

Sri Lanka Missions
斯里兰卡事工

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Over the last two months, we have made two visits to Sri Lanka. The first from 13-18 April was to speak at the leaders' retreat and also to commemorate the second anniversary of the Trinity Reformed Presbyterian Chapel (TRPC). The Chapel came into being through the trials of the church schism, but since then the work has stabilised, and there are a faithful 40 or so worshippers every Lord's Day.

The second visit came at the invitation of Brother Sathi, a worshipper of TRPC. He runs a training programme for local pastors in Batticaloa and Vavuniya. Batticaloa is located on the central eastern coast of Sri Lanka, and Vavuniya in the north central plains. The pastors come from nearby villages and towns.

Training is conducted every month, once in Vavuniya and once in Batticaloa. In Vavuniya, there are about 15 pastors and Sunday School teachers who attended the module on the doctrine of Christ.

On Tuesday morning (10 May) 3.30am, Pastor VJ, Thanuja and I left for Vavuniya. The drive took us about 6 hours by car. It took so long not just because of the distance, but also because of the road conditions. The nearer we go to Vavuniya, the more potholes there were on the road. The reason is that Vavuniya was one of the places that saw the heaviest fighting between the Tamil Tigers (LTTE) and the Sri Lankan government forces. The city is still under military rule, and there is a very strong police and army presence in Vavuniya.

We arrived in Vavuniya at about 9am. Classes ran from Tuesday to Friday, starting at 9:30am and ending at 4:30pm with a two-hour lunch break. The long lunch break is a welcoming reprieve because the weather is extremely hot. The temperature at this time of the year hovers between 39 to 43 degrees Celsius. The classes ended on Friday morning, followed by a written examination in the afternoon.

From Vavuniya, we headed north to Jaffna. We left on Friday just at about noon. The border crossing into the northern province at Omanthai is about 15 minutes' drive from Vavuniya. From there, it is another 140 kilometres, which would take about 2 hours on well-paved roads. But it took us almost 4 hours to reach Jaffna.

Since the defeat of the LTTE in May 2009, Jaffna is now open for travel, but only by roads. May 21 was the day that LTTE surrendered, and the place was a bit tense because of the anniversary. Again, armed police and army patrols were all over the place. Along the way, we saw evidence of the many years of war: spent shells lined the roads, buildings destroyed by bombs and pockmarked by gunfire. On some stretches, the sides of the road are still marked by yellow tapes because land mines have not been fully cleared. We had to clear two military checkpoints, and there were bunkers with armed soldiers every hundred metres or so. Jaffna is the third largest city in Sri Lanka after Colombo and Kandy, and despite the ravages of war, is still a very vibrant city.

My purpose of going to Jaffna is to look at the mission station there. Former Geneva Institute students, Sivapalan and Sujeendran, are presently looking after the church. I preached there on a Saturday afternoon, followed by Lord's Day worship the next day. I also went there to look at the place where our CCF'ers would be going in August to hold a Daily Vacation Bible School (DVBS). They have managed to secure a hostel for the DVBS, and they are expecting 100 children.

Please continue to pray for the work in Sri Lanka, for Pastor Vijeyanthiran and his team of workers, that the LORD will continue to bless their labour in the Gospel.

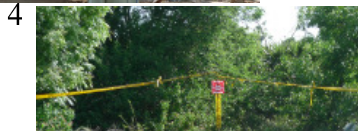
在过去的两个月里，我两度探访了斯里兰卡。第一次是在4月13-18日，主要是在领袖退休会中讲道，并参加三一归正长老教会（TRPC）两周年的感恩礼拜。教会是在分裂的磨难声中诞生的，之后那里的工作逐渐稳定，现有40余人参加主日崇拜。

第二次探访是接受一位在TRPC参加崇拜的Sathi弟兄的邀请。他在巴提卡洛阿和瓦武尼亚为当地牧师设计了培训课程。巴提卡洛阿位于斯里兰卡中部的东岸，瓦武尼亚则在北部的平原上。参加培训的牧师来自附近的村镇。

他们每个月都进行培训，瓦武尼亚和巴提卡洛阿各一次。在瓦武尼亚，参加“基督的教义”课程的共有15位牧师和主日学教师。

星期二（5月10日）凌晨3:30，VJ牧师，Thanuja和我启程前往瓦武尼亚。全程共6个小时车程。我们之所以花这么长时间不只是因为距离，同时也是因为路况。离瓦武尼亚越近，路上的坑洞就越多。原因是瓦武尼亚是淡米尔之虎（LTTE）和政府军交战最激烈的地方之一。这个城市还在军队的监控下，到处都看得到军人和警察。

我们在早上9点左右到达瓦武尼亚。课程从星期二到星期五，早上9:30到下午4:30进行，中间有两个小时的午餐歇息。我们都很欢迎这较长的午餐时间，因为天气实在太热了。这个时候的气温介于39到43摄氏度之间。课程于星期五早上结束，下午则有笔试。



从瓦武尼亚，我们向北前赴贾夫纳。我们是在星期五中午离开的。北部省份奥曼泰的州界离瓦武尼亚有15分钟的车程。之后则是另外140公里，即2小时的石灰路车程，但是我们还是用了4小时才到达贾夫纳。

自LTTE在2009年5月被击败之后，贾夫纳现在已向游客开放，不过只限陆路交通。5月21日是LTTE投降的日子，当地的气氛也随着纪念日的来临而越发紧张。同样的，我们到处都能看到全副武装的警察和巡逻的军队。一路上，我们也看到了多年战争所留下来的痕迹：路上用尽的弹壳、受炮火摧毁的建筑物、弹痕满布的残垣败瓦。在一些路段中，我们还可以看到路旁的一些地方被黄色胶带围起，因为那里的地雷还未清除。我们需要通过两个军事检查站，路上几乎每一百米就有一个武装军事哨站。贾夫纳是继科伦坡和砍迪之后，斯里兰卡的第三大城市。虽然受到战火的摧残，它还是一个充满生命力的城市。

我到贾夫纳去的目的是探访那里的事工工场。前日内瓦学生，Sivapalan和Sujeendran现在正负责照顾那里的教会。我星期六下午在那里讲道，翌日是主日崇拜。我到那里的另一个目的则是为大专与就业团契寻找一个8月举办假日圣经营（DVBS）的理想地点。教会已为这次的DVBS找到了一个宿舍，届时相信会有100名孩子参与。

请继续为着斯里兰卡的事工代祷，特别是为着Vijenthiran牧师和他的同工祷告，求主继续赐福于他们的福音工作。

1. *Some of the local pastors who attended the training*

参加培训的几位当地牧师

2. *The church where the training was held*

进行培训的教会

3. *Omanthai – border crossing between Vavuniya and Jaffna.*

奥曼泰—瓦武尼亚和贾夫纳之间的边界

4. *Remnants of the war – land mine markings and spent artillery shells.* 战火的痕迹—地雷和炮火

5. *The Christian hostel where the DVBS will be held in August*

8月举办假日圣经营的教会宿舍