

IUGO

A quarterly newsletter publication of the Naga Christian Fellowship Mumbai issue # 15/July 2021

EDITORIAL NOTE

Life as we know it, is unpredictable. In the ups and downs of our life, many of us want to trust God. It is easy when life is good, but the real challenge to keep trusting lies when times are difficult. Trusting God is more than a feeling; it's a choice to have faith when our feelings and circumstances would have us believe in something else. God does care about them both. But our feelings and circumstances can change any moment. God, on the other hand, does not change.

Just as when we trust someone, we feel comfortable in being honest with them about anything. God is much more reliable than even our most trustworthy friend. When things get difficult, He doesn't ask us to keep those feelings to ourselves. "Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you" 1 Peter 5:7

In this issue, our Pastor talks about taking a leap of faith in God and challenges you to take the jump with faith. Some of our members have taken that leap by pledging in for leadership role, the church gladly present to you our new core leaders and pastoral team for the tenure 2021-2022. "I have been blessed beyond measure and beyond what I deserve." said our outgoing General Secretary as she shares her experience with NCFM in the last tenure and with her our outgoing core leaders also shares their experiences. All of our lives have been jolted by this pandemic, some of our members share their stories, testifying God's faithfulness. Speaking of faithfulness our Sunday School children have been faithfully attending their classes on zoom also taking part in our church services and we got pictures to prove it! We also have a collection of pictures showing the Church activities and mission works. Concluding with a report from the General Secretary, it covers from August 2020 till May 2021.

May our good Lord speak with you as you read through this newsletter. Let us continue to wait, trust, and remember that God loves us in all circumstances.

"NCF Mumbai exists to reach the people, equip the believers, ascertain the church and prepare to disciple the nation through all we do."

*Iugo is a Latin word meaning connect or bind.


Wungram Raikhan



LEAP OF FAITH

Pastor C Hamyan Phom



Pastor and family, with wife Lima & son Lamuel

The phrase “Leap of Faith” is often used in several ways. Generally speaking, it is an act of believing in or attempting to believe in something whose existence or outcome cannot be proved or known.

Let’s ponder upon the ‘Leap of faith’ from a Biblical point of view by looking into the Bible.

In Matthew 14: 26-31, we find that when the disciples saw Jesus walking on the water and approaching towards them, they were petrified, Peter, however, was the only person in the boat to respond in faith. His request led him to experience an unusual demonstration of God’s power. He started to walk on the water like Jesus. But he began to sink when he took his eyes off Jesus and focused on the high waves around him. Like Peter, we may not walk on water, though we do walk through tough and rough situations. During which if we focus on the waves of difficult circumstances around us without looking to Jesus for help, we do may sink like Peter. We need to look up to Jesus through our eyes of faith for help. Let us take a leap of faith fully trusting in the Lord that He is in control of everything.

Joshua 1: 7-9: God told Joshua to get ready and lead the Israelites to cross the Jordan River, into the promised land. The new responsibility was so great and not easy at all. There were enemies at all sides where God commanded Joshua to attack, defeat and capture the land and its kingdom. Perhaps Joshua was afraid. But he didn’t shrink back in fear. He overcame those obstacles and difficulties and took hold of the Promised Land through his faith, courage, obedience, constantly reading and meditating on God’s Word and seeking God’s direction.

Taking a leap of faith requires trusting God to do what He has already promised in His Word, even though we may not see the fulfilment of His promises yet.

Genuine faith and trust will move us to action.

“Faith is the confidence of what is hoped for and assurance of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1)

Quite often, the fear of the unknown scares us. We assume how it is going to be, what will happen if I do this and that, if I go there etc. Remember, we have to leap to begin!

The story is told of a man trapped on the edge of a cliff. There is a roaring fire just a few yards away that certainly will reach him in minutes and he will be consumed by the flames. As he looks over the edge, a voice calls out to him, “Jump!” He glances down, seeing nothing but smoke and darkness and replies, “But, I can’t see you!” The voice from the bottom of the cliff responds, “Jump, anyway, I can see YOU.”

