

***TARA JOY JAMES (1931-2001)***

***“MORE ALIVE THAN EVER”***

***THE STORY OF TARA JOY JAMES***

**Vivienne Stacey (2004)**

## Contents

Contents	p. 2
Acknowledgments	p. 3
Foreword	p. 4
Preface	p. 5
Chapter 1 Tara's background	p. 7
Chapter 2 As her family saw her	p. 9
Chapter 3 As her friends saw her	p. 43
Chapter 4 As PFES saw her	p. 82
Chapter 5 Tara speaks for herself	p. 95
Chapter 6 As God sees her	p. 102
Epilogue	p. 103
Appendix 1 Archdeacon Ihsan Ullah	p. 104
Appendix 2 Archdeacon Barkat Ullah	p. 107
Appendix 3 History of the Pakistan Fellowship of Evangelical Students	p. 109
Bibliography	p. 115

## **Acknowledgments**

This is Tara's book. We all dedicate it to her. I am very grateful to Banner for requesting me to write it. It has been a privilege. It is essentially a book to glorify God whom Tara so faithfully loved and followed. I wish to thank Bishop Mano Ramalshah for his excellent Preface. I thank every one who has contributed to this account of Tara's life. I hope I will be forgiven for any omissions. It is a book for Tara's family, for her friends, for young people, especially students, for the church, for other communities. Tara had a heart for the world. Tara embraced us all.

Cyprus, 2004  
Vivienne Stacey

## Foreword

On one occasion when D.L. Moody was preaching in England about everlasting life he said, “One day you will read my obituary in the newspaper saying that I am dead. Don’t you believe it. I will be more alive than I have ever been”.

“More alive than... ever.” This is the truth about Tara Joy James.

She certainly lives in the memories of her relatives, friends and the many whom she influenced. She certainly is not dead in her grave but with Jesus in his glory. As David the psalmist wrote, “You have made known to me the path of life, you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand”.

***“Tara is now “more alive than ...`ever.”*** This is her story...

## **Preface**

It is such a real privilege to have been asked to write this Preface for a book on the life and achievements of “Aunty Tara”, the beloved wife of Banner James and mother to Sammy and Miriam. It is interesting to note how through her ministry with the Pakistan Fellowship of Evangelical Students (PFES) she acquired this affectionate and honorary title of “Aunty Tara”.

However, in reminiscing about her I can only start with her antecedents. She was the granddaughter of Archdeacon Ihsan Ullah, the most senior national churchman of the then Church of India. He assisted at the Delhi *Darbar* in 1911. His brother, her great-uncle, was the famous Archdeacon Barkat Ullah, one of the most prolific Christian writers from the Punjab church on theology and church history. With such learned and noble blood running through her veins, Tara was bound to be the person she turned out to be, and we thank God for not only her heritage, but the heritage of the church in the Punjab through these witnesses of faith.

Tara, of course, lived every bit of it in her own life and after a highly successful teaching career, she moved to where her heart truly belonged - serving her Lord through the churches' ministry. This especially happened when in 1973 she moved into the PFES where she became a symbol of goodness and holiness and where she was such an inspiration to young people, especially to the girls. She ended her working days in this movement and is still being remembered for all that she gave.

She of course was also well known in international circles, especially through her speaking engagements, and through reflecting on the role of women in the church in a society like that in Pakistan. Her understanding of the plural and interfaith world was deep and real and I wish to quote from one of the speeches that

was given at her funeral service by a very dear Muslim friend, “She always stressed the commonalities rather than the differences between the great faiths of the world; the oneness of God, the accountability of man’s moral life, the meanings and values of prayer, and the fundamental values of love, goodness and truth”. This is a tribute indeed, coming from a person of another faith.

In spite of all this she still remained a simple woman of faith and in her inimitable way served her Lord deeply and passionately. She loved her family much, and was always dedicated to her Lord. For her, St Paul’s conviction, “For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain”, was at the very heart of her life.

Mano Rumlshah  
May 2004

## Chapter 1 Tara's background

### *Vivienne writes:*

I am indebted to Tara's sister Sheila for some of the following information about their famous grandfather. Further information on Ihsan Ullah can be found in Appendix 1 where I have gratefully drawn on further information from the CMS Archives held in the Special Collections Section of Birmingham University Library researched for me by my friend Mary Cooper whom I also wish to thank.

