



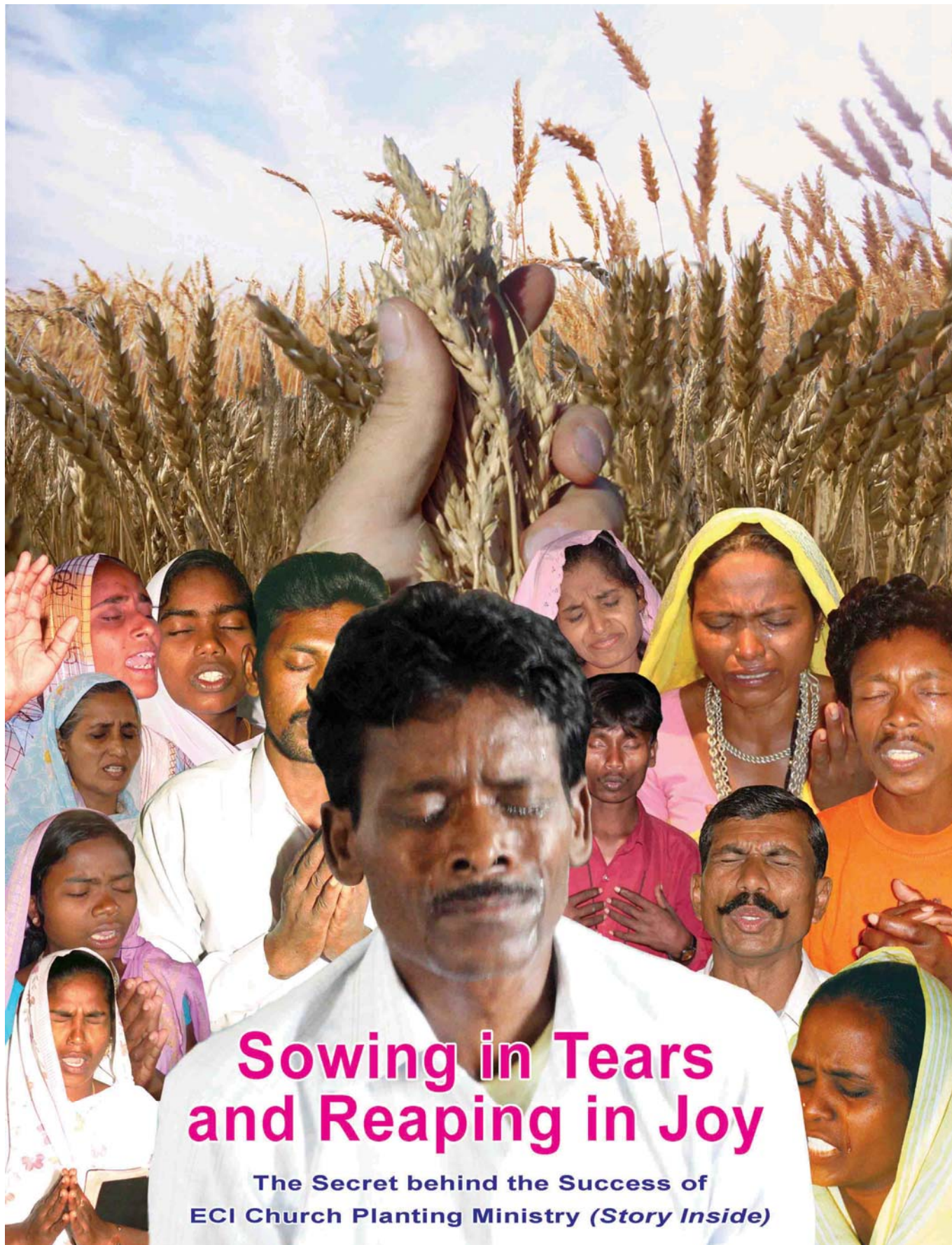
# CHURCH PLANTER

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## Sowing in Tears and Reaping in Joy

