

Transformation



Volume 45:2
November 2004

Board of Directors Meets in Ruston, LA



The thirty-sixth successful and vibrant meeting of the Board of Directors of the United Christian Ashrams International opened on Thursday, September 23, 2004, at 3:00 p.m. at the Central Office, located on the beautiful campus of the Methodist Children's Home in Ruston, LA. Following the call to order by Bishop James K. Mathews, Chairman of the Board, and opening prayer by Brother John Oishi, Chairman of the Japanese Christian Ashram Board, a lively and purpose-driven meeting took place with 42 persons attending, representing Christian Ashrams from fourteen states within the United States, four provinces of Canada, Japan, and Switzerland. The three days of meetings included a time for spiritual motivation, evaluation of our ministry, and the introduction of new ideas and visions for our future.

The E. Stanley Jones Foundation reported progress made with the reprinting of Brother Stanley's books and future aspirations for the Foundation (see article below). The Board was privileged to meet and to be challenged by Mr. Paul Ervin from Lake Junaluska and the Foundation for Evangelism. He offered assistance to our renewed ministry and told of plans for a space in the new Foundation for Evangelism building, which is currently under construction, in which the story of E. Stanley Jones will be presented to visitors.

Dr. Asok Antony, a board member, challenged the Board to "stay the course" regarding the original intent of the Christian Ashram purpose (see page 6). The Board also heard Mr. Wilfred Job, a student at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, TX, tell about a dream he and a team have for a documentary highlighting the life of Brother Stanley and the message of the Christian Ashram (see page 6). Other reports, including that of the General Secretary and Chairman of the Board, as well as a presentation by Mr. Jim Hurst regarding our new website (see page 3), were presented to the Board during the three day meeting.

Following a Louisiana Fish Fry on Thursday evening, there was a meaningful hymn drama by Rev. Whitney Dough, Southeast Regional Coordinator. The Friday evening service of remembrance for fellow Ashramites, was held at Trinity United Methodist Church and was truly a celebration of those who have gone on to glory before us.

Items covered during the board meeting included the need for better marketing of the Christian Ashram and a new brochure with a new image. Some new guidelines were set for Bible teachers and evangelists, including strong encouragement for all leaders to read or reread the book *The Unshakable Kingdom and the Unchanging Person*. The Board felt that this book best epitomizes the central theme of the Christian Ashram ministry. Rev. Jimmie Pyles, General Secretary, said, "I recently gave a copy of this book to a new young pastor that was just out of seminary. After a few days of reading the book, he called to say that it sounded as if it had been written just last week!" The entire Board agreed that the Christian Ashram ministry is still relevant for today's generation.

The meeting adjourned with both Board Members and visitors feeling rejuvenated and anxious to return to local Christian Ashrams with a renewed vision to strengthen each Christian Ashram as we continue to proclaim to the world that "Jesus is Lord!"

Note: Complete copies of the Minutes of this Board Meeting are available upon request from the Central Office.

Visit us on the web! <http://www.christianashram.org>

ESJ Foundation Approves Book Project

In September, the Board of Directors of the E. Stanley Jones Foundation recommended the reprinting of a gift set of five Stanley Jones devotional classics. The five books include: *The Word Made Flesh*, *In Christ*, *The Way*, *Abundant Living*, and *Growing Spiritually*. Board President Tom Nisbett and UCA General Secretary Jimmie Pyles met with representatives of the United Methodist Publishing House in Nashville on October 19th to negotiate the reprinting terms. To date, the ESJ Foundation has received \$24,000 in gifts and pledges toward this project. We will need to raise about \$50,000 for this first reprinting and currently UMPH is estimating the cost of reprinting one book at a time. The first book project will be *The Word Became Flesh*.

The ESJ Foundation plans to market, distribute, and sell the new updated book through the Christian Ashram network, seminaries, and local churches and conferences. Hopefully, UMPH will also market the book through their catalog and their Cokesbury stores. Plans include new cover designs, large print editions, and new scripture and subject indexes for easy reference.

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TRANSFORMATION

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Transformation promotes the Christian Ashram ministry under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God spoken of in the New Testament. Christian Ashrams are international, interracial, and inter-denominational. The motto is "Jesus Is Lord!"

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the E. STANLEY JONES CORNER

The Unshakable Kingdom and the Unchanging Person



JESUS IS LORD

Jesus swept onto the scene declaring that the Kingdom of God had arrived! He proclaimed that we would experience life at its fullest only when we organize our lives around the Kingdom!

