





Christoph Haus



Carlos Waldow



Matthias Dichristin

Dear reader,

“Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.” (Romans 15:7)

This year’s watchword is easily said: Sure, we accept one another, this is the foundation of our faith – accepting and being accepted. But we then close our eyes to the big challenge of the verse: Christ has accepted us, which was linked to enormous cost: He came to us, became one of us, renounced his status and gave himself up for us.

Considering the current debate in Europe, the verse sticks in my throat: Accepting others is difficult, because I have to start out. I become a neighbour to the other person, I share with him what I have, and for this I will have to pay a price. Here, we are already very close to the core of missions: Starting out in order to accept others. And this also matches the annual motto of the German Union of Evangelical Free Churches, which is “The Colourful Church”. Be with us. Enjoy reading the reports of people who have started out. Thank you for every support, every prayer and every donation.

Sincerely yours,

Christoph Haus

Carlos Waldow

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Cover photo:
Accepting one another

Thank you!

Our churches as well as many individual donors from our churches and friends supported EBM INTERNATIONAL in 2014 not only by praying but also by donating 3,574,822 euros (2013: 3,153,200 euros). For this, we say thank you to you on behalf of the many people who benefited from these donations, physically, mentally and spiritually. The additional donations of about 420,000 euros we received in 2014 (compared to 2013) almost exactly correspond to the specified donations for the big crises in our member unions: for Ebola projects in Sierra Leone, for the refugees fleeing Boko Haram in North Cameroon, for the Syrian refugees in Turkey, for the people hit

by the cyclone Hudhud in Southeast India and the victims of the Civil War in the Central African Republic. The unstinting support we were able to give our Baptist Partners in these countries has encouraged them a great deal and made them feel that they are not left to themselves. And for this, we are very grateful to churches and donors alike.

In special newsletters we had reported on these crises, but we had not expected so many donations. We received more donations than we could immediately use, so that some of the money will not be spent until 2015. And, obviously, our churches and donors can spend

every euro only once. So this was at the expense of other mission projects, whose budget funds we could not fully disburse in 2014. We as EBM INTERNATIONAL are best served when we receive uncommitted donations, which we can then use where they are most needed.

Thank you so much for every support. As we have reliable and competent staff in our member unions, every gift will serve its purpose and is helpful.

Christoph Haus

Turkey

Update from Izmir

There were many guests attending our Christmas celebration on December 21, among them even the deputy mayor of Izmir, the mayor of our district, two local politicians, and a judge. They saw the nativity play and listened to many carols. After the celebration, the deputy mayor went forward and said that he had never seen a nativity play like this and was very moved. Cakes, biscuits and snacks followed, with many good talks. During this time Ertan also caught a lung infection. But the celebration and the courage of many church members to profess their faith in Jesus lifted him up again. Christmas Eve was celebrated with 31 brothers and sisters from our church, five of whom were attending for the first time. Everyone contributed to the shared buffet. After that, we went into the church, sang carols and listened to the story of Christmas. Two days later, we also celebrated Christmas with the Iranian



Celebrating Christmas in Izmir

refugees. Most of them heard about the meaning of Christmas for the first time. Celebrating and eating together really did them good. It was a welcome change from their many painful challenges.

Together with our branch churches in Adana, Samsun and Istanbul, we assist the refugees in looking for jobs, paying rents and by giving them desperately needed food. Many non-registered refugees have neither a tent, nor bedding nor kitchen utensils. They sleep and,

during the day, they beg on the streets. We greet all our friends and supporters with Matthew 7:7: "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you."