The Secret behind the Success of  
ECI Church Planting Ministry *(Story Inside)*



# “THEY THAT SOW IN TEARS SHALL REAP IN JOY”

**The secret of the success of Church Planting Ministry of ECI  
and our indigenous partners like FMPB, IMM and others  
- Bishop Ezra Sargunam -**

The vivid images of the prayer-warriors you see in the front-page are those of the first generation pastors (*swarthiks*) and believers from tribal areas, mostly in the Indian States of Jharkhand and Gujarat. They are simple, ordinary Christians who don't know how to feign, imitate or pose for pictures. When they pray, they really pray. It comes from the bottom of their hearts. Our IMM leaders who visited them took these pictures without their knowledge. Obviously, they are oblivious of the tears trickling down their cheeks. This is how they fast and pray. But we “Christians of several generations” are quite complacent. We take things for granted.

## **Praying for the conversion of their entire community**

These simple folks are praying for the conversion of the entire community they belong to like the Malto, Bhil, Vasava, Kukna, Chowdri, Santal and for other responsive people groups. They also fervently pray for their loved ones who are sick and dying. At times, those who are pronounced “dead” come back alive. In those jungles and mountains where they live, if somebody falls sick, they cannot be rushed to a hospital, because there isn't one. But the good Lord cares for them and answers their prayers. I have never heard them pray for “prosperity” or good luck, for a new palatial home or for lucrative jobs or Rolls Royce cars! They are quite content with what God has given them.

## **These unpretentious frontline evangelists**

When they have to take the gospel to the other unreached people groups in the neighbourhood, they do not go and

consult missiologists or church growth experts, who are mostly found in comfort-zones like Pasadena, California, sitting in front of computers containing complete demographic details of the unreached people groups in the world with trivia like how many people, animals and mosquitoes live and breed in a particular region! But these unpretentious frontline evangelists just go on their knees and most of the time God reveals to them in their dreams, which direction they should go. These folks, of course, need a little bit of training and teaching based on the Word of God. This is what we are trying to do in starting small elementary schools in their region, so that they could learn to read and write and study the Word of God. Some of them who go for higher studies can even secure gainful employment. We appeal to partners around the world to pray for them that God may answer their prayers as they endeavour to reach the unreached in their region.



## **Praying to the Lord of the harvest**

The sower went out to sow the seed. As he sowed, some fell on the wayside and got trodden down and some were devoured by the birds of the air. Some fell on the rocks and among thorns and thistles and were either scorched by the heat of the sun or choked up by the weeds and thistles. But the seed that fell on the receptive soil brought forth a hundred-fold (Luke 8:5). The sower failed to choose a good soil and plough deep the fallow ground (Hosea 10:12), remove the thorns, thistles and weeds – the

hindrances to the Gospel – before sowing the seed.

Once the harvest is ripe and ready to be harvested, we are asked to **PRAY** to the Lord of the Harvest to send harvesters into the field (Luke 10:2) and then when the harvest is ripe and ready we have to put the sickle immediately!!! (Mark 4:2) Yes, because people who are responsive today may not be responsive tomorrow. Let us reap immediately. And those who sow the Word of God, both the sower and

reaper, rejoice together (John 4:39). Let us not be weary in doing good, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not (Galatians 6:9). This has been our humble strategy. And this is God’s message to us for this month. Yes, let us sow in tears and reap in joy!

We invite God’s children everywhere to get behind this unique church planting ministry that God has entrusted to us with a goal of planting 10,000 churches, and 100 thousand house churches.

