



The Beacon

The Newsletter of LttN Ministries Inc.

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Dr Gavin & Glenda Williams

We are currently in Australia after an early return from our last ministry trip. (Details below.) We are not sure when we will be able to return to the field. We are available for ministry at home.



When Plans Change

Any modern day traveller has heard the dreaded term DVT or Deep Vein Thrombosis. But that happens to other people. After all we are careful to take the standard precautions and follow the guidelines and people are praying.

But when I woke on Saturday 21st June, just 4 days after reaching India, those three letters took a totally new significance. Later the doctors added two new letters — PE. Pulmonary Embolism is blood clots in the lungs something usually discovered during the postmortem examination.

A few hours later, after a harrowing journey in an Indian 'ambulance', I lay in the intensive care unit of the Pune Adventist Hospital, my life hanging in the balance. Sounds dramatic! But I now know just how close to death I was. My physician, Dr Philip Virathan, a wonderful man of God, said to me a few days later, "You were just a hair's breath from heaven". Sobering thought!

As I lay in that hospital bed (12 days in all) I thought often about the reason I was in India. In February 2013 I had been invited to speak at the Mukti Mission Revival Conference in June 2014. The sense of God's call to be there was unmistakable. The messages were all prepared. I had a deep sense that we were about to experience a profound move of God. The folks in the mission had been praying for months. People all around the world were praying.

And here I was in hospital fighting for my life. "Lord, sometimes I just do not understand!"

During this time, intercessors were woken from their sleep to wrestle for my life. Family and friends at home rallied around Glenda giving her the support



she needed. In India, the people of God surrounded me with love and care. It was an amazing time.

Slowly, I drew back from the brink. The prayers of God's people, the attention of the medical staff and the power of

modern medication all worked together to save my life.

It was almost two weeks before Glenda could join me in India. Visas etc take time. We communicated via phone and later the internet. Being separated by thousands of kilometres at such a time is incredibly difficult, especially for Glenda at home.

Time has passed and we have safely returned to Australia and the care of doctors here. With each passing day, the intensity of the situation decreases and we are left to ponder the many questions that arise from such events.

Since ALL THINGS work together for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purposes, "Lord, what are you saying to us through this?"

It is too early to give definitive answers on the way this will effect our ministry. Already God has been speaking to us personally and through prophetic revelation. Wise friends are speaking into our lives. Our challenge is to draw all of this together.

There is no doubt in our minds that this was a warning call. Aspects of our lives and ministry schedule must change. But there is no standing back from the call and vision God has given us to equip leaders for His church abroad and at home. The practical outworking of that will become clearer in time. Thank you for standing with us through what has been a most challenging time.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Dear Friends,

For a confident, self starter like me to find myself lying in a hospital bed fighting for my life was a new experience. Hearing my doctors speak of how close I had come to death was sobering. Being completely vulnerable and allowing others to take care of my most basic needs was humbling. But the sense of God's presence and the prayers of God's people carried me through.

When God allows one of His servants to go through a journey like this, He always has a sovereign purpose. Never at any stage of the journey did I sense the malignant forces of evil attacking me. I have no doubt satan was more than a disinterested bystander. But God had allowed me to come to this place for a very real purpose.

In the days that followed my release from hospital and subsequent return to Australia, I have been taking time to sit and listen to what the Lord is saying to me personally about our lives and ministry. He has sent people with prophetic insight to confirm the things that we have been sensing personally.

There is no doubt that we will continue in this ministry of discipling and equipping leaders for His church both in Australia and overseas. What must change is the way we implement the vision God has planted in our hearts.

We all come to turning points in our lives. What we do with those turning points depends on our willingness to listen to the Master Planner who sees and know all things.

This is not a time for quick decisions or changes of direction. It is a time for quietly pondering what God is saying. It is a time to take things a bit more quietly and give my physical body a chance to recover from a traumatic experience.

