

FOREWORD

History is a Mirror for the future. By looking at the past you form the present and move forward to the future with renewed hope. As the saying goes 'look at the past and build a future to last', may the History of the Hendala Baptist Church help the future church to do so.

Hendala was a village situated eight kilo meters or five miles north of the city of Colombo, then captital of Sri Lanka (Ceylon). This village is bounded from the North by the historical "Muthu Raja Wela" a famous paddy field belonging to the kings of the Kotte era. The boundary in the East is the Kalu Ela constructed by king Buvenekebahu the VI of Kotte, to irrigate the Muthu Raja Wela. This was later re-constructed by the Portuguese. The southern boundary is the Kelani River which seperates the village from the city of Colombo. The boundary in the west is the Indian Ocean.

There are two theories as to how this village got its name Hendala. The Dutch who invaded Ceylon were famous canal builders. While the village already had Kalu Ela, they built a new canal from Puttalam to Colombo to transport cinnamon and copra in barges to the port of Colombo for export. This new canal, now called " Hamilton Canal" was then called "Honda Ela" (meaning the good canal) from which the name Hendala derived. The second theory was that the places where goods in the barges were exchanged was called "Handel" in the Dutch language. Thus the name Hendala derived from this word. Whatever it may be, our village is known as Hendala. Hendala village is consisted of six villages, namely Great Hendala, Thimbirigasyaya, Hekitta, Palliyawatta, Matagoda and Kerawelapitiya .

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THE HISTORY OF THE HENDALA BAPTIST CHURCH

During the Portuguese period the maritime provinces were under them. Most of the local inhabitants became Roman Catholics to gain favours from the rulers. When the non catholic missionaries landed in this beautiful island during the time of the Dutch and British they had a difficult time to convert the Catholics and the Buddhists being the predominant religions of the area. On 16th April 1812 the first Baptist Missionaries landed in this beautiful Island followed by the Methodists (1814) American congregation (1816) and the Church of England (1818). They all started to preach the Gospel in the villages specially in the outskirts of Colombo.

Our first Missionary Rev. James Chater and the first evangelist Mr. Hendrick Siers of Dutch origin brought the good news to the inmates of the Leprosy Asylum in Hekitta, Hendala built by the Portuguese. As a result of it, the Hendala church was born.

1840 to 1855 - Rev. J.P. de Silva

Rev. J P de Silva had been our first Pastor. As Hendala area was predominantly a Roman Catholic area it was difficult for the Baptists to preach the good news according to the Holy Bible. As Catholics were used to a mythical version of Christianity, worshipping statues etc. At the end of 1845 the Pastor was able to baptize only three converts. By 1850 there were about 25 worshippers on a Sunday. He also conducted prayer meetings during the week. During this period the church had two mission centres one in Batagama, Kandana and the other in Welisara. There had been a boys school with about 50 boys in Batagama, Kandana. In 1855 our Pastor was assigned to the Leprosy Asylum to work.

1856 to 1863 – Rev. Peter Perera

In 1856 Rev. Peter Perera was the Pastor of Hendala, Batagama and the Mattakkuliya churches. On February 9th 1856 the land named “ Delgaha Watta ” with an area of 35 perches was purchased by Rev. John Davis, the Missionary of the Baptist Missionary society from Mr. Ponnawilage Don Abraham Appu. In 1857 a temporary church was built in this block of land. By 1863 there were four baptized church members and about 30 worshippers for Sunday service. During the week, Prayer meetings and Bible studies were held by the Pastor. By this time there was a school hall at Welisara which was used for the above meetings.

1864 to 1868 – Rev. D G de Alwis

Rev. D G de Alwis was the Pastor of the Mattakkuliya Baptist church. The Hendala Baptist and the Bollathe mission station under the Hendala church also came under his care. By

1865 the Hendala church had started a Sunday School. As the Pastor was fluent in all three languages he was able to approach the Tamil community too. By 1867 the membership rose to 9 with the baptism of 2. There were about 30 worshippers for Sunday service. During this time there had been 5 prayer cells and all together about 70 participants.

During this time there lived a wealthy businessman at Kerewelapitiya named Mr. Ranawake Aachchige Bartholameuz de Alwis who lost his wife Mrs. Ponweerage Thino Perera after her first confinement. Mr. Bartholameuz de Alwis then wanted to marry his sister-in-law Miss. Ponweerage Agatha Perera and seeked permission from his own Roman Catholic church but was not granted. Then he had approached the Baptist Church which was being newly built. He had given a substantial donation to complete the church and both of them had got baptized and had their wedding service in this church. Later his brothers and sisters too were converted and joined the church. Mr. Bartholameuz had coir mills in Kerewelapitiya, Hendalawatte and Mabile. He had estates in Kuliapitiya and Wallewa. He also had a fleet of bullock carts which travelled to and fro from Colombo to Badulla. They carried dry fish, salt, sugar etc. to the hill country and brought back coffee and spices to be exported. Therefore he had a big work force working under him. Some of his faithful workers too got baptized and became our church members. Mrs. Juli Hami, Miss Sopey Hamy, Miss Caroline (Josy) and Mr. Michael were some of them who were with us till 1970's. Mr. Bartholameuz de Alwis's sister's husband (brother-in-law) Mr. Wettasinghe Appuhamilage Peiris had been Sir Henry Ward, the British Governor's chef. As there was a need of a cemetery for the Baptist Church Mr. Peiris had intervened and was able to receive 4 roods of land adjoining the church and the public cemetery along the Kanatte Road as a gift. Mr. Peiris himself was a convert and a member of the church.

During this period the Baptist Union Meetings were held at the Grand Pass Baptist Church prior to the building of the Waldock Memorial Hall at Carey College. It is said that our church members travelled to Grandpas in buggy carts and bullock carts. (The episodes in this paragraphs have been carried down through generations from mouth to mouth and was not recorded.)

1867 to 1870 – Rev. Daniel Botheju

In 1867 Rev. Daniel Botheju came to Hendala to serve under Rev. D G de Alwis, but he was transferred to Welgama shortly. There had been two baptisms and the membership had increased to 11.

1871 – Rev. D B Lewis



He too served us for a year or so. A school was opened in Mabole, and was under the Hendala Church. The Bollathe mission point continued under the Hendala church.

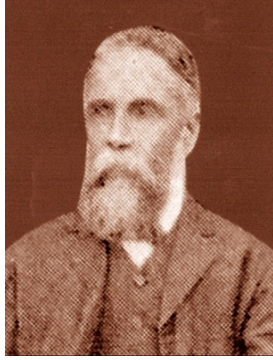
1871 to 1882 – Rev. Daniel Botheju

Rev. Botheju came back to us for the second term of pastorate. It is recorded that a school was started in the area in 1873 with about 35 children. The boys school in Welisara still existed and a girls school was started in Batagama. In 1872 the Mabole mission centre was released from the Hendala Church, but conducted weekly evangelistic meetings at Bollathe. In 1872 Rev. Juan de Silva was released to be a roaming missionary. During this period he visited Hendala and did a valuable service in 1973. Rev. Botheju worked in about 10 villages in the Hendala area.

1882 to 1884 – Rev. Peter Perera

In 1882 Rev. Peter Perera came as the pastor for the second time. In 1883, 3 people were baptized and the membership was 13. Don Peter Perera had his education at cemenary highschool in 'fortdius'. There he studied, English, latin, Hebrew and greek. His school mates were all sons of high ranking officers of noble heritage. After completing his studies, he left the school with flying colours. His ambition was to become a crown lawyer. In the meantime he came under the influence of the Baptist missionary rev. Ebenezer Daniel and became a servant of god and spread the gospel to the heathens for 50 long years.

1885 to 1891 – Rev. Henry de Silva



During his period the temporary church built was in a dilapidated state. Hence it was broken down and a new church was constructed and opened in 1886 and dedicated to the Glory of God. During this time the membership was 14. The Sunday School too had 14 children. A member of our church, W. Alexander Peiris was appointed to work in the leprosy hospital as an evangelist.

1892 to 1894 – Rev. Theodore Silva

Rev. Silva served in the Hendala, Makewita and Batagama churches. In 1894, evangelist W. Alexander Peiris joined the Baptist divinity school in Colombo.

1895 - There are no records about the pastorate.

1896 to 1898 – Rev. Herman Peiris

Though he was the Pastor of Hendala and Batagama Churches, his main service was at the Leprosy Assylum. During this period 4 more new members joined making the membership 18 and the worshippers at the Sunday service were about 30. On November 26th 1898, Rev. Peter Perera, aged 85 had walked from Kohilawatta to Hendala, gone home and was called home while resting on his son's lap.

1899 to 1902

It is recorded that during this period there had not been a Pastor and there had been a decline in the growth of the church.

1903 – Rev. J.A. Perera



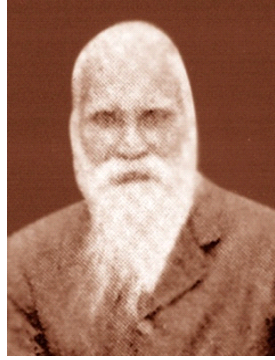
Though Rev. Perera who was serving at the Mattakkuliya church was made the Pastor of the Hendala church, it was not a great success.

1904 to 1906 – Rev. D. A. Benjamin



Rev. Benjamin was considered as a Pastor who was well known to give a new life to fallen churches. Thus, Hendala church was given to his care while serving as the Pastor of Mattakkuliya. He with the Missionary J. A. Ewing and Evangelist Mr. C.A. Hettiarachchi conducted a series of revival and prayer meetings which were a blessing to the church. As a result of these spiritual meetings 16 people accepted Jesus as their personal saviour. On February 24th and 25th 1906 the half yearly Sessions of the Baptist Union were held at Hendala. On the first day the public meeting was addressed by Mr. John Ferguson C.M.G. He was the Editor of the Ceylon Observer and the founder of the Sunday School Union of Ceylon. He was also a lay preacher and a Deacon of the Cinnamon Gardens Baptist Church. As it was a great honour to the Hendala Baptist Church to have such a distinguished person visiting the village the villagers too got together and he was brought to the church in a procession led by the Band of musicians from the village. In 1905 a hall was built in the garden next to the present property of Mr. Siripathy Wijesinghe. The Sunday School and evening meetings were held in this hall. This hall was used to serve lunch at B.U. meetings in 1905.

1907 to 1910 – Rev. G.A. Aponso (Mr. Ajith Aponso's Great Grand Father)



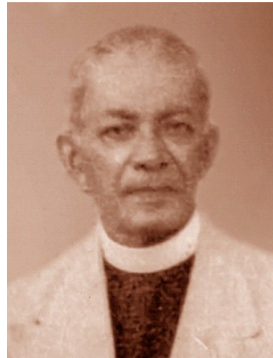
With the new enthusiasm the church received during the past era there rose five enthusiastic ladies who did much to the Glory of God. They were Miss Susan de Alwis(Seetha de Silva, Sampath, Saman & Siripathy Wijesinghe's Grand Mother) Miss Harriet de Alwis (Niranjan, Anil & Shirani Sarem's Grand Aunt) Miss Meria de Alwis (Mr. Bartholameuz de Alwis's youngest daughter) and Miss Margret Peiris (Rev. W. A. Peirise's eldest daughter) They were involved in the Sunday School and the Women's work in the church. In 1907, 10th November five people were baptized. Miss Margret Peiris conducted a school in the area which was taken over by the Baptist Missionary Society in October 1909. Mr. P.S. Perera who was serving the Leprosy Asylum also served in the Hendala Baptist Church during this period. In 1910 Rev. G.A. Aponso with the help of the Missionary Rev. Hankinson conducted some revival meetings. During this period Sophia Gunawardena, a daughter from the church family was sent to the Baptist Girls Boarding School in Colombo.