Ihsan Ullah came from a family of Hafiz-e-Qur'an Shia Muslims who lived in Narowal in the Punjab. His father Sheikh Bina was a leather merchant and well-respected in his community. He had three sons. Sheikh Ihsan Ali born in 1858 whose name was changed to Ihsan Ullah when he became a Christian. Sheikh Rehmat Ali born in 1860 had his name changed to Rehmat Ullah on his conversion in 1907. He was the father of Archdeacon Barkat Ullah, Tara's great-uncle, the famous church historian and writer. More about Barkat Ullah can be found in Appendix 2. The third son Sheikh Mohsin Ali remained a Muslim.

Sheikh Ihsan Ali was baptised in Multan by Rev R Bateman on 21 April 1878. His becoming a Christian was like the conversion of the Apostle Paul, because he was a persecutor of Christians but later became *Master Builder of the Punjab Church*, as described in Barkat Ullah's booklet. When he was thirty Doctor Ditta and Miss Tucker arranged his marriage to Louisa. She came from a family of Rathore Rajputs. Her father worked with the railways in Simla, a well-known hill resort where they married on 17 December 1888. They moved to Narowal where they had two sons and a daughter: Qurban Ihsan Ullah, born 10 September 1889, Nazir, born 24 June 1891 and Rose Anne, born 12 September 1893. Tara was one of the daughters of Qurban Ihsan Ullah.

Ihsan Ullah of Narowal was ordained deacon in 1891 and then priest in Simla on 11 June 1895 by Bishop Matthew. Rev G A Lefroy, who succeeded Bishop Matthew as Bishop of Lahore in 1899, preached the sermon. Rev Ihsan Ullah became the Church Missionary Society Pastor at Narowal 1891-1909, and at Jhang Bar 1901-11. He took part in the crowning of King George V as the King Emperor in the Delhi *Darbar* of 1911. Rev R Bateman spoke of Rev Ihsan Ullah as possibly Bishop French's long prayed for "Indian Apostle". Certainly he displayed gifts of evangelism and of nurturing new believers. With John ("Praying") Hyde he was one of the founders of the Sialkot Convention in 1905.

Ihsan Ullah made his first visit to the UK with General Booth of the Salvation Army in 1883. Fifteen years later as one of three nationals from India he attended on 12 April 1898 the Church Missionary Society Centenary and Conference and spoke at the Albert Hall in London. Afterwards he went with his family to the USA to meet the famous American evangelist and hymnodist D L Moody. Dwight Lyman Moody (1837-1899) was noted for his revivalist campaigns in Britain and the USA with Ira David Sankey (1840-1908). On the way back to India Ihsan Ullah visited churches in the USA, Canada, France and Italy and had many public engagements. He was a powerful speaker.

On 18 December 1911 he was inducted as first Indian Archdeacon of Delhi. He was Canon of the Cathedral Church of the Resurrection, Lahore, from 1917 to 1922. He died in Multan on 23 September 1929 at the home of his eldest son Qurban.

## Chapter 2 As her family saw her

*About our family – recollections of Sheila Roy, Tara’s younger sister.*

***Our father Qurban Ihsan Ullah*** graduated from St Stephen’s College, Delhi, and obtained his M A, B Ed in Lahore. My grandfather Ihsan Ullah took my father to Agra, the city famous for its Taj Mahal, on one of his speaking assignments. There he met my mother Bhagwanti who was training to be a teacher. They married in Amritsar, Punjab, on 27 December 1919. He taught for a few years in a college in Multan and then at Central Training College, Lahore, and finally at Shahpur College, Sargodha where he became Principal. He retired in 1944 on account of the stroke he had suffered and spent his last days in the ancestral home in Model Town, Lahore and finished his race on 13 August 1954.

***Our mother Louisa*** was the eldest daughter of Dr Nanakchand of Amritsar who belonged to a Kashmiri business family. My grandmother was a nurse in St Catherine’s Hospital, Amritsar. My mother finished her race on 8 June 1964. My parents were members of Holy Trinity Church, Lahore. They had ten children of whom Tara was the seventh.

