

Plymouth & Exeter District *of the Methodist Church*

Partnership with the Diocese of Cuttack

The churches of District and the Diocese of Cuttack hope to unite in the Spirit and, through prayer and preaching, remember and encourage their partnership.

The Church of North India (CNI) is a united church established in 1970 by bringing together the main Protestant churches working in northern India.

The Diocese of Cuttack is situated in Orissa, one of India's seven poorest states. Approximately 2% of the population of Orissa (estimated at 45m) are Christian. It is an area which retains a heavy Baptist influence from the work of the Baptist Missionary Society. The Rt. Revd. Surendra Kumar Nanda is the Bishop of Cuttack.

The Diocese is divided into 4 Pastorate Unions, each comprising a number of Pastorates, around 140 congregations, and an estimated 12,500 communicant members.

The Diocese works with partners to support a number of educational establishments, including 5 Stewart Schools, a Skills Centre at Mohana, and teacher training college, as well as a Christian Hospital at Berhampur.

The area includes the large urban populations of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack, the coastal tourist resort of Puri with its historic Hindu temple, as well as numerous fishing communities.

Inland, the area is predominantly rural, mountainous and remote. Between 80-90% of the population in this area is made up of scheduled castes (Dalit) and scheduled tribes (Adivasi).

'Dalit' is the name
the people have
given to themselves
- it means 'broken'

The idea of setting aside a Sunday to focus on our Partnership emerged during Bishop Nanda's visit to Britain last year. We have mutually agreed that the Sunday before Lent will, each year, be an occasion when we will pray for each other and, if possible, preach about unity in Christ.

The theme for 'Cuttack Sunday' is **Transfigured for a Purpose** with a particular focus on the call to share the Good News wherever we are in God's world. Elijah hands over responsibility to Elisha (2 Kings) whilst the Transfiguration of Jesus is a pivotal moment in the Gospels as Jesus moves towards the fulfilment of all things (Mark)

The suggested Lectionary readings are:

- 2 Kings 2:1-12
- Psalm 50:1-6
- 2 Corinthians 4:3-6
- Mark 9:2-9

Other readings are also suggested on the leaflet prepared for distribution.

Please will you join with us on Sunday, 11th February 2017 as we pray for our sisters and brothers in the Diocese of Cuttack? They will be praying for us.

The prayer requests received from our partners in the Diocese of Cuttack are:

1. Please pray for the Churches of the Diocese of Cuttack as they strive to follow Christ in difficult and challenging circumstances.
2. Pray for the Evangelists, as well the Mission and Evangelism desk of the Diocese of Cuttack, as they preach the gospel to the unreached, pray for God's divine protection on them as they face threats to their life and property
3. Pray that the leadership of the Diocese of Cuttack under guidance of the Bishop Nanda, may they be able to know, to discern and to lead in the way that God wants the Diocese to go.

In addition:

The Plymouth & Exeter District has established a 'Cuttack Fund' to support the development of our Partnership. The Fund seeks to make it possible for some from Cuttack to make a visit to the District, also to give small grants to those from our District who could not otherwise make a visit to Cuttack.

Contributions to the Fund are welcome and should be sent to the District Treasurer in the usual way.

Cuttack Sunday 2019 - 3rd March 2019

Cuttack Sunday 2020 - 23rd February 2020

You might like to know that the following prayer requests have been submitted to the Diocese of Cuttack:

The uncertain political situation following the decision to withdraw from the European Union is a continuing concern, particularly for Europeans living and working in Britain. At the same time, the Church is struggling to make the claims of the Gospel heard above the clamour of technology and celebrity. Churches are struggling to identify their mission as the average age of church congregations increases.

Therefore, we invite our sisters and brothers in the Diocese of Cuttack to pray for:

1. stability within a climate of political uncertainty.
2. the Christian Church in this land, that she may regain her voice within society.
3. small rural communities, giving thanks for the faithfulness of elderly Christians, and praying that God enables us to witness to every generation.