We all face these personal cliffs in our lifetime. It could be: marriage, relationship, sickness, discouragement, opposition, criticism, new job, moving to a new place, starting a new business or ministry. They may all cause us to stop from taking a leap of faith, without knowing that God is waiting for us with wide-open arms to hold us and to take us through. We need to look over that personal cliff, knowing that a lack of action will cause us to be consumed in the fire of obstacles and situations around us.

Let us jump even when we cannot see what awaits us. Putting our faith into action may feel like a scary leap, but that is part of the testing and proving of our faith. If we believe that Jesus waits with outstretched arms to catch us, to protect us, and to save us, we will be more confident to take a leap of faith no matter what may.

Do you hear the voice calling you to jump? Do you trust God? Will you take the leap of faith now?

COMMITMENT TO SERVE

Tenure of 2021 - 22

AKALI CHOPY



GENERAL SECRETARY

"I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye" - Psalm 32:8. These words of God inspire and encourage me as I begin my journey as a member of the Core Team in the NCF family. I'm truly Blessed & Honoured by this Opportunity to serve the Almighty God through NCF Church. I Commit that I will be responsible and put my best foot forward to serve the Church while learning and growing Spiritually together with the Team.

WORSHIP CORE LEADER

Greetings to you all in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I am writing this piece to thank God for the opportunity He has given me in NCFM. Last year I was the assistant worship core leader and by God's grace I could become the worship core leader this year. I will glorify the name of Jesus to the best of my ability during my tenure. Thank you.

KENNETH JEZREEL



IMLINARO TZUDIR



PRAYER CORE LEADER

I know that my Heavenly Father loves me. Peace and happiness flood inside me to serve as the Prayer Secretary in the Naga Christian Fellowship, Mumbai under the guidance of loving, godly mentors and teammates. I commit to serve the Lord with my best ability to guide people into God's Kingdom through a prayerful service.

FINANCE CORE LEADER

Serving God through NCFM was truly a wonderful journey. Keeping in mind that we are merely created and shaped by God to accomplish His purpose. I am delighted and it is my humble prayer that, I will continue to have the will and the spirit to fulfil my responsibilities, duties and purpose to Glorify God.

VEKUTULU CHIERO



REDINOKDANG LEMTUR



OUTREACH & EVANGELISM CORE LEADER

Although I have no experience and knowledge of what my role and responsibility was, I took up the responsibility of being the core leader for OUTREACH and EVANGELISM. I know that my Pastor and my parents will guide and mentor me and I know that unless I try it, I will never learn. I also know that I am allowed to make mistakes and learn from them. This will be a very exciting journey for me and I request all the church members to pray and support me.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CORE LEADER

It has been a joy to serve God by being in the children's ministry! Children really are a gift from the Lord like it says in Psalm 127:3. In the past year, we've learned so much from each other and have grown together. As we begin a new session, we're excited and looking forward to what God has in store for us!

THEJAVINUO RIO



WUNGRAM RAIKHAN



MEDIA & NETWORK CORE LEADER

For a moment I thought my journey with NCF Mumbai had come to an end. However, God had a different plan and I am blessed to be a part of this family. It is my prayer that me and my team will continue to serve the Lord with our best.

MAINTENANCE CORE LEADER

I humbly accept this post and have a firm belief that I will be able to do my duties with dedication along with the rest of the members. Also thank you for believing in me. I sincerely look forward to working with the team.

YHUNYEBU KENT



LIMHATHUNG EZUNG



HOSPITALITY CORE LEADER

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" - Philippians 4:13

As I take up the responsibility of being the Hospitality Core Leader to serve the Lord through NCF Mumbai I will give my best in every possible way I can.

ASSISTANT MAINTENANCE CORE LEADER

Thank you so much for giving me this opportunity to become the Hospitality Assistant Core Leader. Through this opportunity, I myself am looking forward to grow as a leader in God's plan for all of us. It will be a great pleasure to help you all. Thank you once again. Looking forward to serve the Lord.

DEEPA LAMA



NAROLA MONGRO



WORKING YOUTH FELLOWSHIP CORE LEADER

With much prayer and anticipation, I am accepting the opportunity given to me to lead the Working Youth Fellowship. May God guide me to serve the youth and add many souls to His Kingdom. We may be few but when our hearts are one and united, we can strengthen our fellowship stronger.

