Bethel Bible College Annual Report-2016

Glory to God! It is my joy to welcome, greet and thank all of you who have travelled along with us in our journey of theological education from the inception of Bethel Bible College or sometime in between or now.

Rev. Scott Alan Norling- founder-president-Gospel Mission of India is our chief guest and graduation speaker today. We sincerely thank him for accepting our invitation and gracing the occasion. Our thanks are due to Mrs. Melody Norling for being part of our ceremony today.

We profusely thank Rev. Dr. P.N.S. Chandra Bose, the General Secretary of Gospel Mission of India and the president of Bethel Bible College for walking along with us shoulder to shoulder ensuring the smooth functioning of the college. GMI has taken all necessary efforts to train men and women for God’s ministry particularly from the economically and socially backward section of the society. Those efforts have yielded concrete reward, for which we are witnesses, as we prepare to confer College diploma today on fifty five BD students, in addition to the one hundred ninety one earlier graduates.

Dr. Leela Bose-Member Executive and Mr. Jeevan Sylvanus-COO, GMI are inevitable for the regular and seasonal excitements that enthrall the BBC family. Their generosity and constant involvement in the life and activities of BBC have added colors and flavors. We thank them and the ones behind them.

Our earnest gratitude to Dr. Joseph Paturi, (Trans-world Ministries) for accepting to be a Promotional Director of BBC and for supporting 25 students to cover their subsidized scholarship granted by the college. Drs. Kevin and Leslie McNulty (Christian Adventures International) have promised similar support. Thanks to them as well.

We sincerely thank Rev. Dr. M. Mani Chacko, General Secretary, Bible Society of India for gifting our graduating students with ESV Global Study Bible.

We are also grateful to the churches, organizations and individuals who sponsor and recommend students to BBC. We thank all those who in one or another way contributed to the ministry of BBC. We fervently pray that God will abundantly bless these ministries and everyone gathered here so that together we will be able to equip many more men and women for God’s ministry.

Cheerful thanks are due to all the other dignitaries, graduating students, guests, parents, friends, professors and BBC family. It is you who inspire us and recognize the value of God’s work here in BBC, Guntur on this day the 18th April 2016.

Hearty congratulations to all graduating students who have successfully completed all the requirements pertaining to BD degree studies and are eligible to the award of Bethel Bible College Diploma, this day. I also congratulate the recipients of special awards.

**Students, Faculty and Staff**

The academic year 2015-16 was started with a formal interview for the new students on the 5th June 2015. Twenty eight new students, including two women, were admitted for the BD degree program. The student body of BBC represents 12 churches and 11 states. The total number of students in the BD degree studies during the academic year 2015-16 is 140.

Like the student body, BBC faculty members are ecumenical. During the academic year 2015-16 thirteen faculty members taught BD courses of the Serampore College curriculum. Their dedicated service, endurance, unconditional cooperation and exemplary life are behind today’s celebration. Special word of gratitude to all the faulty members who held different responsibilities in addition to their regular teaching assignments: Dr. Sean D. House-Bursar, Mr. Benin B.R.-practical work in-charge, Mr. Tiameren Aier-library in-charge, Mr. L. Kainii Mightyson warden-Men’s hostel, Mrs. Taochila Marvein Jamir-warden-women’s hostel, Mr. Imtiakum -chaplain, Mr. Akho registrar and Dr.. George Philip-in-charge for external programs. The role of faculty members who did not hold any specific responsibility is no way insignificant for the smooth functioning of the college. I have no words to sincerely thank all the faculty members for their selfless service.

Dr. George Philip who had completed his D.Th. studies (NT) joined the faculty in June 2015. He received his degree from the Senate in February 2016. Mr. Viju Wilson waiting to receive his D.Th degree (Theology) will join the faculty in June 2016. Mr. Mongtoshi Walling sponsored by BBC for D.Th. studies in the department of Church history will join BBC in June 2016 after completing his residential requirements for the degree.

Dr. Sean David House, professor of Systematic Theology with whom I worked for eleven years is leaving for Hyderabad in May 2016. Besides teaching theology, he has been the bursar of the college. Mrs. Santhi Lydia House, his dear wife, teaching English for a few years, is also leaving for Hyderabad. We thank both of them for their valuable service and pray for God’s blessings upon their family, as they move to Hyderabad.

