

Dear family  
and dear friends and companions of M. Jayapaul.

On April 23, 2024, our brother and friend M. Jayapaul passed away in Vellore at the age of 72. We remember him with great sadness and at the same time with great gratitude.

Through Christ and the love for our brother, we are and will remain connected. What a wealth! The Shalom Foundation, the FMD, e/motion and above all many, many individuals are united in a wonderful way in the service of Christ and the people. Jayapaul has played a very central and decisive role in this connection.

While still working for Kindernothilfe (KNH), Jayapaul helped our partner church, the GSELC in Andhra Pradesh, to set up the hostel work. In October 1989, he was a guest at our Mission-Center for two weeks for the first time. Jayapaul was particularly inspired by the idea of the 'Hausgemeinde' in Hanstedt. He shared this idea of a spiritual center with 'lifetrainees' with his brothers and sisters from 'Shalom'. When the property in Yelagiri was found, the vision could become reality and from then on, close contact was established between the MZ-Hanstedt and the Yelagiri center. Since the early 1990s, there have been regular reciprocal visits and many wonderful friendships have developed. In 1995, Stefan Jung was part of a group I led in Vellore, did an internship there shortly afterwards and brought the relationship with the Shalom Foundation into the e/motion community that was founded later. Fraternal relationships have developed between all of us and the deep, trusting relationship with Jayapaul in particular has enriched us. It was not the institutions, but the personal relationships that carried us through extremely blessed years of service for Christ and the people. In 2008, the partnership between Yelagiri Center and MZ Hanstedt was sealed in a written agreement.

We laughed a lot together. I will never forget Jayapaul's dry sense of humor. For example, he commented on a church that had to be cut in half because of the highway construction with: "Now they can finally fill their church on Sundays." We discussed about Indian and world history many times. Jayapaul was very concerned about the developments in India in recent years. I was able to talk to him not only about our concerns and the turbulence in our Indian partner church, but also about personal crises. He was a real friend. Jayapaul listened and asked questions. We prayed together, talked about our theological and biblical understanding. Unlike many others I have met (not only) in India, Jayapaul was not primarily concerned with his organization and certainly not with himself. He wanted us and me to be well. Hospitality was his top priority. When I arrived in my room as a 'frequent traveler', my bed was already raised at the head end with specially made blocks. Jayapaul was the most reliable partner you could wish for. Whether it was about money, accounts and reports, keeping appointments or talking about what was on our minds - Jayapaul was a role model and the best example of a successful partnership. We were able to learn from him what 'mission' really is: unconditional service to people and dedication to Jesus Christ.

It was so nice to see Brother Jayapaul proud and, above all, grateful. When he showed us and me 'his Yelagiri paradise' and we walked through the hills or went into the village, we always had many conversations with the locals. It was palpable: everyone, really everyone, liked and respected the small and yet so tall man. Modest, reserved and yet determined and full of trust in God, Jayapaul lived his calling. That's what made him special!

We last met in Vellore in February of this year. I hoped he would recover and he looked better than he had in October last year. We also talked about dying, heaven and what really matters in life. We were both from the same 'good year 1951', by the way, and we agreed. It wasn't the organization, the projects or even the buildings we built that would count in the end, but "names written in heaven". It is what the living God brings to people in this world through us that counts! And through M. Jayapaul, God has given this world and all of us an infinite amount.

We at FMD mourn with you and all of Jayapaul's friends and the Shalom Foundation for this great man of God. We will never forget him. The relationship with the Shalom Foundation and especially the Yelagiri Center will continue. We will always miss Jayapaul, especially probably during visits there.

Nevertheless, we know that we are connected as citizens in God's kingdom. God's kingdom extends not only from India to Germany, but into eternity. In this hope, we are certain that we will see our brother again one day. When I said goodbye to him in February, this was also a possibility that we raised and that made us happy and serene.

To all of you who are mourning M. Jayapaul in India or here in Germany - we are praying for you and are connected with you and with each other.

On behalf of the FMD, especially from the members of the World Mission Working Group (Eckard H. Krause, Arne Hildebrand, Gundel Mittmann, Ewald Pollmann, Dieter Pintatis, Andreas Tuttas) I greet you with the biblical Easter greeting: "The Lord is risen!"

Yours in Christ



Hanstedt, April 23.04.2024