***1. Vidya*** was born in November 1920. She graduated from Kinnaird College, Lahore, and obtained her B Ed from Central Training College, Lahore. During the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947 she settled in New Delhi and took up a job in the Civil Secretariat, in connection with the work of “Recovery of Abducted Women”. Posted to Jullundar, Punjab, she was involved in bringing abducted Muslim women from India to Lahore, and similarly taking Hindu and Sikh abducted women from Pakistan to India under police protection. She used to shuttle between Jullundar and Lahore. On conclusion of this operation she was

transferred to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in New Delhi and posted to the Indian Embassy in Cairo where she hosted Tara and Banner when they were returning from Europe in 1971. She died a spinster in New Delhi in 1987.

**2. Lila** was born in November 1921. She also graduated from Kinnaird College, Lahore, and did her B Ed from Central Training College, Lahore. She taught for some time in Alexandra High School, Amritsar. In 1946 she married Mr Ernest Anand who worked in the Civil Secretariat, New Delhi. After settling in New Delhi she taught in a number of schools in Delhi and finished her race in August 2001. She left behind four sons: Inder, a civil engineer in New Delhi, Satish, a captain in the merchant navy, Vinay, a captain in the Indian Navy. Presently, he is a captain in the merchant navy. The fourth, Deepak, was a pilot in the Indian Air Force and holder of the Sword of Honour. After leaving the Air Force he emigrated to the USA.

**3. Arthur** was born in December 1922. He passed his Intermediate from Forman Christian College, Lahore, and settled in New Delhi at the time of partition in 1947. He was a linguist. He later emigrated to Canada where he married a Polish lady. He died there in 1979 leaving behind two sons.

**4. Latwanti** was born in March 1925. She married a non-Christian in 1959 and settled with her husband in Karachi.

**5. Prem** was born in August 1926. After partition in 1947 he left for New Delhi and then stayed in Jullundar with my sister Vidya who was posted there. He died in New Delhi in 1981.

**6. Alfred** was born in July 1930. He graduated privately and worked in the Civil Secretariat, Lahore, and retired as a section officer in Government grade 17 in 1992. He married Martha, a

senior nurse in Sir Ganga Ram Hospital. He lived in the ancestral home in Model Town, Lahore, and died in 2001 soon after Tara.

**7. Tara** was born on 25 July 1931, and died on Easter Monday 16 April 2001.

**8. Sheila** was born in February 1933. She married Captain John Roy, an Army officer, in 1958. Michael her elder son did his Ph D in pharmacology from Bath University in England, and now holds a very responsible position in the pharmaceutical firm Roche in Karachi. He married a Dutch girl called Debbie who works as a Physiotherapy Instructor in the Agha Khan Hospital in Karachi. They have a girl of three named Hanna and a son, Nicholas, born in March 2004. Julian, her second son gained his M Sc in Electrical Engineering, and is a Software Designer, now settled with his family in England. His wife Sundas also did her M Sc in Electrical Engineering in the U K. They have one son Leon and two daughters Sandal and Melahat. Shirley, her only daughter, has done BA and B Ed and is working as a teacher in St Anthony College, Lahore. She married Javed Simpson and they have two daughters, Chevonne and Joanna.

**9. Wilfred** was born in December 1934. He did his F Com from Hailey College of Commerce and worked for Bata Shoe Company. He died in December 1998, leaving behind one son and three daughters. Azhar, the eldest in the family, is married with two sons. Azra is married with a son and a daughter. They have emigrated to the USA. Shazia, the third in the family, is doing her graduation and teaching part-time in Beacon Field, Model Town, Lahore. Shabnam, the youngest, is a graduate teaching in the same school as her sister. They are both sharing the ancestral home.

**10. Usha** was born in October 1940. After Matriculation she joined nursing training at United Christian Hospital, Lahore. She worked

at Holy Family Hospital, Karachi, for sometime and then in Saudi Arabia, and finally in Kuwait where she married the brother of her Muslim friend and colleague and settled in Sialkot.

***The effect of the creation of Pakistan on our family***

Sheila Roy notes that the creation of Pakistan had some adverse effects on the family

***Family Divided:*** The four elder brothers and sisters who would have given us moral, financial support and security decided to settle in India leaving behind young ones with our parents. Our father was paralysed.

