

PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW



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April - December 2011

No. 62



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Presbyterian Review is a quarterly news magazine concerning the Life and Witness of the Church in Mizoram and other related matters, published by the Mizoram Presbyterian Church Synod.

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The views expressed in this magazine do not necessarily represent the official position of the Mizoram Presbyterian Church; each contributor is solely responsible for the views expressed in his/her article.

Editorial✍

Greetings to all the readers of the **Presbyterian Review** from the Editorial Board. The names of the new Editorial Board are printed inside the cover, although some of them are retained from the previous one. The Editorial Board heartily congratulates the previous Board members for their excellent works to publish the bulletin regularly. We particularly recognise the excellent work of the previous editor Rev. Dr. Vanlalnghaka Ralte, who usually does things with diligence and care.

The new editor is 'new' to this bulletin, and unless with the help of the board members he would not be able to publish it regularly. When the time to publish the subsequent issue after the new Editorial Board was formed in May 2011, the new editor had undergone eye surgery, which had hampered his works including the publication of the following issue. This is why the present issue has to cover the activities of the Church from April to December 2011. We are sorry and apologise for the late coming out of this issue.

In addition to what has been featured before, we at this issue flash a detailed report of the Aizawl Theological College which was presented by the Principal Rev. Professor Vanlalchhuanawma on the College's annual Day celebration. The College, though it is one of the departments of the Mizoram Presbyterian Church Synod, has been one of the oldest departments and we feel it deems fitting to give the detailed account of it as its development and progress has been credited to be the outcome of the concerted effort of the Church. Apart from the news of the Church, we even publish the articles written by Rev. Dr. H. Vanlalauva, which was originally presented at the annual College Day (November 18, 2011). The readers will be enlightened by this article on how the Christian Faith has impacted the social and political life in Mizoram. The Mizoram Presbyterian Church, following the guiding principles of the great Christian Reformers, and particularly of John Calvin, has been taking concrete and outstanding steps in socio-political reformation. Dr. Vanlalauva gives a detailed highlight of this. Moreover, we include the articles written by Rev. Dr. Roger Gaikwad entitled "Breaking Barriers, Transforming Life" which he originally delivered in the YMCA Annual meeting held at Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh, (one of the States in Northeast India). The readers will be given assignment by this article to breaking barriers at different levels! The Editorial Board is pleased to the writers of these articles.



NEWS AROUND THE MIZORAM PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (MPC)

The Editorial Collections

1. **Retreat for Missionaries:** A retreat programme was held for Missionaries working in Central India during November 24-27, 2011 at Mission Venghlang Church. 141 missionaries and 58 couples, all together 200 attended the retreat.
2. **New List of Itinerary Preachers:** The Synod Revival Committee had made a new list of Itinerary preachers for the New Year 2011, numbering 70 altogether. These preachers will visit churches all over Mizoram, either by request or sent by the Revival Committee throughout the year. Usually they used to have Gospel camps, campaigns and crusades organised by Districts (pastorates). They are instrumental to the church for bringing spiritual revivals in the church, building awareness to socio-political issues and teaching sound theological doctrines to the general public.
3. **Gospel Centenary Celebrated in Tripura:** Churches in Tripura state (India) celebrated the Centenary of the coming of the Gospel in their state. The Gospel was brought by one Mr. Raja Hrangvunga (who later became a Chief) and his associates migrating from Mizoram for witnessing to the Gospel among the tribals. The celebration was organised jointly by the different church denominations at Vanghmun, the original headquarters of the Chief. Rev. Vanlalzuata, the Senior Executive Secretary of the MPC attended the function and delivered the Word of God.
4. **Revival Crusade within Aizawl:** The Synod Revival Committee organised a 'Revival Crusade' for churches within Aizawl on November 4, 2011 (Friday). The crusade covered 25 local churches within Aizawl in which different itinerant preachers delivered God's Word under the theme "Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand" (Matt. 3: 1). On the following day, there was a public prayer meeting at the playground of the Assam Rifles, which is located at the heart of the city. In the forenoon Rev. Lалуithanga E/S chaired and two itinerant preachers namely Mr. P.C. Lalmachhuana and Mr. Zairemmawia delivered God's message on the same topic. Gospel songs were sung by wellknown gospel singers. The afternoon meeting was chaired by Rev. Zosangliana Colney, E/S, in which Elder Vanlalngaia and Ms. P. C. Vanlalnghaki delivered God's Word; Mr. Lalsangzuala sung a gospel song.
5. **Masihi Sangati Convention:** The 27th Gospel Convention for the Non-local people (**Masihi Sangati Convention**) was organised during October 28-30, 2011 at Chanmari Church, Aizawl. The theme of the convention was "Where will you go after Death?" The convention speaker was Rev.



Vanlalbela, the former Secretary of the Synod Mission Board (now retired). Rev. Adam Kerketa was the leader of Bible Study on the commandments of God based on Exodus 20: 1-17.

6. **Missionary Retreat:** During October 13-16, 2011, a retreat meeting for missionaries working inside Mizoram was held at Republic Veng Church, Aizawl. This retreat was mainly for the missionaries who are working inside Mizoram. The theme of the retreat was "Life in Full Commitment for Christ" which was delivered by Rev. Vanlalbela. 427 missionaries attended the meeting.
7. **Synod's Media Ministry:** The Mizoram Presbyterian Church has launched its media Ministry on November 7, 2011. The inaugural function was held at Lloyd Hall of the Synod Office. Rev. Lalsangliana, the Moderator inaugurated the Programme. The Media programme will be broadcast/teletcast on FM Radio and television. The programme was entitled **Hruaina Eng** ("The Leading Light" in English) The Radio broadcast will be available every Friday between 7:30-8:00 pm and the TV programme will be available in the local

cable Television channels of "Zonet" cable networks and "LPS" cable networks. The inaugural function was graced by Mr. C. Lalrosanga, the Additional Director General of AIR & DD (NEI) as the chief guest, who delivered a message of encouragement and gave enlightening words of guidelines and norms in broadcasting and telecasting underlined by the Government of India.

8. **Synod Session at Khatla:** The 88th Synod session of the MPC was held at Khatla, Aizawl, during November 30-December 11, 2011. The Moderator of the Synod was Rev. Thangzauva, the Secretary was Rev. P.C. Pachhunga, the Statistician was Rev. C. Sangliana. Numbers of resolutions were made for the progress of the Church and its ministries in various capacities. The Synod, although depending on the free contributions of the church members, approved the budgetted amount of [Indian] Rupees 125,42,57,000/- for the coming 2012-2013 financial year. It is hoped and believed that the budgetted amount will be collected with the blessings from God to his people.



LIFE AND MINISTRY OF THE MIZORAM PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rev. Dr. K. Lallawmzuala & Ms. P.C. Lalitlani

NEICC ANNUAL SESSION REPORT

The North East India Christian Council 74th Annual Session was hosted by Tripura Baptist Christian Union at Mission Compound A.D. Nagar, Agartala. The session was started from 18th – 22nd May, 2011. The Mizoram Presbyterian Church Synod sent 25 delegates (pastors and elders & women and youth representatives) to attend this Session under the leadership of Rev. C. Sangliana, Synod Statistician and Upa D.P. Biakkhuma, Synod Secretary(Jr.). The Synod hired Bus for the delegates and spent a night at Noagang Mission Compound. Also Khatla South Presbyterian Church Choir was one of the choirs invited by the NEICC and they sang four songs at the public worship services.

18th (Wednesday) was Arrival of Office Bearers and Committee Members and there was Standing Committee and Executive Committee. Meeting

19th (Thursday) was Arrival of Delegates and there was Inaugural Service at 07:00pm Rev Dr. J. Huoplien, vice President delivered Inaugural Message.

20-21(Friday and Saturday) was Business Session. There was worship service on 20 (Friday) 07:30am -08:30 am where Rev. Dr. K. Thanzauva, President, Baptist Church, Mizoram gave Keynote address and on 21 (Saturday) 07:30 am -8:30 am there was Bible Study led by Rev. NT Murray, NBCC.

The business session decided to celebrate Platinum Jubilee during 16-20 May, 2012 Annual Session at Rymbai Presbyterian Church, KJP Synod Mihngi, Jaintia Hills.

Theme: Lasting Legacy, Greater future (Philippians 3:12-14)

Executive Committee suggestion budget for Platinum Jubilee Celebration Rs. 2, 50,000.00 was accepted. It was also decided that 13 Choirs and four cultural programs will be invited.

Choir to be invited:

1. Mizoram Presbyterian Synod Choir
2. Baptist Church of Mizoram Standing Choir
3. Lairam Jesus Christ Baptist Choir
4. Union Christian College Choir
5. KJP Synod Sepngi Choir
6. KJP Synod Mihngi Choir
7. Church of God (M&A) Choir
8. Rymbai Presbyterian United Choir
9. Khlehriat Presbyterian Church Choir
10. Rymbai Presbyterian Church Choir
11. Ri Bhoi Synod Choir
12. Sutnga Presbyterian Church Choir
13. EFCI Shillong Choir

Four cultural Items were presented:-



- 1 Khasi Cultural Program by KJP Sepngi
- 2 Jaintia Cultural Program by KJP Synod Mihngi
- 3 Mizo Cultural program by Shillong Mizo Presbytery
- 4 Garo Cultural program by Shillong Garo Baptist Church

Theme **‘Building the Body of Christ Together** (Ephesians 4:12) was divided into two Sub-theme-‘Unity in the Body of Christ’ and ‘Working Together for Peace’ Rev. Dr. Jolly Rimai, Mission Secretary CBCNEI and Rev. Dr. R. Lalbiakmawia Mizoram Presbyterian Synod preached on Friday and Saturday at 07:00pm-8:30pm

Public Worship Service

“Unity in the Body of Christ” was preached by Dr. Jolly Rimai and Rev Dr. Lalbiakmawia preached ‘Working Together for Peace’

On Sunday (22) there was Holy Communion Service at 7.00am-8:30am. Celebrant was Rev. Rajani Kaipeng General Secretary Tripura Baptist Christian Union.