We sincerely acknowledge the dedicated services of all the non-teaching staff of BBC who make our life comfortable.

I wish to thank the student leaders and the mess teams for working hard to ensure that BBC family needs are met. We did not choose leaders with extraordinary talents but with the attitude of service, working day and night for the welfare of the BBC.

**Activities and Events**

The new students were warmly welcomed into the fold of BBC on the 26th June 2015 with a simple Fresher’s day program and our students organized a cultural event on 28th August 2015 for the BBC family.

A two member Commission, including the Registrar of the Senate of Serampore College University, visited BBC on the 8th July 2015. It has expressed satisfaction on the functioning of BBC in compliance with the stipulations of the university. We thank the Senate for their full cooperation in all academic matters.

Four of our students participated a seminar, **Christian-Muslim interfaith dialogue on secularism and democracy in India** organized by HMI, Hyderabad from 1st to 3rd September 2015.

Our woman students attended Shine conference-“you have my heart” organized in Hyderabad on the 11th and 12th September 2015. The entire student body along with three faculty members attended **“Cross Culture- 3 day Music festival,** from 20th to 22nd November 2015, in Hyderabad. We thank Rev. Scott Alan Norling for enabling BBC to be part of these two events.

We celebrated **college foundation day cum sports day** on the 31st October 2015. It was a special opportunity to thank God for His abundant grace upon the institution and to refresh BBC family with some games and sports.

The Bishop Rt. Rev. Dr. P. Victor Premasagar 10th memorial lecture was organized on the 1st December 2015. Dr. Sobanaraj (NT) presented a paper **“Prophetic worldview as a key to the challenges Indian Church confronts today**. Professor Dr. George Philip and Amber R. Marak, a final year student, responded to the paper. The College **Christmas** was celebrated on the 4th and 5th of December 2015 as a preparation for our students to meaningfully celebrate Christmas in their own churches, during the vacation.

The student body organized a farewell program to the graduating students on the 13th March 2016. The graduating students, in return, hosted a thanks giving service on the 20th March 2016.

Three students will attend a summer program at Ecumenical Christian Centre, Bangalore in May 2016. Another three students will attend a national seminar organized by BTESSC, Bangalore in May 2016.

Our students’ participation and involvement in these programs along with their scheduled practical ministry, both intensive and weak-end, have gained BBC special place among the academic institutions, churches and organizations.

I, on behalf of BBC, presented a paper, **Role of Youth in Developing Religious Harmony** in a youth meeting organized by UELCI between July 30th and August1, 2015, at AC College, Guntur. Dr. George Philip, two BD students and I attended a Seminar from 23rd to 24th September 2015 on the theme “Strangers”, organized by Calvin Institute of Theology, Hyderabad where my presentation was **“Brewing Strangers”. I** presented a paper at UBS, Pune in the first week of November 2015 on the theme **“Recollection of Insights for Diligent Christian Witness in India: A Study on the Freedom of Religion based on Article 25 of the Indian Constitution.”** Dr. George Philip, one former student and I attended a Vaishnava Christian Dialogue in the first week of January 2016 at Tirupathi, organized by ISKCON, where Dr. George Philip presented a paper **“Protestant understanding of Prayer”**. **I** had the chance of leading a Christian worship with a homily titled: **Jesus Prayed.**

**Graduates**

This is our eleventh year with the BD degree program and the sixth BD graduation. The 39 graduates who received college diploma in 2015 had successfully completed all the requirements of the Senate and passed all the examinations with respectable grade.

More than fifty percent of our graduates are engaged in church ministry. Churches have recognized their talents and appointed them for various responsibilities and even sent them as participants of international programs. Significant number of graduates has upgraded their theological education and has become responsible lecturers in both affiliated and non affiliated institutions. It is encouraging that good number of our graduates is doing pioneering missionary and evangelistic work.

55 students are going to be graduated today. We thank God for enabling them to successfully complete their studies and join the ministry. Our prayer is that, God shall bless them to serve Him with earnestness and to be sensitive to the need around them.

Thanking You