Ertan and Marlene Cevik



Praying together after a Boko Haram attack

Report from Tourou/North Cameroon

Terror wrought by the Boko Haram Sect

Tourou is situated not far from Mokolo and is an important trading post for goods between Cameroon and Nigeria. Since the Boko Haram Sect spread on the Nigerian side, the border with Nigeria has been closed, trade has come to a standstill, and tourists are advised to stay away from the area. Instead, Cameroon's reaction force has been deployed here in order to stave off the sect's assaults. The area is rocky and jagged. Swift response is often inconceivable. Apart from agriculture, the area has not much to offer, and many men went to the city of Mubi in Nigeria in search of work. But they stayed in touch with their hometown and thus, the church in Tourou could rely on the financial assistance from its members in Mubi. Thus, from Tourou, some further congregations were founded and churches built.

When in October 2014, Mubi was raided by Boko Haram, many fled back to Tourou; with them, Nigerian refugees also came to this area.

Among these, there was a pastor, who was very happy to find a newly planted church in Cameroon (Mabass). He moved into the building, preached and also cultivated fields and sewed clothing in order to make a living. The other church members also worked hard and brought the dime of their harvest to the church.

On a Sunday morning (January 18, 2015), the people in Mabass awoke with a start. They heard shooting, and the call „Allah akbar“ left no doubt that Boko Haram was attacking. Those who made it fled to the mountains in order to hide. All the same, 80 young people were kidnapped as hostages, and some people were killed. The extremists set fire to houses and destroyed the crops. An evangelist from the region, with some brothers and sisters, tried to encourage the Christians in Mabass and prayed for them. The situation is very hard: Many families have been torn apart and have sent the children away so that they might grow up in security.

In the previous years, the churches here had experienced really good development. Those who had found work elsewhere supported the people at home. To Ndrog alone, 38 families have returned from Nigeria as refugees and need assistance. And there is widespread fear, for Boko Haram keeps attacking. Some of the people spend their nights in the mountains in order to save their lives, just in case the villages will be attacked again.

One pastor expressed his gratitude for the assistance given by EBM INTERNATIONAL. This enables them to provide families, who have lost everything, with food, clothing and soap. In addition, fifteen sacks of millet have been donated in the church at Ndrog, On one sack of millet a family can live for about four to six weeks.

Martin Pusch, Douala, Cameroon

One year in Malawi



Fishermen about to go out to the lake in the evening



Fletcher Kaiya and Thea Ploeg

Looking back on 2014, I think of those quiet moments when after work I was sitting on the beaches of Lake Malawi, seeing the lights of the fishing boats, which sparkled like stars in the lake. In the evening, the fishermen go out to the lake, hoping to get back by midnight with a good catch. It is a hard and dangerous trade. Many fishermen drown in the lake. These fishermen may stand for life in Malawi, where 74 % of the population still live beneath the poverty line, living on less than 1.10 euro per day.

My days were filled with impressions and emotions, and I did a lot of thinking about it all when after work I was sitting on the beaches of the lake: I had the possibility of immersing deeply into the lives of these fishermen and their families.

Coordinating a community home-based care programme, I met many families who had no income at all. Often, this was due to HIV and AIDS, alcohol abuse or disabilities, and chronic diseases. Many patients also suffer from being neglected by their families because resources to care for those who are ill are lacking. So there were countless times when I was sitting there in their huts, looking into the hungry eyes of dirty and lonely patients. How should I, a weak white person, be able to overcome the unfair realities of their lives. How could I further help these people – between the times spent on the beach and those spent with the patients.



Visiting a home with Memory (left), the project coordinator

Yet soon I realized that we have a God who has compassion and who is at my side. And thus we started taking small steps: We alleviated pain, treated high blood pressure, infections, and we dispensed vitamins and some nutritious pap. We improved, on a small scale, the living conditions by improving hygiene and the quality of clothing. And it was inspiring to see how some situations changed for the better, and to witness, at times, even miracles when people recuperated who we had thought would die.