There was United Public Worship Service at 9:30 am and at 11:45am Rev Dr. Lalpekhlua AGS i/c Mission, LIKKBK and Rev. Dr.M.J. Hynniewta, Principal John Robert Theological School, Shillong were the preachers.

Public Worship Service at 07:00-8:30 pm Rev. K. Nongpluh delivered

Valedictory Sermon and the mixed choir sang Halleluiahs Chorus.

The Mission compound of Tripura Baptist Christian Union covers an area of 2 hectares (approx.). There are more than 80 families living in Mission Compound. And most of delegates were put in the Boys’ hostel, Girls’ hostel and family quarters inside the compound. Delegates from Mizoram Presbyterian Church, 20 out of 25, were given room at the Mizoram Presbyterian Synod House where Tripura Mission Field Secretary lives. They went by their own Bus to the TBCU Mission Compound for food and for meetings from here and they had a chance to have tea fellowship with missionaries before bed.

The NEICC consists of representatives appointed by various Christian bodies in North East India as follows:-

- (a) Member Churches
- (b) Associate Members:-
 - (i) Inter-denominational and non-denominational bodies which are recognized by an affiliated church
 - (ii) Related Agencies of NCCI and All India Christian Organizations operating in the region.

At present there are 35 member churches and 14 associate members. The NEICC has one full-time worker and also women assembly has a full-time worker. Both have office in the NEICC Building in Shillong.



REPORTS OF PASTORS' RETREAT

H. Lalrinthanga

The Mizoram Presbyterian Church Synod Pastors' Retreat was held at the hill top of the Aizawl City. The Aizawl Theological College hosted the Pastors' Retreat on May 24-27, 2011. Altogether more than 400 Pastors, Probationary Pastors and Pensioners from different part of the country attended the Retreat.

1. In the opening session, Rev. C. Lalsangliana, the Moderator inaugurated the Pastors' Retreat 2011 and Rev. Vanlalzuata, the Senior Executive Secretary i/c Pastoral Ministry, etc gave the Key Note address. In his address, he emphasised the importance of the retreat theme "The Church Need today" for Pastors and pastoral ministry of the present context.

2. The theme of the Retreat "The Church Need Today" is developed into three sub-themes with the speakers as below:

1) Critical Review of Revival by Rev. Thangzauva, Editor SL&PB.

2) Pastor and Materialism by Rev. Lalzuithanga, Executive Secretary, MPC Synod.

3) Protection of the Church by Rev. P. C. Pachhunga, Secretary (Sr) MPC Synod.

All the sub-themes are well prepared and presented by the speakers. All the papers are challenging for Pastors, Probationary Pastors and Pensioners

for our ministries. The presentations are followed by group discussion. After each of the presentation, all the participants were divided into different age group. In group discussions, numbers of participants involves in discussion over the issues and questions related to the sub-themes.

3. Plenary discussion was conducted in the last day of the Retreat. As much as more than 50 important questions were raised and discussed. Some of the important issues raised during the plenary discussion are highlighted below:

1) The amount of the contribution of condolence meeting to the bereaved family at the time of the death of Ministers, Pastors and Probationary Pastors was raised to Rs. 100/-.

2) The Synod Office is requested to issue the Church's appeal on protection of the Church and distribute to the local churches.

3) The nature of the giving of Pastors' Retreat TA/DA was also raised and discussed.



4) The telecast of the sermons of our Ministers and Pastors in the local channel of the IMEM also hotly discussed.

4. In the closing session, Rev. C. Lalsangliana, the Moderator delivered a farewell speech in which he highlighted his witness to the life and growth of the Mizoram Presbyterian Church in and out of Mizoram. In his farewell message, the Moderator urged the participants to protect the church from different social evils and heretical teachings. He also emphasised that Pastors should not be compromised with materialism.

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THE REPORT OF THE PRINCIPAL OF THE AIZAWL
THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE ON THE
COLLEGE DAY CELEBRATION

Rev. Moderator, Honorable Speaker, Dignitaries of the Mizoram Presbyterian Synod, Members of the Board, Distinguished Invitees, Ladies and Gentlemen!

On behalf of the Theological Education Board and of the community of Aizawl Theological College, I do extend warm greetings and welcome to each and every one of you. I acknowledge our sincere gratitude to you and your respective churches for making valuable contributions to the life and ministry of the College. Thank you all for gracing this auspicious occasion by your personal presence.

A special word of welcome to our Speaker, Rev. Dr. H. Vanlalauva. Born to a committed Christian parent at Leithum, he had his B.A. (Hons.) from St. Anthony's College, Shillong; M.A. (Econ.) from Gauhati University; B.D. & M.Th. from UTC, Bangalore and D.Th. from South Asia Theological Research Institute (B'lore) with research exposure in Edinburgh (Scotland). He had served the Mizoram Presbyterian Church in various capacities, especially, as

Principal of ATC for two terms and Moderator of the Synod. Similarly he had served the Senate of Serampore College, especially, as Senator, Chairman of BTESSC, and currently as the Dean of Senate Department of Research. We are indeed grateful to Dr. H. Vanlalauva for being with us today despite his busy schedules.

A Brief Historical Reflection: The vision of laying a firm theological foundation in Mizoram started with the inauguration of a humble theological school in 1907 at Aizawl to train the Mizos for various ministries of the Church. Rev. D.E. Jones, the first Welsh missionary in Mizoram happened to be the founder Principal (1907-'23) and was for convenience sake substituted by another Welsh missionary, the Rev. F.J. Sandy (1923-'26). Although the School was shifted to Durtlang in 1924 it



was moved back to Aizawl when Sandy suddenly died in 1927 and Rev. E.L. Mendus took over as the third Welsh Principal. In those days primary school education in the State was also in the hands of the Mission and the Church. For this account the Theological School and Teachers' Training School initially shared the same teachers for several years.

Although the Theological School remained dormant for some fifteen years since 1937 it continued to act as a liaison between candidates and Cherra theological school by offering some preparatory courses. On the Assembly's decision a formal reopening of the theological school took place in 1952 with the more post-modern missionary, Rev. J.M. Lloyd as the fourth and last Welsh Principal. The School transferred in 1964 to a new site at Mission Vengthlang. Thus was laid a strong foundation of Aizawl Theological College by the Welsh missionaries. Real growth, however, started when Rev. C. Pazawna took over in the same year as the first Mizo Principal since the Lloyds returned to Wales. By 1965 the Senate of Serampore College on the Church's request affiliated the School at the level of a course

known as Licenciante in Theology (L.Th) and simultaneously upgraded it to College status. Hence, the name Aizawl Theological College. It is entirely financed by the Mizoram Presbyterian Church except for nominal foreign grants for some designated projects.

A Mizo national movement for autonomy disrupted normal courses of life from the mid-1960s. To the believers those trying times turned out to be blessing in disguise. The College underwent significant developments through new political developments and uncertainties. In 1971 the Senate of Serampore College again upgraded the College to the B.Th. status. Alongside the general theological course a lay theological education programme was introduced. Mizoram attained the status of Union Territory in 1972. New economic and job opportunities emerged. This new situation raised the budget of the Church. During the late 1970s A Missionary Training Programme was started in the College premises. In 1981, Rev. Lalchhuanliana succeeded Rev. C. Pazawna as Principal. By the 1986 Peace Accord signed between the MNF and central Indian Government Mizoram again attained Statehood. The challenges of the



fast changing context of Mizoram led the 1989 Synod resolve to upgrade the College to B.D. degree status. Meanwhile the old campus did not permit further expansion to hold the increasing strength of the College. The Theological Education Board with Rev. C. Biakmawia as its Secretary and Principal explored the present suitable site and the Church acquired it through the generous grant of the State Government. The site preparation and the construction work of the College campus was taken up from 1990 under the efficient supervision of Rev. H. Remthanga who succeeded Rev. C. Biakmawia as the Principal. With the support and contribution of the Church, partner churches, friends and well-wishers, the Gospel Centenary building was constructed. During the Gospel Centenary celebration, the same building was inaugurated and dedicated by Rev. J.M. Lloyd on January 11, 1994.

By 1994 the Senate of Serampore College provisionally upgraded the College to the B.D. status when Rev. Dr. Zaihmingthanga took over as Principal. For sometime the College managed two degree programs, viz., B.Th and B.D and obtained a full-fledged B.D. status

in 1998. Rev. Dr. H. Vanlalauva took over as the Principal at the end of 1999 while the Synod approved the draft of Revision of the Aizawl Theological College Status bearing significant changes in status as well as in the personnel and administrative management. During his two tenures significant developments took place in the College. With Senate's permission the College has been serving as the Center for Bachelor of Christian Studies (BCS) & Diploma in Christian Studies (Dip.C.S) and as a local centre for Doctor of Ministry (D.Min) programmes since 2000. A historic development took place as the Senate's permission to inaugurate the Master of Theology (M.Th.) programme at ATC was obtained in 2002. Considerable Faculty and Library developments took place. As the B.D studies programme matured the B.Th degree programme was phased out in 2003. But a Certificate Course in Christian Studies (CCS) for wives of the students has been run since that year. Rev. Prof. H. Vanlalauva's second tenure as Principal closed with a spectacular Centenary Celebration of the College under his own patronage in 2007. Rev. Prof. Roger Gaikwad took over at the end of 2007 as the



next Principal while the Centenary celebration and jubilation was still in the air. M.Th. programmes in Missiology and New Testament happened to be inaugurated in 2008, and History of Christianity in 2009. Lately Rev. Prof. Vanlalchhuanawma took over as the Principal at the end of 2010 and the M.Th. programs in Religion and Old Testament were inaugurated in June 2011.