E. Stanley Jones suggests that "Life in any other way is a muddled, maddening, and impossible way to live. Throughout the centuries we have lost the Kingdom as a clearly defined and workable system for order and influence in our daily lives. We have reduced the Kingdom by putting it into narrower molds, a refuge now, a present security, a future hope, anything but the Kingdom as Jesus preached it, God's total answer to man's total need now."

In his classic style, Dr. Jones shows us how to claim our spiritual heritage and the abundant life promised us by embracing the Kingdom and Person of Jesus. He suggests how our experience with God and His Kingdom should be taught and shared in the life of the individual, in the life of the church and in the nations of the world.

The Unshakable Kingdom and the Unchanging Person was written by Dr. Jones at the age of 87. Author, evangelist and lecturer, E. Stanley Jones' books have sold in excess of 3.5 million copies and have been translated into 18 languages.

From the back cover of the 1995 printing of
The Unshakable Kingdom and the Unchanging Person

Book of the Year for 2005

By the decision of the Board of Directors, *The Unshakable Kingdom and the Unchanging Person*, by E. Stanley Jones has been selected as the Book-of-the-Year for 2005. This book, written and published in 1972, is now being reprinted by McNett Press, in its original format, with a larger print and a new cover. (See E. Stanley Jones Corner, page 2)

The Board strongly urges all directors, leaders, and Ashramites to read, or reread, this book as each Ashram in 2005 reemphasizes the central theme of the Christian Ashram: The Kingdom of God and Jesus Christ. Current selling price for this book is \$15.95, but it will be offered to local Christian Ashrams in 2005 at a discounted rate of \$10.95 each, plus shipping and handling. Local Christian Ashrams are asked to please contact the Central Office to place an order, allowing at least four weeks for delivery.

IN MEMORIAM

Bo Adcock	Dr. John T. Seamands
Don Firby	Virginia Law Shell
Eugene Jones	O. B. Spencer
Betty McConnell	Mary Webster Tattersall
Wendell Miller	Mary Ada Traill
John Nichols	

GIFTS

IN HONOR OF:

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By: Charles Richardson

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Rev. John Oishi
Dr. & Mrs. Ernest Seckinger, Sr.



Rev. Jimmie
D. Pyles

Greetings to all Ashramites!

What a treat, on our part, to have been able to host our 2004 UCAI Board of Directors Meeting here in Ruston, LA. It was good to hear some of our attendees make such statements such as the following: "I didn't know Louisiana was like this; I thought we were going to the marshes and see alligators; The beauty of north Louisiana is so surprising; The food and hospitality is five-star, indeed." Our attendees came from 14 states within the United States and 4 Provinces of Canada, as well as representatives from Japan and Switzerland.

One of the highlights of the board meeting was the decision to reprint and update some of Dr. E. Stanley Jones' books. Dr. Tom Nisbett, President of the E. Stanley Jones Foundation, and I went to Nashville, TN recently and met with key persons at the United Methodist Publishing House. It was a fruitful meeting, and we should be in a position to give a status report concerning approvals, cost, and etc. in the near future. Many of you would be surprised at the number of requests that we receive for E. Stanley Jones' books, many of which have been sold out and are now out of print. Right now, *The Unshakable Kingdom and the Unchanging Person* is popular among so many. It was republished by the McNett Corporation in 1995 and continues to be a "big seller" for us.

I encourage you to read, or reread, this book in preparation for your next local Christian Ashram. The Board strongly urges all local Christian Ashrams to reemphasize the uniqueness of the Christian Ashram and to stress the key themes that Brother Stanley used: The Kingdom of God and the person of Jesus Christ.

Enclosed in this issue of Transformation you will find a special envelope for a special purpose. Your gift to Christ through the Christian Ashram would be most appreciated at this time.

Jesus is Lord!

Brother Jimmie

ESJ Foundation Approves Book Project

Continued from Page 1

The purpose of the E. Stanley Jones Foundation is to preserve and extend the legacy of E. Stanley Jones in three ways: (1) To promote his extraordinary teachings and writings; (2) to raise funds to support the Foundation and the United Christian Ashram movement; and (3) to support Christian missions in India. Your prayers and financial support are very important to this effort.

Dr. Nisbett said, "Donations toward this most worthwhile project will be greatly appreciated." A contribution can be made by using the envelope that is included in this issue. Please mark your envelope as a donation to the ESJ Foundation and watch for future developments regarding this endeavor.

Website Update



We are glad to announce that our **newly updated** website it now available online at www.christianashram.org. We hope that the changes that have been implemented will benefit our ministry by being more accessible to the public.