1911 to 1914 – Rev. D.T. Jayasuriya (Ruwanika & Keith's Great Grand Father)



He served the church during his period residing in Kerawelapitiya Galkanda area. In 1911 Mr. Wordsworth and Mr. P.S. Perera had a week of revival meetings in the area. In 1912 when the Baptist's were celebrating its centenary in Ceylon the Secretary of the Baptist Mission in India Rev. Herbert Anderson arrived in Ceylon to participate in our celebrations. He was able to visit Hendala with Rev & Mrs. Ewing and had a special meeting in our church. During this period four girls from the church family, Mabel Gunawardena, Esther, Hilda and Grace Peiris were attending the Girls Boarding School in Colombo. By this time there were twenty one members.

1915 to 1920 – Rev. T.A.de Silva (Brother-in-Law of Sir Oliver Gunathilake the former Governor General of Ceylon)



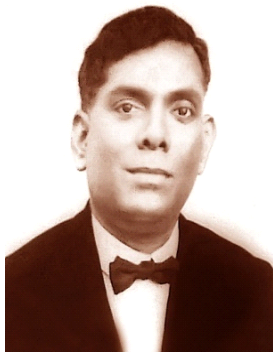
Rev. T. A. de Silva was well known for his Open Air and Magic Lantern services. When he came to Hendala as Pastor he visited many villages in the area and conducted open air and magic lantern services which drew many people to the church. In 1916, sixteen people were baptized. Rev. V. D. David a Missionary from India conducted a series of revival meetings and in 1917 eight people were baptized. In 1915 Mr. Francis Peiris who was the son of Rev. W. A. Peiris was the superintendent of the Sunday School. In 1917 Mr. David Wickramasinghe was the superintendent of the Sunday School. There were about thirty children and six teachers. They used the lessons in the paper named “ Ruwan Mal Dhama”. On 9th February 1919 two were baptized. By this time the Hendala church and the Sunday School had progressed, but in 1919 the Sunday School hall which was at Kerawelapitiya was burnt down. The Sunday School was held in the verandah of a Buddhist friend and in the Deacons house. The day school which was held in the school was closed down. On 10th September 1919 the Sunday School was re-constructed and was dedicated to the Glory of God. By this time the Superintendent of the Sunday School was Mrs. Lily de Alwis. (Grand mother of Neelani, Chrishanthi, Shyamalee, Iyoni, Ingrid and Devika) In 1919 Mr. Francis Peiris who was the former Superintendent of the Sunday School joined the Ministry. On 2nd March 1920 Mrs. Lily de Alwis organized a trip to Colombo in buggy carts and bullock carts taking thirty five children and four teachers. In the morning they had gone to the Cinnamon Gardens Baptist church and had played games in the garden and in the afternoon they had visited the Museum. Now the membership was forty three and there were many worshippers for the Sunday service. By this time Carey College, the only boys school in our mission had started, and three of our boys from the church family were boarded there, namely Joseph, Edward, and Francis Gunewardene. A team from Mattakkuliya church came to help us with a service of singing on Good Friday and Easter Sunday led by Mr. D.E. Fernando the famous lyric writer.

1921 to 1922 – Rev. C.D.Hendrick (great grandfather of Ruwan Colombage)



By this time there was a remarkable progress in the church spiritually. The regular worshippers visited the absentee members at the church service during the course of the week. They also started to support the church financially. During the week prayer meetings were held in the Sunday School hall. Cottage meetings too were held as a regular feature. They organised Fancy Fairs as a regular feature to improve their finances. Mr. Francis Peiris who followed the Divinity course at Carey college proceeded to Bangalore Methodist Theological College for further studies.

1922 to 1929 – Rev. N.H.P. de Silva (Ernest de Alwis’s wife’s Grand Father)



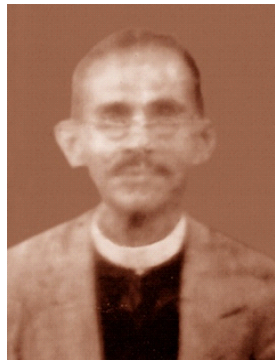
He resided at Galkanda along Kerewelapitiya Road during his tenure of office. By this time the church was in a firm footing. On March 6th and 7th 1928 Half yearly sessions of the Baptist Union meetings were held here. During this period one of the girls, Mabel Wickramasinghe Gunawardena who attended the Baptist Girls Boarding School in Colombo qualified to be a teacher and started to teach there. During this period three girls, namely Lily, Letitia Peiris and Miriam Wijesinghe from the church family joined the Girls Boarding School in Colombo. Thirteen of our members were living out of Hendala. In Colombo, Kiribathgoda, Polgahawela, Dehiowita and Andiambalama. 1925 three people were baptized and in 1927 five people were baptized. In 1929 two were baptized. By now there were 50 members.

1930 to 1932 – Rev. D. T. Jayasuriya (Ruwanika & Keith’s Great Grand Father)



He came to serve the Hendala church for the second time and resided at Galkanda. On February 14th 1930 we bade farewell to Rev. N. H. P. de Silva who was our Pastor for seven and a half years and we welcomed Rev. Timothy Jayasuriya who had taken over our pastorate. The church also celebrated the Christmas celebrations which was not held at the end of the previous year. During this period Mr. Raymond Colombage came to assist the Pastor with the work in the Leprosy Asylum and helped the Pastor to conduct open air services too. On 13th May 1928 the first church committee was formed with Pastor, Deacon, Secretary, Treasurer and two senior members. On 8th July 1928, the church register was introduced to maintain Sunday Service events and attendance.

1933 to 1934 – Rev. H. D. H. Siriwardena



Rev. W A Peiris after his retirement came to reside at “Fair Lawn” his residence and guided the church when required. He was called to rest on 16th September 1933 and his funeral service was conducted by Rev Ewing the Field Secretary of the BMS. At his memorial service a hymn number board was gifted by the family members.

In June 1934 with his great enthusiasm he was able to organize the first church choir at Hendala church. The organist was Mrs. Lily de Alwis. (Mrs. Robert Alwis) During his tenure of office the church was able to purchase a piece of land consisting of 1 rood and 18.2 perches from the land called “Kakunugaha Watta” belonging to the descendents of Magalage Saamel Perera on

16th October 1934 attested by Mr. D. L. Gunasekera Notary Public of Colombo. The trustees who signed on behalf of the church were Ranawaka Achchige Robert de Alwis, Ranawaka Achchige Richard de Alwis and Ranawaka Achchige Edmund de Alwis. In 1934 a set of rules and regulations were drafted and an inventory of the furniture was recorded. By this time there were 24 children in the Sunday School and the membership was 54.

1935 to 1937 – Rev. C H Ratnayake



Rev. Ratnayake came to serve the Hendala church while serving and residing at Makewita. By the time he came to Hendala church as Pastor the membership had decreased but the number of worshippers at the Sunday service had increased. The prayer meetings at the Sunday School hall were not very successful, hence he revived the weekly cottage meetings and there was a good response. He continued the Fancy Fairs to improve the finances as in the previous years. He conducted a series of Gospel meetings with the roaming Missionary Rev. T. A. de Silva with the help of the Magic Lantern. Mrs. Lily de Alwis wife of Mr. Robert de Alwis who was our senior deacon, our first organist and the Superintendent of the Sunday School for 18 years passed away after a brief illness on 10th August 1937. It was indeed a great loss to the family and to our church too. Two were baptized during the period.

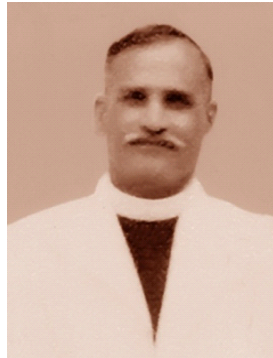
1938 - Rev. C. M. Elangasekera



While residing and serving the Gonewela Baptist Church, the Hendala Baptist church too was under his care for one year. After the demise of Mrs. Lily de Alwis, Miss Grace Peiris became

the Superintendent of the Hendala Sunday School for 12 years. She was also the organist during that time. When we had visiting Pastors residing in Manses of other churches our Sunday services were held in the evening but the Sunday School was held in the morning. During this period the venue of the Sunday School changed from the Sunday School Hall at Kerewelapitiya to the Baptist Church at Galkanda . In 1938, 3 people were baptized.

1939 to 1940 – Rev. P. P. Balasuriya



Rev. Balasuriya served in our church while serving and residing at Makewita. He visited the church families regularly and held weekly cottage meetings. The Local Women in Ceylon started the Baptist Womens League in 1939. Mrs. Belle Jayathunga, wife of Rev. W. M. P. Jayathunga became the President while Miss Resta de Alwis, one of our own members became the Secretary. On 17th September 1939 the Missionary Miss L. M. Reece and the B. W. L. Secretary Miss Resta de Alwis took an initiative to start the local branch at Hendala. Mrs. W. A. Peiris (Rev. W. A. Peiris's widow), Mrs. Susan Wijesinghe (Seetha, Sampath and the siblings Grand Mother), Miss Letitia Peiris (Ruth & Nimal Senaratne's mother), Miss Maria de Alwis (an aunt of Neeta, Patrick and his siblings) were the founder office bearers of our Womens League. With their enthusiasm our Women's League progressed. By this time there were 50 members in the church.

1941 – Rev. F A Peiris and Rev. H. Elwela



Rev. Peiris was the Pastor from January to July 1941 and travelled on his bicycle from Gonawela. Rev. Elwela served from August to December 1941. They did what they could during this period. Rev. D.T. Jayasuriya entered eternal rest on 7th august 1941.

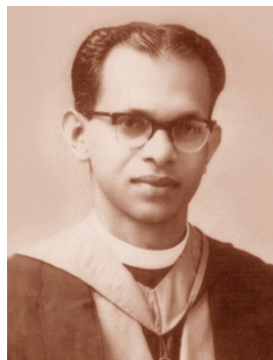
1942 to 1943 – Rev. E. Y. S. Premawardhena (Ruwan Premawardana’s grandfather)

While residing at Makewita Manse he served in the Hendala church too. The Sunday School which was held in a thatched hall at Kerawelapitiya was handed over to Mrs. Susan Wijesinghe. On 08.02.1942 the Christian Endeavour was started in the church, with Mr. Leonard de Alwis as President and Miss Resta de Alwis as Secretary.

On 12.07.1942, the church celebrated Ter Jubilee Celebrations of the B.M.S. Special thank offerings were made toward the 150th anniversary. Though there were only 12 families a valuable contribution of Rs. 858.50 was enclosed in decorated envelopes specially made by Miss Resta De Alwis. Rev. S. F. Pearce conducted the service assisted by the Pastor.

During his period the small church built in 1886 was extended to the front and beautifying the frontage with a tall grilled wall. For this renovation all the church families contributed one months income. Some paid the amount at once while some of them paid in instalments. After completion it was dedicated to the Glory of God on 07.12.1942 along with the Centenary celebrations of the church. Rev.S. F. Pearce chaired the meetings and the guest speakers were W. M. P. Jayatunga and Rev. T. A. de Silva. The prayer was offered by Rev. F. A. Peiris, Hendala’s own contribution to the Baptist Ministry. Mr Robert De Alwis welcomed the visitors. After the public meeting a garden party was held. On Sunday the 20th, Rev. C. H. Ratnayake conducted the centenary service followed by a Baptismal service where four were baptized. The treasurer of the Building Committee was Miss Resta de Alwis and the rest of the committee consisted of Mrs. Susan Wijesinghe, Mr. Albin Wijesinghe ,(Seetha, Sampath and siblings Grand Father) Mr Richard de Alwis (Leonard and Kingsley's father) Mr. Arnolis de Alwis (Walter, Esther and Dora’s father) .