***Financial Disaster:*** Our mother, who hailed from the business community of Amritsar, had started a dairy farm to supplement our father's pension. Our neighbours, who were wealthy Hindus and Sikhs, used to buy a lot of milk from our dairy. Unfortunately for us, at the time of partition all our neighbours had gone to hill stations as usual to avoid the Lahore summer heat. Some had gone to Simla and some to Nainital. Because of the bloodshed going on in the Punjab, they could not return with the result that not only did we lose our credit customers but the money which we used to collect at the end of the month was also lost. The Muslims who came as refugees could not afford to buy milk and so my mother had to sell most of the cows and buffaloes. Moreover my father had kept his money in the Punjab Bank which was liquidated at the time of partition and all the money was lost. Not only this, the shares of the Multan Electric Supply Company held by my father used to give good dividends but stopped giving dividends as almost all the directors were either Hindus or Sikhs who decided to settle in India. Since my father had not been nominated as a beneficiary, no claim could be filed against the company. Due to these financial setbacks my mother had to give part of the bungalow which was on seven *canals* of land to a Muslim family on rent.

***Sheila Roy writes on her elder sister Tara***

I cannot recollect anything of our early childhood but this I can say we all loved her very much. She was seventeen months older than me. We both joined The New School In Model Town and used to go together escorted by our Hindu gardener. When we finished our junior classes, our elder sister Lila Qurban took us both to the Alexandra High School, Amritsar, where she had taken up a teaching post. I used to get a lot of scolding from my elder sister for not paying enough attention to my studies. Tara was never scolded as she was her pet. I used to feel jealous! We had to leave this school after partition in 1947 because Amritsar remained a part of Indian territory. We joined Kinnaird High School in Lahore as boarders. I was in the 8th class while Tara was a class above me. As an elder sister she was always a great help to me.

In 1948 Tara married Banner James. So after completing 9th class I left as I did not wish to be alone. So I rejoined my former New School and passed my matriculation examination in 1950. In 1951 I went with my eldest sister Vidya to India and in 1953 I joined the Brown Memorial Hospital, Ludhiana, for nursing training. I came to Pakistan in 1957, by which time my father had died. Tara was a big source of help to my mother and younger brother and sister Usha. Tara arranged my marriage to Captain John Roy in 1958 and helped with all the arrangements. She was always at my bedside during childbirth. Tara remained a great encouragement and spiritual guide to me until her death. I am personally most grateful to her for being at my side when my husband died in 1999.

Ten days after a severe stroke I became a heart patient. In January 2000 my chest pain was so severe that Tara called me to Lahore to consult her doctor. Until then I was living alone in Rawalpindi. The doctor told me that my four arteries were blocked. On seeing my angiogram report I started crying. It was Tara who used to console me by reading verses from the Bible to strengthen my faith in the Lord Jesus. It was due to her prayers that everything was arranged well and the operation was successful. She kept me in her home for two months, caring for me day and night. I saw her

enduring her own illness but bearing everything courageously. She continued her work of writing Bible studies for students with a smile on her face. I still remember her last phone call wishing me a Happy Easter as I had returned to Rawalpindi, not knowing that I would hear the sad news of her departure to her Eternal Home the next morning. What a great loss to me and all her loved ones! There are some who continue to live in the pages of history and in our fond memories, though we cannot see them any more before us and Tara is one of them to me.

I remember my mother telling us that when Tara was born, one of our cousins, Dr David Satyanand, who was Civil Surgeon at Lahore and Amritsar at that time and later on became the Head of the Psychology Department of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences in New Delhi, wanted to adopt her, but my mother refused to give her saying that he could take any one of the six children but not Tara.

Tara was gifted with good qualities of head and heart. She was known everywhere for her piety, simplicity and generosity. Her house was always open not only to PFES staff but to all and sundry. Her hospitality had no match. She believed in the Biblical teaching that “what your right hand gives, the left hand should not know”. She has also been an encouragement to all who needed it and I would like to relate an example of this. My brother-in-law Banner who worked for Burmah Shell had Anglo Indians and Europeans mostly as his colleagues and friends and in their society he used to drink, smoke and gamble in horse races, but with Tara’s slow and constant encouragement to alter his lifestyle, we found him a changed man after some time and the credit for this goes to my sister.