You may view current and past issues of our newsletter, *Transformation*, contact us regarding books and supplies, as well as find information regarding our ministry and local Christian Ashrams.

Please visit our photo gallery for pictures of the recent board meeting as well as local Christian Ashram.

Lapel Pins Now Available



The Board of Directors recently approved a new order for Christian Ashram lapel pins. These pins are available from the Central Office for \$2.50 plus shipping and handling.

Contact Us! Telephone: (318)232.0004 • Fax: (318)232.0300 • Email: uca@christianashram.org

If you would like to receive future issues of *Transformation* by email or if you prefer to view *Transformation* on our website, only, please notify us at uca@christianashram.org.

THE 2004 CHRISTIAN ASHRAM CIRCUIT

ALBERTA

James River Bible Camp
Sundre, Alberta
Trudy Downey, Director

Alberta's UCA was held at Living Faith Bible College west of Caroline. The Ashram was blessed with sixty enthusiastic adults, youth, and children. Rev. Ed. Hird, from North Vancouver, was the evangelist. He emphasized the message of joy in the Lord from his lessons on Phil. The Bible teacher was Rev. Bernie Smith from Calgary. He reminded us that the only way to build spiritual muscles was to be in God's word on a regular basis. John Miller, also from Calgary, capably handled both church-in-action and music leadership. The children and youth were again blessed with the leadership of Karen Simonson and Allan and Kathy Irion. It was a spirit-filled Ashram and we are looking forward to next year! It will be held at the same camp from Aug. 4 – 7, 2004.

BLUE LAKE

Blue Lake United Methodist Camp
Andalusia, AL
Fred Harmon, Director

Our Ashram met at Blue Lake August 6 – 8 and had 85 present. There were 70 adults at the Ashram. The youth and the children had a wonderful time, with an older youth and an adult as leaders. Everyone in attendance seemed to reflect a spiritual as well as an active participation in all the happenings the entire three days.

Our Evangelist was Dr. Waymon Hollis from the Arkansas Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. The Bible Teacher was Dr. Gary Cockerill, Professor of New Testament and Biblical Theology at Wesley Biblical Seminary in Jackson, MS. They were both excellent, and we highly recommend them to other Ashrams in like capacity.

The adults all commented that the highlight of the Ashram, for them, was the Prayer and Share Groups. There were five of them, and the feedback was tremendous! Much help was given to those needing spiritual help, and some of the physical problems were discussed and hopefully are on the way to becoming better. The healing service helped in this area as well.

The youth and children all had a great time. They not only enjoyed their playtime, but found time to practice for a Christian dance routine and a show, which was presented to the entire Ashram. It was just great! One young man, a first timer, was asked if he was coming back in 2005. His response to his great grandparents, who had brought him, was, "Try to leave without me!"



BRITISH COLUMBIA

Alexandra Camp
White Rock, BC
Janice Hird, Co-Director

We had wonderful weather, good food, and great fellowship again at the BC Christian Ashram. It was our best turn out ever with 82 full-time, so it was helpful that we had the whole campsite to be able to accommodate everyone.

Bishop Malcomb Harding from Manitoba was our evangelist and we loved all his jokes and words of encouragement. He spoke from the book of Philippians. His wife Mary-Lou taught the children sign language and was very helpful with the children's ministry. David Cline was the Bible teacher and he taught on the Lord's Prayer. It was a great and joyful time to hear him.

Elsie Quick was our church-in-action speaker and she spoke about teaching the former prostitutes and drug addicts how to love Jesus and one another. She has a home where they take in the poor women and teach them how to live a Christian life. They also have a food coop where the poor can give a \$20 donation and get food for a week. Other former drug addicts and prostitutes help put the food donations together. She meets the people where they live down in the east end of Vancouver.

Christine MacIntosh did a great job with the children and had excellent helpers as well. We had 13 children this year. Their skits for the talent show were excellent.

The young teens and adult group was looked after by Brad Madu again with 7 full-time participants. Their skit was one of the silliest and funniest ones that I have ever seen.



Time to get away at the prayer vigil and time to share and pray for each other were special highlights. Of course, the talent show was a delight, as always.

CALIFORNIA WINTER

Camp Maranatha
Idyllwild, CA
Loel Meredyth, Director

We were at a new camp in Idyllwild - very nice accommodations. It was cold (we had a snow flurry). Brother Don Cray spoke on healing/health and wholeness/holiness. An excellent call to restoration through Christ. We were blessed, also, with Bro. Lloyd Saatjian and his flavorful mid-eastern view of Biblical truths; from Moses to Jesus, we received a new vision and meaning to faithfulness, mercy of God and obedience. Church-in-Action by Lynn and Don Hales centered on our "being" the church in areas of life we live on a daily basis.