A further big challenge has been the financial situation. Some years ago, lots of money were still available for the fight against AIDS – yet now, a few years later, during which the project was inactive, no more funds are available. Together we had to

learn to start from scratch, by small steps. Today, I am unbelievably proud that the project is continuing and will do so even after I go back to the Netherlands. I could show the ropes to Memory, the future coordinator, and 60 patients are now being visited on a regular basis. Small agricultural projects such as chicken farming and rice paddies allow people in the villages to generate small incomes. It is good to know that EBM INTERNATIONAL will go on supporting the project financially up to a certain extent.

Thea Ploeg

Ebola changes life in Sierra Leone

Just before we left for home furlough, there was an outbreak of ebola in neighbouring Guinea. During our time in Holland we heard reports that the epidemic had spread to Sierra Leone, but we realized only towards the end of our stay how serious it was. Would we be able to go back? Not long after we arrived in Freetown in July, all flights were cancelled.

We returned to a country in a state of emergency. Text messages on our mobiles informed on every day's number of deaths and newly infected people. The numbers increased every day until at the beginning of December they stood at 50 and 100, respectively. In consultation with the Mission Office, we decided not to leave our compound except to buy foodstuffs and other supplies. Life in our country came to a standstill. We were especially worried about the children who live with us. Schools were closed. We had to teach them at home. For several months we could not attend church, because of the habit of dancing and physical contact in our churches.

Ordinary Sierra Leoneans were badly affected by ebola, which was like the civil war all over again. Most people lost their jobs, while at the same time prices increased sharply. The situation was worst in the North. In the village of Petifu Brown, near Lunsar, over 150 people died, many of them Baptists. People were no longer allowed to travel around the country, except with a special pass.

The Baptist Convention received help from EBM INTERNATIONAL to give assistance to people in the different areas where we work. As a family also, we did what we could to help. We felt so helpless during those days, as there seemed no end to this suffering. The main cemetery of Freetown is situated not far from our house, and all the time we heard the screaming ambulances when another person was burned.

Because of the continuous lock-down on our activities we had a lot of time for prayer and Bible study. We kept in touch with many people by mobile phone and knew exactly what and who to pray for. Gradually the numbers started decreasing in January, though the epidemic is not over yet. Perhaps habits will change forever. People are no longer quick to hug or shake hands because of the fear of contracting ebola. They have become suspicious of strangers, as anybody who is sick might be suffering from ebola, even if most are not.

Life is not the same as before. A Ministry of Health slogan says, "Ebola is still with us". And it will be with us for a while, surely. But we know: God is also with us, and HE is greater than anything in the world. Meanwhile we need to pray for and help the victims, orphans and widows.

Hans Willem Oosterloo



Aisha teaching their foster children



Distributing foodstuffs



Distributing hygiene items supplied by EBM

Reconciliation work



Tokens of reconciliation between Christians and Muslims following the seminar

Since 2012, the Central African Republic has gone through dramatic military-political unrest. These turmoils are caused by religious differences and have endangered social cohesion. People are killing one another, property is being destroyed. All of this makes co-existence impossible. Concerned about the social cohesion, the „Association d'Églises Baptistes Évangéliques“, a Baptist Union, has launched a programme for the religious leaders, which consists of 10 seminars and has been funded by EBM INTERNATIONAL.

Eight seminars of three days each were held in the cities of Bangui, Berberati, Sibut, Bossagos, Damara, Batangafo, Bouar, and Bangassou, and were each attended by 320 Christian and Muslim leaders. There was a fruitful exchange, which was a first step towards greater cohesion again.

During these seminars, we were, time and again, faced with various difficulties. Very practically, armed groups often blocked the roads so that we were forced to negotiate or, respectively, to give them money

in order to go past. Another deeply rooted problem was coping with the atrocities that many had experienced. It is a big challenge to make the case for mutual understanding and to get a process of reconciliation going. All the more impressive were some of the statements we heard in the seminars. One Muslim leader said, e.g.: „It is Satan who has brought about these problems to our country. I thank the Christians for this seminar. I ask for forgiveness on behalf of all the Muslims, and I am forgiving those who destroyed my house. In revenge for that, I have killed two people. I ask God for forgiveness and hope that He will forgive all of us here.“

On the whole, the goals we had set have been achieved despite the difficulties we encountered. 320 leaders have been trained and have committed themselves to passing on the contents and the structure of these seminars in their respective places. Some results can already be seen, and they have been desperately needed: For many Central Africans do need forgiveness in order to be able to live together in future. We are very grateful for the support we received from EBM INTERNATIONAL. May the LORD bless your hands in order to continue His work.