Reports on Departments of Aizawl Theological College:

These reports cover a period of Nov., 2010-Oct., 2011. In the given period something unusual happened that all the Administrative heads of ATC are new in the respective posts given them. The Synod Theological Board acts as the Governing Board of the College; its members are appointed for a term of three years. It looks after all matters concerning theological education under the Mizoram Presbyterian Church. Most of the policy matters, appointments and building projects of ATC are in the hands of the Board. The Faculty of the College is primarily responsible for the academic programme and other ministries of the College. Most of the credit for all the achievements and developments of the College is due to the service of members of

the Synod Theological Education Board, faculty, staff and students in absolute solidarity and perseverance. Members of those sections are in profile below:

1. Synod Theological Education Board:

a) Ex. Officio Members

Rev. C. Lalsangliana, Synod Moderator & Chairman of the Board
 Rev. P.C. Pachhûnga, Synod Secretary.
 Rev. Zosangliana Colney, Executive Secretary i/c Theological Education.
 Rev. Prof. Vanlalchhuanawma, Principal.
 Rev. Dr. C. Lalhlîra, Vice Principal.
 Rev. Dr. Vanlalnghâka Râltê, Registrar.

b) Members for 2010-'12:

Rev. C. Biakmawia
 Rev. C. Lianhmingthanga
 Upa Prof. Lalkima
 Upa K. Lalthanzama
 Upa Lallianzela
 Upa C. Lalramliana
 Upa C. Lalhmuaka
 Upa Dr. R. Thangvunga
 Rev. K. Lalrongheta
 Upa R. Lalmalsawma
 Upa Lalremthanga.



2. Administrative Staff:

Principal: Rev. Prof. Vanlalchhuanawma, B.A. (Distn.), B.D., M.Th., D.Th.

Vice Principal: Rev. Dr. C. Lalhlira, B.Th., B.D., M.Th., D.Th. & P.G. Dean

Registrar: Rev. Dr. Vanlalnghaka Ralte, M.A., B.D., M.Th., D.Th.

3. Faculty of Theology:

The Faculty members are divided over different clusters of discipline as follows:

Old Testament:

Rev. K. Lallawmzuala, B.A., B.D., M.Th., Ph.D., Lecturer (HOD; i/c Repair and Maintenance)

Rev. Laiu Fachhai, B.Sc., B.D., M.Th., D.Th., Lecturer (Director, Serving in Mission, North-East India)

Ms. Rosy Zoramthangi, B.A., B.D., M.Th., Lecturer (on Contract)

Revd. Chuathuama, B.A. (Distn.), B.D., M.Phil. (Cantab), Associate Professor (Superannuated)

Rev. Lalfakzuala, B.A., B.D., M.Th., Assistant Professor (On Ph.D. study leave in UK)

Rev. B. Lalnunzira, B.Th., B.D., M.Th., Lecturer (On Ph.D. study leave in USA)

New Testament:

Rev. Vanlalnghaka Ralte, B.Sc. (Hons.), M.Sc., B.D., M.Th., D.Th., Associate Professor (Registrar, Student Body Adviser, Director Calvin Study Center, Editor Didakhe)

Rev. R. Chhuanliana B.A., B.D., M.Th., D.Th., Associate Professor (HOD; Book Service Manager)

Rev. Lalthangpuia Fanai, B.Th., B.D., M.Th., Lecturer (Chaplain, Presbyterian Review Manager)

Rev. P. R. Hmuaka, M.A., B.D., M.Th., Lecturer (awaiting result of D.Th., Book Service Manager Puitu)

Rev. L. H. Rawsea, B.Com., B.D., M.Th., Lecturer (on D.Th. study leave in Bangalore)

Christian Theology & Ethics:

Rev. Tlânghmingthanga, B.Th., B.D., M.Th., D.Th., Associate Professor (HOD; LTE Director, Campus Care & Security Secretary)

Mrs. Lalnghakthuami, B.Th., B.D., M.Th., D.Th., Associate Professor (i/c Campus Beautification)

Rev. Rosiamliana Tochwang, B.Th., B.D., M.Th., D.Th.,



Assistant Professor (Hostel Superintendent)

History of Christianity & Missiology

Rev. Vànlalchhuanawma, B.A. (Distn.), B.D., M.Th., D.Th., Professor (Principal, HOD, Editor of MJT).

Rev. O.L. Snaitang, B.A., B.D., M.Th., D.Th., Professor.

Rev. R. Lalrosiama, B.A., B.D., M.Th., Lecturer (Didakhe Manager).

Rev. H. Lalrinthanga, B.A., B.D., M.Th., Lecturer (MJT Manager, D. Th. Result a nghâk mêk).

Rev. B. Zohmangaiha, B.Th., B.D., M.Th., Lecturer.

Rev. Lawmsânga, B.A., B.D., M.Th., Ph.D., Lecturer (HOD).

Rev. Vanlalrova Kiangte, B.A., B.D., M.Th., Lecturer.

Religions & Social Analysis:

Ms. T. Vànlaltlani, B.Th., B.D., M.Th., D.Th., Professor (HOD, Convener of Museum & Art Gallery)

Rev. V. S. Lalrinawma, B. A. , B.D., M.Th, Ph.D., Associate Professor (Adviser of Student Christian Movement, India, ATC unit)

Mr. Hukashe Zhimomi, B. A. , B.D., M.Th., D.Th., Lecturer.

Ms. Lalrindiki Râlte, B.A. (Hons.), B.D., M.Th., D.Th., Lecturer (Faculty Seminar Coordinator, Asstt Coordinator of CWM Face to Face Program)

Christian Ministry & Communication:

Rev. C. Lalhlîra, B.Th., B.D., M.Th., D.Th., Associate Professor (Vice Principal, Christian Ministry etc. Department Hotu, Dean of P.G. Studies, Editor of Presbyterian Review, Coordinator of CWM Face to Face Program)

Rev. Lalchungnunga, B.Com., B.D., M.Th., Assistant Professor (Dean, Field Education)

Rev. H. Vànlalruata, B.Th., B.D., M.Th., Assistant Professor (-on study leave of Ph. D. in USA)

Rev. R. Vanlaltruanga, B.A., B.D., M.Th., Lecturer (on sudy leave of D.Th. at FRRC, Kotayam, Kerala)

Music

Upa Zothanmawia, B.Min., Music Instructor (On contract)

Faculty development continues to be one of the priority projects of the College with a view to further contribution towards theological education in India and abroad. Of the existing 30 (thirty) faculty members 16 (sixteen) of them hold doctoral degrees, Rev. H. Lalrinthanga (History of Christianity) is called for



viva vocé on 16.11.'11 while Rev. P.R. Hmuaka (New Testament) is awaiting summons for the same. Five other faculty members are undergoing doctoral studies in various countries as indicated in the list above. Some of the ordained ministers are being sent for M.Th. studies in different disciplines in connection with Faculty development program.

A good number of the Faculty members have been involved in Seminar, Consultation, Pedagogy and Committee/Board meetings in different parts of India. Within Mizoram they are involved in the programs of the Social Front, Sunday School, Youth, Women, Mobile Theological School and of Calvin Study Centre. They are also involved in various Committees from the local level to the Assembly level. Besides writing articles for the regular ATC publications, some engage themselves in writing official Synod syllabus as well as their private papers/books. Their involvement in preaching in the local churches truly promotes the relation between ATC and the Christian public.

4. Office Staff:

For the smooth-running of the College office the following

members of office staff have been rendering efficient services:

Permanent Staff

Upa H. Lalnuntluanga
Mr. Albert Lalmangaiha
Ms. B. Lalhmingmawii
Mrs. Lalkhumtiri
Mrs. C. Lalremruati
Mr. Ramengmawia Ralte,
Mr. Lalremruata
Mr. C. Lalpara
Mr. C. Ramsanga
Mr. Lalhminghlua
Mr. Lalrammawia

Contract Staff

Mrs. Lianmawii
Mr. Lalhmingmawia
Mr. Samuel Lalmuanpuia
Mr. R. Vanlalchhuanga
Mr. Sunil Murmu
Mr. C. Lianzuala

Daily Wages Staff

Mr. Ramdinthara
Mr. Sanghnuna
Mr. TC Rohlunpuia
Mr. Vanlalchhuanga

5. Library Staff:

For a post graduate and theological institution like the Aizawl Theological College it goes without saying that the Library serves as the pivot of all academic life and



activities. In 2011 the Library has increased its volume to the tune of 58,432 books, 237 journals (84 foreign, 112 English, 35 Mizo, 2 national and 7 Mizo dailies). It's good to put in record that the students take full advantage of our subscription of the Database American Theological Library Association (ATLA). On the advice of the Senate of Serampore College Commission a separate reading room for the M.Th. students was constructed by aluminium materials.

In terms both of quantity and quality the ATC library is considered to be one of the best in India and is in the hands of the following qualified staff:

Permanent Staff

- Mrs. P.C. Laltlani - Librarian
- Mr. Thankima - Assistant Librarian
- Upa Lalnuntluanga Colney- Archivist
- Mrs.K. Lalrinpuui - Office Assistant
- Mr. Zosangliana - Daftary
- Mr. Rokima - Peon

Contract Staff

- Ms. R. Lalrinpuui
- Mr. Chalbuanga
- Mr. Vanlalmuana
- Mrs. Saingurpuui Sailo

6. Retirement: The following staff will go on retirement in 2013:

- i. Rev. Prof. Vanlalchhuanawma, Principal.
- ii. Mrs. P.C. Laltlani, Librarian.

7. Students & Academic Concerns:

Our College is now running two regular academic programmes – BD and M.Th study programmes of the Senate of Serampore College (University). The following shows the strength of our students registered for the academic session of 2011-'12:

Course	2010-'11	2011-'12
M. Th. II	13	- 14
M. Th. I	14	- 17
B.D. IV yr.(Old)	00	- 34
B.D. III yr.(Old)	36	- 24
B.D. III yr. (New)	00	- 20
B.D. II yr. (Old)	21	- 00
B.D. II yr. (New)	20	- 26
Special Course	02	- 00
Total	106	- 135

The College takes great pride in maintaining its ecumenical nature and vision. It has drawn students from various ecclesiastical backgrounds including Pentecostal, Salvation Army, Baptist, Lutheran, CHT Synod, Evangelical Church of Maraland, Manipur Synod, Evangelical Free Church of India, Biateram Synod, Lairam Isua Krista



Baptist Kohhran, Mennonite Brethren and Methodist churches. Those churches spread across Northeast India and outside, viz. states of Manipur, Tripura, Assam, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Jharkhand, and even to Myanmar. Most of the students are, however, financially sponsored by the Mizoram Presbyterian Church.