The youth and children's programs were great! We had 21 children who were very keyed into Jesus, and the Holy Spirit touched many of them.

A weekend Ashram goes quickly, but we still had time for a snowball fight, an intergenerational "coffee time," and a talent show. You should have seen the children perform "Finding Nemo (aka Jesus) - very cute and creative!

Prayer and Healing service was also awesome!

Experiencing a new camp, all went very well except for a small flu outbreak on the last day. We had sun and snow and Jesus! A most excellent combination! Jesus is Lord!

CENTRAL ONTARIO

Salvation Army Conference Center
Jackson Point, ON
Jean Marshall, Director

Our Ashram, 2004, was excellent! The speakers were fantastic and re-enforced that "Jesus is Lord!"

FLORIDA WINTER

Life Enrichment Center
Leesburg, FL
Whitney Dough, Director

We introduced a new exercise at this Ashram. The Director read from the book, "Sayings of E. Stanley Jones" (page 120) under the topic, "Self-centeredness." About ten sayings were read, then a pause to say, "Jesus is LORD" with the people responding. Then we added a phrase: "and we lay ourselves at His feet." About ten more sayings were read, then repeating, "Jesus is LORD, and we lay ourselves at His feet." It was a very moving exercise, Brother Stanley speaking to us, and the surrender of ourselves to Jesus as LORD. We recommend this experience for all Ashrams.

This Ashram was a fantastic "family" time with the regulars returning and many new participants. It was deeply spiritual with searching messages from evangelist, John Wolfe (of Methodist Hour International) and Bible teacher, Judy Wolfe. Church in Action was lead by professional Nashville singer, Lynne Drysdale Patterson with a session of tribute to Maryjohn Wilkin, writer of "One Day At a Time, Sweet Jesus" and scores of other marvelous spiritual songs. Lynne is director of music at a Messianic Jewish group in Nashville and shared her faith.

There was a lot of fun and laughter at the Ashram. We observed a "Talent Night" and were amazed at the skilled comedy and music of our Ashramites. Near the close of the Ashram we experienced a Hymn Drama of the life of George Beverly Shea. Our associate Director, Betty Fisher, is a close friend of Shea and of Billy and Ruth Graham, having been a part of the Graham household and team for many years.

As in previous years, we had participants from as far away as California and other states. Out three days passed quickly, and we parted with joyous anticipation of next year's Ashram.

LAKE JUNALUSKA

Lambuth Inn
Lake Junaluska, NC
Bill Laycock, Director

Living water flowed and God's name was hallowed at the Lake Junaluska Christian Ashram. For two beautiful days God's Spirit inspired, challenged, and empowered through the messages, music, and witnesses.

"When God wants to speak a new truth, He starts with a person," said Evelyn Laycock, our Bible Teacher. These words rang true as He spoke through Sister Evelyn. One individual expressed

THE 2004 CHRISTIAN ASHRAM CIRCUIT



what many felt when he said, "Evelyn Laycock had to have been taught by God in order to teach us." She led us to the visions from God to Ezekiel where we found an altar pouring out living waters of truth and hope. We came to know that God is not an absent God; He moves where people are.

Again we were inspired and challenged by the words of the Lord's Prayer as Brother Richard Looney encouraged us to just receive what God is eager to give. He led us to consider our own relationship to God.

We were challenged to be the Church in Action through a ministry of healing prayer. We listened as a group from Longs Chapel United Methodist Church in Waynesville told us about the powerful presence of

God in the healing ministry of their church. We spent much time in meditation as we sought this same healing ministry.

The work and witness of the Lord to the Navajos was presented by Brother Charles Dennis. Vividly, he brought us face to face with those touched by this important ministry. We rejoiced and glorified God through the time of the Overflowing Heart. Several were there for the first time and witnessed to the fact that the Spirit truly was at work in the lives of those present.



MIDWEST

Christ The King Retreat Center
Henry, IL
Kay Kuder, Director

Every Ashram is unique and special. 2004 was my twentieth year of attending the Midwest Christian Ashram. In that twenty years, I have experienced God moving in many different ways to provide His people with truth, new revelation, and fresh bread for their spiritual growth and nourishment. This year's Ashram was filled with music. Mike Adkins served as Evangelist. God has gifted Mike with a wonderful singing talent. He shared his life journey, and his family with us. His wife, Carmel, blessed us as she ministered freely to the Ashram family.