According to a report by Pastor SINGA-GBAZIA Nicolas Aimé Simplicie, President of the "Association d'Églises Baptistes Évangéliques" in the Central African Republic

PRAYING AND DONATING

Theological Education in the Central African Republic

Project Number: MAG 56400

Financial need: € 25 000

Home-based Care Project Malawi

Project Number: MAG 52150

Financial need: € 6 000

Information available at: www.ebm-international.org

Donation account EBM AFRICA:

IBAN: DE89 5009 2100 0000 0333 16

BIC: GENODE51BH2, SKB Bad Homburg

Seeing God at work firsthand

Hundreds of people coming to Jesus! Their lives being radically transformed by God's love and grace! Many being baptized! Scores of new churches arising! This gives an idea of mission work in Cuba. My co-travellers and I are happy to report on our trip to Cuba in February.

Abel Santa María / Havana is home to Jacinto and Olga with their daughter. They opened their house so that people should get to know Jesus and be exposed to God's love. This was the beginning, and a bible club was launched two years ago – giving birth to the new church. To the family's house, they added a tin roof, under which the new church now gathers.



The pastoral couple Sergio and Regina Gomez

It is a unique experience: the celebration marking the foundation of this church on February 14. With 100 people, I am sitting under the tin roof of the church. Some brothers of the Baptist Union leadership have come. They test how much knowledge the young Christians have of the Word of God, if their faith is sustainable and if they can be admitted to the Union as the 432nd church. The brothers and sisters share about their faith with effervescent enthusiasm. They know the Bible passages that allow them to substantiate and explain their theological and moral principles by heart. I am amazed by the unconditional faith these young Christians have in Jesus. After passing the exam, the young pastoral couple and the church are blessed for their

ministry and their mission. We pray for a revival in Europe, one of the kind Cuba is experiencing these days.

People explain to me that here, in Cuba, nothing like this is a standalone event. As soon as a group of people accept Jesus, they are led on a new path of systematic mentoring and support, up to the point where they form a church. I am also surprised at the domino effect of this concept, but even much more at the quality and holistic orientation of these new churches.

The next day, six congregations that have been founded over the past three years in Havana meet for a joint service in **Santos Suarez/Havana**. At 7 a.m., with the sun just rising over Havana, we see from the window of our room how the heavy pews, plus all the available chairs, are being carried from the chapel to the sports ground of the church, whose main pastor is Daniel



Founding the Church in Abel Santa María

González. In the service, 700 people make music, dance and sing. 20 brothers and sisters are baptized in the paddling pool. There is a lot of praying, and people are encouraged to submit their lives to God. I sense that God's Spirit is present, touching these Cubans. Never before have I been hugged, kissed and blessed by so many brothers and sisters after a service. For me, it was very emotional and inspiring. Among the leaders, I can see a young generation with a clear vision, which is rooted in authentic faith.

Carlos Waldow with Betty and Arturo Köbernick, Esther and Bruno Fröhlich, and Ernesto Zacharias



Festive service in Santos Suarez

Space allowing for opportunities

At the place where the Arayas used to run a small children's home in 12 de Mayo near Mendoza, more and more new things are developing. Another plot could be purchased, and in the autumn of last year, a two-storey building was attached to the old house. The new rooms were inaugurated with great joy. It was quite amazing to see how many different programmes had been run in this very small space. Now, after all, there is more space for the projects there: the ministry to teenagers, PEPE, medical care, evangelism and church planting, work with the parents, etc.; 15 programmes that are offered altogether! In the daily feeding programme for the poor, the children get an additional glass of milk. Moreover, the poorest families receive a monthly food package.

