

## Our Korean friends/Colleagues:

They have started a Montessori school in a place called Ratmalana (a poorer area 1km south along the coast-not the whole of Ratmalana is poor) and we visited recently with them and saw the need there. Rev. & Mrs. Jeon do not have much English but do know Sinhala. As there seems to be an emphasis on learning English, they have asked Claudette if she could do some English classes twice a month (every other Saturday). As we saw a lot of young boys and girls there wanting to learn and interact with other young people – Claudette also plans to take our Youth to Ratmalana once every month (Sundays 4:30 pm) from June 2012 for both programmes, as Rev. & Mrs. Jeon are on their furlough in S. Korea until end of May 2012.

### Family:

*We thank God that Mervyn's dad is well which gives us peace of mind to continue in His service here.*

*We thank God that all the Children are well and some of you see them from time to time.*

*Daniel will be with us soon in June 2012 and then he flies back to NI on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2012 to start University in September, God willing. He is having a great time in India at the moment.*

*Miriam hopes to visit us in August (for her 21st Birthday on 30<sup>th</sup> August) after Castlewellan Holiday week, where Lydia, David, Miriam and Daniel are hoping to help on the Youth Team.*

*Luke is working hard in London and looking for new opportunities in Architecture in the future – he might even look overseas e.g. Japan, Australia. And hopefully visit us next year.*

### PLEASE PRAY:

*For the young people on the Alpha Course that many will come to know the Lord Jesus Christ and become servants of His.*

*For greater priority for prayer and Bible Study in Mount Lavinia.*

*For more involvement of men in the spiritual life of the church.*

*That people will have a deeper understanding of the Truth and not just have a form of godliness,*

*That young believers will not enter into mixed marriages (other faiths/non-Christians) which effects relationship with God and destroys the family unit.*

**May the Lord bless you all. Mervyn & Claudette Kilpatrick.**

## Mervyn and Claudette Kilpatrick – Sri Lanka

Issue 2 – April 2012

Phil. 1:3-5 *"I thank my God everytime I remember you....because of your partnership in the gospel..."*



Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Greetings from this beautiful island of Sri Lanka from the two of us to all of you in the Name of our Risen Lord and Saviour, even our Lord Jesus Christ.

Lots has happened since we last wrote to you in December 2011. We have settled well into the Manse & Church in Mount Lavinia. We arrived here on the 20<sup>th</sup> December, spent a couple of nights in the empty manse which is a flat above the church hall, and took the train to Batticalloa to the east

coast of Sri Lanka (Tsunami and flood affected area) – stayed at the Women's Empowerment centre - women who are abused by their husbands or some who have lost their husbands as a result of the war. October of last year we also visited Jaffna (very north of SL) and saw and met many in similar circumstances including orphans. Mervyn preached at the local church (Koddaimunai) here in Batticalloa and we spent Boxing Day afternoon in Batticalloa Jail, preaching the Word and distributing food along with Ministers and members of other denominations. We also met people from the Methodist Churches and an Evangelist Training Centre there who were affected by the Tsunami and had lost a few of their members/family in 2004 earthquake.

### Earthquake!

*Talking about Tsunami and the previous earthquake in 2004 that caused a lot of damage and loss of life in Batticalloa, we experienced/felt the most recent 11<sup>th</sup> April '12 earthquake which was also felt by people all over the island including its aftershock couple of hours later. Although it has not triggered off a Tsunami, it was very worrying for the people in Batticalloa again who suffered greatly even as a result of heavy rains and flood damage in January 2011. Galle, down south was on full alert. We experienced heavy rains in Batticalloa even while we were there in December '11.*



We started here in Mount Lavinia on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012. From our first day (someone also died) it has been non-stop. This is why it had taken us so-o-o lo-n-g to write this Newsletter. Claudette volunteered straight away for Sunday school teaching (Grade 6) and also responded to the need for a Youth Adviser-cum-Mentor. This means our Sundays are really packed with morning service (Worship 8:00 am – pre-service Praise which Claudette started with the Praise Group – all young people at 7:45 am), then Sunday School at 9:45 am and then quick lunch and preparation (food, talks – Mervyn and

Claudette) for the **Youth Alpha Course** 4:30 pm which started on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2012. We have had a great response from the young people between the ages of 13-27 years of age. Young people from other faiths also come along. Please pray for our weekend 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> May 2012 (Topic: The Holy Spirit). As we are new here we don't have the same amount of (English speaking) contacts as in Ireland to help with Youth



Alpha. We are however, grateful to Steve Pearce from WCR, London who brought & gifted all of the resources required to start Youth Alpha. He was our first guest in our Manse (Mission House as known here) at the end of January and we have called that room 'Steve's Room' as a point of reference. Thanks to Steve and his Colleagues for the massive effort in order that we may have a vehicle to do our ministry here with. A vision blue Ford Focus (this colour happens to be the colour of the ruling party – someone said!). Mervyn is learning to drive as a Sri Lankan at the moment – on the horn! Claudette is not yet brave enough, although we both have our SL driving licences.

**Alpha photo 1-3 Food, Balloon Game, Presentation.**

We are part of a six congregation Circuit with three other Ministers and two Evangelists, and we share across the circuit in preaching, support and projects - especially with our small/poorer (economically) society called Attidiya (Tamil). The Circuit staff (which we are members of) meet every fortnight and we also had an overnight retreat including all family members in February which was a great chance for us to get to know everyone.

We had a pleasant surprise last month (March 2012) – when we received an e-mail from Harold and Joan Baird saying that they were visiting SL and that they would like to see us one evening. We were invited for a five star dinner by the International President of the CIMA (Harold) at the Cinnamon Grand Hotel. We were picked up by a Chauffeur driven car as we had not got ours at that time. We were later invited to the Presidential Suite after dinner and garlanded (for a photo – ask Harold for one). Mervyn was glad to speak Cullybackey as both Harold & Joan also hail from the same village!

The heat is killing at the moment and black dust gathers on our floor which Claudette is allergic to. We had a few days in the mountains (Nuwara Eliya) to recover from the heat and to rejuvenate ourselves for the continuation of our work, the Youth Alpha Course and its weekend which is coming up.

***HOLY WEEK & RESURRECTION CELEBRATIONS!***

We started our Holy Week services on Maundy Thursday where we had a service of Holy Communion including washing one another's feet followed by supper – Soup and Bread. On Good Friday we concentrated on the seven words of Jesus on the Cross (3 hours) – the first one was taken by Claudette and a mime by our Young people. We had a couple of visiting local preachers but Mervyn did most of the other words.

On Resurrection morning 5:30 am – we gathered at the church and went in procession with candle lanterns, banners (our church and Bible verses in English & Sinhala on the resurrection) and police escort for traffic control to the beach (which is less than ½ km) singing about the resurrection. Mount Lavinia beach is always crowded at this time in the morning as people are exercising or jogging there. We placed our banners around us for people to see and started a small service with a lot of singing and Mervyn gave a short message. People stopped by and joined in. Then we went in procession along another route, on the main road and back to the church for Breakfast for all, including the policemen. Then we started our pre-service singing at 8:15 am and our second service at 8:30 am with Holy Communion. The church was packed to capacity on both wings (L Shaped). We have a Korean minister & his wife (Rev. & Mrs. Jeon) on our Circuit and they always come on Communion Sundays to help us. So the four of us served communion. Mrs. Jeon also does the flower arrangement for communion Sundays.