



# NEWS LETTER

## APRIL 2017



Dear Members of Madurai YMCA family,

Greetings to You all in the name of our Risen Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ !

It is indeed a pleasure and privilege to be in touch with you occasionally through this Newsletter. Let me give you an overview of things that have happened in the last few months.

### YMCA Madurai International Centre

A very special event was the dedication of the YMCA Madurai International Centre that took place on 24th February 2017. With Bishop Amma, Mrs. Leela Manohari Joseph and other eminent women of Madurai YMCA lighting the kuthuvilakku and children of the School for the Hearing Impaired performing an invocation dance, the function commenced.

The Centre is a milestone in the journey of YMCA Madurai towards self reliance. The Rt. Rev. Dr. M. Joseph, CSI Bishop of Madurai and Ramnad, consecrated the Centre through his prayers and blessings. Adv. Mr. Isaac Mohanlal, Senior Counsel of the Madras High Court and its Madurai Bench, joined the Bishop in unveiling the inscription. Dr. Sempon David, former Dean of the Madurai Medical College, declared open the Chapel on the first floor donated by the Navamani family. The Bishop inaugurated the Working Women's Hostel on the second floor. Offering his greetings on the occasion, Adv. Mr. Isaac Mohanlal applauded the yeomen efforts of Rev. S. Suyambu, the erstwhile General Secretary of YMCA Madurai, in this respect. Rev. S. Suyambu, Guest of Honour at the occasion conveyed his best wishes to the YMCA Madurai fraternity. The dedication ceremony was well - attended by YMCA Board members, staff, members, well-wishers and the public.

### YMCA Evening Study Centre and Nursery School

Coaching the socially and economically backward children to compete with the elite at their level is a task that the YMCA Evening Study Centre and Nursery School is involved in. YMCA Madurai has realised the fruits of its efforts over the years.

Even simple things, other than academic learning, become important and relevant in this context. The students learnt the nutritional value of "Pappaya" on "Fruits Day" and enjoyed eating the fruit. 'Hand Washing Day' was observed at the School and the children got duly trained in the seven steps of hand washing.

### J. P. Kennett YMCA Boys' Home

The J. P. Kennett YMCA Boys' Home too is yet another effort of the YMCA Madurai to serve the marginalized sections of the society. SEESHA (Jesus Calls) continues to support the Home by way of funds and materials. The theme of the children's programme, "Express Yourself", gave the children an opportunity to make use of their talents to express themselves in very innovative ways. There is indeed an urgent need to accommodate the inmates in a new building. YMCA Madurai appeals to the members of YMCA and well wishers to contribute generously towards the construction of a new Home for the Boys.

### YMCA Higher Secondary School for the Hearing Impaired

Integrating the hearing impaired into the mainstream society is really a challenging job, but it needs to be done in the larger interests of the society. The hearing impaired should not feel left out and the people must not also see them as a burden. Apart from providing them with opportunities for formal learning, the School is engaged in activities oriented towards mainstreaming them.

The students participated in a Science Exhibition conducted by Yadava Women's College. Career Guidance, Session on Life skills, Coaching classes for Bank examinations, Industrial Exposure visits, Educational tour, Generation of awareness on Traffic Rules, and the holding of a Retreat formed part of the activities carried out in recent months.

### YMCA Sports and Wellness Centre

More or less the whole society is getting conscious today of the need to stay physically fit in the context of the changed life style and food habits. The facilities offered at the Centre have attracted quite a number of people in Madurai. Fives - football court is also getting ready.

The Inter-school Skating Tournament conducted at Virattipattu Imagine Skating Club was quite a success. Tennis India Academy conducted 2 days Tennis tournament at our Tennis grounds. Summer Coaching Sessions have been started presently at the Centre.

### YMCA Religious and Choir Department

The YMCA Religious and Choir Department conducted the World YMCA/YWCA Week of Prayer and World Fellowship. This year the theme of the Week of Prayer was titled "Leaving No One Behind". Mr. R. Sathiamoorthy, Former President of the National Council of YMCAs of India, and five others delivered the word of God on the theme at various places from 13th to 18th November 2016.

Christmas Carol Service was held at the Church of the Divine Patience, Railway Colony, Madurai. Dr. C. Gregory Basker, Professor and Dean of the Tamilnadu Theological Seminary, delivered the message.

The Department organized a 'Passion Song Service' also on 2nd April 2017 at the Divine Patience Church in which the word of God was preached by Mr. J. Andrews Christopher M.A., B.D., of C.S.I. Thoothukudi - Nazareth Diocese.

