was in 2013, the Interserve India had called for partnership to five different denominations in North-East India for a partnership, such are: Synod Mission Board, Mizoram Presbyterian Church, Council of Baptist Churches in North-East India (CBCNEI), Baptist Church of Mizoram, Evangelical Congregational Church of India (ECCI), and Nagaland Mission Movement, Nagaland Baptist Church Council. As these churches warmly welcomed the call for partnership, Partnership Council was established and the first Council Meeting was convened on February 19, 2013 at Guwahati. Following a request of the Interserve India, the Synod Mission Board of Mizoram Presbyterian Church hosted the Second Council Meeting-cum-Consultation during February 18-19, 2015.

On February 18, 2015 (Wed), a meeting of the Partnership Council was held by its members at the Synod Office. On the next day, i.e., February 19, 2015 (Thu), a Partnership Consultation was held for the various denominations within Aizawl city, such as: Presbyterian, Baptist, UPC (North-East & Mizoram), in the Devotion Room, Synod Office. The consultation was conducted to facilitate a wider ministry and to foster better ecumenical partnership among the local churches. On February 23, 2015 (Mon), an exclusive meeting of the leaders of Interserve India and



Executive Committee members of Synod Mission Board was held at the Synod Committee Room I.

At this Partnership Council Meeting-cum-Consultation, the Interserve India was represented by John Amalraj, Executive secretary and Binu Varghese, Head of Partnerships. It must be recalled that the Synod Mission Board and Interserve India started working as partners with agreement signed in 1985. It is expected that the meeting to yield a better understanding and cooperation amongst the member churches.



**THE 6TH BIENNIAL BUSINESS SESSION OF
CENTRAL YOUTH CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP**

The 6th Biennial Business Session of the Central *Kristian Thalai Pawl* (Youth Christian Fellowship) of the Mizoram Presbyterian Church was held during February 27- March 1, 2015. The meeting was hosted by Mission Veng Church, Aizawl. On the Eve of February 28, 2015, welcome and reception service was held in which an interesting reports of the ministry of Central Youth Christian Fellowship was given by the Gen. Secretary. The Services from Saturday evening till Sunday evening were opened for public. After public services on Saturday and Sunday, Fellowship and Praise & Worship were conducted.

Resolutions passed during the business session were:

1. Rates of donation collected from local branches for the construction of Youth Recreation Centre (YRC) be raised as under:
a) Aizawl City Rs. 50/- b) District Capital Rs. 30/-
c) Others Rs. 20/-
2. Offerings of one night service of all the branches must be used as fund-raiser for the construction YRC building.
3. Mass prayer for forgiveness of sins and fasting be organised at the state level. The Central Committee has been assigned to do the needful.
4. Offerings of one night service of all the branches be donated towards Charity Fund of the Synod Hospital, Durtlang.
5. Possibilities of founding an Orchestra Band be explored by the Central Committee.

The theme: “*To Walk Humbly with God*” (Mic. 6: 8) has been selected for the annual theme. The proposed budget for year 2015-



2017 amounting to Rs. 43,30,000/- (fourty-three lakh and thirty thousand only) was approved. The next business session (2017) will be held at Bawngkawn Church, Aizawl.

SEMINAR ON CALVINISM AT BIATE

The ATC faculty meeting has approved the proposal made by Calvin Study Centre to have a Seminar on Calvinism at Biate during 7-8 March, 2015, and appointed three members to attend this Seminar; Prof. Lalnghakthuami, Rev. Dr. LH Rawsea and Rev. K. Lalhuanawma. The topics of the Seminar have been already selected by the hosting Pastorate, and the faculty meeting assigned Prof. Lalnghakthuami and Rev. Dr. LH Rawsea to write papers on the selected topics ‘John Calvin’s teaching on Faith’ and ‘Calvin’s Teaching on Economics’ respectively.

On 6th March, 2015, while scores of people of Mizoram were cheerfully celebrating one of the jovial festivals called ‘Chapchar kut’ in various places, we departed from ATC to our destined place of Biate Village. Started off our journey around 9:00 am from ATC and arrived Biate around 3:00 pm, we were warmly welcomed by Pastor MS Dawngliana, i/c of Biate Pastorate and elders of the Pastorate with a warm and delicious dinner at Pastor Quarters, but the mountain zephyr which was breezing gently has cooled off our bodies from the scorching trip of the day. Since this seminar was jointly organized by ATC’s Calvin Study Centre and Biate Pastorate, the first night worship service was spent as a joint service at Biate church that all the churches within Biate Pastorate had attended (but there are only two churches, i.e., Biate and Biate North). Rev. Dr. LH Rawsea preached in this service.