As per the new Senate Curriculum the erstwhile Practical Work is renamed Field Education with an ample multiplication of working dimensions of intensive and concurrent programs. It is also to be credited henceforward. Following the new Senate Curriculum the final year students went in December 2010 on an intensive field education program to Kolkata under the supervision of the Field Education Deans, viz., Rev. Rosiamliana Tochwawng and Dr. Lalrindiki Ralte, abandoning the usual Study Tour in South India. It is a great joy to acknowledge that our students' Sunday Practical Work, Winter and Summer Field Education, Rural and Mission Exposures have been successful only because of the close cooperation of the Churches. Meticulous arrangements for both the intensive and concurrent

Rev. Vanlalzuata, Sr. Executive Secretary of the Mizoram Presbyterian Church Synod. The function was followed by a dinner served at the dining hall of the College's Hostel.

The following is the list of the out-going students who were bade farewell and dedicated on this auspicious function: programs have been prepared under the vigilant supervision of the new Dean of Field Education, Rev. Lalchungnunga. Some of those arrangements have already been implemented while others are yet to be undertaken.

On account of adopting the new B.D. curriculum only certain special or mature candidates and referred students had appeared the final examination. All of them have been successful while 4 (four) got B grade and 2 (two) got B- grade. All the thirteen M.Th. candidates were successful in their final exams as follows:

New Testament	- B+ (2 candidates)
Theology	- B+ (2 candidates), B (2 candidates)
History of Christianity	- B+ (3 candidates)
Missiology	- B+ (1 candidate), B (3 candidates)

Since 1999 A.T.C. has been offering certain in-service or



external courses, viz., B.C.S. & Dip.C.S. as well as D.Min. study course. Mention may be made of those successful candidates who received their degrees at the Serampore Convocation at Clark Theological College in February: Ms. Baby Lalramsiami – B.C.S. degree, Rev. P.B. Lalmalsawma, D.Min. degree. Currently Rev. Lalengmawia, Rev. R. Lalhminganga and Rev. Lalsangmuana are undergoing D.Min. studies on Synod deputation.

8. Different Sections:

a) Calvin Study Centre (CSC):

The CSC has been functioning under the Program Committee headed by Rev. Dr. Vanlalnghaka Ralte and has been maintaining the Life and Thought of John Calvin course that is compulsory for the Synod-sponsored students. It is maintaining 1015 books and 6 journals. For a convenience's sake its library was shifted to the main Library Stack Room while its office remains in the Centenary building.

b) Publications: The College publications of Didakhe bimonthly with Rev. Dr. Vanlalnghaka Ralte as Editor, Presbyterian Review with Rev. Dr. C. Lalhlira as Editor,

and Mizoram Journal of Theology with Rev. Prof. Vanlalchhuanawma as Editor, have been maintained despite certain technical problems cropping up from time to time. The generous cooperation amongst the Faculty members for the success of these publications is commendable.

c) Book Service: is well taken care of. Due to the sickness of the manager, Rev. Dr. R. Chhuanliana, the Faculty entrusted Rev. P.R. Hmuaka to assist in managing the book service.

d) Lay Theological Education: Under the supervision of the Director, Rev. Dr. Tlanghmingthanga, Mobile Theological School of LTE was conducted in the following Pastorates during the given period: North Hlimen, Champhai Vengthlang, Khawzawl Venglai, Ratu and Mualpheng. Examinations have been conducted for the pastorates where the School was conducted in the previous year.

LTE has received 169 new registrations for the Correspondence Course No. 1



and 24 for Course No. 2. In the given period 106 correspondents had received rewards for completing Course No. 1 and 16 correspondents for Course No. 2.

e) **Museum & Art Gallery:** Collection of artifacts and relics of the missionaries and prominent church leaders has been maintained with Prof. T. Vanlaltlani as Convener. Amongst other collections this year Katie Hughes' (Pi Zaii) harmonium formerly used in the Mission Veng Church was donated Elder Rinzawna, and Gwen Rees Roberts' (Pi Teii) Gramophone was donated by Rev. Lalnghinglova.

f) **Early Childhood Care Education Centre:** With the help of SSA this childhood care school has been well maintained under the leadership of the Headmistress, Ms. Lalsangpuii w/o Rev. Dr. Vanlalnghaka Ralte, assisted by Teacher Ms. Lalthanpuii w/o Rev. Dr. Tlanghmingthanga and Attendant-Cook Ms. K.C. Malsawmi w/o Mr. Ramsanga.

g) **Campus Care & Maintenance Sections:** Construction and maintenance of the campus and quarters have been systematically

taken care of under the untiring supervision of Rev. Dr. Tlanghmingthanga, Secretary, Campus Care and Security, of Rev. Dr. K. Lallawmzuala, i/c Quarters Repair and Maintenance, Rev. Rosiamliana Tochwawng, Superintendent of the Hostels, and of Rev. Vanlalrova Khiangte, entrusted by the TEB to supervise construction of water reservoir and certain other works. In many cases of maintenance and cleaning it is the students who lay their hands.

h) Works undertaken within the stipulated period of report: construction of the largest Faculty Quarters, Block D was completed and occupied by seven Faculty families and two student families while one of the flats is reserved for participants of CWM Face to Face. A miniature of the Sea of Galilee was constructed at Biblical Garden. Construction of a large water reservoir on the south of the Chapel is almost completed. Several useful drainage and retaining wall have been constructed. Construction of a Viewing Shed on the southern tip of the western Gallery is about to complete, and that of Museum and Art Gallery is being started.



h) Worship: In accordance with the resolutions of the Worship Committee, and to enhance the spiritual life and ministerial activities of the community members, Rev. Lalthangpuia Fanai, Chaplain and Rev. H. Lalrinthanga, Assistant Chaplain regularly arranged devotional and worship meetings on week days and Sundays.

9. Donation/Gifts/Prizes: The College occasionally receives free gifts either in cash or in kind. Following are the donations received during the given period:

- a) Ramhlun North Kohhran Hmeichhia - For repairing Rotunda Building - ₹ 10,000/-
- b) Rev. Iain B. Hodgins, Moderator, General Assembly of Welsh Presbyterian Church - For Library development- ₹ 3,000/-
- c) Chhingaveng - For the support of Jungmet Ngaimong - ₹ 7,200/-
- d) Pastor Thanga Tû leh Fat - For Pastor Thanga Prize - ₹ 46,000/-
- e) Pu R. L. Laltawnga - Addl. R.L. Tawnga Prize - ₹ 10,000/-
- f) Pu C. Laltanpuia, Mosia Agency - Purchase of SB computer - ₹ 20,000/-
- g) PC-USA- Women's Scholarship - ₹ 1,26,498/-

10. Prominent Visitors from Outside of Mizoram:

- a) Five Women Pastors from Taiwan Presbyterian Church

(gifted us a small banner bearing the logo of Women Wing of the Church).

- b) Dr. Michael Gabbert, Bixby, OK 74008, USA
- c) Dr. Chin Do Kham, Jenes, OK 74037, USA
- d) Rev. Dr. Ravi Tiwari, Registrar, Senate of Serampore College.
- e) Rev. Dr. P.C. Gine, Vice Principal, Serampore College, & Friends.
- f) Sylvia Comb, Former CWM Secretary & Friends.
- g) Rev. Randolf Turner, Executive Secretary, CWM
- h) Eve Parker, Associate Secretary, CWM
- i) Rev. Dr. David Upp, Ph.D., D.D. Kiribati (from USA)
- j) Executive Team of Bible Society of India

11. Some Significant Events:

Senate of Serampore Commission headed by the Registrar, Rev. Dr. Ravi Tiwari, recommended ATC for commencing M.Th. in Religion department and Old Testament department. Accordingly the two departments were inaugurated on June 10, 2011 by the Moderator Rev. C. Lalsangliana in lieu of the Senate Registrar, Rev. Dr. Ravi Tiwari whose flight was



cancelled. Prof. T. Vanlaltlani and Rev. Dr. K. Lallawmzuala representing their respective disciplines presented papers on Religions and Old Testament. In turn Rev. Prof. Vanlalchhuanawma participated in the Senate Commission investigating the petition of UTC to commence M.Th. (Missiology), perhaps, the first time to include ATC's faculty in a Senate Commission. In a College Day celebration on November 19, 2010 the Speaker Rev. Dr. William C. Browne, Executive Director, Medical Benevolence Foundation, P.C.-U.S.A. was accompanied by his wife, Rev. Dr. Lalhmingliani, the ATC alumnus.

Mr. R.L. Rinawma, the then Director of Geology and Mineral Resources addressed the ATC Community and hoisted the national flag on the Republic Day of 2011. Rev. C. Lalsangliana, the Synod Moderator solemnly conducted the Dedication-cum-Farewell Service in April 16, 2011 wherein six B.D. and thirteen M.Th. graduants were solemnly consecrated and bidden farewell. As part of the College's preparation to host CWM Face to Face program the Vice Principal, Rev. Dr. C

Lahlira visited Zambia during Nov. 20-28, 2010 and Fiji Island during May 13-24, 2011. For the second time A.T.C. hosted the Mizoram Presbyterian Church Pastors' Retreat in May 24-27, 2011. As the intention of the whole TEB Sub-Committee to go to Serampore failed due to unfavorable circumstances, the Principal alone met the Senate Registrar and Dean of Research Department at their Serampore offices in August 9, 2011 to explore the compatibility of Aizawl Theological College to prepare itself for a doctoral study centre. In conjunction with this visit the TEB decided to put up to the SEC its proposal to prepare ATC for a doctoral study centre. Mr. Lalrinenga Sailo, the Local Councillor of the AMC graced the Independence Day Celebration at ATC by addressing the community and hoisting the national flag. Other significant visits to place on record are those of the Executive Members of the Bible Society of India on the 5th of November and of His Excellency, the Governor of Mizoram, with his wife on 11.11.'11.