1944 to 1946 – Rev. W. G. Wickramasinghe



After Theological training in Serampore College in India, Rev. William George Wickramasinghe was sent to Hendala church to serve under Rev. E. Y. S. Premawardena in 1943. In 1944 he was made the Pastor of the Hendala Church. He was residing at Paranawatte. On 10th February 1944 the first anniversary of the Christian Endeavour was celebrated. The speakers were Rev. D. K. Wilson of the Methodist Church and Mr. Peter Jayasuriya Secretary of the B.Y.P.A. On 15th and 16th of March 1944 the half yearly sessions of the Baptist Union meetings were held in our church and the meals were served at Mrs. Sophia Gunasekera's residence known as "May Blossom". (Presently late Mr. Jayamanne's house and garden). As the visitors were given accomadation in the houses of the church members, the meetings went on till late even after dinner with Magic Lantern services. These meetings were a great blessing to the church. On 29th April 1944 Mrs. Mary Peiris (widow of Rev.W. A. Peiris) who was a deacon was called to rest. From 10th to 18th July 1944 was a period of circuit tours carrying the Gospel to the non believers holding Open air meetings and Magic Lantern meetings. The group which toured Agalawatte, Kalutara and Moratuwa ended their tour at Hendala holding their Thanksgiving Service here. In 1944 three people were baptized in our church. In 1945 a Fancy Fair was held at "May Blossom". During this period Watch Night service dinners too were held at "May Blossom". From February 19th to 21st 1946, Rev. T. A. de Silva conducted a series of revival meetings ending each day with a Magic Lantern Service. On the 1st of June 1946 Miss Resta de Alwis married Rev. W. G. Wickramasinghe at the Cinnamon Gardens Baptist Church. While Rev. Wickramasinghe was sent to Oxford University for Post Graduate studies by the Baptist church, Mrs. Resta Wickramasinghe went at the end of the year to "Carey Hall" Selly-Oak Birmingham where she was awarded the Diploma in Childrens Work and Youth Work. She also followed a course of study in social service.

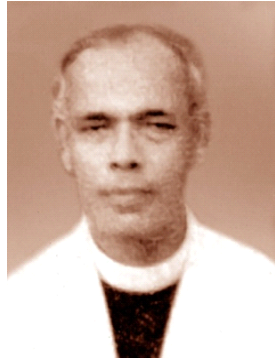
1947 to 1949 – Rev. S. R. Perera (Malini, Shelton & Chandra's father)



Rev. Romanis Perera served in our church while serving and residing at Kadawata Biyanwila. Because of his ill health he retired and went to reside at his residence in Kotikawatte. During his tenure of office he got two young girls from our church family (Sheila Perera & Dulcie Wijegunawardena) admitted to Ferguson High School in Ratnapura where they passed the S. S. C. examination and they became English teachers in the Baptist vernacular schools. Four babies were dedicated during his time. Because of his ill health the Deacons of the church, Mr. Arnolis

de Alwis (Walter, Esther & Dora's father) Mr. Robert de Alwis (Neela's Grand Father) Mr. Richard de Alwis (Anil & Shirani's Grand Father) and the Secretary of the church, Mr. Edmund de Alwis helped to run the church.

1950 to 1951 – Rev. F V de Alwis Jayasinghe



Rev. Francis Jayasinghe came to serve the Hendala Church while serving and residing at Makewita. As mentioned earlier when we had visiting Pastors the services were held in the evening, but the Sunday School was held in the morning. The Annual General Meeting was always held on February 4th evening. In 1950 Mrs. Resta Wickramasinghe represented Asia and Sri Lanka at the special meeting in Chicago with the Womens Committee of the Baptist World Alliance. During this era, as the organ was in a dilapidated state, our organist, Mr. Felix presented his own organ to the church. In July 1950, Mr. Suwaris who was a church member and the caretaker for many years was called to rest.

1951 to 1952 – Rev. Paul. E. Premawardena



After completing the Theological training in Serempore College, India, Rev. Paul came to serve the Hendala Church residing at Kadawata. This young priest gave new life to the church. His enthusiasm with the young gave a new life to Christian Endeavour. Thus the young people, Mr. Leonard de Alwis and Lionel Wijesinghe joined the Kadawata young people and participated in a one day conference held in Kandy in 1952. During this period the church started an English service with the assistance of Rev. Charles Karunaratne who was residing at Alwis Town as the

membership consisted of several tamil families who were Associate Members. Our Pastor was a great preacher capturing the hearts of the congregation with his tone and way of speech. 6 young people were baptized in December . During this period Mrs. Winifred de Alwis and Mrs. Cornelia Mawala lead the Baptist Womens League. The Sunday School Superintendents were Mr. Don Martin Mawala and Mr. Lionel Wijesinghe during the two years. During his short period the Pastor did much to improve the church in every sphere.

1952 to 1955 – Rev. E. Y. S. Premawardena



Rev. E. Y. S. Premawardena came to serve our church for the second time while serving and residing at Kadawata. During this time he was able to prepare a constitution which was approved at the Annual General meeting held on 4th February 1955. In September 1954 a church trip was arranged by Mrs. Resta Wickramasinghe, Mr. Lionel Wijesinghe and Mr. Leonard de Alwis to visit Polonnaruwa, Sigiriya, Anuradhapura, Dambulla and Trincomalee. Five babies were dedicated by him during his period. Three children from the church families went to attend the B. M. S. English School Matale, namely Ruth, Nimal and Seetha Senaratne. Godwin Wijegunawardena, Basil and Ian Paranawithana were attending Carey College. On 04.10.1955, Rev. S.R.Perera passed away after a brief illness.

1956 to 1957 – Rev. D E Weerasinghe



Rev. Danny Weerasinghe too came to serve in our church while residing and serving at Makewita Baptist Church. He conducted Cottage Meetings regularly. In 1956 the constitution was amended at the Annual General Meeting held on 4th February. During his time Nimal Senaratne from the church family joined Carey College. On July 13th 1957 Rev. F.A. Peiris, who was the President of the Baptist Union and a product of Hendala Church was called to rest after a brief illness while serving at the Baptist Church, Ratnapura. His funeral service was conducted by the Field Secretary Rev. R. C. Cowlin on 15th July 1957 at the Hendala Church. In August 1957 the church organized a Fancy Bazaar at Carey College to swell their funds to build the Manse. During this time Mr. Leonard de Alwis was the Superintendent of the Sunday School, while Mrs. Winifred de Alwis and Mrs. Cornelia Mawalage led the womens League. Mr. Don Martin Mawalage was the organist. During the tenure of his office three babies were dedicated.

1958 to 1966 – Rev. P. P. Balasuriya



Rev. Balasuriya came to serve the Hendala Baptist Church for the second time while serving and residing first at Makewita and later at Grandpass. He introduced the reading of a chapter from the book of psalms alternately by the paster and the congregation. During this time the children of our church family were studying in our Baptist Colleges, three at Carey College (Rowland de Alwis, Godwin Wijegunawardena and Nimal Senaratne) and two at B. M. S. English school Matale (Ruth and Seetha Senaratne) and two at Baptist Girls College (Blossom de Alwis and

Swarna Pieris). In 1959 Chitra Peiris joined the tutorial staff of Carey College and Christable Suraweera who came to Hendala after marriage to Earnest Wijegunawardana was also on the tutorial staff of Carey College. . In March 18 1959 the 20th series of evangelical meetings were held. With the help of film shows at “Mill House” Mr. Leslie de Alwis’s residence at Kerawalapitiya and “ Fair Lawn ” Mrs. Mabel Peiris’s residence at Galkanda and the final service in the church. In the mornings the visiting team visited Hekitta, Thimbirigasyaya, Convent Lane, Alwis Town and Kerawalapitiya areas.

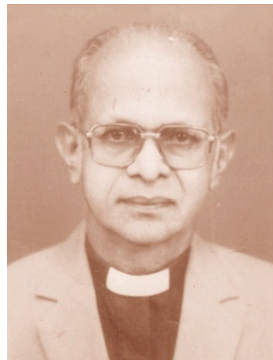
In 1960 the church, under the leadership of Mr. Gladwin de Alwis, the treasurer organised a Fancy Fair at “ Fair Lawn ” Mrs. Mable Peiris’s residence to purchase a new organ. The reading stand was donated in memory of Mr. Richard de Alwis, who was a deacon and the Secretary of the church by his family. In 1960 Mrs. Resta Wickramasinghewent to Japan with a B.Y.P.A. team representing Sri Lanka. On 14.12.1960 Rev.C. H. Ratnayake passed away while serving Nugugoda.

Revival meetings were held from February 2nd to the 4th in1962. On the 10th February the church had a Thanks Giving service and a garden party in the church premises to commerate the “Ter Jubilee” of the Baptist Mission in Sri Lanka. In 1962, a Christmas carol service was held trained by Miss Chitra Peiris and the choristors were, Seetha Senaratne, Ruth Senaratne, Swarna Peiris, Indrani Algama, Manel Algama, Roslin Gamage and Blossom de Alwis. During this time the Sri Lanka Baptist Sunday School Committee was started and the Missionary Miss Celia Moon took the leadership to prepare a new syllabus. Our children were sent for the exams and achieved very good results. Chitra Peiris, one of our Sunday School teachers were called upon to translate lessons to Sinhala. On August 29th – 31st 1963 the Church family went to Cinnamon Gardens to take part in the Ter Jubilee Fair where the chief organizers of the sections were Mrs. Resta Wickramasinghe, Mr. Leslie de Alwis from our church and Mr. Timothy Nanayakkara. In 1963 Mrs. Resta Wickramasinghe participated in the 2nd Asian BWL congress held in Phillipenes. During 1963 Christmas we were invited by the Nayakakanda Catholic church to take part in their open air carol service held in their church premises. They came to our church and escorted us to their church. Sunil Algama, Upali de Alwis and Aruna Wijesinghe from ourchurch family joined Carey College. During this time, the pastor introduced the offering of the monthly subscription envelope on 1st Sunday. Our church was repaired again by constructing a ceiling, cementing the floor with brown cement, repainting the walls , wiring and installing the elecricity, and on 29th March 1964 it was opened at the Anniversary Service to the Glory of God.

On 1965 Mrs. Resta Wickramasinghe and Rev. Doc. W. G. Wickramasinghe went to America for the world Baptist conference in Florida. On the 28th of August a Fancy Fair was held in the newly built Town Council Hall premises opposite Keels Supermarket along the Hendala Road . Our Pastor was famous for house visiting and he did this regularly. The church members and the worshippers appreciated it very much. During this time Miss Esther Peiris, a daughter of Rev. W A Peiris left some money to her cousin Letitia Senaratne which she donated to the church in the

name of Miss Esther Peiris. In 1966 the church family got together at Mrs. Mable Peiris's residence to discuss about the Church Union Programme. Our church too decided to go along with the proposal. Lunch was organized by the members. At the beginning Mr. Martin Mawala was the organist. After the new organ was purchased, Mrs. Venetia de Alwis was made the organist assisted by Miss Chitra Peiris. By this time the services were held in the morning. Rev. Balasuriya had the old wooden cross now in the Sunday School hall hung on the front wall of the church. In 1966 our children participated in the All Island Sunday School Rally held at Carey College for the first time. 14 babies and 4 people were dedicated.

1967 to 1970 – Rev. Dr. W. G. Wickramasinghe



Dr. Wickramasinghe came to us for the second time while serving and residing at the Principal's Bungalow at Carey College as Principal. Mrs. Resta Wickramasinghe was an asset to us as she was one of our own members. Miss Chitra Peiris and Miss Neelani Wickramasinghe played the organ when Mrs. Venetia de Alwis was not available.

On 2nd and 3rd March 1967 a series of revival meetings were held at the church in the evenings. The team lead by the Missionary Rev. Collin Grant visited the houses of our church members in the mornings. Evangelical meetings were held in the Open Air and religious films were shown. In 1967, our Sunday school carried the best results trophy at the all island Sunday School Examination.

In 1967 they started to build a Manse which was a dire need to our church with the funds collected by having Fancy Fairs and the donation received in memory of Miss Esther Peiris. Mrs. Resta Wickramasinghe, Mr. Gladwin de Alwis, the treasurer and Mr. Walter de Alwis the Secretary took the initiative in building it. Though the building of the Manse cost us Rs. 20,000/- we had only Rs. 12,500/- the rest was spent by Mr. Gladwyn de Alwis, the Treasurer. Therefore the church decided to donate one month's income in four instalments to cover the expenditure. The Manse was built by Mr. Victor Perera of Matagoda. On 07.10.1967, Rev. T. A. de Silva, who had done much to our church, passed away.

