

CARPENTER'S CROSS MINISTRIES

training – equipping – releasing the next generation

CCM Update March, 2010 Sri Lanka/Malaysia Report

Sri Lanka was full of surprises and again proved that God's thoughts are definitely higher than our thoughts! We had it all worked out and the kids in the orphanage were to be our focus. However, this wasn't really the case at all, and although we don't yet understand why things happened the way they did, we see new doors and challenges in that country opening.

We flew into Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia with two free nights before meeting up with the Sri Lankan team. Ps. Ron and Grace Hee (New Life Restoration Centre) had invited us to be a part of the team to target the orphanage children and staff specifically. This was our first time to SL and we were really excited at the prospect of a new country and new people. We were met at the airport by Hlrnathi, the wife of the senior pastor, and taken by van to 'The Camp'. This was a property about 30 mins from the airport. It was dark, and we wound around tiny lanes and "jungle". We finally pulled up at "The Cabana" – our quarters for the stay. Dr. Lalith Mendis met us and the Rainbow Boys Orphanage kids stood on the steps and sang us English songs and presented us with 'Welcome' cards.



Boys from Rainbow Boys Home welcome us.

The Cabana – our room with mozzie net and fan was on top floor.

Over the next day or so we spent eight hours meeting with the pastor's wife (it was her vision that commenced the orphanages) and with the carer's for the children (mostly women, a few young men). With over 90% of children having been sexually abused, there was much to talk about. Our experience in ministering and training at Southern Cross Kids' Camps proved to be just what they needed to hear. Sharing included understanding the ramifications of sexual trauma, how to respond to inappropriate behaviour, the importance of screening and interviewing employees, and the setting of boundaries that ensured the safety of children in care. These and many more issues proved to be the main reason for our visit. Interest has been expressed in holding a SCKC style camp at some stage for the children, and we will look at this for the future.

Sharing God's Heart for Children:

Gospel Ministries in Colombo is definitely an apostolic ministry with over 50 churches planted to date throughout Colombo in both Sinhalese and Tamil communities. Each month pastors come together for a three day prayer/fasting "Prayer Parliament" and this had coincided with our visit here. We had the privilege of speaking one night, presenting the challenge of children from Matthew 18. With two interpreters (Sinhalese and Tamil) we decided to vary our presentation and so did it 'tag-team' style. God was gracious and the message seemed well received – it is vital that pastors realise the heart of God IS for the young, and that they CAN and DO hear from Him. If we don't welcome children, it's as if we slam the door in Jesus' face – that's a sobering thought. *Matthew 18:5* One of our favorite quotes from our time in Sri Lanka came from the Tamil interpreter who told us "That was a first time for us – to have two

speakers. It was amazing – “two voices, one heart.” We liked that!



Sue leading ice-breaker with carers.



Sharing God's heart for kids with Pastors.

The children's camp:

The girls from the Rainbow Girls' home were bussed over to join in “camp” and we had a great first meeting with both Sue and Carolyn ministering using music, puppet, teaching time, and a lot of child interaction. Our young interpreters did a great job.

However, that night Sue's bout with severe food poisoning started, and that was her exile to the Cabana. Team members Ps. Ron, Grace and Sarah joined in leading the kids in fun and games, making it easier for Carolyn to then concentrate on the teaching and life challenge to the kids. Praise the Lord for flexible people!!!!

Back in Colombo....Sue was able to receive medical help. God works in mysterious ways – as she says, “I am barely able to afford one doctor in the U.S. and here I am in a home with not one but **3** doctors!” Carolyn, assisted by Sarah shared with the Children's Church on Sunday morning, and the team flew out for Malaysia the next night. We were humbled at the servant heart of the ministry leaders in Gospel Ministries, awed at their vision for their country and the spirit of reconciliation that resides in them. You will understand that the war which has raged for decades is now ended, but that it ended in genocide. Dr. Lalith is a reconciliation intercessor – he and his wife intercede for their nation, for true repentance, confession and forgiveness to come to Christians of both Sinhalese and Tamil races. We loved the children and their infectious joy, and know in our hearts that our business in Sri Lanka is not yet done.



MALAYSIA:

We had both looked forward to being back in Malaysia SOOOOOOOOOO much and had bragged to our Malaysian friends now in Australia “We'll eat Kajung satay, Char Kuey Teow, Curry Laksa, BBQ stingray – it will be wonderful!” However one of us didn't get to do that until after that first week! But it was SO good to back with such wonderful friends. Ps. Jeremiah Yap – one of the early elders in Waverley Christian Fellowship (Now CityLife Church) founded New Life Restoration Centre in the early '80s and it has grown to have several daughter churches throughout that huge city, plus churches around the world, with the PJ church now pastured by Ps Ron and Grace Hee. We shared with several house groups, ministered to the church staff, ran an afternoon workshop on making Christ real to children, and then took the Sunday a.m. Family Service and shared at the Ampang church at night. It is so easy to minister in a church where God's presence just IS. After the worship time it was easy to open the word and see it produce results. Sue ministered on “Stewarding the Presence of God in Your Family” and at the end, prayed for all families and children. It was a powerful time. It was also good to meet up again with 'old friends' Simon and Lai Eng Eng who head up Hope International Ministries, and we shared a great day of fellowship with them both.

For Carolyn, being able to stay with her 'foster brother' Kuan Yee Yau was a real highlight – we both love him (and his wife) very much. As both were away, we had the first few days at the house alone, giving Sue ample time to recuperate. And once KY was back, our appetites were ready and all those goodies came our way! We appreciated being able to spend time with some outstanding young people, ministering at Sri Eden Centre (for mentally challenged children) and at the Myanmar Community School for refugees. What a great vision this church has. The children in both places responded so well.



Sue ministering to families who responded.



Carolyn with Kuan Yee, Cameron Highlands



Some of the children's workers at NLRC



Love these kids – refugees from Myanmar waiting for relocation.

We want to thank *EVERYONE* who has prayed for us over these last weeks. We believe this was God's timing, that His plan was accomplished and that the enemy didn't want to see this happen. As one of the intercessors said **"Anyone who comes back from the battle clean and without a mark did not fight!"** We believe that we will return, possibly in 2011 – there are strong bonds here and in Sri Lanka and so many open doors. Please pray with us for wisdom to know which ones to walk through.

As this is being written we are regaining our strength (Carolyn having contracted some kind of bug just before returning and Sue getting her asthma under control – we have so appreciated the support and prayers of friends). We are preparing to return to the Kimberleys to minister at the AAO aboriginal convention in Wyndham. Please pray with us for renewed strength, good health, safe travel and most of all, God's outpouring on the women and children of the five indigenous communities that will gather. Blessings and love,
Carolyn and Sue