The new house is used for the many different activities, among others also for the meetings with the children who used to have their programmes in private homes, due to the space constraints. The work keeps expanding, and the commitment of the great number of honorary staff shows no signs of slackening. What a blessing for this poor community in 12 de Mayo!

In Ijuí, Brazil, in the "Henrique Liebich" Children's Home also, there has been a social centre for quite some time. Every day, about 60 children and teenagers come here. It makes us happy to see the strong changes in them and their families: New values are being lived, a blessing for their togetherness; teenagers have left the drug scene or can be prevented from entering it. Many families attend the services, and some have become believers.



Children in the Ijuí Social Centre



Social Centre in 12 de Mayo



Social Centre in Ijuí

Leaving poverty behind

In Argentina, Brazil, and Bolivia, EBM MASA has been supporting – in some places for many years – the social commitment of the local churches. In a pre-school programme, they provide good preparation for school to children from socially deprived families,



PEPE children in Erechim

so they will not be disadvantaged because of their background. Their parents are often illiterate or they are unable to further good development and preparation for other reasons. A vicious circle is the result: Without any help from outside, the children do not have any chance of keeping up at school, right from the start. They remain uneducated – like their parents – and will end up living below the poverty line.

In the PEPE Projects, the children also get a hot meal every day, and additional training is made available to the mothers. These can, for instance, learn to read and write,

as well as to sew and cook, which enhances their opportunities on the job market – this is help for self-help!

In the PEPE Project 12 de Mayo, Argentina, 60 three- and four-year-olds are now attending the project. The project started a good three years ago with 20 children, but the need is steadily growing. This is one of the reasons why Patricia, who is primarily responsible for the project, invests a great deal of time into training auxiliary staff. The children learn a lot in the pre-school programme, and they are also made familiar with the gospel.

From the PEPE Project in Erechim, Brazil, Noemi and Wilma, two staff workers, share about the blessings the children and their families have experienced in recent years. Roughly 80 children and another more than 500 people from the community have been reached with the gospel. Even though the project for the preschoolers, with which everything started, is not being continued, there are other things that do go on: – Noemi and Wilma do their best to honour God in their activities. On Saturday afternoons, Noemi, e.g., offers Bible lessons. 45 pupils are enrolled, most of them former PEPE kids. Many families are happy about this possibility and are glad to send their children there. The PEPE Project is very important to Erechim, and it is highly appreciated and commended.



PEPE children in Alem



PEPE children in 12 de Mayo



Handing out the relief items

Our missionary Adrián Campero reporting from Peru

Potatoes for the Quechuas

Dear brothers and sisters! Thank you for your support! It is wonderful that you have responded to our cry for help last November. Thanks to your assistance, we could bring help to the people in their misery. I am happy to share about this:

In some of the regions where EBM MASA supports mission work, it was extremely cold: people had never experienced anything like that. It had been snowing, and in addition, there were devastating hailstorms. Both badly affected the farming activities of the Quechua families. A lot of plants were frozen or damaged. This meant that we had very bad crops or none at all, and worst of all, we could not produce any potato seeds. The potatoes are our staple food; that is why they are so important. If we cannot plant them, this means that we go without this food for one whole year.

In this emergency, we immediately turned to the regional government authorities, asking for help. But as

usual, we did not get any support from there at all.

The most affected were 1,040 families, 305 of whom belonging to the churches and mission stations in these areas. Thanks to your support, 14,000 euros were at our disposal to use for them. Because of the large amount of potatoes we needed, we had to go to other provinces to get them. In the end, we could get relatively low-priced ones and, for this reason, we could provide every family with 28 kg of potato seeds.