From October to December our Pastor had to go to Gonawela and Rev. Carlyle Petersz came to Hendala. He organized a Carol Service with the help of two Gonawela youths. In February

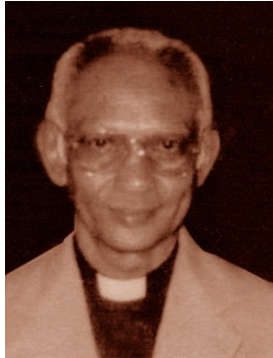
1968 the Manse was declared open by the Missionary Rev. T. W. Allen who was back in Sri Lanka and dedicated the manse to the Glory of God at our anniversary service. It was rented out for a few years to Mr. Manikkam, Rev. Ben Manikkam's father who was a worshipper at the Bagatale Baptist church.

In 1968 the church was refurnished with new teak chairs that cost Rs. 60/- each and was donated by the members. Most families donated 4 chairs to make a pew. The 1968, the Sunday School Rally was held in the (NCC) National Christian Council Centre at "Preethi Pura", Hendala. Our Sunday School children too participated. We went to Elakanda by public transport, crossed the Canal over a small draw bridge and walked through the shrubland to the N.C.C. site. In the same year, Mrs. Resta Wickramasinghe went to Hong Kong to participate in the 3rd Asian B. W. L. Conference. She was chosen as the Secretary of the Asian Baptist Womens League. She was also made the editor of the magazine 'Asian Echoes' for the years 1968 and 1969. During this period, Sampath and Saman Wijesinghe along with Sarath, Patrick and Harold de Alwis of the church family joined Carey College. In 1968, Ms. Ruth Senaratne and Ms. Swarna Peiris joined the tutorial staff of Carey College. Later, Nimal Senaratne joined as librarian to Carey College.

In 1969, after our Anniversary service the church members were taken to Preethi Pura where we had a days programme at the NCC Centre. Rev. P B Rajasingham, the President of the Methodist Conference was the Guest Speaker. Mrs. Resta Wickramasinghe our Pastor's wife was responsible in organising it. In 1969 July the Hunupitiya Anglican Church requested to use our church for Sunday Services which we granted at a nominal fee of Rs. 25/- a month and continued up to 1988 till they built the upper room church at Wattala. In 1969, our Sunday School Quiz team with Ranjini de Alwis, Sunil Algama, Lilani Algama, Upali De Alwis and Shayamalee Wickremasinghe won the 1st place at the all island Sunday School Quiz competition. In August we had a "Fancy Fair" in the church premises to renovate the church building. 10th of November 1969 was a dark day for the church family as our live wire, Mrs. Resta Wickramasinghe was called to rest. Her funeral service was conducted by our Pastor in the Hendala Baptist Church. During this time Rev. & Mrs. F V De Alwis Jayasinghe came to reside at Mabile after his retirement. They sold Mrs. Jayasinghe's house at Kirillapone and had bought a house at Mabile. He was a great asset to our church. On 4th of July 1970 the N. C. C. organized a full day programme to commemorate the Evangelistic Year at the "Preethi Pura N. C. C. Center. Many of our church members participated. As our Pastor was the President of the Sri Lanka Baptist Sangamaya from 1966-1969 the church had to release him once a month to visit other churches. On such Sundays one of our Baptist lay preachers Mr. Arthur Sandaratna and Rev. S. J. D. S. Weerasinghe took our services alternately.

He dedicated one baby and baptized 4 youths during his tenure of office. The church membership was 50 at that time.

1971 to 1978 – Rev. Stanley Alwis



Rev. Stanley Alwis started serving our church residing at Moratuwa. Later he came to reside at Hendala, but as the Manse was not vacant he lived in Mrs. Benedicta Basnayake's house along Shanthi Road. On 01.10.1971 Rev. E.Y.S. Premawardana who served our church in 2 occasions, passed away. In 1973 the pastor came to reside in the Manse, But as the house was small and he did not have a place for his motor cycle he requested the church to build a garage adjoining the Manse with a connecting door from the dining room. Rev. Stanley was the first Pastor to reside in the Manse and after about 30 years without a residential pastor it was a great achievement for the church.

In 1971, after a lapse of many years the Christian endeavour was started in our church with Stanley Wijesinghe as President and Ione De Alwis as Secretary. Rev. Stanley introduced the Holy Week and Prayer meetings with the full day Prayer chain on Holy Saturday. He was keen on agriculture and encouraged the youth to do home gardening as it was the era where the Government emphasized growing food on every inch of land. He also helped self employment by getting coir making machines to the house wives who were unemployed.

In 1973 Mr. Sunil de Silva who was a church member joined the Ministry. Rev. Theodore Perea's Dev Suwa Sevava healing mission team was invited to our church to have a healing service on 4.8. 1973. In 1973 the communion service pattern was changed from the Baptist procedure where the Pastor took the communion to the communicants, to communicants going to the front railing to receive communion. At the February Annual General meeting it was decided to submit the Annual Expenditure Account to all the members before the meeting. On the 7th of March 1974 we had the half yearly sessions at Hendala. The meals were cooked and served at Mrs. Mabel Peiris's residence. Mr. & Mrs. Ivan Gunasekera of Makewita were members of our church at that time. They brought some ladies and utensils from Makewita to do the cooking.

In 1975 April many of our members participated the family camp held at Polgolla organized by the Sri Lanka Baptist Sangamaya. It was a great revival to most of our families who attended it. In 1975 the Cinnamon Gardens youth staged the play " Siripala" at Hendala Baptist church

premises organized by the church christian endeavour society. On 6th June 1976 our constitution was revised. Issuing of monthly receipts for the subscriptions were introduced.

In 1978 Mrs. Joy Cullen, a Missionary of the Southern Baptist Convention foreign mission board was instrumental in drawing up a new syllabus for the Sunday School. Mrs. Monica Alwis and Mrs. Chitra Samarasinghe were invited to the committee.

During this period two young boys from the church family were encouraged to join the Lords Ministry. They were Wasantha(Freddy) De Alwis and Ruwan Wijesinghe who proceeded to Bible College at Peradeniya.

During his tenure of office 8 babies were dedicated and 21 youths and converts were baptized on four occasions. The membership was 94.

1979 – 1982 – Rev. Arty de Silva



Rev. Arty de Silva served our church while serving and residing at Kotikawatta. Therefore, Brother Roland resided for a short time in our Manse. 22nd-29th April 1980, American Sri Lankan co evangelistic program was held in Hendala.

By 1980 our church members decided to build a bigger church as the existing church which was built in 1886, extended in 1944 and renovated in 1969 was too small to accommodate the growing church. Then the President of the Sri Lanka Baptist Sangamaya Rev. Dr. W G Wickramasinghe was instrumental in getting the necessary funds from the Baptist World Alliance for which the Hendala Church is indebted to him. The foundation stone was laid by Rev. W. G. Wickramasinghe on 30th November 1980. The supervision and construction process was entrusted to Mr. Walter de Alwis and Mr. Kingsley de Alwis. Mr. Leonard de Alwis got the plan drawn. The contractor, Mr. Leslie Perera of Alwis Town undertook to build the church. After completion, the church was dedicated to the Glory of God on 20th February 1982 by the President of the Sri Lanka Baptist Sangamaya, Rev. Dr. W. G. Wickramasinghe along with the 144th Anniversary celebrations while hosting the half yearly sessions of the Sri Lanka Baptist Sangamaya.

As Rev. Arty de Silva was residing in the Kotikawatte Manse, Rev. Arthur Bunce attached to the Foreign Mission board was residing in our Manse. The Manse was renovated to suit the requirements by tiling the wash room and the kitchen and fixing mosquito netting to the doors and windows by the Sri Lanka Baptist sangamaya. In 1981 Mrs. Bunce was our Sunday School Superintendent.

Mrs. Mabel Peiris wife, of Rev. F. A. Peiris passed away on 27th March 1981. The funeral service was conducted by our pastor. Rev. F V De Alwis Jayasinghe who did a great service to our church in his retirement was called to rest on 25th December 1981. During Rev. Arty Silva's time six youths were baptized by Rev. Paul Koralage. The membership was 97.

1982 to 1983 – Rev. Paul Koralage



Rev. Koralage came to serve in our church while residing and serving the Gonawela church. As our Manse was vacant he sent his Assistant at Gonawla, the evangelist Mr. E K Yasaratne to reside in our Manse till his quarters at Gonawela was renovated. During this period Mr. Yasaratne helped Rev. Koralage with the Hendala work. On 19.11.1988 rev.Paul Premawardana passed away while serving at pilima thalawa theological college.

1984 to 1990 – Rev. Sunil de Silva



Rev. Sunil de Silva was a member of our church before he joined the Ministry. He came to serve in our church and resided in our Manse. He did much to revive the church activities. The

Pastor took the initiative in purchasing a new Yamaha Electric Organ to the church with the donations sent by Mr. Kingsley and Blossom Gunasekera who were living in Canada.

The Pastor re organised the choir during Christmas to hold a carol service and after the Carol service they went house to house caroling round the village in an open lorry.

The Pastor gave his fullest co-operation and guidance to all the special services that were introduced to the Sunday School when Mrs. Chitra Samarasinghe was the Superintendent. On 2nd Sunday in May 1985 the Mother's Sunday was introduced. On October 1st Sunday in 1986 the Childrens Sunday was observed and the children took part in the service as the Sri Lanka Baptist Sunday School Committee decided to celebrate the World Children's Day on 1st Sunday of October which was later shifted to the 2nd Sunday at the request of the churches. Our Sunday School started celebrating the Father's Day on the 3rd Sunday in June from 1987, which was discontinued in 2015.

In 1986 the Pastor took great pains to renew our marriage register and the marriage of Miss Ranjani de Alwis and Mr. Malavi Senaratne took place on 5th April 1986 in the new church. In 1986 the octagen pulpit which was in the old church was dismantled and the carved wooden panels were used adding two more to make the new pulpit to suit the new church with the guidance of the Pastor. Mr. Leslie de Alwis got the three wooden crosses made as a gift from his daughter Miss Ingrid de Alwis to a design the Pastor had seen in England and was fixed over the pulpit which is a living monument and later used as our logo on all our letter heads. On 20th September 1986 the Pastor introduced the "Dead March" at Mr. Leslie de Alwis's funeral service and was played by Mrs. Neelani Gunawardena for the 1st time and continued in the later years. At this time the Christian Endeavour which was there in our church was not active. In 1987 the Pastor was instrumental in sending 3 of our young people, namely Priyantha Wijegunawardena, Deepthi Wijesinghe and Sandya Wanigasekera to the leadership training camp held in Kadugannawa. They came back full of enthusiasm and at the beginning of 1987 in March the Baptist Young People's Auxilliary branch was started in our church with Miss Deepthi Wijesinghe as President, Mr. Priyantha Wijegunawardena as Secretary and Miss Sandya Wanigasekera as treasurer. Their first project was to clear the cemetery which was over grown with weeds. The entire church members were there to support them on 1st May 1987. On 10.09.1987 Rev. C. M. Elangasekara who served our church for a short time passed away.