An event of special significance is the commencement of CWM Face to Face program at ATC, for which UTC, Bangalore has been considered almost as the permanent and immutable rendezvous in India. This three-month program is to be shared by ATC and Bishop's College in Kolkata. A Welcome Program with Mr. Lalthanhawla, the Chief Minister, as the Chief Guest was organized in September 26, 2011 for the nine participants from Fiji Island, Congo, Zambia, Australia, Madagascar, Myanmar, Kiribati, Sri Lanka, India and Mizoram. By the efficient guidance of Rev. Dr. C. Lalhlira and Dr. Lalrindiki Ralte, the coordinator and assistant coordinator the participants experienced enriching orientation, rural and urban exposures in Mizoram until they left for their second phase of the program at Bishop's College.

12. Acknowledgment: God is to be given the full credit for raising ATC from a very humble beginning to its present status. I'd emphatically say that it is the

Churches, God's co-workers, to claim the next credit. We are extremely happy to all the representatives of the Churches today. God's co-workers next to the Church are the TEB members, the teaching faculty and office staff. A good working relationship has been maintained due to the close cooperation of the Churches. A School started without proper annual budget has become a full-fledged College and is proposing an annual budget of Rs. 4,17,32,000 for 2012-'13 financial year. The TEB wants the theological education under our Synod to stress not only high academic standard and broad theological spectrum but also spiritual and holistic nurture for the total life of the Church. It attempt to fully develop ATC to train and equip young people for various Christian ministries to work in Mizoram, India and abroad.

Rev. Prof. Vanlalchhuanawma
Principal



BREAKING BARRIERS, TRANSFORMING LIVES¹

Rev. Dr. Roger Gaikwad
General Secretary, NEICC

Images and Implications of Barriers

As we were entering Arunachal Pradesh there was a Check-gate where our Inner Line permits were checked. Is that check-gate a barrier? No, not necessarily! This measure is meant to act as a safeguard for the people of Arunachal Pradesh from undesirable persons and influences. Therefore the question arises: What barriers do we need to break? The answer is, “We need to break those barriers which harm the lives of people, their livelihood, their identity and dignity, and their growth. We also need to break barriers that divide person from person, individual from society, groups from groups, and humans from creation. Yes, we need to break barriers that perpetuate injustice, inflict suffering, and cause enmity.

Some of you must have seen the film, “No Entry”. Is this “No Entry” sign a barrier in the story of the film? No, it is not! In the story, a married man falls in love with another woman. This film warns people about temptations that lead to immorality and cause much sorrow and suffering in relationships. When such “No Entry” signs are broken, they deform lives! So, some so-called barriers are meant for the good of the society. They should not be broken. If they are broken, they bring nothing but trouble.

Many of you might have seen this advertisement on TV. Two brothers

and their families are divided by a wall between their two houses. They realize that the wall is a barrier in their relationships. So they try to break down the wall. But the wall is so strong that, though they try to ram the wall with strong pillars and other implements, the wall cannot be broken. Then one brother calls out despairingly to the other brother, “Brother, why can’t this wall be broken?” The ad conveys the message that the cement manufactured by the particular company is so strong and cohesive that anything constructed with that cement cannot be broken. Today the challenge is for us to break such walls in the society. Religion,



Culture, Politics, etc. have constructed such strong walls, which over the centuries have become further hardened. They have perpetuated certain ideologies, values, and systems that have become rock-solid and are responsible for much injustice and suffering in the world. It is such walls that have to be broken, if lives are to be transformed.

The YMCA is one important constituent member of the ecumenical movement which aims at involving young people to be committed to the Christian ideal of building a human community of justice, love and peace, of reconciliation which facilitates the growth towards fullness of life in all creation.

The Reign of God: Breaking Barriers, Transforming Lives

Jesus presented the vision of the reign of God in which barriers are broken and lives are transformed. In our Bible, the vision of the reign of God is usually described as the kingdom of God. In Mark 1:15 we read the young man Jesus starting a movement with the slogan, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." He felt called and

commissioned for this task. He applied to himself the scripture passage, which he read in the synagogue: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." The image of "the acceptable year of the Lord" has its reference to the celebration of the Jubilee Year as directed in Leviticus chapter 25. There are three important features of the Jubilee year: (1) Repentance (not merely of the individual, but of the whole community); (2) Rest and recreation of all the earth; and (3) Reform (both economic - "getting back one's property and therefore identity", and social - "freedom from slavery and affirming one's dignity"). In other words, Jesus calls us to break barriers (1) between humans and God, (2) between humans and creation, and (3) between humans and humans.

Break the Barrier of Caste!

One of the barriers that we in India have to break is that of the caste system. It has become so entrenched in the Indian society that



it is like a strong cement wall that has to be rammed again and again before it can be broken. Let me share with you how some of the Mahar Dalits have suffered because of the caste system. The Mahars were not allowed to live inside the village. As outcastes they had to live outside the village. However to serve the caste Hindus they were allowed to enter the village, but they were to enter the village only around 9 a.m. and had to leave the village by around 3 p.m. The reason for this time restriction was that in the early hours of the morning, a person's shadow is very long. Similarly in the evening the shadows are long. When shadows are long, the shadows of the Mahars could fall on the caste Hindus and thereby pollute them! From about 9 a.m. and to about 3 p.m. the shadows are rather short and therefore if the Mahars worked in the village during that period their shadows would not be long enough to pollute the caste Hindus. Secondly when the Mahars entered the village they had to tie leafy branches behind their backs so that, as the Mahars walked on there muddy road, the leafy branches would sweep away their footprints. The caste Hindus feared that in case they stepped on the foot-prints of

the Mahars, they would be rendered unclean! Therefore the Mahars had to take care to see that their footprints were swept off! Thirdly, Mahars had to tie a vessel round their neck which was to be used as a sputum bowl. Mahars were prohibited from spitting anywhere in the village, lest their sputum would desecrate the place. Thus we find that Mahars and all Dalits were subject to much injustice and suffering. In many places they were not allowed to speak Sanskrit, which was considered to be the holy language of the caste Hindus. If a Dalit was caught speaking Sanskrit, molten lead would be poured down his/her throat! One could go on adding to this list of humiliating atrocities. Even today in some places, caste Hindus, including their animals, have access to water upstream while Dalits are restricted to water downstream. Time and again we hear reports of Dalit women being raped, and dalit houses being burnt. Again when it comes to education and employment opportunities, Dalits are discriminated against. It is this kind of system barrier that we are called upon to oppose and break!

Break the Barrier of Communalism!



Yet another challenging barrier is communalism. There are different kinds of communalism. In our pluralistic society, we are faced with the problem of politicized religious communalism. Recently we have seen how one Hindu leader has stirred his own community against Christian witness by declaring that a person who converts should be beheaded. There is so much of hate campaign being generated by one religious community against another religious community. We are all aware of the cruel burning of Graham Staines and his two children, the atrocities against Christians in Gujarat, the brutal killing of people in Kandhamal, the destruction of Church property in Karnataka, the threatening pressure put on Christian educational institutions in Madhya Pradesh ... the list is endless. Not only Christians, but other minority communities are also being harassed and subject to much violence. Another expression of communalism is ethnic/tribal communalism. In North East India we have instances of Santhals versus Bodos, of Nagas versus Kukis, and so on. Each ethnic group wants to claim rights over land, socio-political power, and economic resources and considers other ethnic

groups as their rivals and enemies. There have also been occasions when members from one religious tribal group have killed members of another tribal group though they belong to the same religion. Ethnic blood is thicker than baptismal waters. Therefore the urgency of breaking the barriers of communalism! The YMCA with its ecumenical ideology and programmes could catalyse the breaking of barriers and facilitate the transformation of lives and of society.

Break the Barrier of Globalization!

A third critical barrier is the system of economic globalization. Economic resources and wealth are becoming increasingly the possession of the rich, while more and more humans are struggling with life, livelihood and the cost of living. Take the example of POSCO in Odisha. Firstly, this Korean company, with the support of the Central and State governments, is trying to acquire around 4000 acres to set up their steel industry, thereby displacing several hundred villagers. Secondly, it will be given access to some 10,000 acres of forest and agricultural land which will be unearthed to dig up the iron ore, thereby exploiting mother earth and



robbing the people of their traditional occupations. Thirdly it will take possession of large volumes of the Mahanadi river water for their industrial activity, thereby making water scarce for the people of the place. Fourthly, it will construct a large sea port for shipping its steel, thereby adversely affecting the coastline, and the fishing livelihood of the inhabitants. POSCO and the elite class of Indians will benefit from this enterprise but the majority of the inhabitants of the region will suffer and even the ecology of the region will be destroyed. Similarly, with the open doors to privatization policy of globalization ideology, the Government is withdrawing from basic essential services. So-called quality education is commercialized and therefore beyond the reach of the poor. Likewise, in the health sector, medical treatment through super-speciality services is unaffordable for the poor. All in the name of development, it is the upper middle and richer classes of India, who constitute the elite minority, while the majority of the citizens of the country are being victimized.

Break the Barrier of Patriarchy!
Patriarchy is another barrier that society is confronted with. As is often stated, a woman as a daughter

is under the authority of the father, as a wife she is controlled by the husband, and as a (widowed) elderly woman she is directed by her son. This rule of the male in the family, in the society, in the country, and in the world is responsible for much suffering of women. They are expected to sacrificially serve and please men and be obedient to them. In many churches, women are expected to be Marthas: they are the ones who serve tea for committee meetings, decorate the church altar, and raise funds for church programmes and projects. Their participation hardly goes beyond those bounds. Even if they are ordained in some church traditions, they are rarely given pastoral charges. Thus women are in general not consulted in important matters, nor given freedom and space to do what they think would be best for them and the church and society; indeed they are not given decision-making power! Even when women occupy positions of power, their positions are manipulated by men. Worse still several crimes are committed against women: cruel child labour, rape, sex trafficking, denial of just wages, neglect of their health care particularly when they are sick, etc. It is very heartening to see that the membership of Young



Men's Christian Association is open also to women! But there are much more changes required in society which would bring in partnership of women and men in society and the realization of the complementarity.