The following day (i.e., Saturday) was a Seminar day; the attendance of the seminar was good, it was attended by 204 members. The attendance seemed to be more than expected that we made only 150 copies of the seminar papers which we brought with us from ATC, and more copies were needed to make from the Church's photo-copier machine!! The morning session was started from 10:00 am in which Prof. Lalnghakthuami has presented a paper on 'John Calvin's teaching on Faith' which was followed by group discussions in five different groups; each group has an elder as their leaders and secretaries of each group then gave reports of the discussion in the subsequently meeting. The resource person then made the final response to the comments and questions that came out of the group discussions. The addressees seemed to be content with the paper and the response of the presenter and be reminded themselves about the importance of faith in the life of a Christian especially in relation to Salvation. After tea-break, the afternoon session was started and we followed the same schedule as the morning session; Rev. Dr. LH Rawsea has presented a paper on 'Calvin's Teaching on Economics'. The audiences were happy as the presenter has skillfully contextualized and related the topic with the village's main occupation of tea-plantations that they always give alertness and inclined their ears to pay attention. After the seminar, we were led by Pastor MSa to the surroundings of Biate to see and witness various important places and historical monuments of the village, and we were very much impressed by those stuffs. From Saturday night till Sunday night, we preached in the worship services of both the churches alternately as we were assigned by the Pastorate Leaders. As they were spiritually revived, the atmosphere of each worship service was lively and all the pews



used to be full, and numerous members praised God by dancing while singing; even some members could not stop shouting 'Halleluiah Amen!' throughout the services.

By Monday morning around 6:00 am, we left Biate for ATC and reached around 12:30 pm safe and sound. We thank the ATC's CSC and the Faculty for shouldering the responsibility to us of organizing this essential Seminar at Biate, for which we felt ourselves contemptible to do so. We also thank the Biate Pastorate leaders for their warm welcome and providence during our stay with them. Most of all, we thank the Omniscient, God Almighty, for his guidance and protection all through our journey and allowed us to witness his wonderful and gracious works among his people there at Biate Village.



**REVIVAL AT KELKANG AND N. VANLAIPHAI
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES**

- Prof. Lalnghakthuami

Revival at Kelkang:

The revival movement had occurred in Mizoram at the beginning of 1904. Since then the revival hardly leaves the churches in Mizoram either in one local church or covering the whole churches in Mizoram. The revival is instrumental for the growth of the church and becomes the backbone of the church. Recently the revival is experienced again by the eastern part of Mizoram at Kelkang Presbyterian Church since 2013. People are attracted by this revival and the visitors are increasing day by day. The revival also occurred in other place called North Vanlaiphai Hospital Veng Presbyterian Church which has a unique feature and characteristic.

Origin of Kelkang Revival Movement: The beginning of this revival can be traced back with the children and youth who gathered together for prayer meeting. They used to dance and pray together in the church for some time. The youth group was joined by some people who offered their domestic animals for “Pathian chawimawina”. From then on the spirit of the Lord possessed people and the churches experienced the revival movement. Since June 12, 2013 (Wednesday) the church continuously conducted worship services except four nights of bereavement until 2015. It is said that the church is full in all the services with praise and worship.

Nature of service: In this revival the church does not arrange a special speaker as such but the pastor, elders and the local preachers are taking up the preaching assignments. If there are ministers, elders or revival speakers among the visitors who spend



longer time are also given preaching ministry. People are attracted to this revival since it has lasted for quite a long time. Other local church members, friend's groups, individual and even members outside of the Presbyterian Church come to visit the place to be revived by the Holy Spirit.

Reception: The local church has made reception committee to welcome those visitors for accommodation. There were 400 guests approximately in the month of February 2015. Most of the visitors carry their own foods in such a way that they would not make problems to the village people. The local church also received aids from other local church in terms of finance and food items.

The Theology of the Revival: The great revival of Kelkang had occurred way back in 1937 that had a great impact upon the life of the people. Many people believed that there was continuity of that great revival to the recent revival movement. The service is conducted every night as the numbers of visitors are increasing. Singing, dancing and preaching are the common features in the service. They sanctify one particular place called "Mount Bethel" where people offer prayer and communicate with God. In this area there is a holy place called "Moriah" and a cross is also erected. Some sick persons got healed after praying in this place. The main theology of this revival is "Repentance". Repentance from sins, words and actions is the emphasis given in this revival. No particular song is emphasized but indigenous songs and tunes are usually sung in this revival.