Ashram brother, and former director, Pastor Clare Deboef, served as Bible teacher. Clare and his wife Marian have been part of our family for many years. They share their love for Jesus by serving wherever God needs them. Clare's love for God's word was fresh, clear, and enlightening.

Pastor Doug Reynolds served as the Church-In-Action speaker. Doug has served for the past eight years at Grace United Methodist Church in Davenport, IL. Doug's strongest message has always been, "We are to be a church-in-action. We need to get out of the walls of our churches, and go into the community. God has blessed each one of us with gifts and talents, and we need to actively use them." We are grateful for God's goodness as He continues to send us the right speakers to bless us and provides for our financial needs.

Many thanks to Brother Ron Barman for leading us in anointed worship. Thank you Ron, for your many years of service.

I believe the highlight of the week was Thursday evening's healing service as the Ashram family ministered to one another. The sweet presence of the Holy Spirit joined us together as one. Praise and Thanksgiving to Jesus our Lord.

MOUNTAIN

Young Harris College
Young Harris, GA
Victory "Vikki" McVay, Director

We had a wonderful Ashram. We were small this year, but it was a grand experience as we got to know each other so much better and were able to bare our burdens and our hearts with one another. Great healing took place as evident in the Hour of the Overflowing Heart.

We are very excited about next year, as all who were present in 2004 have committed themselves to prayer and continued fellowship. We have asked each person to sponsor someone in 2005.

NEW ENGLAND

Geneva Point Center
Moultonboro, NH
Katherine Doolittle, Director

We had a great weekend! There were at least two dramatic inner healings. The preaching and teaching were anointed. During the healing service we all prayed over each, rather than having selected leaders ministering to the rest of the community.

Our music ministers lead us in genuine worship as we sang.

One of our young adults and one of our teens received the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

REDWOOD

Redwood Christian Park
Boulder Creek, CA
Kent Barnard, Director

This year's Ashram was remarkable in openness and willingness of the attendees to be open to the working of the Holy Spirit from the first moments of the Open Heart to the closing minutes of the Overflowing Heart. The leadership of John McFarland and Mike Foell was excellent. Brother John focused on how we can tell the Good News more effectively using the four Spiritual Laws used by Bill Bright. Brother Mike shared about the Character of God based on the study of the Psalms.

Every aspect of the program proved to be a blessing, from the work hour to the youth's camp-fire. Physical and emotional healings were reported all week long. It really was an extraordinary week.

One example of the extraordinary happenings was that a missionary couple from China, who had never heard of the Christian Ashram "happened" to read E. Stanley Jones' spiritual autobiography, *A Song of Ascents*. They were so taken with what they found there that they said, "We have to find the Christian Ashram." They researched it on the Internet and through the UCA website found our Redwood Ashram. They found the experience so enriching that they plan to take the concept back to China and explore the possibilities of starting an Ashram there! Jesus is Lord!

SASKATCHEWAN

Arlington Beach Camp
Cymric, SK
Linda Sullivan, Director

We often come to the Ashram from lives that are so busy and too complicated. Being together at the Ashram, focusing on the Lord, is such a beautiful and calming experience. It reminds us that living with Jesus as Lord day to day can maintain that peace and calm. People commented that the retreat brought new hope and direction back to their lives.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Idyllwild Pines Campground
Idyllwild, CA
Paul Walker, Director

A few of our youth accepted Christ for the first time. Several men and youth committed to a stronger Lordship of Jesus Christ. The evaluations that the campers returned indicated that many people grew spiritually and were blessed.

WESTERN ONTARIO

Pearce Williams Christian Retreat Center
Fingal, ON
Peter Kumpf, Director

The spiritual content was excellent with many people sensing and feeling the presence of the Lord. During the healing service, there was evidence of healing, both physical and psychological that were later shared. Dr. Gordon Ross, the Evangelist, spoke on saying "Yes" to Jesus and following the leading of the Holy Spirit, giving some examples of his own experience.

Rev. George Fleming was the Bible Teacher using the book of Jonah as an example of God's grace. He illustrated how God's grace had been given to us and how we should be willing to extend that grace to others. His delivery was powerful, at times causing us to laugh with joy and at other times moving everyone to tears.

Bryan Aitken was the Witness. His testimony was about how he was active in the church all his life, yet it wasn't until he attended a Lay Witness weekend in his church that he realized that he missed the true meaning of the Gospel. Upon realizing this, he gave his life to Jesus, experiencing forgiveness, finding a new desire and power to live the full Christian life. Bryan and his wife, Nancy, also led the music, whenever the worship team was absent.

The worship team was Greg and Susan Hamilton of the gospel-singing group, Crystal River.