According to the last will of late Rev. & Mrs. F V de Alwis Jayasinghe they had donated their house and property which was in Mabile to the Baptist Sangamaya to be used for social service activities. But the Sangamaya decided to sell it to Mr. Lakshman Wijesinghe, a member of our church. Hendala Baptist church took the opportunity and requested the Baptist Sangamaya to build an "Elders Home" in the premises of our Manse with that money. Our request was granted at the S. L. B. S. Executive meeting held in August 1987 where a committee was elected to implement the cause. The committee members were, the Pastor – Rev. Sunil de Silva, Secretary, Sena Wanigasekera and Treasur Ruth Wijesinghe. From the church Gamini Samarasinghe, Ajith

Aponso, Stanley Wijesinghe, Sunny Wijesinghe, Derrick Perera, Chitra Samarasinghe, Venetia de Alwis, Niel Algama, and Secretary and the Treasure's of the Sri Lanka Baptist Sangamaya Nihal Perera & Lorenzo Kariapperuma. The Pastor got the plan drawn and the foundation stone for the 1st stage was laid on 20th February 1988 by Rev. Dr. W G Wickramasinghe the President of Sri Lanka Baptist Sangamaya along with the 150th Anniversary of the church while hosting the half yearly sessions of the Sri Lanka Baptist Sangamaya. The 1st stage consisted of 5 small rooms, two sets of toilets and wash rooms, dining hall and the kitchen. It was decided to name the Home " Jayasinghe Retirement Home" . Mr. Patrick Perera from Pokuna Road was instrumental in building it. The Pastor supervised the construction of the building. During this period the organists were Mrs. Venetia de Alwis, Miss Chitra Samarasinghe, Miss Shyamalee Aponso and Miss Ruwanika Jayasuriya.

In 1989 Priyantha Wijegunawardena from our church family joined the Ministry and became the Secretary of the B Y P A. In 1991, he entered the Pilimathalawa Theological College.

In 1989 the BYPA organised the first trip after 1954 to go to Ratnapura. They visited the Saman Devale, Potthgul Vihare etc. In 1990 the BYPA organised a trip to Hikkaduwa and Rajapakse Walawwa with an olden day antique oven, fridge and a ceiling fan. Martin Wickramasinghe Museum in Koggala and the Galle Fort and the Dutch Church etc. Sri Lanka Baptist Sunday School committee decided to conduct the All Island Sunday School Examination after a lapse of 20 years. Children from our church sat for this examination and achieved excellent results. As the Sunday school children of the previous years didn't receive any certificates, the pastor and the supirintendant issued certificates of completion of the sylabii in the 3 age categories- primary, junior and senior. During this period 37 young people where baptized. By this time the church had grown and the membership was 123.

1991 to 1995 – Rev. George R Lee



Rev. Lee came to us as the Moderator while Kandana, Madampe and Mattakkuliya were also under him. Rev. Wiilie Ranasinghe assisted him from 1991 -1992 residing at Mattakkuliya. From 1993 – 1995 the Evangelist Mr. Lucien Anthony assisted him while residing in his home in Kelaniya. In 1991 our BYPA organised a trip to Sigiriya and Dambulla. In 1992 December 1st “

News Letter” of our church was edited by Mrs. Dora wijesinghe which she did for 20 long years upto December 2012. At the beginning it was published quarterly and then later half yearly and from 2010 on an yearly basis.

On 31st January 1993 the rear section of the Jayasinghe Home which was completed a few years ago was furnished and was declared open by Rev. Dr. W G Wickramasinghe. Rev. and Mrs Lee took great interest to get it opened. The church family and friends of the church donated many utensils and other electrical items.

One of our church members Mr. Sampath Wijesinghe attended the World Baptist Conference held in Zimbabwe in August 1993. The B Y P A organised the annual trip to Kandy, which included climbing Hantane Hill and visiting the Museum and the Botanical Gardens. They also had a cricket match with the Biyanwila youth at the Maharagama grounds. Our cricket and Netball teams were placed 2nd at the matches organised by the S L B S & B Y P A. The Sunday School trip was organised by Mrs. Renuka de Silva the Superintendent of the Sunday School to Pinnawela Elephant orphanage. Rev. Wengadesan conducted a Tamil service on second Sundays and was translated to sinhala by Ashley Sangster.

Under the leadership of Rev. & Mrs. Lee the foundation stone for the second stage of the Jayasinghe Retirement Home was laid by Miss Joy Knapman, the BMS Regional Secretary for Asia on the 5th May 1994 with the funds received from the Baptist Missionary Society in London. The second stage consisted of four double rooms, with attached toilets, a verandah and a sitting room. All the furniture for the verandah and sitting room were donated by the members of our church. This section was declared open by Rev. David Martin a Director of the B M S on 4th April 1995. Mr. Gamini and Mrs. Chitra Samarasinghe and Mr. Stanley and Mrs. Ruth Wijesinghe took the initiative in building the second stage. Mr Anil Samarasinghe of shanthi road was instrumental in building it. In 1994 the Annual Trip organised by the BYPA went to Embekke, Gadalaladeniya, Lankathileke, Kawatayamuna temple and the Aluvihara temple.

The Kandana church was renovated. Rev. Lee was initiative in giving a new life to the Kandana church by starting the services there in the evening. It was under Hendala Church. A christian group from Minuwangoda started worshipping with us. Hendala Church started a bilingual service once a month. Mr. Clarence Mendis and Mr. Emmanuel Guneratnam started the bible class before the Sunday service. The venue was the sitting room of the Jayasinghe Home. DR Lalin Fernando started conducting the Bible study from 1995 at the Dev Asiri Sevana ground floor.

In 1995 the Sunday School children and teachers visited the children’s ward at the Cancer Hospital and made the little patients happy by giving them goodies to eat and toys to play and singing to them and dancing with them. During Rev. Lee’s period 9 babies were dedicated and 11 adults were baptized. The English Mission Praise was donated by Frimley Baptist Church in England. The church membership was then- 140. We bade farewell to Rev. & Mrs. Lee on 27th July 1997 with a thanks giving service followed by dinner.

1996 to 2004 – Rev. Lucien Anthony



Rev. Lucien Anthony came to our church in 1993 as an evangelist under Rev. George Lee. Then he was appointed as Asst. Pastor. When Rev. Lee returned to England he was made our Pastor from 1996 and came to reside in our Manse. His wife Mrs. Rani Anthony was an asset to him and to the church. She was a regular visitor to the homes of sick and elderly church members. Rev. Lucien started a Bible study in the church. We started to visit the patients at the Ragama Rehabilitation Hospital which was a joint venture of the Auxiliaries. On February 16th an all night prayer vigil was held in the church. An action team from the BMS came to Hendala to conduct a programme from 5th March to 13th March 1996. During this period the church doors were open for a time of prayer in the morning. Our pastor and the deacon walter de alwis held a time of special prayers for our church at this time.

On 28th August 1996 delegates from the churches of the Western Province had a special retreat in our church. The BYPA organised the Annual trip to Unawatuna on 30th August 1996. On October 4th the Asian Baptist Women's conference was held at the "Wind Mill Beach Hotel" in Negombo. Five of our members participated. They were Mrs. Dora Wijesinghe, Mrs. Shyamalee Aponso, Mrs. Esmey Wijesinghe, Mrs. Chitra Samarasinghe and Mrs. Jeeva Muthulingam. During the course of the year the parapet wall and a gate was erected parallel to the Kanatte Road, along the Baptist Cemetery by the church.

On 5th January 1997 a retreat for the members of the "Siyana Zone" was held in our church. On March 30th 1997 our Easter service was given a live telecast over Rupavahini channel. Mrs. Sheila de Alwis and the family gifted a Red Carpet to the church in memory of Mr. Leonard de Alwis. On 20th October the BYPA celebrated the 10th Anniversary with Rev. Priyanthe Wijegunawardena as the guest speaker who was the founder Secretary of the BYPA of our church.

On 2nd November 1997 the first memorial service for all our departed members of our church and our families was started. It is still continued on the first Sunday in November. After the service every body present went to the cemetery and held a short service there too. The Men's Fellowship was started on 16th November 1997. Mr. Ruwan Premawardena was elected

President, Mr. Sunny Wijesinghe as Secretary and Mr. K H Ratnapala as the Treasurer. On 21st December our church members staged a play “ Pawuru Walallen Eha” (Beyond the circular Wall) directed by Thiraj Lester which took the form of a Christmas Opera instead of our normal carol service and it was staged in our church. Our choir visited the Leprosy Asylum and made the inmates happy by singing carols and giving them gifts. For the first time a church photograph was taken on 1st February 1998.

On 21st February 1998 we celebrated our 160th Church Anniversary along with half yearly sessions of the Sri Lanka Baptist Sangamaya. Lunch was provided in the Manse premises. The 1st Souvenir Magazine was published on that day. The members of Souvenir Committee were – Mr. Ajith Aponso, Mr. Walter de Alwis, Mr. Sena Wanigasekera, Ms. Dora Wijesinghe, Ms. Ruth Wijesinghe and Ms. Chitra Samarasinghe. The Anniversary song was composed and the tune was set by Mrs. Ramya Wijesinghe one of our church members. it is still sung at our Anniversary services. On September 4th 1998 an all night prayer vigil was held at Ms. Nita Perera’s residence. In August the BYPA of the Sri Lanka Baptist Sangamaya organized a Bible Quiz and our Sunday School team secured the first place. On October 25th our BYPA organised the “ Sudasuna” programme on the Rupavahini channel. On November 29th “Dev Suwa Sewawa” healing service was held on our invitation by Brother Prasad Perera and his team. On 6th December 1998 the Vestry room which was an ardent need was built and dedicated to the Glory of God. On 28th December the Christmas Play produced by Mr. Dharshana Mawela and organised by Mrs. Lucky Mawala was broadcasted by the Sri Lanka Broadcasting corporation. Many of our children took part in it. During this period Mr. Rex Wijeratne assisted our Pastor by serving at Kadana and Minuwangoda mission stations. On July 13th to 18th 1998, Mrs. Dora Wijesinghe and Mrs. Shyamalee Aponso two of our members attended the Asian Baptist Conference held in Taiwan Taipei. Our BWL started to conduct Cottage meetings once a month as and when requested by the church members. On July 24th 1999 the BWL organised a seminar on “Family Life” conducted by our Pastor along with Dr. Lalin Fernando and Mr. Clarence Mendis of our church. The BYPA organized its Annual Trip to Polonnaruwa on 25th September 1999. This year their Annual “Harvest Festival ” held in August was a great success. Our youth organized a one day programme in our church with the youth of the Union Church joining it.

Christmas News Letter took the form of a mini magazine with articles and drawings by our children to welcome the New Millenium. During this time Bro. Sebastian assisted our Pastor but after he changed his residence he left us. Then Bro. Kingsley Sahayam and his wife started work at the Hendala, Minuwangoda and Kadana from October 2000. On 05.10.2000, rev.P. P. Balasooriya Passed away

From January 5th to the 9th 2000, two of our church members participated in the “ World Baptist Conference” in Melbourne, Australia. Mrs. Shyamalee Aponso was our Sri Lankan delegate to represent the BWL. Mr. Ajith Aponso too participated. Our constitution was amended for the 3rd time and approved on 8th May 2000. 5th August 2000.

In 2001 the church got the lands surveyed by the License Surveyor Mr. M D N T Perera and a deed for the cemetery was written by the Notary Public and Lawyer Mrs. T M G Gunewardena. All these documents were handed over to the Sri Lanka Baptist Sangamaya Head Office by our church Secretary Mr. Sampath Wijesinghe. The BYPA organized its Annual trip to “ Bopath Ella” and to Ratnapura visiting tea and rubber factories and the Saman Devale. In 2002 the 1st Lady Priest of the Sri Lanka Baptist Sangamaya Rev. Ranjini Liyanarachchi came to work in our church under our Pastor for one year. On January 12th the BWL visited the Ragama Rehabilitation female ward. Later the BWL gifted 10 plastic chairs and a fan to be used in the ward as requested by them. On 28th January 2002 the BWL organized a seminar on “Child, Mother and Wife” under the leadership of Dr. Lalin Fernando. On 21st April 2002, the Sunday School teachers organized an “Avurudu Ulela” under the leadership of the Superintendent . In August 4th to the 11th 2002 the first “Mens Fellowship Camp” was held in the Salvation Army Centre in Rambukkana. 9 of our men participated. They were Mr. Ajith Aponso, Clarence Mendis, Ruwan Dharmasena, Shiran de Silva, K H Ratnapala, Sena Wanigasekera, Kingsley Sahayam, Lionel Wijesinghe (Kandana) and Vincent Fernando (Minuwangoda).