TREASURER

I never saw myself as a finance person until Pastor asked me to be the treasurer two years ago. I have learned so much along the way, and I am grateful for this opportunity to learn and serve God in His church.

ALUM RAIKHAN



IMLINUKLA JAMIR



FAMILY FELLOWSHIP COORDINATOR

JAMES LANA



COVENOR, PASTORAL TEAM

I, James Lana, NCFM Pastoral Team Convenor along with brother Lipok Lemtur, brother David Nesaraj, brother Reisang and sister Rinzat extend our warm and loving greetings to all the people who love the Lord and the Church. When we use voices in love, we are mindful of Jesus' love for us. With prayers we will strive to be the faithful "shepherds of God's flock". 1 Peter 5: 2



CHAMYANG PHOM



LIPOK LEMTUR



DAVID NESARAJ



RINZAT LUNGRAN



REISANG MUINAO

MY EXPERIENCE WITH NCF MUMBAI

As I look at the one year spent with NCFM, I can say with a sense of joy and fulfillment that I have had the privilege of working with a wonderful and committed team and an encouraging congregation. There have been moments when challenges have sipped in. However, I will forever be thankful to God for His wisdom and counsel and grateful to this Church for its tireless support and prayers. Through all my experiences with NCFM, I have been blessed beyond measure and beyond what I deserve. Once again, I am left awestruck by the faithfulness and unconditional love of my Heavenly Father.

Lanbangliu Lulu Kamei, General Secretary, NCFM
2020-2021

I'm truly grateful for all that I got to learn during my time as the Prayer Secretary. I can easily say that I gained so much more than what I put in; getting a deeper understanding of prayer and of leadership from my fellow core team members is a treasure I have received which I will cherish. I thank God, Pastor, and the Pastoral team for this opportunity.

"To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing". Martin Luther King. May God Almighty bless NCFM Church and use it for His Glory and for the extension of His Kingdom.

Dr. Tolivi Chishi, Prayer Core Leader, NCFM
2020-2021





In Gratitude,

NCFM has always been a blessing to me during my stay here in the city. Looking back to 2020, it was indeed a challenging time where all the activities had to be operated online and yet I'm grateful to have worked with different personalities and learned many good things from the Core Team and the Church. I thank the Pastor and team for the opportunity given to me. I look forward to seeing what the NCFM continues to accomplish in the Lord's service.

God bless!

Regards.

Atoholi Chishi, Hospitality Core Leader, NCFM

2020-2021



It was a wonderful learning experience, leading the Working Youth group under NCF Mumbai, with members from various professions, from different parts of our country, praying, motivating, and encouraging one another in every possible way. At times it was really tough and challenging to be leading the group. However, with the blessing of Almighty God and teamwork all things worked out well.

Youth life being the most productive period in one's life must be utilized to its maximum potential with Lord Jesus as our companion; as the word of God says, "Remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the days of trouble come and the years approach when you will say, "I find no pleasure in them" - Ecclesiastes 12:1

I feel contented and blessed that I could serve Him in my own little ways, though with numerous shortcomings. Yet, years from now we will reminiscence at all good memories made with members and my own service as a Youth.

What a joy it is for the working youths to remain connected in such a manner in His name and be spiritually nourished.

May the journey continue...

Dijang Kamson,

Working Youth Fellowship Core Leader, NCFM

2020-2021

COVID EXPERIENCE

Chuba Jamir

When the sudden lockdown was imposed upon us the whole nation was astonished. There was a dilemma in our minds. I was not very worried, after all, how hard could staying at home possibly be? And the lockdown was meant to be for a fortnight only. But as the deadly virus spread its claws, the reality started to sink in and we were confronted with a problem alien to humanity.

Yes! I did plan to move to Europe, way before the pandemic hit us. But things did not work out on the legal front and other paper works, after which I had to give up the thought of going abroad. However, I feel extremely blessed even though things could not go as planned, I had the time to discover my inner potential, my love for my cultural food.

