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FORGIVENESS



Rev. Gnanakumar serves four congregations in the upcountry of Sri Lanka. The city of Hatton is central to three of these congregations and about an hour's drive to the fourth. We have been negotiating to rent a property which will serve as a parsonage and ministry hub for this busy pastor.

God willing, this will also provide an opportunity for outreach in the city of Hatton itself. Being a minority religion in a very religious country, means that we must be sensitive to our neighbors who could become suspicious and make it difficult to remain. Please pray for this ministry that Rev. Gnanakumar would be "wise as serpents and innocent as doves." Matt. 10:16



That repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations. *Luke 24:47*

Over the New Year, the Asia area missionaries and their families gathered in Taiwan to study God's Word, encourage one another, and for some respite.

The president of Ambassadors of Reconciliation, Mr. Dwight Schettler trained us in reconciliation. This focusses on our vocation as Christians to love others and Christ has loved us. As Christians, we love by forgiving. God loved us by sending His Son to die for our sins so that we can be forgiven. Christ died for our neighbor so we can forgive them too.

What does this have to do with mission work? Everything. Forgiveness is at the very heart of the Christian faith. It's what Jesus preached. Forgiveness is what He commissioned the Apostles' to preach. Forgiveness is the result of Jesus' sacrifice. Forgiveness is the gift given to us in His Word, in Holy Baptism, and in the Lord's Supper.

Forgiveness can be one of the hardest things to practice. When is the last time you told someone that

you forgave them? When is the last time someone told you that they forgave you? Missionaries are not exempt from having a difficult time forgiving.

Missionaries also have the joy of forgiving and teaching forgiveness for Jesus' sake. I am thankful for the training we received in Taiwan. I know this training will be a blessing as I am in the position to teach and model forgiveness with the people of our partner church, as well as people outside the church.

Thank you for your prayers and partnership in proclaiming repentance for the forgiveness of sins in Jesus' name in Sri Lanka.



Family Dates

Wedding Anniversary **August 11**

Birthdays:

- Steven **January 27**
- Martha **December 11**
- Autumn **September 13**
- Liberty **July 15**
- Skye **May 29**
- Rose **March 19**
- Duncan **July 24**



To be added to or removed from this mailing list, send an email message to newsletter@mahlnews.com with the word ADD or REMOVE in the subject line.



PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- The music program
- More outreach opportunities in Sri Lanka
- Ministry center in Hatton
- Success of the proclamation of repentance for the forgiveness of sins in Sri Lanka

GIVE THANKS FOR:

- For Autumn's and Libi's safe return to the US.
- Good health
- Missionary training in Taiwan

PRAISE GOD FOR:

- Forgiveness of sins in Jesus' name.
- Bringing people to faith in Christ.
- The many congregations and individuals who pray for us, encourage us and partner with us.

CONSIDER:

- Adding us to your congregation's mission budget as a Together in Mission partner (Call 888-930-4438 for details).
- Starting, continuing, or increasing financial support for mission work in Sri Lanka (See below).
- Having a Skype update with your congregation, Bible study, Day School, Sunday School, Women's group, etc...

Family News



Skye playing on Christmas Day



Duncan playing the electronic piano



Martha and Libby



Martha and Autumn



Rosie taking a photo of me taking a photo



Showing his angelic side

We were quite busy after Autumn and Liberty came from America. Not long after they got here we went up country. We worshipped with the Saints at Good Shepherd in Westward Ho. After the service we enjoyed the cultural program that included dancing, passing out school packages, and an appearance by Santa.

On Christmas we worshipped at Immanuel in Colombo. Martha accompanied the hymns on her Bassoon. After the service Skye and Duncan took part in the cultural program by playing hymns on the electronic piano.

We did not have a lot of time to relax on Christmas as we needed to fly out that night for the Asia Region Family Retreat. We spent a few days in Taipei before taking the high speed rail and a bus to Kenting where the retreat was held. We enjoyed our time there with the other missionary families.

Too soon it was time to say goodbye to Autumn and Liberty. They flew east to America and we flew west to Sri Lanka. It was sad to see them go. We look forward to seeing them again.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Instagram: [stevemahlburg](#)

Twitter: [twitter.com/MahlburgMission](#)

Facebook: [facebook.com/groups/missionSriLanka](#)

Kindly consider a special gift to further support LCMS mission work in Sri Lanka. The instructions below explain how you can give this gift.

*Together in Jesus' Service,
Steven & Martha,
Autumn, Liberty, Skye, Rose, and
Duncan*



There are many opportunities to serve as short-term or GEO missionaries. Check out the current list and download an application at [lcms.org/service](#). Click on "Service Opportunities."

To support the LCMS through the work of Steven Mahlburg, you may send a tax-deductible gift to:

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
P.O. Box 66861
St. Louis, MO 63166-6861

Make checks payable to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Mark checks "Support of Mahlburg-Sri Lanka". Gifts can also be given securely online through the LCMS website, on my online giving page at [lcms.org/Mahlburg](#).