Sure, we can already see some things that must change. But the rest will be a journey of waiting, listening, watching and obedience, of walking for a while in the sense of 'unknowing'. And I am OK with that.

Dr Gavin

They did so Well

When news reached our friends in Uganda that we could not join them in July, they faced a challenge: do we go ahead with the SALT Schools without Dr Gavin and Glenda or do we cancel. We are thrilled they took the bold step to go on without us.

Under the leadership of Pastor Namara Nathan, our newly installed Headmaster, the team pulled together to bring all the many bits and pieces together.

During our last visit in February, we had set many things in preparation for just such a set of circumstances. Nathan and Pastor Nicola Tayebwa knew just where to find all the teaching notes and other resources needed for the schools. But having the resources on hand was just one small piece of the very complex process of running a SALT School.

The first school in early July was not such a problem. Nathan had commenced this school as headmaster

and everyone was comfortable with his leadership. And he did such a wonderful job. Pastor Nathan, we are proud of you and your commitment to God and His people.

The second school was a bit more challenging. The students were used

to Dr Gavin's leadership. To suddenly find that the Dean was now headmaster and principle teacher was more of a challenge. But once again Pastor Nathan and his team did a wonderful job and the term 5 school

was a great success. This group graduate in late October.

We now know that we will not be able to return to Uganda this year. However we are confident Nathan and his team will do a great job and leaders of the church will continue to be disciplined and equipped for their ministry.

Pastor Nathan, we are proud of you!



Solomon Islands

In September 2013, we met with Bishop Matthias Lima of the South Seas Evangelical Church in Solomon Islands to discuss ways in which we could assist them.

During a recent visit to Australia, Bishop Lima asked to meet with us to talk further about our involvement in equipping their pastors and leaders. He has extended a formal invitation for Gavin to visit Honiara in early 2015 to meet with church leaders and talk about the way ahead.



The SSEC has over 650 churches scattered across the Solomon's Archipelago. Fewer than 10% of their pastors have any formal training. Our potential involvement in Solomons will be to resource their senior leadership to take the training into the remote areas of the islands.

We wait with interest to see how this invitation will work out in practice as it will be a different approach to that which we have used in Africa. Please pray with us for God's leading.

What do Angels Look Like?

Have you ever wondered what angels look like. Perhaps you have heard someone speak of an angelic encounter and wonder what they saw.

During my time in hospital in India, God sent some 'angels' to my side. They were very human but to me in my hour of need, they were messengers of His love.

Dr Philip Virathan is the senior physician at Pune Adventist Hospital and oversaw my care. This wonderful man of God prayed over me every time he came to my bedside. With his gentle manner and loving care, he was surely a messenger from heaven to me.



Pastor Tina Prakash arrived at my bedside carrying a western style meal. She had been sent by a supporter in Queensland whom she had met some years ago. Tina brought me lunch almost every day, washed my dirty clothes, collected Glenda from the airport in Mumbai and welcomed us into her home the last night before we departed for Australia.

Pastor Danny and Judy Williams who live in Pune appeared at my bedside shortly after my admission to hospital. "When you are released,



our home is your home." said Judy with her delightful smile. What a blessing it was for Glenda and me to have a place that felt so much like home in which to stay and continue my recovery.

Mr & Mrs Nitin Misal came to visit bringing an evening meal. Nitin is a senior 'advocate' in the Indian courts. Yet night after night he came as a servant to bring my supper and attend anything else I might need.

And there were others too. Some were dressed in nurses uniforms or a doctor's white coat. Friends old and new who came to my bedside bringing encouragement, love, gifts, prayers and so much more.

Some ran errands to get medications or bottles of water. Others brought fruit or flowers or simply sat at my bedside. They were indeed His angels of light, messengers of His love to me in a difficult time. I thank God for every one.



A New Equipping Model

On several occasions I was visited in hospital by pastors from churches in Pune. Each of them spoke of the need to equip their people for discipleship and Christian leadership. They looked with excitement at some of the *SALT School* materials I had with me. 'Can you help us?' was a constant request.