However, over time, I found ways to deal with the pressure. I realized that lockdown gave me more time to do the things I loved, hobbies that had been previously neglected. I started baking, cooking again. This gave me a new platform to promote our rich culture through food. So I started off cooking our authentic food and began taking orders. Undoubtedly God has been very merciful throughout the whole lockdown. I had forgotten how good it felt to be creative. I started spending more time in recreating my dishes which I have learned in my career.

I hadn't realized how much I had missed them. Indeed, this pandemic was a blessing in disguise for me as God knows what is best for us.

Now as the world now starts to come on track again, it is important for us to understand and realize the life lessons which the period of lockdown have given us. The times were challenging, despair was all around but eventually we found the way out of it. No matter how awful situations may become, there is always a way out of it. Hope and the feeling of togetherness in our hearts can give us immense strength to fight any enemy in any forms. We just need to have faith in our Almighty.



“

No matter how awful situations may become, there is always a way out of it.

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MY COVID-19 QUANDARY

Alum Raikhan

As India plunged into its second wave of the Covi-19 pandemic in April 2021, this was also the time when the online academic session of my children came to an end. My family was gearing up to go home to Manipur for the summer break. My kids were super excited to pack up and head to the hills. After a year of lockdown in Mumbai, we were ready to stretch our legs, enjoy some fresh air and good food at my parents' place. 'Up in the mountain' as the kids would put it.

But as it is written in Proverbs 16: 9, we can make our plans, but it is the Lord who determines our steps. Our travel plans came to an abrupt halt. As it was mandatory to carry a negative report of Covid-19 at the airports, we called for home testing through a private lab, we gave our samples but they were doubtful if the reports would come on time for our flight. This was April 14 2021, right about the time when cases were surging and testing laboratories were overloaded.

In that dilemma we found out through a friend that government hospitals were giving tests reports within 24 hours. To be on the safer side we decided to get tested a second time, we rushed to the government hospital close by and gave our samples within the hour from our first test. Thinking we will carry whichever results came first. Up until this point it did not cross our minds that we could test positive. We were taking extra precautions and had no symptoms, not even a snuffle. We were dumbfounded when the result came. The next day, as promised the Gov. Hospital report came, and bam! the plan out of the window. All three of us test Positive!

In the shock and confusion I quickly realised flying was not an option for us anymore. Once tested positive in Mumbai, the BMC gets to work and in no time my Arogya app turned red which meant our names were red listed. I had no choice but to postpone our trip.

Then the private test results came on the 15th, where all three of us tested Negative!

Despite no symptoms, turns out there was



Alum with her daughter Samana and son Gabriel

very little we could do to rectify the situation. Try as we may it was not possible for us to get our names off the red list.

We had to wait out the 14 days home quarantine period. By this time the cases and death rates in the country were rising in lakhs and thousands. We eventually decided to cancel the trip altogether -considering the risk and dilemma we would be putting through others.

Leaving aside the disappointments of cancelling a meticulously planned out trip, it got me thinking how our worries were of little consequences when the world was raging an all-out medical crisis which seems far from getting over anytime soon.

My run in with Covid-19 is just the tip of the iceberg. The world is in utter chaos and confusion. Be it about the origins of the virus to the efficacy of the vaccines and everything in between, just like our test results, most times we don't know which news to believe.

The truth of the matter is obscured with science, religion and politics all in the same pot; and we are fed with all their interpretations. The ability to discern the truth from all the noise and ulterior motives entailing information have become the need of the hour.

Proverbs 18:15 *“The heart of the discerning acquires knowledge, for the ears of the wise seek it out.”*

The news of our testing positive was swift and far reaching. But very few enquired about what actually happened. Fewer still bothered to know that we had simultaneously tested negative and that we had no symptoms till date. I leave it to the individual to believe whichever result they want. My take away was that bad news travel faster than good news.

In the same way we can see so many half-baked information doing rounds in our social media and chat groups.