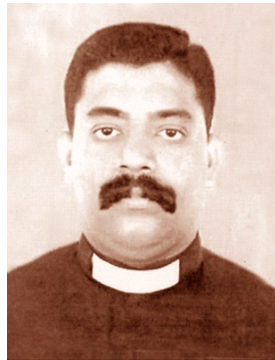
The small church which was built in 1886 was beyond repairs so the church decided to demolish and built a multi storeyed building there. We started building it with the money we had in hand and with a loan from the E C L O F. On 29th February 2002 the foundation stone was laid by Rev. Dr. W G Wickramasinghe to coincide with our 64th Church Anniversary. In 2002 August Mr. Nishantha de Alwis son of Mr & Mrs. Gladwin de Alwis built a parapet wall round the church in memory of late Mr. Edmund and Mrs. Lily de Alwis his grand parents. Mr. Clarence mendis and the President of the Sri Lanka Baptist Sangamaya went to Amsterdam to attend a conference led by Billy Graham, Evangelical Services on “ Gospel to the World” from July 20th to August 6th. The BYPA organised the Annual Trip to “Phahian Rock” and had lunch and a time of relaxation at the “ Gods Little Acre” at Kadalana. In July the BWL organized an United Praise and Song time with the neighbouring churches and on November 11th they had a work shop for the women of the neighbouring Baptist churches. Many participated and they had a wonderful time. Thanks to Mrs. Lucky Mawala our BWL President. On December 10th the church organized a Carol Service and a Christmas tree at Minuwangoda. In 2003, Shyamalee Aponso and Dora Wijesinghe, 2 of our members participated in the asian Baptist womens union meetings held in Okinawa, Japan. On February 2nd 2003, we had the Anniversary Service. On 6th April the BWL had a get-together with the Minuwangoda ladies under the zinc roof the temporary shed built till the new building came up inbetween the Jayasinghe Home and the manse. The 1st building committee members were, pastor, Sampath Wijesinghe (secretary), Ranjith Sudasinghe (treasurer), Gamini Samarasinghe(sec.das), K. H. Rathnapala (treasurer das), Chitra Samarasinghe and Shyamalee Aponso. On May 10th 2003 work on the new building started. Dr.

Asoka Perera a member of the Baptist Church Moratuwa and a lecturer at the Katubadde Campus sent us two of his pupils to guide and supervise the workmanship. After laying the foundation and putting up the columns the 1st slab was laid on July 18th. The 2nd slab was laid

on September 2nd. both were laid by “Orumix” company at Orugodawatta. The 3rd slab was laid on November 7th by Sanken Lanka at Thota Langa. After that a short wall was constructed round the 1st floor and the church started using it as the Sunday School and for other church activities. Then the church members donated iron grills to enclose this floor. On July 9th Rev. Stanley Alwis who served the church for 8 years was called to rest.

On September 14th the “Grand Parents Day” was commemorated under the leadership of Mrs. Taniya Dharmasena, the Superintendent of the Sunday School. In 2004 Brother Ralph Solomon assisted the Pastor before he entered the Theological College. On Sunday the 21st September the Christian Half and Hour over the radio was conducted by our church. On September 9th our Annual Trip was to Brother Raja’s camp in Galle where a simple lunch was served to us. Then we went to Galle Fort and the Ancient Dutch Church. On February 22nd 2004 before the Anniversary service the 1st floor was officially opened by our Senior Deacon Mr. Walter de Alwis and was dedicated to the Glory of God by our Pastor. On 20th March the Hendala BWL visited the Minuwangoda ladies and had a time of fellowship with them. March 26th we had an all night vigil on the 1st Floor conducted by Rev. Lucien Anthony, Rev. Priyantha Wijegunawardena, Dr. Lalin Fernando, Bro. Kingsley Sahayam and Mr. Clarence Mendis. On April 18th the sinhala and tamil avurudu ulela was commemorated and an Avurudu Pola was held. On April 24th the BYPA had their cricket match at the Bangalawatte grounds. On 1st May 2004 Rev. Lucien Anthony and Mrs. Rani Anthony and Rebeca left us to serve at Kadawatha after serving Hendala for 10 years. During this period he had dedicated 41 babies, and baptized 82 people. Some of them were from Minuwangoda and Kandana mission stations. At that period our membership was 160 with the two mission stations, Kandana 22 and Minuwangoda 12.

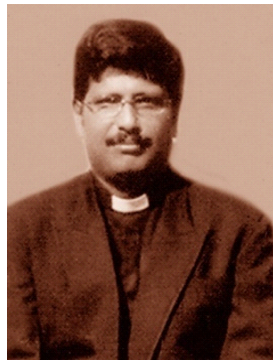
2004 May to 2005 – Rev. Sunil Warshmanage



Rev. Warshmanage came to us straight from the Pilimathalawa Theological College to work here under Rev. Lucien Anthony during his probation period. On May 15th the BWL organized a trip to Guruge Nature Park. The Sri Lanka Baptist Young people’s Auxiliary organised a Talent contest on June 19th at the Carey College hall. Our contestants performed very well at the contest. Miss Allison Adamon came 2nd in the Solo singing section and Mrs. Ramya Wijesinghe was awarded the 1st place for the best script and best tune.

Mr. Ajith Aponso and Mr. Collin Adaman attended the World Conference of the BYPA held in Hong Kong from 4th to 8th 2004. On October 27th our BWL visited the ladies(female) ward at the Maharagama Cancer Hospital. During this period the President of BWL was Mrs. Ruth Wijesinghe who organized many social activities through our BWL. The family members of late Mrs. Susan Jayasinghe donated the small organ to the Jayasinghe Home. On December 19th we had the 1st Christmas party at the Jayasinghe Home we made full use of it to sing the Carols. On 26th December 2004 when the Tsunami disaster affected the coast line of Sri Lanka the dwellers along the coast line of Hendala too were affected. The Hendala Church was able to give the partially completed new building to about 200 homeless people. The ground floor and the 1st floor were used. Mr Kingsley and Mrs. Blossom Gunasekera sent us a donation to be used on Tsunami affected areas. The church under took to re construct the play ground of the Preethipura Children's Home. On 30th March 2005 we had an all night prayer vigil in the 1st floor of the new building. It was lead by Rev. Kingsley Wijekoon, Rev. Ranjini Liyanarachchi and the Pastor of our church. On April 18th the Auxiliaries of the church organized the Avurudhu Ullela. During this period Mrs. Chitra Samarasinghe prepared a set of Funeral Hymn sheets which was first used at Mr. Ruwan Hettiarachchi's (a young member of the Kadawatha Church) funeral when our church members visited the funeral house. During this period six babies were dedicated. Rev. Arty Silva, who was a pastor of our church passed away on 11.11.2005.

2006 to 2009 – Rev. Heshan de Silva



Before Rev. Heshan came to reside in the Manse renovations were done to the church manse by colour washing and constructing the garage to be used as a office room and a bed room On February 24th we had the 168th Anniversary service followed by a Fellowship lunch. The Holy Week programme was observed as usual. On 11th April the pastor organized a retreat at the Dev Asiri Sevena Hall on Church Leadership. The 1st speech was given by our Pastor on the theme “ The Church”. The 2nd speech was given by Rev. Garry Dean on the church Leadership and the 3rd speech was by Mr. Malik Perera of the Cinnamon Gardens Baptist Church on how to prepare the church Mission statement and the vision of our church. Thereafter our church prepared the Mission statement and the vision of the church.

On May 19th our BWL organized a Night Prayer Session. Many members participated. From June 16th – 19th a conference for the young Asian Baptist Women was held at the Browns Beach Hotel Negombo. Mrs. Tania Dharmasena and Ms. Shehanika Wijesinghe participated. Mrs. Dora Wijesinghe and Mrs. Shymalee Aponso were in the Organizing committee. On October 7th 2006 our BYPA organized the Annual Trip to Athagala, Namal Uyana and Dambulle Viharaya. Our pastor conducted the “ALFA” programme to our youth. Our cricket encounter was held at St. Anthony’s grounds on October 24th.

From October 1st 2006 two social service projects were started in the 1st floor and in the ground floor of the Dev Asiri Sevana Building. The free English classes for the needy children in the area and needle work, knitting & crochet classes for their mothers. Miss Kamini Jayasuriya and Mrs. Chitra Samarasinghe organised the English classes. Mrs. Shehanika Wijesinghe, Mrs. Mihiranzie Samarasinghe and Mrs. Rajitha Fonseka conducted the English classes. Mrs. Annette Alles conducted the knitting and crochete classes and Mrs. Neeta Perera and Miss Rose Walsalem conducted the needle work classes. Mr. Gamini Samarasinghe the founder Secretary of the “Dev Asiri Sevana” and the committee were instrumental in starting these projects. Our church is grateful for the volunteer services they rendered to Glorify the Name of God. The BMS London sent a grant to the Dev Asiri Sevana Fund to purchase the necessary equipment and furniture to conduct these classes. This year a joint Christmas party of the Sunday school and the English classes was held at the Dev Asiri Sevana hall. Further more the Sunday School gifted school bags to the English class children. On December 24th the BWL provided lunch to the Preethipura Childrens Home.

On the 1st Sunday in January our Pastor introduced a Service of Promise or covenant Sunday to our church. On the 11th March our B Y P A cricket team took part in the inter church matches organised by the Sri Lanka Baptist Young People’s Auxiliary. On 24th February 2007 we celebrated our 169th Anniversary and on that day 17 adults were baptized. March 10th Nine of our ladies participated in a one day programme held at Makewita for the BWL members of the Western Zone. On 14th April 2007 the ladies of the BWL visited the Minuwangoda ladies and Mrs. Sugantha Guneratnam demonstrated how to make Fancy Candles to them. On May 1st our B Y P A had a shramadana to clean the cemetery. On May 31st a joint workshop for about 80 young people was organized by the Hendala & Nugegoda BYPA in our church on love and sex. On 24th of May, a church retreat was held at the dev asiri sevana conducted by Mr. Elmo de Mel.

On July 15th a Thanks Giving Service for the life and work of Rev. F A Peiris (50th death anniversary) and Mrs. Mabel Peiris (26th death anniversary) was held in our church. Rev. Kingsley Perera the President of the Sri Lanka Baptist Sangamaya was the guest preacher. Rev. D E Weerasinghe and Mr. Bernard Premawardena made the tributes. The special prayer was given by Mrs. Ruth Wijesinghe, a church deacon. The family donated the much needed Church Bell in memory of their parents. The 1st bell was rung by our Pastor Rev. Heshan de Silva at 9.30am on that day.

On 26th September the BYPA organized its Annual Trip to Pinnawela Elephant Orphanage, Embekke, Gadaladeniya , Hulu Ganga and the Trinity College Chapel. Professor and Mrs. Aponso hosted them for tea in the evening. On October 18th the Annual Cricket encounter was held.

During the course of the year our Pastor organized Sunday evening programmes with religious films shown in the church. Praise and worship services were started once a month. Brother Joseph Andradi and Brother Vincent helped the Pastor during this period.

From January 1st 2008 the Kandana Mission Centre which was under the Hendala Church was recognised by the Sri Lanka Baptist Sangamaya as a fully fledged church. On 23rd February we celebrated our 170th Anniversary of our church and the half yearly sessions of the SLBS was held here. On that day the church hall in Dev Asiri Sevena building was dedicated to the Glory of God and declared open officially by Rev. Kingsley Perera the President of the SLBS amidst 700 participants. We hosted them for lunch. Our 2nd souvenir was published and distributed on that day. The souvenir committee consisted of Mrs. Dora Wijesinghe, Mr. Sena Wanigasekera, Mrs. Chitra Samarsinghe, Mr. Lalith Wanigasekera, Mrs. Jeyakala Lawrence, Mr. Marimuttu Devadas, Mr. Thushara Thomas, and Miss Dholani Mawala.