The Biblical Vision of Transformation

As we focus on breaking barriers and transforming lives let the words of Scripture inspire and direct us: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." (Gal.3:28); "After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no man could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb ..." (Rev.7:9); "I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'See the home of God is with mortals. He will dwell with them as their God; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe away

every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away'." (Rev.21:3-4); and "... the river of the water of life ... flowing from the throne ... On either side of the river, is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations." (Rev.22:1-2).

Note:

This article was the Address delivered at the National YMCA Youth Assembly held in Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh during November 11-13, 2011. The theme of the assembly was "Breaking Barriers Transforming Lives". The author had been the former Principal of the Aizawl Theological College during 2008-2010, until he was selected to become the General Secretary of the National Council of Churches in India (NCCI). The Editorial Board express its gratitude to him for allowing us to publish this article.(Ed.)



College Day Address:
(November 18, 2011)

IMPACT OF CHRISTIAN FAITH
ON SOCIO-POLITICAL CONTEXT OF MIZORAM

Rev. Dr. H. Vanlalauva

Rev Moderator and dear co-workers in Christ,

It is a great joy and privilege for me to have been invited to participate in our College Day celebration today. First of all, I would like to thank the Principal, Rev. Dr. Vanlalchhuanawma, members of the Board and the faculty for inviting me to give an address on this auspicious Day. Almost four years have passed since I had left this our College. But all my experiences in this College for the last twenty seven years are still fresh and vivid in my mind. I and my family always feel proud and privileged to have been associated with this college for such a long period. And for this privilege, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our Church, Mizoram Synod.

Today I would like bring to you greetings from the Department of Research/SATHRI of Serampore College University, in which I am now working as the Dean with the blessings and support of our Church and for which I am greatly indebted to our Synod. Department of Research/SATHRI is the one which has been running and coordinating doctoral studies programme under the Senate of Serampore College for the past twenty two years.¹ At present we are having 168 D.Th students including four of ATC faculty members enrolled in various doctoral centres.

Let me take this opportunity to mention that in the initial stage of

the formation of SATHRI, our former Moderator & Principal, Rev. Dr. Zaihmingthanga happened to be its Associate Director for six years. As it has been shifted to Serampore this year to become the Research Department of the Serampore College (University), it is no other than Rev. Dr. Lalchungnunga, the former Principal of Serampore College and former student of ATC, who welcomed and allotted a site for SATHRI on behalf of the Council. This is one of the indications that our Church has been playing a key role in running theological education not only at the local/state level but also at the national level. Such being the case, the Council, Senate and Department of Research/SATHRI



of Serampore College (Univesity) have gratefully acknowledged the contribution of our Church Synod both in terms of services and finance towards the development of theological education at the national level.

May I take this opportunity to thank our Church, Mizoram Synod, on behalf of the Senate and Department of Research/ SATHRI for its immense contribution towards the development of theological education under the Senate. Truly speaking, theological education under the Senate of Serampore College (Univesity) today has been run with the help of our Church. Let me say with confidence that this is a special divine call our Church has received to do His mission in India today. It is my hope and prayer that by His grace our Church would continue to respond to this call for greater development of theological education in South Asia to the Glory of God and for further extension of His kingdom here on earth.

Introductory Notes:

The topic selected for our College Day this year is **Impact of Christian Faith on Socio-Political Context of Mizoram.**

As a topic like this concern for people and the implication of their faith in their historical context, one may call it *People's theology*. It may also be put as role of Christianity or Christian faith in addressing the issue of peace and justice in the socio-political context of Mizoram. Anyway, our concern in our topic today is to highlight the positive aspect of the impact of Christian Faith on the historical context of Mizoram.

It is needless to say that the historical context of Mizoram has been radically changed with the coming of Christianity in the last decade of the nineteenth century. With the adoption of the Christian faith, not only the religious life and practices but also the socio-cultural, political and economic life of the people in Mizoram was also radically transformed. This radical change and transformation has brought about a considerable improvement in the life of the people of Mizoram who had been widely known by the outsiders in the nineteenth century as head-hunters or savages.



To begin with, it may be good to mention the first four pioneer missions held responsible for the coming of Christianity in the soil of Mizoram. These four pioneer missions are no other than Calvinistic missions, such as, **Welsh Calvinistic Mission, Arthington Mission, Baptist Missionary Society and Lakher Pioneer Mission.** William Williams, one of the Welsh Calvinistic missionaries stationed at Shella in Meghalaya was the missionary who came first to Mizoram. It was in March 1891 that he set his feet in the soil of the land.² Through the works of the missionaries of the above mission bodies from Britain, the people in Mizoram gladly embraced the Christian faith. One may be surprised to learn that almost all the people living in different parts of Mizoram became Christian within a short span of fifty years.³

As mentioned above, missions and missionaries coming to our land were all rooted in Calvinistic faith and tradition. Following Calvin and his theology as well expressed in the Westminster Confession or London Confession of faith, they all upheld supreme authority of the Word of God as found in the Bible. In line

with the teaching of the Bible, they all affirmed doctrine of trinity as formulated in the ecumenical creeds of the first five centuries, divine sovereignty and total depravity of human, finality of Christ and centrality of the cross in salvific works, indispensability of the Holy Spirit in justification and sanctification of the believers, necessity of the Church and its ministry for doing mission of God in the world and a firm Hope for the future including the second coming of Christ and realization of full salvation at the End. They also strongly upheld and affirmed realization of the kingdom of God with the help of the Holy Spirit in socio-political and economic context of the present world through the cross and resurrection of Christ.

No one can deny that fact that the above Calvinistic Faith and tradition is what has been imparted to the people in Mizoram. However, the Christian Faith brought to us by the missionaries has been contextualized or reformulated in relation to the changing context of Mizoram. As this is the case, it may be called a faith of praxis, a living faith coming out of people's experience with the living God in their struggle for social, political and



economic transformation. As it is firmly rooted in the Calvinistic tradition, it has concerns for the liberation of the poor and the oppressed. It has also emphasized involvement of the Church in people's struggle for social-political and economic justice. This is what we are referring to by the 'Christian Faith' in our address today.

A Living Faith in the context:

Looking at the context of Mizoram, the impact of the Christian faith which can easily be noticed is the rejection and removal of the old beliefs and practices, known as animism. It may be true to say that fifty years after the coming of Christianity in the land, animism almost disappeared and practically most of the people renounced the old practice of trying to appease the evil spirits known as *ramhuai* by offering sacrifices. At the same time, almost every man and woman claimed to have been indwelt and empowered by the Holy Spirit. The practice of Christian faith thus liberated the people living in Mizoram from the bondage of evil spirits or harmful beliefs and practices.

It must be noted that the Christian Faith has brought about change not only in the religious life but also in

the socio-political and economic lives. It is often said that in pre-Christian era, women were treated almost like a property or a thing. With the coming of Christianity, the condition of women has become considerably improved. Here it must be noted that even though the Mizo society was a patriarchal society, women could embrace the Christian faith without much opposition. In almost all the villages, women were found among the first Christians. They were also found to have enjoyed the benefits of education available through the Mission and the Church. Even though they are not yet welcomed to the ordained ministry of the Church, today women in Mizoram are in the forefront in all the struggles for social-political and religious transformation.⁴

Slavery that had been practised in pre-Christian era was abolished after the coming of Christianity in the land. Missionaries were held responsible for the abolition of slavery which had been practised in a mild form. Dr. Fraser was often quoted to have adopted an extreme form of protest by writing a long letter to the Emperor of Britain complaining against the negative behaviour and attitude of the then



District Superintendent towards the issue.⁵ At the same time, some of the village chiefs who were inspired by the new found faith, had set free all their slaves voluntarily.⁶ This may be seen as a significant impact of the Christian faith in the whole of Mizoram.

As we all know, it was the Missionaries who started primary education in our land. On seeing the good work of the Missionaries in Mizoram, the Mission and the Churches were fully entrusted by the Government to take care of all primary school education in the land. ⁷Till India achieved Independence in 1947, almost all the schools were in the hands of the Mission and the Churches. Today Mizoram has won the second place in literacy (89%) in the whole of India⁸. This may be seen as the impact of the Christian faith in our land.

Christianity has played a significant role in the production of literature. It is commonly accepted that we, the Mizos, had no written form of literature before the coming of Christianity in the last decade of the nineteenth century. It was only through the initiative and work of the Mission and the Church that the written form of the Mizo language

began to take shape. The Bible was translated in Mizo and at the same time the Mizo Christian Hymn book was also compiled and published. The Missions and the Churches had also taken an initiative in the publication of text books for schools, Lushai-English Dictionary and a monthly Christian Journal, *Kristian Tlangau* at the early stage of Christianity. This is how the Mizo literature began to take shape. Even till today, some of the Mizo literatures widely read by the public are the products of the Christian Institutions. In the growth and development of Mizo literature, the impact of Christian faith is clearly discernible.

Impact of the Christian faith in the field of medical service should also be mentioned here. During the pre-Christian era, diseases were widespread and sickness was common among the Mizos. All sickness and misfortunes were attributed to the work of the evil spirits. As such, if anybody fell sick, appropriate sacrifices were made to appease the evil spirits. So, the people living in Mizoram during the pre-Christian era spent a great deal of times and energy for unnecessary sacrifices. Hence, the Mission and the Churches lost no time to start Hospitals and Dispensaries in which



thousands of patients were treated every year. Till today the hospitals run by the Mission and Churches in Mizoram have been providing medical and health services to a good number of people in the land including HIV/AIDS patients⁹.