Proverbs 14:15 *“The simple believes everything, but the prudent gives thought to his steps.”*

My first reaction when I got both my test results saying exactly the opposite was wanting to get to the bottom of the matter and hold whoever was at fault accountable. The urge to blame someone was real. It felt like the whole Covid situation was just a number game for them. But I soon gathered that when the medical institutions were in a war-like situation, mistakes will be made. I also heard from multiple friends that people they know had similar experience with the test results. What I want to drive home here is that these false positive /negative do happen, mistakes are made but they are certainly

not proofs that the pandemic is not real. Correlations do not imply causation.

Many a times we are too eager to blame it on someone. And in the process we could end up believing the wrong thing. It is so much easier to blame and hate. But the need of the hour is for us to be responsible for ourselves and be a part of the solution.

In a catastrophe as big as what we are facing today, we need to keep safe not just from the corona virus but also the virus of the mind which can be fear, doubt, anger, frustration and many more.

Proverbs 4:23 *“More than anything you guard, protect your mind, for life flows from it.”*

The 14 days of home quarantine was quite an ordeal, our building was sealed and declared a containment zone which was a hassle for everyone in our block. I was getting constant calls from the war room followed by pre-recorded calls from BMC checking up on my vitals every single day. At first I resented it. It felt like a nuisance because I was not sick. It even felt like I was wronged. But again on second thought I realised how comforting those calls would have been had I been actually sick. After all it was not their fault that I tested positive in one report. After this realisation I became more thankful, that I am now, so are my children.

I diligently responded to all their queries, by the end of the second week my Arogya app turned green and we were finally out of the woods of testing false positive.

Now, I was in a quandary whether to rebook my tickets or cancel the trip. It was heart breaking to cancel something we had planned and looked forward to all year. At the same time to go for another round testing and travel in the peak of the pandemic with two kids seemed daunting.

Finally, my older kid suggested that it would be hard to travel with her curious 5 year old brother who is always ready to run off and touch anything he wants. So we unanimously decided to stay put. I don't know if I made the right decision, I don't know why this happened to us, I don't know so many things. Not knowing is unsettling and it is human nature to fear the unknown. In times such as these trusting God turned out to be our only source of hope and comfort.

Proverbs 3:5-6 *“Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.”*

Sunday School



The children sometimes do crafts and activities in their classes based on their lesson or a given topic.



Children testified the goodness of God by sharing on topics like 'Jesus my provider', 'Jesus my best friend', etc.



A jua ru, No a pihólie;



Sirei Puo ngukemezhie thuo,



Puo ngukemezhie, a phfúlie,

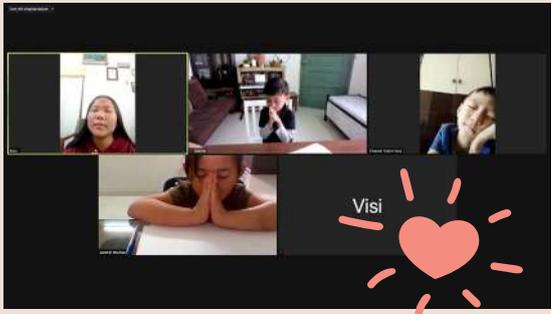
Children learned the hymn "Amazing Grace" in Tenyidie (Angami Naga Dialect) and performed it on Cultural Sunday.



Bible Verse Competition held on 31st May 2021 to encourage the children to learn the word of God and meditate on it.



Children sharing their testimonies



A glimpse of the younger children praying in one of their classes.



Drawing competition held on 2nd October 2020 on the topics -
1) My family (Cl 2 and below)
2) Where my heart belongs



Christmas Outreach at Old Age Home, Nerul, Navi Mumbai



Eve Sunday 2021

Church Foundation Day 2021



Mission Trip to Bherle Wadi, Panvel, Navi Mumbai





Ministry among sex workers and their children

NCFM Relief Program reaching out to the homeless living in the streets of Panvel, Kharghar, Belapur, Ulwe, Uran, Kharkopar, Juinagar, Sanpada, Nerul, Vashi, Koparkhairane, Airoli, Ghatkopar, Kalina, Andheri West and East, Bandra East and West, Ville Parli, Byculla, and Kamithipura.