On 20th March 2008 Rev. Dr. W G Wickramasinghe was called to rest and his remains were cremated at the General Cemetery Borella. On 22nd March the ashes were buried in our cemetery . He had served our church from 1944 to 1947, and 1967 to 1970. The latter while being the Principal of Carey College which he held for 21 years. Our church building stands as a living monument in his name as he was instrumental in getting a grant to build it from the Baptist World Alliance.

On July 26th “Kiripani Yuwala” a one day work shop was held in our church conducted by Rev. Ananda Amarasinghe and Mrs. Amarasinghe of A O G church. A Bible Vacation School camp was held from Sept. 12th to the 14th for our Sunday School children and the Convent Lane Methodist Church children at the Dev Asiri Sevena and the church. It was conducted by Mrs. Mercy Ponniah and her team.

On November 13th to 16th the “Living Waters” conference was held at the Vigro Center in Madampe. Our Pastor, along with Mr. Emmanuel Guneratnam, Mr. K H Ratnapala, Mrs. Shyamalee Aponso, Mrs. Jeyakala Lawrence, Mr. Vincent Fernando and Miss Iresha Fernando participated. On 29th November there was a meeting for the participants of the “Siyana Kalape” in our church. On 12th December 2008 the Jayasinghe Home Committee with the help of the Sunday School teachers commemorated the Elders Day which was scheduled for 1st October and postponed due to the demise of Mrs. Delecia de Silva our Pastor’s mother.

On 7th -9th January 2009 Golden Jubilee Celebrations of the Asian Baptist Womens League, was held in Calcutta. Mrs. Shyamalee Aponso and Mrs. Ramya Wijesinghe participated. On January 13th an All night Prayer Vigil was held at the residence of Mr and Mrs. Shiran & Renuka de

Silva. Our Pastor, Rev. Priyantha Wijegunawardena, Mr. Saman Wijesinghe and Bro. Vincent Fernando and the Minuwangoda members too participated. On January 16th our senior deacon Mr. Walter de Alwis who did so much for the church passed away. On 2009 Mr. Vincent Fernando of Minuwangoda was appointed to assist the pastor specially with the Minuwangoda work. On 22nd February 2009, our 171st Anniversary Service was held and followed by Fellowship lunch. On 11th April 2009 our Pastor organised a retreat at the Dev Asiri Sewena for the leaders of the church. Rev. Shehan Fernando of the Methodist Church and our own Rev. Kingsley Wijekoon conducted it. The Easter Week programmes were held as scheduled. The Easter Eggs were gifted to the Nayakakanda Catholic Elders Home. Our B Y P A organised an outing to the Guruge Park to have a “ fun time” on 5th May 2009. Our B W L organised a bring and buy sale to purchase the necessary items for the lady inmates and their children under 5 years of age at the Welikada Prison.

Mr. Dharshana Mawala organised a seminar in the church on June 7th on the theme “Praising God with Musical Instruments”. On June 9th Mr. Ajith and Mrs. Shymalee Aponso donated an electric organ in memory of Rev. Dr. Willie and Mrs. Resta Wickramasinghe. The old Yamaha Organ was shifted to the Sunday School Hall and our own student Naveen Fernando started playing it for the Sunday School worship time. On 5th July an All night prayer vigil was held at Mr. Shiran and Mrs. Disna de Alwis’ residence. Our Pastor and brother Vincent conducted it.

On 15th August 2009 our B W L visited the ladies at the Welikada Prison with necessary items they needed to improve their self employment projects. B W L is grateful to our Pastor’s wife Ronali for donating a Zig Zag machine through the “Smile Lanka” to be gifted to them. Other sewing materials such as scissors and tapes were purchased from the money received from the “sale . During the Presidency of Mrs. Ruth Wijesinghe many projects were started and Mrs. Ranjini Senaratne continued them. On 30th August our Pastor organized the “Family Sunday”. After the morning service the participants were divided according to the age groups and separate meetings were held. In the evening a United Service was held in the church. On 10th October the BYPA organized the Annual Trip to Hiniduma.

Rev. Sunera Vaz Gunawardena came to our church in mid year to complete his probation period under our Pastor. He started a “Bala Samajaya” a childrens club on 10th October 2009. The BWL visited the Welikada Prison with Christmas gifts and made the ladies and children happy and conducted a Christmas programme. This year the B Y P A was much concerned about the inmates of our Jayasinghe Home, They organized “Sing Song Evening” and took them to the beach. Rev. Heshan ably guided us with a solid Bible study. He completed many books of the Bible during his period of office. The venue at first was the church which was later shifted to the Jayasinghe Home for the benefit of all the inmates. 11 babies were dedicated and 32 were baptized. The membership was 163 + 10 from Minuwangoda. The farewell dinner for the Pastor and his family was held on the 31st of December 2009.

2010 to 2014 – Rev. Ranjani Liyanarachchi



Rev. Ranjani served in our church under Rev. Lucien during her probation period in 2002. In 2010 she came back to us as the Pastor. Before she came to reside the hall area of the Manse and the wash room was tiled.

On February 7th Pastor introduced the fellowship cup of tea after the church service. The church members donated 150 ceramic cups to the church to be used for the fellowship tea. The Christmas gifts donated by the Sunday School children on Christmas day was gifted to the Home at Gonawela. Special Prayer time in the church on Fridays was introduced by her.

On 28th February 2010 with our 172nd Church Anniversary the dormitory in the 2nd floor was declared open by Mr. Gamini Samarasinghe the founder Secretary of the “Dev Asiri Sevena” committee and a deacon, and dedicated by Rev. Kingsley Perera the President of the SLBS. The electric cross fitted to the black cross on the front of the church was a donation from a church member in July 2010.

The Sri Lanka Baptist Women’s league held its annual camp at the Dev Asiri Sevena from March 5th to the 7th. As a joint venture of all the auxiliaries the Avurudu Ullela was held in front of the Manse. Brother Roshan Algama came to serve our Church under Rev. Ranjani Liyanarachchi before going to the Theological College at Pilimathalawa. On June 20th 2010 Miss Upeka Wijesinghe went to Singapore under the sponsorship of the Singapore Baptist Theological College to follow a course held there. On July 11th a healing service was held in our church by Brother Prasad and his team.

On June 9th sister Ronali wife of Rev. Heshan de Silva who was our Pastor the previous year was called to rest. She was a great asset to him and to our church. A Thanks giving service for her life and service was held in our church on 11th August 2010. Mrs. Shyamalee Aponso commenced a weekly Bible study at Mrs. Devika de Alwis’s residence at Kerawalapitiya for our House Wives.

On 10th October the Jayasinghe Home committee with the help of the Sunday School teachers organized a get to gether of all the over 60’s in the church and the inmates of the Jayasinghe Home. They had a time of sing song, fun games and a light dinner. The Pastor gave the message. A small token was given to the participants. An article and some photographs

appeared in the Lanka Woman magazine November edition. On October 16th the Sunday School had an Art and Craft Exhibition to commemorate the Childrens Day. The Sunday School childrens picnic was to the Pamunugama Environmental Holiday Resort. BWL had their Annual Pola and continued to have the cottage meetings. Dev Asiri Sevana got a grant of Rs.75000/= from farms Lanka for the on going projects. On October 31st the Dev Asiri Holiday Home was declared open and dedicated to the Glory of God by our Pastor Rev. Ranjani Liyanarachchi. Singing of the Doxology commenced during this period. The year ended with the usual Christmas Programmes, 31st night fellowship dinner and the watch night service was held.

On 27th February 2011 we celebrated our 173rd Church Anniversary. From 18th to 20th March Sri Lanka Baptist Womens League Camp was held at Dev Asiri Sevana. Many of our BWL members too participated. On March 15th the BWL had a Mini Pola to collect money for the Killinochchi project. From April 9th to the 10th the Junior Sunday School camp was held in the Dev Asiri Sevana and in the church. The usual prayer meetings were held during the Easter Week. The Easter Eggs and the dry rations collected on Easter Day was gifted to the Welisara Elders Home. On 16th to 18th May the Sunday School Senior Camp was held at the Dev Asiri Sevana. On June 15th our BYPA organized a workshop on the theme " Who am I, What is my vocation, My marriage" conducted by an Air Force trainer Mr. Ratnasiri Dissanayake. The annual BYPA cricket encounter was held at the Nayakakanda Roman Catholic church grounds. This year the BYPA organized its annual trip to Ratnapura to see Belihul Oya, Saman Devale and the Pothgul Viharaya. On October 16th The Sunday School had its Hand Work and Art Exhibition. During the year 2011 BWL conducted many hand work demonstrations after the 2nd Sunday service by our church lady members. The christmas programmes were held according to the schedule. In 2011 Church Secretary, Dilhan wijesinghe introduced sending news alerts through SMS on any important news of the church family. On 31st night the fellowship dinner was not held but the Watch Night service was held.

From 2012 our parish priest took the sole of managing the Minuwangoda mission centre and brother Vincent was released of his responsibilities. On January 14th 2012 the Annual Teacher Training programme was held at the Dev Asiri Sevana building. On February 19th the 174th Anniversary service was held. On 19.2.2012 A Website <http://hendalabaptistchurch.lk> was launched, a dedicated email info@hendalabaptistchurch.com was set up and A Face Book page by the name of Hendala Baptist Church was created by Rev. Priyantha Wijegunawardena, President, Sri Lanka Baptist Sangamaya. On March 17th Sri Lanka Baptist Women's League organized a "Jubilee Pola" at the Cinnamon Gardens baptist church premises. Our BWL too had a stall in it. On April 15th all the Baptist churches in the island had a thanks giving service to celebrate the Bi Centenary of the Baptist Mission in Sri Lanka. On April 16th a special Thanks giving service was held at the Grandpass Baptist Church. Many of our church members participated. Miss Ruwanthi Wijesinghe of our church was a member of the Jayanthi choir. Many representatives from other denominations were invited for this service. On May 20th there was a special programme for the members of the churches in the "Siyana Kalape" in our church.

The pastor started a free tuition class on Sunday evenings at Mrs. Juanita Moorthi's residence at Matagoda to the needy children in the area. Mr. Manishin Fonseka, Mr. Dulanjan de Alwis, Mr. Dileepa Fernando went there to teach Sinhala and Maths. The church committee had a retreat at Dev Suwa Sevawa in Moratuwa on two consecutive years with Brother Prasad leading it.

Our BYPA organised a work shop on the theme "We'll Worship Our Lord Unitedly" conducted by Rev. Father Jeevantha Peeris. The members of the neighbouring churches too participated and there were about 80 participants. Our church decided to cover the 3rd floor with an alumetal roof. It was erected in July. On 31st August 2012 the Bi Centenary Public Meeting was held in the Carey College Hall. Many of our church members participated. Arch Bishop Righ Rev. Malcom Cardinal Ranjith was the chief guest at the public meeting. Rev. David Corrigan conducted the thanks giving service which was held in the New Chapel at Carey College. Rev Dr. Chou Wood too represented the Asian Baptist Conference.

On October 7th our Sunday School teachers wore the Sunday School Saree worn by Sunday School teachers of all religious groups in the Island for the first time to commemorate the World Teachers Day which falls on October 6th. On October 21st the Sunday School children's talent show was held. The inmates of the Jayasinghe Retirement Home were the special guests at the occasion. The BWL gave them baskets of fruits and a token to commemorate the Elders Day. On October 29th the Sunday School children were taken to Guruge Nature Park to commemorate the Childrens Day. On December 1st Sunday after the service there was a pola organised by the Dev Asiri Sevena Mothers who wanted their handi crafts and food items sold. On December 10th BWL conducted a shrama dhanaya at the Jayasinghe Retirement Home.

The Christmas Progarmme was held as usual. On 31st night the Fellowship Dinner was held at the Dev Asiri Sevena followed by the Watch Night Service.