The youth and children leaders were the sister team of Michelle and Nicole McKillican, who led the youth in a walk through the Bible..

To be continued in next issue...

New Vibrations of the Ashram Spirit

The following is an excerpt from a message given at the Board of Directors meeting by Wilfred Job, Dallas, TX:



Wilfred Job

Brother Jimmie Pyles, thank you for this opportunity to share my story with all of you here today. I was born and raised in India. After completing my high school in India, I went to Europe and graduated with a Bachelor's from a school in Brussels. After that I came to Southern Methodist University, Dallas, to pursue my graduate studies. So, for the last six years, I'm a student at SMU and for the last 9 months, I'm serving as an Associate Pastor with Wesley foundation at SMU.

During a recent conversation with Bishop Matthews, I was asked if I could consider helping the Sat-Tal Ashram in India and I said that I would prayerfully consider. So, I'm in the process of becoming part of the Ashram movement. While I'm preparing to serve the Ashram in India, I thought about what role could I play now. I'm willing to do everything I can to help the Ashram movement.

My grandfather was a Hindu. He heard the gospel through Methodist Missionaries and became a Christian. He was one of the early converts in North Karnataka, a southern state. Not only did my grandfather become a Christian, he also chose to become a Methodist preacher for about 25 years. He encouraged my father to become a teacher. And later, both my parents served as teachers at a Methodist Mission School in Kolar. While they were serving as teachers at Kolar, I was born. So, I grew up in a mission compound and there were several missionaries who lived in that compound. I want to speak about two missionaries who had a profound impact on my childhood.

Miss. Hugo was an American Missionary, working with an orphanage in my town. What I remember about her is her servant heart. Miss. Hugo did every task with equal dedication. Be it helping children, fixing breakfast, or driving sick people to the hospital. Nothing was beneath her, because she was simply committed to serving others. And I've not forgotten her dedication to serving others.

Another Missionary who had a profound impact on my life was J. T. Seamands, Sr. He was fondly called Tata Seamands. (Tata meaning grandfather in my mother tongue). When I think of

Tata Seamonds, I think of John Wesley's motto, "Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as you ever can" That is greatness and Tata Seamonds lived those words. His life has always taught me to love people unconditionally.

I know a lot of missionaries who never made it back home. They left their home country, never to return again. Not far from my home in Kolar was a cemetery. I was always afraid to walk alone in the cemetery because of all the ghost stories that I've had heard through my brother and sisters. I asked my mother, "Mom, who are those people who are buried there?" and my Mom answered, "They are missionaries." I asked, "What does missionary mean," and my Mom said that missionaries were those who came from a very, very, far place. And I asked, "Why did they come here to die" and my Mom thought for a while and said, "I guess because they loved Jesus" and that was the end of the conversation. And until this day, I'm still trying to understand what it means to love Jesus and give up everything you have to come to serve people and die and never go back to your home country.

I'll always remain grateful for the sacrifices of the missionaries. Some said that true gratitude takes place in three forms. A feeling of gratitude in one's heart, an expression of that feeling and giving something back in return. I hope that I'll always find ways to continue that good work of these missionaries in India.

Four years back, I was serving as a youth director at a local church in Dallas. And I met a doctor who became a medical missionary because one day he heard Bro. Stanley speak at his church. This doctor heard the calling and went to serve all around the world as a medical missionary.

In 1988, I had an opportunity to spend a week at Sat Tal Ashram. I learned a lot about Bro. Stanley and his contribution to the Indian Church. This triggered a new interest to read more of Bro. Stanley's books. During my undergraduate studies in Europe, I read many of Bro. Stanley's books and his books had a profound impact on my theological understanding. I was deeply touched by his commitment to Lord Jesus Christ and his undying desire to knowing Him more. My favorite part of Bro. Stanley's writing is from his spiritual autobiography.

"How did it all happen? I asked myself that question as I sat in a hotel room in Alaska writing. I looked up and saw myself in a looking glass and said to myself: 'Stanley Jones, you're a very happy man, aren't you?' I replied, 'Yes, I am.' And then the vital question: 'How did you get this way?' And my reply: 'I don't know.' It is all a surprise to me, a growing surprise. I walked across a field one day, and I stubbed my toe against the edge of a treasure chest, jutting out of the earth. 'It's treasure,' I cried. Ran off and sold all I had, including myself, and bought that field; and I've been hugging myself ever since I had sense enough to do it."

The Theme of A Christian Ashram

The following is an excerpt from a message given at the Board of Directors meeting by board member, Dr. Asok Antony, Indianapolis, IN:

I have not rehearsed this before and am speaking in order to make some observations that I have shared earlier with the Four... they felt that it would be worthwhile to bring to your attention.