Handing out relief items is always done as follows: The items are handed out to all the families in the affected villages, not only to church members. We make sure that the people who do not belong to the

church get the items first. – All the helpers met in two villages. Brother Modesto and I were present in order to overlook the distribution. We preached God's word and explained to the people where this help and solidarity came from. It was wonderful to see so many happy faces. Never before had they received so much help in this area. We arranged for the items to be handed out in the villages by the village chiefs; this was greatly appreciated by the Quechua people. At this point we would like to express our sincere thanks for this precious support. The brothers and sisters in the villages of the Cusco area, the authorities and the village chiefs would like to say a heart-felt thank you, to each one of you, for this assistance.

Fraternal greetings
Yours sincerely,

Adrián Campero



Women with potato seeds

PRAYING AND DONATING

PEPE Projects in Argentina
Project Number: MAG 21150
Financial need: € 16 000

Quechuas in Peru
Project Number: MAG 24010
Financial need: € 84 700

Information available at:
www.ebm-international.org
Donation account EBM MASA:
IBAN: DE 62 5009 2100 0000 1339 06
BIC: GENODE 51BH2
SKB Bad Homburg

Free Feeding Programme in Kolkata

The free feeding programme for needy people at the Social Centre in Kolkata has been a source of blessing to many families for many years. On the one hand, it keeps many people from starving, on the other hand it also means food for the hungry souls. In this report you will find the testimonials of three people who benefit from the programme every day:

I am Mrs Arati Singh, I am 45 years old, and like many other people, I live in a slum in Kolkata, together with my husband and two children. My husband is a rickshaw-puller, and I work in many houses as a cleaner in order to earn some money. However, this is not enough to live on. Then I got the opportunity of taking part in the free feeding programme of the Salvation Army. There we get hygienically prepared food at noon. Now, we are no longer constantly hungry, and so we are happy. This support, the daily mid-day meal, allows us to save a little money to maintain the family. My children go to school; there, they receive education and also lunch. We thank God and the Salvation Army, for they have brought about a change in our family's living conditions. I would like to ask the readers to pray for my family – may the Lord bless us.

I am Mrs Uma Majumder, 50 years old, and one of the many slum dwellers in Kolkata. I am single and live together with my very old parents. We are a poor family, and we are always starving. From Monday through Friday, I go to the free feeding programme run by the Salvation Army, where I get a mid-day meal: There we get good food (rice

with vegetarian or non-vegetarian curries). Here in the city, it is very difficult to get the food for three meals a day for all of us. I am physically very weak and cannot do any hard work in order to earn more money. I thank God, and I also thank the Salvation Army for caring for poor, disabled and weak people like me.

I am Dhruva Jyoti Lalla, 55 years old, and I am not able to earn any money and save it. One day, I heard people say "...mid-day meals handed out at the Salvation Army"... Unbelievable! During many months I was looking for this place in the streets of Kolkata; finally, I found the narrow street, where the doors stood open. There, they welcome old, poor and weak men and women, who come with plates, tiffins and polythene bags in their hands. Slowly, I went inside to the table, where the meals were being served, and was happy to be there. I got some delicious rice with an egg curry. I was very happy about this free meal, the first in my lonely life. It satisfied my appetite, strengthened my weak body and my mind. Words fail me to express my joy – so I just say "thank you with all my heart for your love".

EBM INTERNATIONAL finances about 150 meals (per day on every week day) of this feeding programme, which is run by the Salvation Army.



Distribution of meals in Kolkata

Southeast India: Disaster relief after cyclone



Relief aid after the Cyclone



Pastor Rufus Kamalakar helping with the cleanup efforts

On October 12, the Hudhud cyclone made landfall on the coast of Southeast India with wind speeds exceeding 200 km/h. Previously, 150,000 people had already been evacuated, whose dwellings on the beach did not seem likely to survive the storm. The cyclone destroyed more than 7,000 houses and over 90% of the coffee and pepper crop in the coastal highlands. The population there is mainly made up of poor, "untouchable" peasants, who make a living cultivating coffee and peppers.