***From Alfred Qurban. “ She was the best among our sisters and brothers”***

I was the sixth child in the family of four brothers and six sisters. I remember my younger sister Tara as a very playful and brave girl. She used to take her elder sister's bicycle and cycle around Model Town in Lahore, her feet hardly reaching the pedals. During those days (1937-40), there were very few houses as Model Town had come into existence only a few years earlier. Our house was one of the first in this locality, but Tara was not afraid of cycling around the place.

I also remember that she was fond of climbing trees, though she fell a number of times. She was fond of playing badminton. She used to entertain guests without feeling shy. She was an early riser starting her day with Bible reading and prayer, a habit which she continued till the day she passed away.

I remember when the plan for building her house in Model Town was being made, she told ZOR Engineers who were the architects and builders to make the lounge as large as possible so that it could be used not only for PFES gatherings but also for other Church activities. On completion of the house in 1979 she invited all the Christian residents for a get-together and started regular Bible studies and encouraged the other residents to open their houses for such meetings. The inaugural service at their new house was led by the then vicar of Lahore Cathedral, the Rev Michael Nazir-Ali who later on became the Bishop of Rochester in England.

Tara was generous from her childhood and was always prepared to help the poor and the needy. I will give only two illustrations of her generous nature among many others. One day in the cold month of January, a Muslim neighbour, Chaudhry Inshaullah, came to her house and told her and my brother-in-law Banner that while he was on his morning walk he found a Christian man lying on the ground by the road side near the Quran Academy. On inquiry the man said

that he used to work as a mason. One day he fell down and fractured his hip and was admitted to the Services Hospital but after a few days they discharged him, as he could not pay Rs10,000 for the operation. His son gave him shelter for the night but made him lie outside in the cold during the day to ask for alms from the passers-by. Tara mentioned this to her children and friends and collected the required amount, giving it to Chaudhry Inshaullah who very kindly deposited the money in the hospital and got the operation done. Then, some time in 1988 the same gentleman Chaudhry Inshaullah came and said that the son of his Christian domestic sanitary worker Emmanuel had passed F Sc in 1st division and wanted to join medical college but has no means. Tara said that she would help as much as possible to provide him with books and fees. One of our family friends, Rev Matthew Jeong, a Korean church worker residing in Peshawar, who happened to be staying with Tara and Banner also promised help and sent a cheque of Rs 8,000 for him. It is very difficult to get admission in the medical college in Lahore but Chaudhry managed to arrange it. Unfortunately Emmanuel could not cope with the studies and had to leave the college.

All the college and university students used to call her Auntie Tara and the people in Model Town and other places called her Tara Baji (Elder Sister). I was greatly moved when Chaudhry Inshaullah with a few Muslim friends whose lives she had touched came to her funeral and placed a *chaddar* of roses on her body and remarked that she was *Dervesh* and that the drizzle that turned that hot April day into a pleasantly cool day was a blessing of Allah for her.

***For Banner from his eldest sister Lila in New Delhi, India***

April 2001

My dear Banner

It's just unbelievable to hear that Tara is no more. Since the sad news came I have thought of nothing else but my dear sister. I can't reconcile myself to the fact that I'll see her no more. What must your state be! May the Good Lord comfort you in your grief. First, there is bewilderment, you don't know what strikes you, then the tragedy sinks in slowly, then with passage of time the healing begins. I say this from experience. I pray for you and the family several times a day...Dad chose her name after a lot of thinking and she was baptized TARA JOY. How apt. She was a radiant child. She brought joy and happiness to all she came in contact with. She was a help to the needy and a comfort to those in pain and sorrow. Now, I am sure she is united with her dear ones above and sits with the angels. You were lucky to have such a fine lady as your wife. God bless you and your family. Draw comfort from the good she always did and remember her smiling face. Have a look at the snap taken on your fortieth wedding anniversary. It shall soon find a place on my table. My heart goes out to Sam, Kamni, Miriam and John and all the grandchildren. With lots of love and hugs, your loving sister Lila.