And so my mind began to work on a way to apply our *SALT School* materials in an urban environment. Our pastors and leaders in Africa have no difficulty in coming for a week to be part of *SALT School*. But for people who have regular work commitments, such a model simply will not work.

At 2.00am one morning in Pune Adventist Hospital, *Foundations School of Christian Leadership* was born. It began as a series of scribbled notes in the back of my journal. Over the next day or two it became a 5 page proposal for the pastors to consider. Since arriving home in Australia, it has become a multi page 'Operation Manual' that will guide Pastors as they set up the *Foundations School* in their local churches.

What began as an idea to meet the need of urban Christians in the Indian city of Pune, has grown into an equipping model that could be applied by any church or group where people have regular work commitments and a desire to grow spiritually.

Students would cover much of the same curriculum that has been so successful in our African *SALT Schools* and in the *Grace Summer Bible School* here in Australia last December and January.

The course would extend over 2 years with students studying 2 subjects each term of 10 weeks. The course includes both the formal teaching and practical elements that make our *SALT Schools* so successful.

We envisage that in time elements of this course could be available by video or online, making it accessible to a far wider group of people than is currently possible.

These are early days but we are excited about the possibilities for equipping God's people for a life of dedicated discipleship and effective ministry.

What's Coming Up

Right now, this is a difficult question to answer. For the immediate future, extended air travel is off the agenda. It could be as much as 6 months before doctors release Gavin to fly again.

Doctors have now confirmed that it would be most unwise for us to consider extended air travel for the remainder of this year. In the interim there is an endless list of medical appointments and tests. We need grace for it all.

We will be visiting friends and supporters in the NSW Riverina District in early September, but beyond that are many unknowns.

Over coming months we will be continuing with the revision of our *SALT School* teaching materials as we make them easier for others to use. We are in consultation with pastors and leaders via Skype and email. But overall, we are seeking to work quietly and seek His leading.

The Bottom Line

Another Financial Year has closed and we praise God for His provision that enabled us to meet every commitment.

Almost all of the expenses arising out of our recent sojourn in India have been met by travel insurance. A fund has been established to help with additional future travel costs necessitated by recent events.

Enclosed with this Newsletter is an annual summary of donations to the ministry to all financial supporters. Without you we could not accomplish any of that which God has called us to do. Thank you everyone who has stood with us this past year.

Family News

Becoming a fireman has long been a dream of our youngest son, **Andrew**. For years, he has been making application upon application. He was finally successful in late last year and entered his training in March this year.

In early June, Andrew graduated as an Aviation Rescue and Fire Fighter with Air Services Australia. He is based at Sydney International Airport at Mascot.

Andrew loves his new job and also the additional time that shift work gives him with his family.

Our daughter in law, **Vivienne's** dad passed away in early July after a long battle with cancer. We rejoice that he came to Christ just weeks before his passing.



We really appreciated the additional support **Mike and Libby** were able to give Glenda during our recent time of separation when Gavin was in hospital in India. They dropped everything and came to stand with Glenda. Thanks family for your love and support.

For Prayer and Praise

Praise God for preserving Gavin's life in what was a potentially fatal situation.

Praise God for the faithfulness of His people both in Uganda and in India.

Praise God for the success of the *SALT Schools* in Uganda and for Pastor Nathan and his team.

Please pray with us for the patience to see through these next few months of recovery from the aftereffects of the blood clots.

Please pray that God will guide the medical people as they seek to understand what is at the root of the clots. After so many years of travel, they feel that the blood clots are a symptom of a deeper cause.

Please pray for wisdom as we listen to the voice of God and look into the future shape of our ministry. The vision and passion remain unchanged.

Please pray for our team of local leaders in Uganda and other places as they move forward without our presence. Pray that God will give them holy boldness.

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Our Mission:

To Model, Teach and Mentor life and ministry founded in intimacy with God and a dynamic personal spiritual journey