Church outing cum picnic

REPORT

Dear Fellow Believers,

Greetings from the Naga Christian Fellowship, Mumbai.

It is my great joy to share with each of you that August 2020 - May 2021 has been a wonderful and fulfilling year for NCFM. So much has been accomplished despite some tough challenges with the onset of the pandemic. We as a church have grown to be more grounded on this wonderful truth, "Where God guides, He provides".

I want to especially thank and acknowledge the commitment of our Pastor and Core-Team Leaders. It is because of their generous ideas and relentless efforts; many meaningful and fun programs and online activities have been conducted throughout the year. We have had consistent monthly Replenish Core-Team meetings which have enabled the smooth planning and realization of all Church activities and Sunday Service Programs. Some church activities include monthly Bible Quiz; Drawing Competition for all age groups; regular Sunday School classes; CONNECT fellowship; annual church outing; Christmas outreach program; Mission Trip program; and Relief Program.

Every year the NCFM church, as part of its annual Christmas outreach program, reaches out to various civil organizations, individuals and families, with the intention to provide help and support in whatever capacity it could. For the year 2020, NCFM collaborated with "Hilltop of Hope", a ministry working in the red-light areas of Turbhe, Maharashtra. Through this initiative, on the 23rd and 24th December, NCFM and Hilltop of Hope Ministry were able to reach out

and share the word of God to individuals and families residing in Grant Road; Turbhe red light area; and Gurukrupa Old Age home in Nerul, Maharashtra.

NCFM on the 13th of March 2021, observed its 2nd Missions Sunday with Missions Trip to Bherle Wadi village under Panvel district, Navi Mumbai. 11 members from NCFM along with a few local guides visited the village to share the love of Christ to the people. It was a great blessing for NCFM to share the Gospel and witness Christ to the people who through this fellowship discovered Christ for the very first time.

With the ongoing challenges of the pandemic and lockdown, and countless people affected in more ways than one, NCFM initiated a Relief Program with the theme "**Love beyond Boundaries**". This initiative was focused on reaching out to the homeless living in the streets of Panvel, Kharghar, Belapur, Ulwe, Uran, Kharkopar, Juinagar, Sanpada, Nerul, Vashi, Koparkhairane, Airoli, Ghatkopar, Kalina, Andheri West and East, Bandra East and West, Ville Parli, Byculla, and Kamithipura. This initiative started on the 31st May and concluded on the 4th June 2021 and through it, NCFM was able to distribute essential food packages to over 200 people. NCFM is grateful for the encouragement, support, prayers and generous contributions from its church members. We praise God for all that He has done through our church.

I extend my appreciation and thanks to all the members of the NCFM Pastoral Team, Pastor's family and all Church members for the continued guidance, prayers, love and support. We as a Church have stayed united and have labored together to materialize our goal and vision of undertaking the works which Christ Jesus has required from us. It is my hope and prayer that we continue to make God proud as we venture further in different directions and through different circumstances. May God give NCFM the Willingness, Wisdom, Courage, Faith, and Kindness always.

May God Bless NCFM.

With Love & Prayers,

Lanbangliu Lulu Kamei, General Secretary, NCFM
August 2020-May 2021

Fare-Thee-Well

NCFM would like to extend the deepest appreciation and gratitude to all the students, families and working youths. Your dynamic presence aided NCFM to grow to its fullest spiritual strength and attain its vibrancy. Nonetheless, following the pandemic that has suddenly required us all to adapt to the new normal and/or upon the completion of academic courses, career changes and job transfers, some of us would be leaving Mumbai or have left for good. It is here that NCFM would like to implore: As a family of NCFM, do continue to be the ambassadors of love and peace!



Venkatesh, Erika, Miraya and Rasika



Ajay, Villy and Azro



Soso, Angel, Rishon, Singra and Worlan



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Editorial Team:

Lumreiphi Raikhan, Shaokhai Mayitnao and Wungram Raikhan

Every month we have **Replenish** for core leaders to rejuvenate their spiritual leadership and curate the programmes and events of the ensuing month. **Family Fellowship** over potluck for families in different homes. And **Connect** for the youth, for a time of spiritual nourishment in various localities.