I have traveled and visited several Ashrams myself and am fairly well versed with Brother Stanley's writings. So [as a framework for this talk] what I would like to do is to ask you a series of questions to which I think you have the answers. First of all, I think that you as the leaders of the Ashram Movement must continually ask the fundamental question, "Why the Ashram? What is so special about the Ashram? What is so special about the Ashram?" As you all know, Brother Stanley followed Jesus very, very closely. However, my observation is that the Ashram Movement today is not following Brother Stanley as close as he would have liked, and this is because the central theme (of the Ashram Movement) is not even close to the keynote that was emphasized by Jesus and what he wanted for all of us.

If you recall, both the Sermon on the Mount, as well as The Disciples Prayer began with The Kingdom of God. This keynote is what Brother Stanley was distinguished in the world: that of self-surrender to the Kingdom of God using the Laws, Principles and Attitudes of the Kingdom as shown to us by the life of Jesus. It was Brother Stanley who noted it several years ago and continuously pounded on this one theme, that contemporary Christianity had substantially reduced Jesus' central message to the margin. Contemporary Christianity had not done anything but reduce Jesus' keynote obsessive and continued message about the Kingdom of God and of Him being the Embodiment of the Kingdom. Remember how Brother Stanley pointed out how Jesus seamlessly used the phrase "for the Kingdom's sake" and "for My sake" interchangeably?

The Ashram today, as I have traveled around, in my opinion, does not continue with Brother Stanley's vision – of following Jesus very closely. Jesus only taught about the Kingdom of God, as a way to live now and about following Him through complete self-surrender as the only way to align ourselves with the Absolute Order of the Kingdom of God. Unfortunately the Ashrams are not

talking about this message. Instead, the Ashrams have become an extension – a very weak extension – of just another Church retreat, and not very different in content.

Having identified the fundamental problem, what are the solutions we can collectively take to reinstate Brother Stanley's original vision for the Ashram? In thinking about this very seriously, let me ask you all the next question as to the means to reach a solution: "Why is it that the Evangelist and the Bible Teacher do not begin a dialogue well before the Ashram so that they can come up with the same theme on each day of the Ashram?" As you recall, Brother Stanley spent -- let's say during a five day Ashram -- talking about specific things on each day of the Ashram. He wrote extensively about it. So the related question is: "Do all the Evangelists and all the Bible teachers know about what Brother Stanley really wrote about how the Ashram should be organized? How each day is spent in specific themes that the Evangelist and the Bible Teacher both focus on: Self Surrender (the What, Why, and How of Self Surrender), the Kingdom of God as Realism, Jesus as the Word become Flesh, Conversion of the actions and conversion of the reactions, Mastery through the Indwelling Holy Spirit, Guidance, Jesus as The Way, Christian Maturity as defined as maturity in Agape Love -- and a whole host of other themes to focus on that has been written extensively about in Brother Stanley's books that he himself referred to as his "babies"? The fact is that in traveling among Ashrams, it appears that many of these leaders have not read enough and are unfortunately blissfully unaware of the depth of his insights and writings. And this lack of knowledge quite naturally trickles down to the Ashramites. So the next logical question is: "Do they [the Bible Teacher and Evangelist] discuss his writings about Jesus and the Kingdom of God regularly during Ashrams and teach these topics as The Unique Message that the Ashram has to offer --



Dr. Asok Antony

The Theme of A Christian Ashram

Continued from Page 6

and which is fundamentally different from what is taught at Church retreats?"

So my prescription for the entire Ashram Movement, my brothers and sisters, is that rather than reducing the Kingdom of God, we need to assert, recapture the emphasis on Jesus and his teachings of the Kingdom of God as explained so clearly by Brother Stanley and place back into the forefront the fundamental keynote of the entire Ashram movement as emphasized by Jesus. To achieve this, the Bible Teacher and the Evangelist must be speaking thematically on the same issues on every single day of the Ashram.

So the question is: "Can any of us find the kind of Ashram that upholds the fundamental premise of what an Ashram is meant to be – A Kingdom of God in miniature?" Jesus' Message was only one thing, the Kingdom of God. If you remember, Brother Stanley pointed out that the Kingdom of God or equivalent was mentioned in the New Testament over one hundred times. And that by the time of the three main Creeds when Jesus and His Message of the Kingdom of God were not emphasized, the Nicene, Apostles, and Athanasian Creeds had marginalized what Jesus held was central to Abundant Living! We cannot afford to allow the Ashram Movement to go this way. Rather, we need to follow The Way.

