

Dear friends,
Greetings from a hot and sunny Sri Lanka at the beginning of 2024.

My ministry here has many strands. I am one of four ministers at the Kollupitiya Methodist Church in Colombo, and my focus is primarily on the English-speaking congregation. Much of this work is very similar to that of many Methodist Ministers around the globe. However, due to the context here, a number of the community projects we run have a different focus, and the majority involve giving out food or food parcels.

Once a week, the church runs an after-school education program (Tuesday Kids Club, TKC) in English and Maths to support the education of children from difficult circumstances. English is an important component of getting service jobs and access to higher education, and the church aims to give these children the broadest range of job opportunities possible. My role is working with those children for whom languages do not come easily.

Throughout Colombo, the church collaborates with several schools, providing hot meals, which do not come as standard and can sometimes be the only meal a child will get on a given day.

TKC Christmas party for children & parents



One of the projects very close to my heart is an ecumenical project with the local Anglican church, providing a Medical Clinic once a month staffed by members from both churches.

Here, people can come and have a check-up with a doctor and receive their medication for a tiny fee compared to the cost of seeing a GP and obtaining medicines in the community.

Pharmacy at the Church Clinic



Medications have recently been hard to come by, and a number of imported drugs have proven to be less than pure, causing patients additional issues.

Both the cost of these medications and concerns for the purity of the compound are serious issues for the community and the church.

Sri Lanka is a stunning example of God's beautiful creation with extremely fertile soil. However, it is now in the grip of debt. Whether you are rich or poor, the increase in gas,

electricity, fuel and food prices, and taxes coupled with a shortage of goods, including eggs, is beginning to impact everyone, more so those who are already barely surviving and living below the subsistence level.



Climate change is also having a noticeable effect here. December and early January have seen uncharacteristic rain every evening in Colombo and torrential rains in the northern and eastern provinces, creating an internal flood disaster.

On Christmas Day, 25th December 2023, I celebrated eleven calendar months in Sri Lanka, having arrived on 25th January 2023, and I had the joy and privilege of conducting the Christmas Day Worship, which for all churches included being protected by the armed forces, as threats to Christian worship do remain.

The last year has been diverse and different from anything I would have anticipated being a part of my life. Bearing in mind that 2025 will see me turn 60, I never expected such a God given adventure at this point in my life. Everyday continues to hold something new or unfamiliar in the approach to life and ministry.

Sri Lanka will be holding a series of elections this coming year. These will be highly significant for the country's future, and I ask you to uphold Sri Lanka in your prayers.

Many blessings,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.