On 25th January 2013 the Jayasinghe Retirement Home celebrated the 20th Anniversary by a thanks giving service held in the church and thereafter serving sweet meats at the home. The Guest Speaker was Mr. Nihal Perea who was the SLBS Secretary during the inception of the Home. The guest preacher was Sister Chandrani from St. Margrets Home, Polwatte.

2013 was a special year for us as we were celebrating our 175th Church Anniversary. Therefore our Pastor invited Guest preachers from other denominations to speak prior to the anniversary service, which was held in the evenings from January 13th to February 10th. On February 9th Mr. Lakshman Wijesinghe one of our church members held an eye camp at the Dev Asiri Sevena in coloboration with the Wattala Lions Club. About 80 people got their eyes tested and received free spectacles. On 17th February we celebrated our 175th Anniversary. Right Rev. Diloraj Canagasabay, the Anglican Bishop of the Colombo diocese was the guest preacher. Rev. Priyantha Wijegunawardena SLBS President chaired the service. Our 3rd souvenir magazine was published. The souvenir committee consisted of Mrs. Ruth Wijesinghe, Mrs. Chitra Samarasinghe, Mrs. Anula Rupesinghe, Miss Dholani Mawalage, Mrs. Jeyakala Lawrence & Mr.

Dilhan Wijesinghe. Our President opened our Web Site. The day's programme ended with a fellowship lunch.

The stage and the carpets at the Dev Asiri Sevena ground floor were dedicated on 31st March 2013 and 28th April 2013 respectively. During the course of the year the stage curtains were put up. On March 9th the Sri Lanka Baptist Mens Fellowship organized a "Pola" at the premises of the Cinnamon Gardens Baptist Church. Our Men's Fellowship too had a stall in it. The prayer meetings during the Holy Week were held as scheduled. Our BYPA organized an Avurudu Ullala in front of the Manse. On 18th May 2013 the church members of the "Upper Room" Anglican Church celebrated their 25th Anniversary as their beginnings were in our small church from 1969 and worshiped here till 1988.

On 19th September 2013 the Cinnamon Gardens Baptist Sunday School organized a special programme called the "Bible Olympics" with Bible Quizes and Bible Games to mark their Bi Centenary of their church. Our Sunday School banner was placed 2nd and Doreishan Devadas from our church got a special award. Most of our Sunday School children participated in it.

Under the leadership of our Men's Fellowship on 29.9.2013 a "Variety entertainment of Worship Songs" was held at our Dev Asiri Sevena hall, The choirs from the Siyana Kalape took part in it. On 5.10.2013 the Ministry of the Christian Affairs organised a drama workshop at the Dev Asiri Sevena Hall in connection with the Christian literary Festival. Our President Rev. Priyantha Wijegunawardena and our church Secretary Mr. Dharshana Mawala were the co-ordinators. On 8th October 2013 Mrs. Shyamalee Aponso and Mrs. Ramya Wijesinghe participated in the Asian Baptist Women's Conference held in Seoul Korea.

On 13th October 2013 the Multi Media Projector was dedicated to the Glory of God. It was a donation given to the Dev Asiri Sevena and to be used for church activities. Throughout the month of October the Childrens' Day, Teachers Day, Sunday School handi craft exhibition and the talent show took place.

On 22nd October 2013 Rev. Sunil de Silva who had been our Pastor for 7 years was called to rest. His funeral service was conducted by the SLBS President Rev. Priyantha Wijegunawardena, Rev. Gayan Gunasekara and our Pastor along with other pastors .

From 11th to 13 November the Leadership Residential training programme of the Leads Association conducted by the SLBS was held in the Dev Asiri Sevena Hall. A "Ramp" was built for the Jayasinghe Home building. The Jayasinghe Home sisters were taken on a City Tour on 9.12.2013 at their request. Our Home committee and the over 60's of the church joined the trip. They were taken on the Katunayake High Way too. Mrs. Dora Wijesinghe who dedicated herself to edit the church News Letter from 1992 to 2012 stepped down from it and Mrs. Ruth Wijesinghe took over from 2013. The Christmas programmes were held according to the schedule. The choir went house to house caroling by bus. On 31st night the BWL organised the

Fellowship dinner and the BYPA organised a fun time. They showed a past drama videoed in 2000 and the year's programme were screened. The year ended with the Watch Night Service.

On January 2014 our Men's Fellowship organized a prayer time on Poya Days. The first prayer session was held on January 15th in the 3rd floor of the Dev Asiri Sevena. On January 26th Rev. Sunil de Silva's memorial service was held in our church. On February 2nd the house of Mr. Leslie Alwis of Kudagahapitiya was blessed. Our Men's Fellowship helped him to complete the house as one of their projects. Our Sunday School children were taken to see "Ape Gama" on 14th February 2014. On the 15th Siyana Kalape BYPA's had a one day programme at the Dev Asiri Sevena.

Our 176th Church Anniversary service was held on 16th February and Rev. Priyantha Wijegunawardena, President of the S L B S was the Guest preacher. The 3rd floor of the Dev Asiri Sevena building was opened and blessed by him. All thanks and praise to god, we were able to complete the 4 storied building with our own effort.

Our BWL commenced the monthly Prayer meetings from February this year. They also organised a Night Prayer Vigil in the newly consecrated uppermost floor on February 23rd.

As a social project we lent the 3rd floor from 23rd February to have weekly meetings of the Alcoholics Anonymous (A. A.) under the leadership of Mr. Jeremy Dias from 6.30pm onwards on every Saturday.

The BYPA organized a Praise and Worship service on 30th March in the Dev Asiri Hall. The eggs and dry rations which was gifted on Easter day was gifted to the "Rainbow Childrens Home" at Gonawela. Our Men's fellowship organized a shrama danaya on May 1st to clean up the Dev Asiri Sevana Building. They also organized the Annual Church Trip to visit Matara, Polhena and Hummanaye "Blow Hole" on 12th July. This year too Brother Prasad and his team came to our church to conduct a healing service. Our choir participated at the open air service held in Makewita to celebrate their 174th Anniversary. In October the Childrens Day, Teachers Day and the Elders day were celebrated in the church. On the 19th the Elders Get together was organized by the committee of Jayasinghe Home for the inmates of the Home and the elders of the church family.

Rev. Sunil de Silva's 1st year Memorial Service was held on the 26th of October. The Sunday School had their year end hand work exhibition on 8th November. The year end programmes were held according to the schedule. Before the watch night service the usual fellowship dinner took the form of a farewell dinner to Rev. Ranjani Liyanarachchi who was our Pastor for 5 years.

During her period there were two dedications and 18 baptisms. The membership list was revised in 2013 and now it stands at 143 + 12 from Minuwangoda.

2015 – up to date Rev. Shriyan Jayamanne



Rev. Shriyan Jayamanne, son of Rev. Denzil Jayamanne, a former President of the SLBS came to serve as our Minister. Prior to his arrival a wash room was constructed adjoining the spare room at the rear of the Manse. Rev., Mrs Jayamanne and the family were welcomed to our Church on 4.1.2015. The opening of the church doors in the mornings during week days for two hours was reintroduced from 2.2.2015. Our anniversary service was conducted by Rev. Lucian Anthony on 22.02.2015. Rev. Jayamanne introduced to hold Independence Day services in our church from 4.2.2015. Brother Prasad Perera conducted the Church retreat on 15.3.2015 after the service. The Easter Programmes were conducted in the usual manner.

Many of our church families participated in “The Door” convention conducted by the SLBS held at the Carey College and Yasodara Girls College. Our BWL organized a semi-night prayer vigil on 27.3.2015, which was conducted by Rev. Kingsley Wijekoon. Brother Bandula was invited to give his testimony at a prayer meeting held on 30.10.2015. The Men’s fellowship held their 20th anniversary service in our church. Rev. Willie Ranasinghe, the Vice President of the SLBS was the guest speaker. On 5.4.2015, the BYPA held a musical programme “The Boat 2” at the Dev Asiri Sevena hall. On 3.10.2015, the Jayasinghe Home committee organized an elders day for the inmates and the over 60s of the church family. Rev. Shriyan Jayamanne delivered the message. From September 2015, Mr Lionel Jayaweera was appointed to assist the Minuwangoda Mission station under our Pastor. At the end of the year, evening service at Awarakotuwa, Elakanda was started.

On 3.1.2016 the Covenant Sunday was resumed. Brother Elroy and Rukshani David were sent to Hendala to understudy our Minister. Dev Asiri Apartment was given to them to reside by our Church. Mrs. Merium Senaratne’s 50th and Mr Aronolis De Alwis’s 60th death anniversary services were held in our Church. On 31.1.2016 Brother Lucky Devasri and his Army of the Lord conducted a Praise and Worship service at the invitation of our Minister. On 14.2.2016 our Church Choir was re-organized by our Pastor and a Junior Coir was commenced under Mrs Shehanika Wijesinghe. “The Musical Notations for the Christian Hymnal” compiled by Mrs Chitra Samarasinghe was launched at the SLBS half yearly sessions. The BWL Centenary celebrations too were held on the same day (27.2.2016) at the Carey College Hall. Many of our BWL members participated at this event. Audio and video visuals on Special Sunday sermons are uploaded on Facebook from 24.1.2016 and from 7.2.2016 videos on Special Sunday sermons

too are uploaded on YouTube. We much appreciate the joint efforts of Mr. Upali de Alwis and Mr. Dilhan Wijesinghe for their hard work and dedication. In August our Sunday School children participated in the Sunday School camp held at 'Vigro', Madampe. Our Sunday School team won the Zonal trophy this year. Our Sunday School drama represented the National Christian Council at the final competition conducted by Christian ministry. We are grateful to Mrs. Renuka de Silva and Mrs. Shyama Jayamanne for taking the initiative to train them. On 02.04.2016 BWL organized a mini sale and Rs. 50,000/= out of the proceeds were sent to Maharagama cancer hospital to swell the funds to purchase a pet scanner. The BYPA organized 'Boat 3', an evening filled with entertainment in order to glorify God. On 16.09.2016 the BYPA along with the Men's Fellowship organized a cricket match at the RC church grounds Nayakakanda. The end the year fellowship dinner was held after the carol service instead of before the watch night service.

BWL Syana Zonal meeting was held at the DAS on 28.01.2017 on February 18th the church purchased a generator and was installed for the use of the church and DAS. Under the leadership of our pastor Sunday School camp for our children was held at DAS conducted by Brother Justin Fonseka of the Child Evangelism Fellowship. The holy week program went according to schedule. On February 2017, the church constitution which was revised for the 4th time was tabled and adopted. The holy week programme went according to schedule. The Holy Trinity Church at Grandpass which began to hold their Tamil and Sinhala Bible studies in Dev Asiri hall from June 2016, is presently conducting a bilingual service on every Sunday evening on then 3rd floor. In June 2017 our Pastor was given the opportunity to gain exposure in a Pastor's Conference held in Seoul held in Korea. On 8th June Poya day, the Bible study took the form of a retreat and was conducted by Bro. Dilantha Liyanage of the World Evangelical Fellowship. On August 6th 2017, the 180th Church Anniversary photograph was taken. A Korean team conducted a workshop on 18th August for the Sunday school for the English class students In September, Ajith and Shayamalee Aponso went to Indonesia to participate at the 9th Asia Pacific Baptist Conference

It was decided at a church meeting to renovate the church building which was now 35years old. The work of it was started during the last quarter of the year. The shape of the door was changed and anew door was replaced. A ceiling was installed. The lighting system was changed and the building repainted.

Under the leadership of Upali de Alwis the media unit of the church decided to change our existing logo giving it a more Biblical meaning but continuing the three crosses inserted in a maroon colour .

The end of the year programs went according to schedule

We will be celebrating our 180th church anniversary on 24th February 2018 hosting the half yearly sessions of the S.L.B.S in our church. The guest speaker will be Pastor Neville Fernando of the

Kings Revival Church International. During the three year period of Rev.Jayamana 10 babies were dedicated and 11 believers were baptized. The total membership is 200.