**As usual ECI Chennai Diocese celebrated Bishop Ezra Sargunam’s 72<sup>nd</sup> birthday – this week on July 19<sup>th</sup>. Thousands of ECI believers, friends and well wishers greeted him on this occasion including the Honourable Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister and other Cabinet Ministers of Tamilnadu. Relief and development projects were launched. Bicycles, tailoring machines were distributed for the poor and needy people. Tricycles for the physically challenged and grinding machines for women were also provided. School bags, note books, shoes and uniforms were provided for the 1500 school going children. 100 blind people also received materials for making chairs. Total number of 2157 people were benefited. Several Bishops wished and prayed for Bishop Ezra Sargunam. At the second part of the birthday Pastor Dudley Thangaiah brought a prophetic and anointed message.**



## CHURCHES DEDICATED IN THIS MONTH

Through the efforts of KEHC missionaries Rev Kim and Rev Steven Lee, nine churches were constructed and dedicated this month in the states of Tamilnadu and Andhra Pradesh. We praise and thank God for the partnership with Korean Evangelical Holiness Church. Pray that the Lord will strengthen this partnership for building God's Kingdom in India.



Churches dedicated at Beeravolu, Marupuru and Sathralu in Andhra Pradesh



ECI Ariyalur, Marutham nagar and Nachiyarpet churches dedicated in Tamilnadu



ECI Ekunampet, Badaveedu and Chapadu churches dedicated in Andhra Pradesh



ECI Polichalur church in Chennai dedicated by Bishop Ezra Sargunam. Thanks to the friends of One Mission Society who sponsored towards the construction of this church

**GOD MIRACULOUSLY SAVED ME, I WILL CONTINUE TO SERVE THE LORD IN JHARKHAND – SAYS A MISSIONARY**

Pastor Mamang and Sophia are a missionary couple serving the Lord as teachers of music and sports in ECI Rajpokra and ECI Dongkappu School in Jharkhand. On 25<sup>th</sup> of June Pastor Mamang went to market to buy groceries for the school. While he was returning it suddenly started to rain heavily. He wanted to get back home at the earliest because his newly wedded wife was suffering from Malaria. He had to cross a river to reach the school. While he tried to cross the river on his motorcycle, the flood swept Pastor Mamang along with his motorcycle. Mamang cried to the Lord to save him. Soon he could get hold of a bush and was fighting to get out of the water. The flood which was strong, swept away the helmet he was wearing. God sent a man that way who took Pastor Mamang safe back home. “Many people have died in sudden floods like this, but God has miraculously saved me and I will live my life serving him till I die” says Mamang. Sophia who was little hesitant to work in Jharkhand, seeing the miraculous way the Lord had saved her husband has also rededicated her life to serve the Lord. Kindly uphold these couple who serve the Lord in Jharkhand in your prayers.



**GOD LOVES ME MORE THAN ANYBODY ELSE IN THIS WORLD – SAYS JESWIN**



Jeswin the youngest son of former IMM Chairman, late Dr J D R Kirubakaran was doing his class X in the last academic year. As he was preparing for his final board exams, he was affected by Dengue fever and was hospitalised for more than a week. Again he developed viral fever during the month of March and his exam dates were also in March. He had doubt whether he could write his final exams or not. He prayed to the Lord and made a vow that if he could write his exams; he would give away all his pocket money for the cause of IMM ministries in North India. The Lord heard his prayers and Jeswin wrote his exams and came out with 93% in his final exams. Praise God!

**47 BAPTISMS REPORTED THIS MONTH FROM DIFFERENT PARTS OF INDIA**



**Pray for the 47 newly baptised believers that they will stand firm in the decision they have taken for Christ and live a witnessing life for Jesus**

## 15 BAPTISED AND 5 MISSIONARIES DEDICATED AT ECI ERUKAMMA NAGAR CHURCH IN CHENNAI



We praise and thank God for ECI Erukamma Nagar Church believers who celebrated the 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their church. To mark this anniversary the local believers raised around 7 ½ lakh rupees to extend the church and for other works of the church. Bishop



President dedicated the newly renovated church altar. On this occasion 15 people were baptised and added into the church. To add another milestone Dr D Koilpillai, one of the businessmen came forward to support 5 missionaries through Indian Missionary Movement. Pray that many more missionaries will be supported and churches established through this church.

