

SATURDAY 7TH OCTOBER 2006

at the YMCA Indian Student Hostel, Fitzroy Square, London

Over 100 Friends of the Church in India gathered for their annual meeting at the Indian YMCA, London, on the 7 October and began with a celebration of the eucharist based on the Church of South India's Alternative Liturgy and led by the Rev. Nutan Suray of the Methodist Church in Leicester. The sermon was preached by the Rev Leslie Nathaniel, now a pastor in the Evangelical Church of Wuerttemberg, Germany. The offertory amounting to £846 was for the Dalit Theological Training Programme of the CSI Diocese of South Kerala.

After the introduction of visitors from India, members had the opportunity to meet friends old and new over an excellent Indian meal. In the afternoon, after we paused to remember members and friends who had died during the year, Anthony Morton-King, the Development Officer for Christian Aid, spoke about the work that Christian Aid had done to help victims of the Tsunami in December 2004. Pictures of his tour of the S E Asia area brought the tragedy, suffering, and new hopes to life.

A programme of Indian music and dance followed. Amiya Das, one of our visitors who had only arrived in England the day before, brought us a song and dance from Bengal; Shobha Gosa beautifully portrayed devotion to the Cross of Jesus in traditional Indian dance; Jayamani and Sangeetha flourished handkerchiefs as they sang to accompany their own country-style dance and Merlin Joseph, using a modern keyboard synthesizer for accompaniment, sang us a modern song. Items were interspersed with community singing of traditional Indian Christian bhajans led by Israel Selvanayagam.

The day concluded with tea and Indian snacks. Finally, thanks to our Committee and the Indian YMCA for making the day so enjoyable.