

శుభ సందేశం

(Good Tidings)
April 2004



**Menno-Clinic
INDIA**

Go, and Be Changed

Wes Culver

I did not know what to expect in visiting Menno Clinic in India. What was it that I could offer? I'm not a doctor or have any medical expertise. Before the trip was over I realized it was the Indian people who had the things to offer to me. Often we think of 'mission trips' as an opportunity to serve by doing manual labor. But in a country with an excess of capable labor, our labor is not the need.

What did I learn? I got to see how far a dollar can go in India, especially in the medical field. Procedures and medicines are substantially cheaper in India, yet still beyond the reach of most people there. Because of this, donations made to the Clinic go a long way. The clinic is much needed in this Village of 10,000 people.

I learned about the Indian people. To go to a one-room mud hut and be offered food and the only seats in the home is humbling. I realized how wealthy our country is, yet bankrupt in many things they are rich in. They taught me hospitality, generosity, friendship and a perspective on life that we won't get in America.

I learned that India is a very spiritual country. Almost all the people are either Hindu, Muslims or Christian. Their religion is the central theme of their lives and they are very devout. Because of this spirituality there is a great amount of interest in Christianity. While I was there a number of people asked to hear more about Christianity. They asked! No one had to push, they wanted to know. And those who asked made very educated and wholehearted commitments to Christ. In America there seems to be a trend away from interest in Christianity, almost an anti-Christianity' trend. In India there seems to be a hunger. The harvest is very ripe in India.

My suggestion, go and be changed.

A Word from The Board

John C. Murray

Menno Clinic India, January 2004: fully staffed, fully functioning. It was an overwhelming reality to experience that first hand. My last trip to Chiluvuru was two years ago for the dedication ceremony. The clinic didn't become fully functional until several weeks after I left in February 2002. Now, in January of 2004 patients were streaming in the doors, the staff were busy about their tasks attending to the medical needs of patients, the small chapel was ministering to the spiritual needs of a growing number of people.

Patients came not only from the village, but from neighboring villages as well. They came with illnesses that could be readily treated with relatively simple procedures and medications. They came with illness that if not treated would lead to an early death. They came with illness that could not be treated. The top six illness the clinic faces are: 1) malaria, 2) tuberculosis, 3) anemia, 4) hypertension, 5) diabetes, 6) HIV/AIDS.

The clinic staff is a diverse group of people from various castes and religious backgrounds who effectively work together to accomplish the mission and purpose of Menno Clinic India. Many of the staff themselves are amazing stories of the demonstration of compassion, generosity and hospitality. Providing jobs to persons who might otherwise be unemployed is a secondary benefit of the work of the clinic.

(Continued on back)

Serving in the Clinic

Dr. Jay Wedel

My initial reaction to the village of Chiluvuru was that of much poverty and despair. I soon came to realize that even though the people of Chiluvuru lived in extreme poverty, they had hearts much more generous and caring than many that I see daily in the U.S. This generosity and high level of caring was also seen within Menno-Clinic itself. I was put to work rather quickly with helping out in the clinic. Each person there seemed dedicated to helping others, and in spite of knowing very little Telugu, I soon learned the inner workings of the clinic, and was very impressed, to say the least. We saw many patients over the 8 days that I was there. I enjoyed working alongside Dr. Zetson, and Dr. Prasad. I learned a great deal about Indian medicine from these two doctors. I also learned much about Indian medicine from Kendra Bucher, who had been working at Menno Clinic as a nurse for the 2 months prior to our arrival.

There were many difficult cases that we saw over 8 days. One was a young girl who had cataracts, and with closer examination, we found that she was severely anemic (hemoglobin of 2.0). Kendra and I loaded this girl into a taxi along with her mother, and took her to a hospital in Vijayawada. Things moved rather slowly in this hospital compared to those in the U.S., but nonetheless, this girl received the transfusions that she needed, and had Menno-Clinic not been so readily accessible, I'm certain this young girl's anemia would have gone unnoticed to the possible extent of her death.

My experiences at Menno Clinic were incredible. I can say that many aspects of my life were changed forever by being in Chiluvuru. One of my most memorable experiences there as well was the ability to finally meet Subbarao and Olga Yarlagadda. I have never met two people so dedicated to serving God and so willing to do God's will. I was truly blessed by my experiences at Menno-Clinic, and I hope to be able to go back again. Menno-Clinic and the people of Chiluvuru will be in my heart and mind forever.

A Word from the Board (continued)

The small group that meets in the chapel for worship on Sunday evenings at 7:00 p.m. is a growing and vibrant group of people seeking to follow Jesus. Six persons were baptized during our trip this year which brings the total to 11. We were able to hire Gopala Rao as a part time pastor for this emerging congregation. Seeing the joy on the faces of the persons who were baptized was a special joy. It was overwhelming to hear one of the persons who was baptized say, "If you would not have come to the village, I would not be a Christian."

Challenges are always before us. Cross cultural communication, personnel policies and personalities, maintaining relationships half way around the world will always require effort and intentionality. The increasing activity at the clinic and at the chapel will continue to stretch our budgets and require the involvement of more people in participating in this work. There are more medical needs than we can respond to. The long term vision for inpatient services, maternity and health education will require continued expansion of our facility and our staff. But in the midst of a multitude of challenges the fruit of this labor of love continues to be an abundant harvest beyond our expectations.



Financial Corner

Menno-Clinic, India

February, 2004

Cash	\$55,196.93
Total Assets	\$55,196.93

Receipts & Disbursements Sept. 1, 2003 through Feb. 29, 2004

Donations	\$50,969.35
Interest	169.03
Total Receipts	\$51,138.38
Expenses & transfers to India	44,743.91
Net Receipts	\$6,394.47