## 400 YOUNG PEOPLE PARTICIPATED IN THE YOUTH MEETING HELD IN VILUPURAM DISTRICT IN TAMILNADU

A youth meeting was organised by the ECI Vilupuram district churches in Chennai Diocese on 29<sup>th</sup> of May. God brought 400 youths to attend this meeting. Bishop Sundar Singh gave a challenging message on how youths must live for the Lord. Many youths dedicated their lives to God through this meeting.



## PRAY FOR THE ONGOING CHURCH CONSTRUCTION WORKS IN GUJARAT



We praise and thank God that church construction works has started in Gujarat in Aarrkatti, Devanifalio, Kumrad and Sodmal. Pray that the Lord will meet the needs to complete the construction works and dedicate these church buildings for His glory.



Pray for the ECI Lydia Women's Fellowship annual conference which will be held on 14<sup>th</sup> of August in Chennai. More than 2000 women are expected to attend this conference from different ECI churches in Chennai Diocese. Pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in this conference



# YOU SAID IT!!

## A FEW OF THE MANY LETTERS RECEIVED FROM READERS

This is the BEST ECI newsletter that I have received to date. Thank you for sharing  
– **Melinda Staples**, *New Directions International*

I want to commend ECI for the wonderful job you all are doing with the ECI Church Planter. It is indeed exciting to read about what the Lord is doing through the various ministries of the ECI. It is so encouraging to see ECI lay people whom the Lord has blessed with finances stepping up and building churches, schools, sending missionaries etc. It is a great pleasure and privilege to partner with the ECI.

– **Don Saum**, *Director, International Support Ministries, One Mission Society*

Church Planter is coming up nicely. Keep up this good work. A very good promotional tool for your ministry. May God bless ECI ministry and bring total transformation to Malto people. We will give our fullest cooperation for this to be happened – **Rev Stephen Joyson**, *General Secretary, FMPB*

Thank you for sending us the heart-warming newsletter from India – wonderful to see and read about God’s wonderful work at all places on earth! For us here in Pretoria, South Africa, it means so much: because we are all trying to help disadvantaged people and communities. Especially helpful is the reminder that physical help is always wanted, but the Lord’s teachings MUST go together with it! - **Will mien Schoombee**, *Reformed Church Rooihuiskraal Youth Mission, South Africa*

### PRAYER AND PRAISE CONCERNS

1. Pray for the needed funds to complete the church construction works at ECI Dharampur in Solan in Himachal Pradesh, where the local church came up thus far to raise funds.
2. Pray for Rev Navaraj Moses, the brother in law of Bishop President who is very seriously ill and admitted in the ICU, that the Lord will heal him.
3. Praise God for the Lord helped us to give 3 motorcycles for the native missionaries in Jharkhand.
4. Praise God for the ECI Koladi Church in Chennai Diocese which has come forward to support IMM missionaries in North India.
5. Praise God for the Lord helped IMM to provide a four wheeler for ECI Mumbai Diocese for their ministries in Mumbai and Gujarat.
6. Pray for the Lord to raise committed young men and women who will go and work for God especially in North India to bring transformation in the lives of the people.
7. Pray for the newly started school in Jharkhand for the Malto children in Dangakeppu, that the Lord will meet the needs to run this school.



**Note: Readers are free to circulate this newsletter in full or in part to their friends and well-wishers. If you no longer wish to receive this e-magazine kindly make it known to the Editor, or if you would like your partner friends to receive this newsletter kindly send their email ID’s to us.**

Evangelical Church of India has more than 3400 churches and 13 Bible Schools in different parts of India. We move forward with a goal of planting 10,000 churches and 100,000 house churches. Hundreds of people are turning to Christ every day and Churches planted. If you want to know more about the overall ministries of ECI, please write to:

**Bishop Dr M Ezra Sargunam**

Evangelical Church of India

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