Impact of the Christian faith can be seen in the economic life of the people living in our land. Like people in other parts of North East India, jhum cultivation is the main occupation of the people in our land. With the introduction of modern education through the mission and the Churches, a number of people have become engaged in white collar jobs. Some of them are engaged in trade and commerce. This brought some improvement in the economic condition of the people. As mentioned earlier the Christian faith introduced in Mizoram is rooted in Calvinistic tradition which emphasizes the virtue of work. At the same time, this faith also inculcates in the life of the Mizo Christians a genuine concern for others. This has helped strengthening the communitarian life of the society and improving the economic condition of the underprivileged as well. When Mizoram became the Union Territory, Churches have taken an

initiative to educate the people to make use of the development funds for the purpose for which it was sanctioned.¹⁰ In recent past the Mizoram Presbyterian Church Synod used to make some suggestions to the State authority as to how best our natural resources can be harnessed for economic development in our State.¹¹

One may also see the impact of Christian faith on the political context of Mizoram. Before the coming of the British in the second half of the nineteenth century. People living in the land were without any domination from outside. When they were forced to come under the British rule by the end of nineteenth century, they did not easily accept the new ruler. But, as Rev. J.M. Lloyd has rightly pointed out,¹² the Mizo chiefs and their peoples were getting slowly reconciled to the mighty British rulers because of their new found faith which teaches the solidarity of all people created by God and saved by Christ through his life and death on the cross. Such being the case, the Christian faith has played a pivotal role in bringing peace in the land.

It should also be noted that before the advent of Christianity, people



living in the land were divided into various ethnic groups.¹³ Each village was ruled by village chief and no confederation or political unity for the whole of the land was developed. But, with the coming of Christianity and due to the British administration, a political unity of all the various tribes in different parts of the land soon emerged and developed. Thus, all the ethnic groups who were fighting with one another before the coming of Christianity could come together as one community and thus formed one country or state which is now known as Mizoram.

Faith that works:

Having surveyed the impact of the Christian faith in the context of Mizoram in general, let me now discuss in more detail the impact of the Christian faith on the contemporary socio- political context of Mizoram by taking up two or three cases. The first one is the role played by the Church and its related agencies in addressing peace and justice during the period of underground movement or insurgency in Mizoram. A movement for independence from the Indian Union was launched and on March 1, 1966 an independence from the Indian Union was declared.

As Vanlalchhuanawma has pointed out, the consequences were tragic. The Government of India lost no time to launch military operations.¹⁴ Thus the state was declared a ‘disturbed area,’ and during the turbulent period the people had been experiencing traumatic and chaotic experiences; peace was disturbed and development paralyzed.

Right from the day when Independence was declared in March, 1966 law and order situation in the land was disrupted for several years. During this turbulent period, life in Mizoram was dislocated; many villages were burnt down and then grouped together by force. Women were raped while men were forced to become *coolies* for the army personnel. Curfew was clamped at night and movement was restricted. When anybody was found to harbor the underground personnel, he or she was tortured or killed by the army. Thousands of people both men and women were jailed outside Mizoram. It is true to say that in those days of murders, kidnapping, looting, rape, ambush and dissertations were the talk of the land.¹⁵ Practically speaking the whole land had gone through such agony and suffering for twenty years. As Zairema remarked, those



days were the worst times in the history of Mizoram.¹⁶

The Church in Mizoram firmly rooted in Calvinistic tradition was not simply a silent spectator on the political situation mentioned above. Soon after the armed revolt for independence broke out on March 1st, 1966, the Church took initiative to form 'Aizawl Citizens' Committee' comprising members from all religious groups or denominations.¹⁷ Initially the focus of the Committee was relief and rehabilitation. The next step was to bring the Government and the leader of the Underground to the negotiating table. It was not easy at all for the Church to gain the trust of both parties. The Church issued press release condemning all kinds of violence, extortion, kidnapping, threat letters, etc. Because of the bold and strong stand taken by the Church, many a times leaders of the Church received death threat from both sides. Some of them suffered imprisonment two or three times. In that situation, as Magaret Ch. Zama has rightly pointed out,¹⁸ the leaders of the Church who were actively engaged in the peace process may be compared to being between the hammer and the anvil.¹⁹ However,

there was no fear at all but the zeal to work for peace increased.

The peace initiative taken by the Church was not left without positive result. Though the Church leaders met many hurdles in their attempts to bring the two parties to the negotiating table for talks, finally the historic **Peace Accord/Memorandum of Settlement** was signed on June 30th, 1986 between the Government of India and the Mizo National Front.²⁰ This brought to a close the twenty years long sufferings of the people in the whole of Mizoram. Today, Mizoram has become the most peaceful state in the whole of North East India. By saying this, one should not forget that the Christian faith as found in Mizoram is not a divisive force. Rather it is a strong force that promotes and strengthens the national unity and integration.

Faith that moves and changes:

Despite the impact of the Christian faith in the socio-political context of Mizoram mentioned above, the socio-political situation is not free at all from evils and vices. For fear of undesirable elements that might be adversely affecting the election process, the Church has been constantly keeping eyes on the



political situation. In every election the church used to publish an election communiqué appealing the people in the State to cast vote in favour of the upright and honest men or women free from drinking and corruption of all kinds²¹. Despite the appeals made by the Church and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), in the past fifteen years the election expenditure was found to have been increased manifold and some incidents that are detrimental to peace and harmony in society were reported to have occurred in some areas.²²

The situation was seen becoming worse in the 2003 Assembly election in which violence including kidnapping of the candidates and threats to the lives of the candidates were reported to have taken place in some areas. There also occurred many other incidents that were detrimental to peace and justice in the society.²³ This was shocking for the people and consequently the Churches particularly the Mizoram Presbyterian Church Synod lost no time to take some urgent measures to make election process free and fair.

At the initiative of the Mizoram Presbyterian Church Synod, a series of seminars and consultations were

soon organized and in the light of their studies of the problems and issues concerning the elections and political situation in the land, it was finally resolved to form what has become known as the **Mizoram People's Forum (MPF)**, in which Churches and NGOs have come together to make the election free and fair, bringing about the good governance in the state accordingly²⁴. As the name implies the MPF is the forum in which all the people from all walks of life can freely participate for the good governance of the country. Even though the Churches are at the forefront, it is indeed a People's movement, as most of its activities are carried out at the local or village level by the people themselves and the common people are the strength and resources of the movement.²⁵

The formation of the MPF was soon followed by the MLA bye-election in one constituency and the District Council election in Mara and Chakma areas. This was a big challenge to the newly constituted MPF. Despite some nervousness on the part of MPF leadership, due to an active involvement of the MPF, all the elections were conducted peacefully without any report of violence and other incidents. This



greatly encouraged and emboldened the MPF to carry on the tasks with full force to which it has committed. To be brief, by the time of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) General election in 2008, there was no village in Mizoram where MPF Local Forum was not established apart from Lunglei and Lawngtlai districts. In other words, with the back-up and full support of Churches and NGOs the MPF was fully prepared to help Election Commission in making the whole process of election free and fair in the state.

Right from the month of January 2008, the MPF had left no stone unturned to make the MLA General Election free and fair. A crucial meeting was organized in April, in which all the political parties participated and accepted without reservation the common guidelines for the election.²⁶ Meanwhile, an appeal was made to all the insurgent groups both inside and outside Mizoram to stay away from the election process.²⁷ The MPF office bearers also met the State Governor, the Chief Minister and the Presidents of all the Political Parties asking them to fully cooperate with the MPF as well as the Election Commission in making free and fair election. An appeal was also made

to the Governor to beef up the security not only in the sensitive areas within the country but also along the international border and the inter-state border too.²⁸

In this election, the MPF organized General Conference two times at Aizawl and thousands of Local Forum representatives from all over the State attended that Conference.²⁹ Another meeting was organised from time to time in almost all the villages and towns to enlist the people in ensuring election free and fair in their local context. In all the meetings it was stressed that the Christian principle was the basis on which the MPF should rely upon to make their involvement in the process of election meaningful and effective. It was also firmly believed that this could enhance good governance in the state. It is interesting to note that not only the Churches but even the NGOs organized a meeting in which people from all walks of life joined together to pray for the peaceful conduct of poll.

When the Election Day drew near and the dates of the MLA General election announced, it was encouraging to see that all the political parties made their best efforts to select upright, honest and



reliable candidates. Interestingly all political parties and their candidates welcomed the MPF guidelines rather than seeing them as a constraint.³⁰ The Church and the MPF had not only issued the guidelines for the election but were also monitoring its implementation. The MPF volunteers together with all the members of the Youth Department of the Churches were keeping their eyes on all the election campaigns. One may be surprised to learn that this was really appreciated by all who got involved in the election fray.³¹

All the efforts made by the MPF for free and fair election was richly rewarded. The election campaign as well as the election itself was conducted peacefully in all the areas where the MPF was active. On seeing this, the Election Commission could not refrain from praising openly the MPF and even the Chief Election Observer made a remark that other states should follow the MPF way!³² In his words of gratitude conveyed to the President of the MPF, the State Governor said that this great country (India) has something to learn from a very small state like Mizoram.³³

Mizoram is not free at all from vices and evils that are also found in other

parts of the world. However, when looking at the involvement of the Churches in the peaceful conduct of election through its watchdog, the MPF, one may join Samudra Gupta Kashyap of the Indian Express, who said that the Church (the Christian Faith) not only has an overwhelming impact on Mizo society but on its elections too³⁴.

Faith that liberates:

In Mizoram drinking is considered to be the chief source of social evils in the Mizo society and hence almost all the Churches in Mizoram have enforced the rule that any communicant member should refrain from drinking or selling of liquor. In the 1980s when the issue of free sale of liquor was raised, the Churches in Mizoram were united not only in opposing the free sale of liquor but also putting a strong pressure on the State government to totally prohibit drinking and selling of liquor all over the State. Having succumbed to this pressure, the State Legislature passed in 1993 what has become known as **The Mizoram Liquor Total Prohibition Act**.³⁵ This Act has been still in force even till today and found liberative for people in the state.



Like many other States in India today, Drug Abuse and HIV/AIDS are another problems in Mizo society for quite some time. The Churches and their related agencies are now actively involving to rescue and rehabilitate the persons affected by Drugs and HIV/AIDS. As such, all the Churches are now actively engaged in running the Rescue Home and the Rehabilitation Centres in different parts of the state.³⁶ In recent past, the Bru nationalists known as *Bru National Liberation Front* kidnapped Government servants and some civilians more than once.³⁷ In these incidents, the State authority approached the Church leaders to secure the release of the kidnapped victims. With the involvement of the Church leaders, the victims were set free.³⁸ Thus, the Churches in Mizoram are of great help both to those in authority and also to those disadvantaged and underprivileged as well.