One of these ethnic groups are the Konda-Doras, among whom our Baptist Partner Union "ALMA" has been evangelizing and planting churches for a year. The Konda Dora live in the mountains of the Indian Federal States of Andhra Pradesh and Orissa. The Konda belong to the "scheduled" tribes of India, who were formerly known as "untouchables". But even after many years of Indian independence, this tribe still lives in impoverished conditions. According to the census, there are 30,000 Konda-Doras.

They are very hard workers. Every family must toil their own field. The children also help at a very early age with every kind of field work. Every day, the cattle is led to the hills, and they expect there will be one person in the group to look after the cattle and sheep as a herdsman. Men, women and children sometimes go along with the cattle. They do not use any modern equipment for plowing the land. Nor do they use

any artificial fertilizer – cow dung is the main fertilizer.

The Konda Dora mainly live on raggi porridge and rice; once in a while there is meat. On the market, dry fish is available. They eat very little vegetables. The side dish that is eaten along with rice and raggi is ground chilli.

The Konda Doras are animists. For one year now, Rufus Kamalakar, director of the Baptist Partner ALMA, has been trying to reach them with the gospel.

The Konda Doras were hit most severely by Cyclone Hudhud. Many dwellings of these people were completely destroyed. It was greatly appreciated that many ALMA volunteers, supported by the European Baptist Mission, could hand out commodities to 600 families. Many volunteers pitched in in order to make the devastated homes somehow habitable. It was good to see that our friends reached these interior areas, which were not reached by any government aid at all.

The Kondas greet the European Baptist Mission and thank you for your disaster relief. And ALMA thanks EBM INTERNATIONAL for bearing witness to Christian charity through this help to the Konda Doras.

Stuttgart, Elstal, India

It was a special trip we, i.e. three members of Bethel Baptist Church in Stuttgart, went on in January 2015. We accompanied Christoph Haus of EBM INTERNATIONAL on his annual field trip to India, visited several projects with him and participated in the annual conference of all the 17 partners of EBM in Nellore.

Our focus was on the projects of Lallaluga Baptist Church, Hyderabad, run by BLESS (Burden and Love for the Economically and Socially Suppressed). This organization is supported financially by Bethel Church, and personal contacts between the two churches are encouraged. We attended the English-language and the Telugu-language services, and visited three projects run by BLESS: The Madhapuram Children's Home with its sewing school and two of the altogether five pre-schools.

Everywhere, we were given the warmest welcome, with people offering everything Indian hospitality has in store: chalk salt paintings on the floor, flower garlands, placards with our names, gifts, songs and dances by the children and at least one small snack with tea boiled in milk. Even in the streets, people came up to us and wanted us to bless them and pray for them.

PRAYING AND DONATING

Food Security and Feeding programmes for the poor

Project Number: MAG 80010
Financial need: € 63000

Emmanuel Baptist Church

Project Number: MAG 85101
Financial need: € 3000

Information available at:

www.ebm-international.org

Donation account EBM INDIA:

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SKB Bad Homburg



Children

Children held out their hands and told us their names. Small conversations developed in English – encounters at eye level, for this wasn't the mother tongue of either of us. Playing volleyball and skipping with the children and sitting between them at table were definitely highlights! Proudly, they showed us their rooms with their bunk beds, the bed-nets sewed by the students at the sewing school, the shelves for their satchels, where every child keeps his personal belongings, and their modern-day picture (comics) bibles. As we were admiring the henna in the kitchen garden they had recently set out, one girl just hurried away and came back with a small piping bag of henna paste and painted a tattoo on our hands with deft fingers.

Pastor Rufus, the director of the Baptist Union ALMA, had two children with malformations from his children's home come to the EBM meeting. Dr Santhosh, the surgeon working at a Christian hospital partnering with EBM, examines the two and decides that actually he can help both of them to walk "normally" again. Little money that we

donate can achieve a lot, and help many.

