



**lutheran
partners
in global
ministry**

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December 14, 2022

Dear members of the Bethlehem Lutheran Capital Campaign Committee,

I continue to give thanks for all of you for your sharing in the good news of God's grace for all people, and your willingness and commitment to provide access to a quality education for people at the margins—especially women and girls—through Lutheran Partners in Global Ministry.

Your gift of \$25,000 in 2022 through the Capital Campaign is continuing to be a blessing for two important schools in India: Park Town Mission School in Chennai, and Melpattambakkam Boarding School near Cuddalore. In the report below you'll see more details on the resources and opportunities you're providing to students at these schools.

As Ms. Navaneetham Jeyakanthan, the manager at Melpattambakkam, says,

I sincerely thank you from the bottom of my heart for the instant, thoughtful and immediate reply. The concern and the warmth of your affection towards the children is evident.

We created a collection of photos from Park Town and Melpattambakkam to share at Bethlehem. You can view and download them for your own report at photos.lutheranpartners.org/?c=142&k=631e41fd2f

Bethlehem continues to be the cornerstone community for LPGM over the more than two and a half decades of our global ministry. I'm personally grateful for your continued support through your prayers, your time, and your financial gifts that keep this ministry moving forward. You continue to be instrumental in giving students around the world the resources and opportunities they need to thrive. Thank you.

In the hope of *Immanuel*, God with us,

Dan Ruth
Executive Director



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Park Town Mission School | Chennai, India



Lutheran Partners in Global Ministry partners with the Arcot Lutheran Church (ALC) in Tamil Nadu, India, to support the Park Town Mission School in Chennai.

Overview

- Park Town is in a quickly gentrifying neighborhood in Chennai. Because of the economic development, the government has been trying to “clean up the streets” by moving poor families to outer neighborhoods and slums.
- But because Park Town is their home, many families continue to return even when it means sleeping on the streets. But that means the neighborhood students who have long been enrolled at Park Town Mission School do not have the stability they need to thrive.

Bethlehem Lutheran’s Partnership

- “Building a Future with Hope” campaign provided \$15,400 to Park Town in 2022.
- Bethlehem Lutheran Church has a long-term partnership with Park Town.
- Congregation members have visited and built relationships.
- Funded renovations through the “Treasure in Clay Jars” campaign from 2014-2016.

Current Enrollment

- 60 preschool students
- 120 primary school students
- 156 secondary school students

2022 Support

\$15,400

- Provides breakfast and an evening meal for 125 students, 24 days every month.
- Provides daily transportation to and from school. Park Town rents a van to make two trips every morning and two trips every evening to bring students to school from the settlements where they’re living outside of town.



LPGM’s Vision

LPGM envisions a world where relationships transform boundaries and where all people have the resources and opportunities they need to thrive.

LPGM’s Mission

LPGM improves access to quality education for people at the margins, especially women and girls. We work together with global partners to listen, respond, and bear witness to local needs and priorities.

LPGM’s Partner

The Arcot Lutheran Church is a small, indigenous Lutheran church body in Tamil Nadu, India. With a mission by, with, and for *Dalit* people (formerly, “Untouchables”), the ALC values education and has built a strong school system that serves marginalized communities.



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Roof Repair | MELPATTAMBAKKAM, INDIA



Lutheran Partners in Global Ministry (LPGM) partners with the Arcot Lutheran Church boarding homes in Tamil Nadu, India to help students by providing shelter, food, clothing, medical care, and school supplies.

Overview

- The Danish Mission Boarding Home at Melpattambakkam (MPM) is an all-girls boarding home in Tamil Nadu, India, that serves 265 girls.
- Students come from families in India who value education but cannot provide the kind of opportunities they would like for their children.
- MPM provides excellent care, quality education, nutritious food, and a safe environment for girls aged 10 to 18.
- MPM students consistently get top scores in their national exams at the end of high school, setting them up for placement in college & university.
- Above all, the school gives children hope for a better future.

Acute Need

- In November 2021, major rainstorms swept through this area of India, causing major flooding.
- The roof on the dormitory at MPM was badly damaged, and students had to temporarily return home, as their living space was damaged and flooded.
- To provide for students' education, repair work was completed quickly, but the ALC owed the construction company for its work.
- The "Building a Future with Hope" campaign provided the funds to pay for this roof repair.

2022 SUPPORT

\$9,600

- **\$850** clean-up of old roofing tiles, and clearing of bushes.
- **\$8,750** repair and replacement of roof tiles, waterproof paint, materials and labor.



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The Impact of Safe & Secure Schools

Priyadharshini ("Priya") is like many girls at Melpattambakkam. Her parents were day laborers who struggled to make ends meet in a system that punishes those who cannot.

After the tragic suicide of their mother, and their father's increased use of alcohol as a trauma response, Priya and her sister, Thamizharasi, both found refuge in the boarding home.



Priya wrote this:

During the COVID-19 lockdown, none of our relatives from my father and mother side were willing to take care of us. They compelled me for marriage. Because of my family situation they asked me not to go to school and study. They asked me to work in their house for some time and then they will help me for the marriage.

But I don't want to marry at this age. I want to study and stand on my own leg. Now I know how uneducated girls go through this society and struggle in their life.

Thank God as soon as I came to this hostel I was taken as a sponsored child. I enjoyed everything in this hostel through the LPGM sponsorship. Because of LPGM [my sister and I] both are safe and have nice food and staying well. I am well and very happy as I study in this Boarding Home.

For many *Dalit* ("Untouchable"), or other marginalized families living in poverty in India, marriage too often feels like the only viable option for teenage girls, because of the financial relief it can provide.

Providing a safe place to live and learn is transformational for girls like Priya and Thamizharasi. Secure infrastructure is key to that quality education. When Melpattambakkam's roof sustained damage in the fall of 2021, it put hundreds of girls at risk.

"There was heavy and continuous rain in the month of November," wrote manager Navaneetham Jeyakanthan. "There was heavy leakage in the whole building. We closed the hostel and the students went home for six days."

Thanks to Bethlehem and the "Building for the Future" campaign, the roof was repaired, girls once again had a safe place to be, and hundreds of girls like Priya continue to gain the resources and opportunities they'll need to thrive. THANK YOU for providing that support.