So, here is a much more fundamental question: Are your Bible Teachers and your Evangelists aware of this wealth of writings by Brother Stanley? Are they really reading "the book of the year" and are they really discussing ideas from it with one another before the Ashram, prayerfully together, months in advance, saying, "Let's talk about this theme on day one, this theme on day two, this theme on day three, and so on . . ."

Now, I happen to be a senior Professor at Indiana University, and I should not be professing anything more than what I know to be the truth – so I will keep saying the same message and close with the following summary: Follow Jesus. How can any of us go wrong? Brother Stanley

did that all the time, and I would hope that this particular group would re-dedicate themselves to the Ashram Movement which is solely based on teaching and living out the Laws, Principles, and Attitudes of the Kingdom of God as Embodied in Jesus. We need to make sure that there is far more accountability about the whole issue of why we are meeting on a regular basis in Ashrams?

It is not as if we do not have a unique message – we do have a unique message – you Members of the Ashram Board are the closest to what Jesus talked about – living out the Laws, Principles and Attitudes of the Kingdom of God during this Board Meeting. Jesus' Magnificent Obsession was the Kingdom of God. You, as a body of the Kingdom of God in Miniature, are the one group more than any other group who can speak about this with great authority. After all, your founding leader, Brother Stanley was the greatest proponent for this -- and you are now armed with Brother Stanley's insights that have been extensively written in a most scholarly manner. He was well known throughout the world for highlighting and emphasizing what Jesus focused on and showed in His life and teachings all about the Laws, Principles, and Attitudes of the Absolute Order -- The Kingdom of God. Why don't you do the same?

That's all I have to say. I am aware that this is a message that has a sting to it. It can be painful, but as a physician, I know the importance of diagnosing and then cutting into and draining the pus from an abscess whenever I see it. This can save the whole organism. Likewise, the Ashram Movement has a festering abscess which stems from losing its central message and reason to exist. This must be lanced and drained with a rededication by the entire Ashram Movement to reemphasize what Jesus emphasized during his life as well as after the Resurrection.

[A complete copy of this transcript can be obtained by contacting the Central Office.](#)

Board of Directors Meets in Ruston, LA



Photos: 1. Board Meeting Attendees / 2. Board Members in Session / 3. Dale Boyd and Jerry Vogt / 4. Bro. Jimmie welcomes attendees to Ruston / 5. Dr. William "Bill" Berg / 6. Rev. John Oishi, Chairman, Japanese Christian Ashram Board / 7. The Four – back row – Allan Barnes, Bill Berg; front row – Roberto Escamilla, Dorothy Davis, John Oishi (honorary) / 8. Jimmie Pyles, Lynette DeLaune, Bishop Jim Mathews, Eunice Mathews, Anne Mathews-Younes / 9. Board Members: Kathy Nason, Allan Barnes, V. P. Singh, Judith Starkes / 10. Regional Coordinators / 11. Bishop James K. Mathews, Chairman of the Board

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2005 NORTH AMERICA CHRISTIAN ASHRAM SCHEDULE



Date	Name	Location	Registrar
January 20-22, 2005	North Louisiana	Ramada Inn • 318/255-5901 P.O. Box 1189 • 1951 N. Service Rd. E. • Ruston, LA 71270	Ms. Sue Carroll • 318/435-3505 • (0) 318/329-5400 scarrol@entergy.com • 390 Gaither Streer Gilbert, LA 71336
February 19-21, 2005	California Winter	Camp Maranatha • 909/659-2739 54162 Maranatha Dr. • P.O. Box CC • Idyllwild, CA 92549	Ms. Mary Beth Hebert • 909/487-0943 chenobi2@earthlink.net • 1462 Sunswept Dr. San Jacinto, CA 92582
February 28- March 3	Florida Winter	Life Enrichment Center • Box 2107 Leesburg, FL 32748	Mrs. Karen L. Wenck • 941/625-2753 kwenck2@comcast.net • 2359 Fintonrod St. Port Charlotte, FL 33948

Upcoming Events.....

- *Biography of E. Stanley Jones* by Dr. Stephen Graham, University of Indiana, will be available in October, 2005, published by Abingdon Press.
- Plans are being made for a [North American Christian Ashram in June of 2006](#) in Colorado. Mark your calendars and watch for upcoming details.
- Please plan to [attend a Christian Ashram](#) of your choice in 2005!

Your Gifts...

Are important to the ministries of the [United Christian Ashrams](#), and are greatly appreciated!

An envelope is enclosed in this issue for your convenience.