A special highlight also was dispensing food, part of the milk & egg feeding programme. The Yanadis, a tribe of casteless people, showed great confidence and gratitude for us. God's love is put into practice here by meeting basic needs. At some time, the inhabitants realize it is charity that makes Christians act like this, and they ask who "our" God is.

Back in our church in Stuttgart, we could share this: Every euro that we invest in BLESS is invested well. We have seen how conscientiously these children and young women make use of their opportunities and develop their skills. We have come back with hearts full of memories and the longing to pray for the people we have met, knowing that in India also, they pray for us. Hallelujah.

Christine Aust-Bendele, Dr Jochen Stanullo, Beate Kraft

The Emmanuel Baptist Church

The Emmanuel Baptist Church was founded in 1973. Today, Pastor Pravin Pathre is its leader, and it has nearly 500 members.

Church activities include Sunday worship, Sunday School, a women's and a youth group, evangelistic activities, regular times for fasting and prayer as well as Bible studies. A special highlight in our church life is the holiday bible school. We invite the children of our member families and also from our district to our two-week programme during the holidays. Roughly 120 to 140 children are then offered a varied programme focusing on Bible knowledge and life skills. We tell the children how to live in society, within the family and with friends, how Christ Jesus can be their friend and how they can pray to him. At the end, they are given a certificate.

We are also committed to social projects such as a programme of visiting widows in our district. We help them cope with everyday life and support the often poor and needy women in their material needs (second-hand clothing) as well as spiritual ones. Now, some 60 widows attend our church regularly. Many of them are elderly, but quite

a few are just in their early thirties. In Indian society, life is extremely hard for widows. Our aim is providing them with opportunities to generate an income of their own so that by sewing or micro-trading they could be on their own.

This is why we have launched a small tailoring school. Two qualified tailors teach not only widows but also other women and girls from the slums so that some day they can make their own living. They learn to cut patterns, sew and stitch. Currently, 22 women of various ages are being trained in this course so that later on they will be able to contribute to the family's living, full-time or in a side job.

Another social project is caring for and counselling HIV patients in a slum of Mumbai. Our HIV Centre has been running for seven years already. We perform AIDS tests and give advice to HIV positive people. We arrange for appointments at the government treatment centres where they get medical assistance.

Many who are at an advanced stage of the disease are no longer able to work and get material assistance and care. In addition, we witness to God's love in Christ Jesus. In this way, we have already reached more than 2,700 AIDS patients.



Holiday Bible School

And last, as a church, it has been our desire to do something for the many homeless and abandoned children. Approximately 50 children get help and something to eat in our church. At present, 15 church members care for these street children on an honorary basis. As a church, we would like to give them a steady home, and we are praying that God would show us His way.

We thank all the people in Germany who support our church work, and we want to let them know that we also pray for the churches in Germany.

Pravin Pathre



Dance of the youth group

LEBEN TEILEN – HOFFNUNG GEWINNEN



Wir sind als Mission gerne
für euch da!

Gemeinsam mit unseren 27 baptistischen Partnerkirchen in Afrika, Lateinamerika, Indien und der Türkei ist uns die Ganzheitlichkeit des Evangeliums ein besonderes Anliegen. Wir evangelisieren nicht, ohne diakonische Arbeit zu leisten und wir machen keine Sozialprojekte, ohne das Evangelium zu predigen.



Seit Januar 2015 sind wir mit unserer neuen Facebook-Seite online. Wir laden alle ein, die Seite mit „Gefällt mir“ zu markieren. So bekommt man ungefähr einmal in der Woche eine Seite mit aktuellen Informationen und Gebetsanliegen aus einem von mehr als 20 Projekten.



Jetzt auch auf
Facebook mit
aktuellen Berichten
aus Afrika,
Lateinamerika
und Indien.



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