YMCA Madurai Choir, directed by Mr. T. Jeyakumar, rendered Hymns in Tamil and English on both the occasions.



### **YMCA Special School for the Mentally Challenged**

It is indeed a challenge to prepare and enable the mentally challenged to feel part of the larger society. They must not always remain at the mercy of others. In an effort to equip children with skills that will stand them in good stead in life ahead, training was imparted in jewellery- making and candle-making. The students get trained in producing candles of finer variety. The children enjoyed the Exposure visit to Kanyakumari arranged in February 2017.

The teachers had the good fortune of undergoing an in - service training on 'Occupational Therapy.' A special training on 'Acupuncture' was arranged at the school for the benefit of the parents of students .

Ms. Marei Knebel and Ms. Vivian Hill, Volunteers from YMCA Germany, spent their time with the students during their 6 - month stay that started on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2016. They shared their knowledge and expertise in music therapy, art therapy, culture, traditions and language with the students. Their talents were a great source of contribution to the development of the school. On 14<sup>th</sup> February 2017, the Volunteers organized the observance of 'German Day' at the campus.

### **YMCA International Guest House and Programme Centre**

YMCAs all over the world have always been engaged in providing accommodation to the floating population and the migrant employees. They offer venues and facilities to conduct programmes and events too. The International Guest House catered to many local and international guests in the months past.

More than 300 women stayed at the YMCA Guest House when 10 non-residential training programmes of "Puthuvazhvu Thittam" were conducted at the place. Also, around 110 women were stationed at the Guest House at the time of three residential training programmes for the Ramnad "Puthuvazhvu Thittam". The state health department officials made use of the venue to hold six one – day training programmes on 'Leprosy' for para - medical staff and doctors.

### **YMCA Programme Department**

It was during the last few months that an "YMCA Youth Forum" came into being at the initiative of the YMCA Programme unit. The Forum resolved to take forward God's work through social action. A fellowship meeting of the Youth Forum was held subsequently in which Rev. Joseph Kamalam, Head pastor, St. George's Church, delivered the word of God. The fellowship meeting will be held every month hereafter.

A "Mega Cycle Rally" focusing on generating awareness on the health and environmental benefits of cycling was organized by the Forum. The placards held aloft by the participants stressed the need to save fuel, mitigate the ill-effects of global warming, minimize pollution and traffic congestion.

A District level Inter–school Carrom Competition was arranged under the aegis of the Forum in which around 200 students took part.

The YMCA Christmas Carnival, conducted in a grand manner by the Forum, enthused the members of YMCA Madurai through a variety of games and entertainment.

150 Children participated in a Drawing Competition held at YMCA premises. Also, a district level Chess Tournament was conducted in which many children participated. Winners were awarded prizes. Summer Camps are getting kick started at present.

### **Women's Concerns Desk**

YMCA has stayed alive to the issues of women always. If women are only marked for stereotyped roles in the family and the society, the status of women may not change at all for the better.

Women's Day was observed by YMCA Madurai Women's Concerns Desk on 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2017. Outlining the significance of the 'Day', Dr. Mrs. Janet Shankar, Chairperson of Women's Concerns Desk, stated that women had a vital role to play in the economic development of the country. Rev. Dr. Jeyachithra Rohan, New Testament Professor, Tamilnadu Theological Seminary, pinpointed certain achievements of the Women's movement and hoped for many more in the coming days. Mrs. Judith Kirubakaran, Special Guest, felicitated YMCA Madurai on the occasion .

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Christmas Celebrations formed part of all project activities. Diwali, Pongal, Republic Day, Children's Day, and Teachers' Day too were celebrated invariably in all the projects of YMCA Madurai.

Many experts and professionals have been Resource Persons at the programmes of YMCA Madurai. And many eminent citizens of Madurai have come as Chief Guests or speakers at YMCA events. YMCA Madurai is thankful to all of them.

Many philanthropists have generously sponsored gifts or feasts enthusiastically when events were organized on different occasions. Some are even backing the activities of YMCA Madurai through their regular donations in cash or kind. YMCA Madurai expresses its gratitude to all of them.

I shall be failing in my duty if I do not thank the Office-Bearers and Board Members for their unflinching support and backing for the activities of YMCA Madurai. Special mention should be made of the work carried out by the Secretaries and the staff in making the activities of YMCA Madurai a success.

YMCA Madurai is also thankful to the members for their active association and for their prayers and support. You are most welcome to participate in the mission of serving the needy and to partake in the events organized.

Thanking You and Wishing You All the Best,

Your sister in Christ,



J. Shamila Doris  
General Secretary