Revival at North Vanlaiphai Hospital Veng:

According to Rev. J. C. Lalramliana, Pastor in charge of North Vanlaiphai, the revival occurred in this church in December, 2014



when they organized three consecutive gospel camping. They had invited “Kraws Hnehna Maicham Team” with its speaker Pu Vanlalchhuanawma, Synod Revival speaker. They had a regular service at night as a follow up programme in the church and had singing together at the Christmas house. In the middle of January on Saturday the church was organizing “Penial marching” where they went in procession and ended at the church. This was the beginning of people experiencing ecstatic movement where their body is moving upside down, yelling and crying in the procession for about 2 kms.

Feeding Bottle: It was on January 19, 2015 that the “lengkhawm zai” after the church service proposed to go home at around 12.30 pm but the youth group could not go as they started crying like a baby. As they could not stop crying even the church elders did not know what to do with them. The youths asked the elders to give them breast milk while crying. After giving them milk in the feeding bottle they were able to sleep. There were nine people at the beginning who drank milk with the feeding bottle but the numbers of people are increasing who needed the feeding bottle. They were feeling shy when they asked for it but they were compelled to do so. They said, “If this is for the Glory of God let me drink with the feeding bottle.” Those who took feeding bottle reached up to 26 numbers. Some of them already left it but around 17 numbers were still taking feeding bottle in February. These youths were looked after by the church along with some donors.

Implication of feeding bottle: The revival occurred at North Vanlaiphai has unique features and characteristics. It is significant to see the implications of this unique characteristic of the revival. Feeding bottle implies that christianity in Mizoram needs to restart their life like a baby. The people of Mizoram are more



and more sinful and turn away from God therefore; we need to begin our life like a baby. Turning the body upside down also implies that Christian in Mizoram need transformation and total change is required by the Lord. They also proclaimed victory which was followed by healing ministry. They laid their hands on the sick people and prayed for them that some of them were healed through their ministry.

Reflection by the Church Elders: The church elders are receptive to this unique feature of revival in their church. They did not try to stop or control over it rather they give freedom to the spirit of God. The vice chairman of the local church committee said, “We pray hard for the Holy Spirit to revive the church and now it has come, we have to nurture and care for those who receive the Holy Spirit. Since the fire is lit here many other churches from various places may also come and carry the fire of the Holy Spirit in order to see the mighty work of God.” It is important that we pray for those who are possessed by the spirit of God so as to discern the will of God and for the growth of the church in Mizoram.



OBITUARY**REV. Z.T. SANGKHUMA**

Z.T. Sangkhuma (May 15, 1934–December 22, 2014) was a prominent pastor and a creative writer and thinker among the Mizo in northeast India. He was the Moderator of the Mizoram Presbyterian Church Synod in 1983. He died of cardiac problem on the forenoon of December 22, 2014 at his residence in Zotlang, Aizawl at the age of 80.

Early life and education

Sangkhuma was born in Farkawn, a small village in the eastern Mizoram. He was the fourth son of Elder Zothanga and Mrs. Chalmawii. His father completed both Assembly Preacher and Evangelist, courses offered by the Church. As his father died at an early age of thirty-five, his widowed mother raised solely all her children with a strong faith in God the Almighty; his mother also



passed away in 1959. Most obviously, Sangkhuma inherited his father's name as his initial 'Z. T.' spells out his father's.

As there was no school other than primary school in his village, Sangkhuma was unable to continue with studies after primary school for sometimes. In order to get a higher education beyond primary school, the people of his village had to go to the neighbouring villages with a lot of expenditure. As he had lost his father early, education was costly and almost impossible. Yet, he and his other brothers—who were known for their literary and academic contributions—could survive hardship and poverty because of they were diligent and tough. Sangkhuma completed Lower Primary in 1947 and after a decade in 1957, at the age of 27, he joined class 6 as a private candidate, not as regular student who attended classes on regular basis, as he had to support himself by working in the jhum.