Conclusion:

Following from what has been mentioned above, one may conclude that Christian faith as found in Mizoram is the living faith that works, moves, changes and liberates. It has really helped the people living in Mizoram in their

struggle for social, cultural, political and economic transformation.

Here it should be noted that Christianity in Mizoram and other parts of India may be seen as a divisive force that has disintegrated the national unity and integration. Our inherited faith and tradition can also be seen as the one that destroys and corrupts the indigenous culture. Without doubt, the denominational conflicts and the rise of a number of sectarian groups which have been witnessed and experienced within the Mizo-Christian community in the last fifty years have tarnished considerably the image of Christianity and the Churches in the land. However, despite these negative impacts, one cannot deny the fact that such a Christian faith as received and practiced by the people in Mizoram has been found liberative and transformative in addressing the issue of peace and justice in the socio-political and economic context of Mizoram down through the years. It is a living and relevant faith that responds to the changing context of Mizoram and helps the Mizo Christians in their struggle for socio-political and economic justice.



To conclude, the Christian faith has had a great impact on contemporary socio-political context of Mizoram. As mentioned in the beginning, the Christian faith imparted to the Mizo Christians by the missionaries is the biblical faith firmly rooted in all Calvinistic faith and tradition. It underlies the Confession of faith of the Churches in Mizoram, particularly the Confession of Faith of the PCI. It is also the faith which was firmly held and practised by William Carey, the founder of Serampore College. To my knowledge and experience, this is also the faith which has been articulated and re-formulated in relation to the changing historical context both by the Senate and all its affiliated colleges including Aizawl Theological College.

Today as we celebrate our College Day, let us re-affirm that the Christian faith as found and practiced in Mizoram has never grown old to meet the challenges of our day. May our loving and sovereign God help our College and all of us here to hold fast this living Faith and to make it relevant in our changing socio-political and economic context today and tomorrow.

(Footnotes)

¹ In the eighties, the Board and the Senate saw the urgency to establish initially one advanced research centre in the country. A national consultation with the participation of several Mission Boards from abroad was held in 1987. Intense planning and negotiation thus led to the establishment of the South Asia Theological Institute (SATHRI) in 1989 at Bangalore. After twenty two years of its establishment in Bangalore, the role of SATHRI was reviewed and as per decision of the Senate, SATHRI has been bifurcated from the BTSSC and has moved to Serampore in February, 2011 so as to function as the Department of Research of the University. So far 305 students have been enrolled for doctoral studies programme under the Department of Research/SATHRI, out of whom 121 students including 12 members of ATC faculty have been awarded the degree. At present SATHRI is having 168 D.Th students including four of ATC faculty members in various doctoral centres.

² William Williams "A Visit to Lushai Hills" **The Monthly Tidings** (August, 1891):159-160. According to this report, William Williams and his party left Silchar on Monday March 2nd, 1891 for Lushai Hills (Mizoram) through Tlawng river by boat. It was reported that on week after they left Silchar for Lushai Hills they preached among the people living in one of the villages in Mizoram by the side of Tawng river. If so, they must have arrived Mizoram on 8th March, 1891.

³ V.L. Zaihangang, **From Head Hunting to Soul Hunting**, (Aizawl: Synod Press, 1981.), pp. 1ff.

⁴ From the early days of Christianity in Mizoram, a number of women were appointed as a full time worker in



evangelistic works. Practically speaking, almost half of the Sunday School teachers and missionaries appointed by the Churches in Mizoam are women. In Government offices, women outnumber their male counterparts..cf. P.C. Laltlani “Mizoram Presbyterian Church Women” in **Mizoram Presbyterian Church: A History of Departments** Ed. Vanlalchhuanawma (Aizawl:ATC,2007), pp.228f.

⁵ P. Fraser, “Petition to His Majesty King George V” dated Aijal, Lushai Hills, Sept. 10, 1910. In this letter Fraser wrote: “*The attention of responsible government of Lushai was called to the existence of this slave system in February, 1909 and that of the Commissioner of Surma valley and Hills Tract in January, 1910 but upto the present the system has not been changed.*”

⁶ It was reported in Fraser’s letter acknowledged above, three Mizo chiefs Khawvelthanga, Hrangvunga and Raja Hrangvunga set free more than 65 slave families by payment of ransom .

⁷ V.L. Zaithanga, **From Headhunting to Soulhunting**, ., p.23.

⁸ **Ibid.**

⁹ Lalremthanga, “Presbyterian Hospital Board Annual Report” in **Synod Inkhawmpui Vawi 87-na : Programmes & Agenda**(Aizawl: SLPB, 2010) pp. 248f.

¹⁰ The Social Front Committee of the Church takes the lead in socio-political and economic concerns.

¹¹ R. Chhuanliana, “Synod Social Front Committee” in **Mizoram Presbyterian Church: A History of Departments**, Ed. Vanlalchhuanawma (Aizawl: ATC., 2007), pp. 175f.

¹² J.M. Lloyd, **Nine Missionary Pioneers** (Caernarfon: The Mission Press, 1989), p. 46. D.E. Jones, **A Missionary**

Autobiography (Aizawl: Lengchhawn Press, 1998. p. 8

¹³ D.E. Jones, **A Missionary Autobiography**, p. 8.

¹⁴ Vanlalchhuanawma, **Missionand Tribal Unity**, p. 74.

¹⁵ **Ibid.**,p. 74.

¹⁶ Zairema, “ God’s Miracle in Mizoram”

In his **Lehkhahu Te Pasarih** (Aizawl: Zorun Community, 2009), p. 218. .

¹⁷ Zairema, **I Ni Min Pek Hi**(Aizawl: Zo Run Commmunity, 2009), pp. 366f.

¹⁸ Magaret Ch. Zama, “The Role of the Church in addressing the issue of peace in Mizoram” A paper presented in a Seminar organized by North East Network and the Ford Foundation at Shillong, June 13,14, 2002.

¹⁹ **Ibid**

²⁰ **Ibid.**

Church leaders of all the denominational Churches in Mizoram commonly known as **Mizoram Kohhran Hruaitute Committee (MKHC)** had taken the place of Peace Committee formed in the second half of 1980s. They made their best efforts in the first half of the 1980s to bring both the MNF and the Government of India to the negotiating table. On April 16th.1984 they sent their representatives to meet the Prime Minister of India. In the same year on June 24th., their representatives met MNF President Laldenga in London

and conveyed the message received from the Prime Minister. This was followed by his return to India. In April 1985, six delegates of the MKHC met the Prime Minister to have unconditional talk with the MNF President. Through the efforts of the MKHC, a year later on June 30th., the historic peace accord was signed, thus bringing to a close the 20 year long insurgency. (Magaret Ch. Zama, *The Role of the Church...*”)



²¹ R. Chhuanliana, "Synod Social Front Committee", p.173.

²² Mizoram People Forum, **Mizoram Politics Siamthat nana Mizoram People Forum Hnathawh, 2006-2009** (Aizawl: MPF, 2009) p 1

²³ **Ibid.**

²⁴ R. Chhuanliana, "Synod Social Front Committee", pp. 173f.

²⁵ Mizoram People Forum, **Mizoram Politics Siamthat nana Mizoram People Forum Hnathawh**, p. 9.

²⁶ Election Guidelines were framed to supplement the Guidelines issued by the Election Commission of India. As per this Guidelines, Election expenditures should be kept to the minimum. Community feasting, poster and flag wars, use of force, intimidation door to door campaign, influencing of voters through money or other incentives should be avoided. Securing support from insurgent groups is strongly condemned.

²⁷ "Mizo Polls Sans Shine" **The Times of India**, (November 14th, 2008).

²⁸ MPF President's Letter to His Excellency, Governor of Mizoram, dated May 15, 2008 & October 24, 2008. .

²⁹ MPF General Confeence was organized at Vanapa Hall in Aizawl in January and October, 2008.

³⁰ The Guidelines issued by the MPF are intended to supplement the Guidelines issued by the Election Commission of India. Ref. **The Indian Express**(November 24,2008.)³¹ "The Mizo Polls sans shine" **The Times of India**(November 14th, 2008) "*The MPF comprising all major denominations of churches, has not only checked the expenditure during elections but even scaled down candidates' movements in their constituencies. No door to door campaign, no rally, no public meeting, no*

feast, no singers, no tall promises." "North East :Page" **The Statesman**(November 12th ,2008) "*Mizoram candidates are used to the dos and donts imposed by the Presbyterian Church but they, however, have little choice but to obey the diktat laid by the Mizoram People's Forum, the social wing of the Church.*"

³² **Assam Tribune**(December 12th, 2011)

³³ His Excellency, Governor of Mizoam, Lt. Gen (Retd) M.M. Lakhera's Letter to the President of MPF (December 12, 2008) "*I would like to convey my deep appreciation on the unprecedented role that the MPF had performed in the just concluded Mizoram Assembly General Election. I am very proud to be part of the movement from outside. As we have experienced this time, I am sure this great country has something to learn from a very small state like Mizoram*"

³⁴ "*Poll with a difference*" **The Indian Express**(November 24th, 2008).

³⁵ R. Chhuanliana, "Synod Social Front Committee", pp. 178f.

³⁶ **Ibid.**, pp. 171f.

³⁷ Magaret Ch. Zama, "The Role of The Church..." , p. 5.

³⁸ **Ibid.**

Rev. Dr. H. Vanlalauva delivered this article at the Annual College Day Celebration on November 18, 2011. He was the Principal of this College during 1999-2007, until he was elected as the Moderator of the Mizoram Presbyterian Church Synod. After his retirement in 2009, he taught at the Serampore College (Theology Department) as a Professor of Systematic Theology. Now he is the Dean of the Department of Research under the Senate of Serampore College.



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