Career and pastoral achievements

Z. T. Sangkhuma started his professional carrier lowly from Peon-cum-Clerk in the office of Mizo Sunday School Union during 1962-1965. In 1965, he completed matriculation at the age of thirty-one again as a private candidate. After his matriculation, Sangkhuma joined theological education and attained his L. Th. diploma in 1967. And he joined Synod pastoral ministry. While actively involved in pastoral ministry, he continued with his studies and attained both B.Th. and B.D. degrees. When he was probationed at Kangmun Pastorate during 1968-197. After ordination, Sangkhuma served God at three pastorates, such as: Mamit Pastorate (1972-1979), Dawrpui Vengthar Pastorate (1980-1988), and Bungkawn (1989-1995). On his retirement in January



1996, he moved with his family to Zotlang locality at the western part of Aizawl city for settlement.

As indicated earlier, Sangkhuma became Moderator of the Mizoram Presbyterian Church Synod in 1983. He served the church as useful and resourceful instruments at the Pastorate, Presbytery, and Synod levels. Some of the notable leadership he had held include: Mizoram Church Leaders' Committee, Bible Translation Committee, Mizo Bible translation editing Committee, BSI Executive Committee (Aizawl Auxiliary), Synod Grammar Cell, Dictionary of Theological Terms in Mizo for the Southern Asia.

Sangkhuma was a talented man and he made contributions immensely towards the growth and establishment of the church and society in Mizoram. As a prolific writer, he authored forty-three books in the field of theology, literature, and homilies. He also composed forty songs, and those songs, at least some of them, are known widely among the Mizo.

Other academic and social contributions

Sangkhuma made significant contributions towards promotion of education and literature in the Mizo society. He worked as Primary School teacher in Samthang village and he earned grains of rice as salary. When he was a Probationary Pastor in Kangmun Pastorate in 1969, the Movement Middle School, which was ruined for half a decade due to the insurgency movement was re-established under his leadership. He was also one of the pioneers in the establishment of Bungkawn College in 1990 which had later amalgamated with Khatla College, forming Govt. Johnson College. On his retirement, he founded Auxilium Higher Secondary School



and he served the school as the Chairman of the Governing Board, and he was later made the Principal of the school for four years. Mentioned must also be made that took active part in the establishment of a Higher Secondary School in his home village at Farkawn in 2002.

Recognising his profound knowledge in the field of language, culture, and customary law of the Mizo people, the state government appointed him as a member of various boards, such as: Customary Law Drafting, Art & Culture Advisory Board, Art & Culture Language Board, Mizoram Publication Board and others. He presented a good number of scholarly and well-argued papers on various areas including history of local Christianity, revival, culture, customary laws, etc., at seminars, workshops, consultations organised by the church, government and non-governmental organisations. He had written more than 140 articles in Mizo. His lexicography, *Zotawng Dictionary* (co-authored with his two brothers) is widely in use. His article entitled, “*ChanchinTha Malsawmna*” (Blessings of the Gospel) won the First Prize of the Essay Writing Competition organised on the occasion of Mizoram Gospel Centenary in 1994. He was also awarded *Literary Award 1999* of the Mizo Writers’ Association, one of the most prestigious award in Mizoram, for his significant contributions in Mizo literature.

Personal life and death

When he worked as probationary pastor at Kanghmun Pastorate, he married Mrs. Lalparliani (d/o R. Tawnluia) on November 21, 1969. Rev. Biaktluanga, the then Synod Moderator solemnized their wedding ceremony at Kanghmun Presbyterian Church. They were blessed with five children. Sangkhuma was



known for his critical and creative thinking as well as his enthusiasm in ministry. He was a sort of born-critic and preacher with quality, and his profound skill in counselling was a great blessing to many. He hardly made judgment on certain issues without prior in-depth studies.

During his active ministry of 28 years, he was said to have been admitted to the hospital for seven times. Whenever he struggled with deep problem of health, he was said to have experienced always remarkable communion with God. This was a spiritual quality embedded in Sangkhuma's life journey. Since his retirement in 1996, he was disturbed by certain health problems. In 1998, he underwent surgery due to sciatica disease; in the year 2008, he underwent heart surgery at Kolkata; in 2010 he was attacked by stroke, since then he spent rest of his life at home. Again, on November 22, 2014, he had another attack which made him unconscious and his condition became more critical. On December 22 at 10: 45 p.m. he received the final call to be without the LORD forever. He was survived by his wife, six children and grandchildren.

STOP PRESS!

Due to unavoidable circumstances, the two issues of Presbyterian Review viz. October-December 2014 and January-March 2015 have been put together in this issue. The Editorial Board requests the readers' forgiveness for this.



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