***Life Sketch of TARA JOY JAMES by her husband Banner James***

Tara blessed the home of her father, Professor Qurban Ihsan Ullah on 25 July 1931. Her father was the Principal of Shahpur College in Sargodha, the son of the well-known Archdeacon Ihsan Ullah who hailed from the business community of Narowal District, Sialkot. Her uncle Archdeacon Barkat Ullah was an eminent scholar and writer, an authority on the Qur'an who wrote a number of books which are still available in India and Pakistan. Her Aunt Madam Nazirullah was a Professor of French in Forman Christian College, Lahore.

Her mother, Mrs Bhagwanti Nanakchand, belonged to a Kashmiri business family of Amritsar. Her cousins too were well-educated

and distinguished people. One of her cousins, Dr David Satyanand was the Civil Surgeon at Amritsar and Simla. Another cousin, Joseph Permanand was the Metropolitan Bishop of Calcutta, and yet another, Jalil Asif, was a Colonel in the Pakistan Army.

Tara was the seventh child of the family of ten – six sisters and four brothers. Her father spent a long time deliberating about a name for her and finally named her “Tara Joy”. She did in fact remain true to her name and like a star she guided students towards the true light, Jesus Christ, and thus brought the true joy of Jesus into the hearts of many students and families. On 27 December 1948 she became joy for me as a life partner.

She began her educational career by joining The New School, Model Town in Lahore and studied there until class V. Thereafter, she joined the Alexandra High School for Girls as a boarder in Amritsar visiting her parents at weekends in Lahore. In 1947 because of the partition of India which resulted in the creation of Pakistan she had to leave Amritsar and move to Kinnaird High School in Lahore. Her education was disrupted because of her marriage to me. However, she decided to continue her education and joined Kinnaird College for Women, graduating in 1959. The next rung on the ladder of education was Bachelor of Education (B Ed) from Karachi University in 1960. She was awarded the Gold Medal for being the best student. While in the university she took part in many extra-curricular activities. She directed and acted in an English drama and was on the university’s badminton and table tennis teams. In 1967 she obtained an M A in English Literature.

I would like to recount an incident of her student days in the university. One day she asked me to add one hundred rupees extra per month to her pocket money without asking any questions. I readily complied with her request, not knowing then what the extra money was required for. It so happened that I was invited to the

Convocation ceremony and before declaring her the best student of the year and before the awarding of the Gold Medal by the Federal Minister for Education who was the Chief Guest, the Principal, Dr. Bakhtiari, related this incident which brought some tears to my eyes and a lump in my throat. I reproduce here what he said.

This morning a student called Shireen came to see me. She started by saying that today she was breaking a promise she had made to her student friend Mrs Tara James - a Christian lady. She said that she came from Lucknow, India, and was staying with her relatives in Nazimabad and did not attend classes for three days because of illness. On the fourth day Mrs Tara James went to her place after taking her address from the registrar. Mrs James found out why she was not attending the classes. Shireen told Mrs James that she taught her relative's two daughters for which they give her some money to buy medicine and milk, but when she had stopped teaching, they were no longer giving any money. She further said that Mrs James told her to stop teaching the girls and to concentrate on her own studies. She gave Shireen one hundred and fifty rupees and promised to give her this amount for the next five months on the condition that Shireen would not mention it to anyone. Shireen said that Mrs Tara James went and brought medicines and milk. Shireen said that she was telling me all this because her heart is full of gratitude for this act of kindness on the part of a Christian lady.

On hearing this, the audience gave Tara a standing ovation. From the same university she gained her M A in English Literature in 1967.

She began her teaching career in Lahore by serving at the Convent of Jesus and Mary from 1961-63. Then she taught in Karachi in Our Lady of Fatima from 1965-68. In 1969 she was elevated to the post of the Principal of Holy Trinity Girls High School where she served until 1973.

Her illustrious career in school teaching and administration ended when God called her into full-time Christian work. She resigned from her gazetted Government post and joined the Pakistan Fellowship of Evangelical Students (PFES) in 1973. In preparation for her work among students she did a one-term intensive course at All Nations Christian College, England, where she was highly commended. During her ministry she travelled the length and breadth of Pakistan and also overseas to a number of countries. She was a gifted speaker and used her talent extensively.

During her ministry she served on various board and committees including the Board of the United Bible Training Centre, Gujranwala, the Lahore Diocesan Board of Education and the Board of the Pakistan Fellowship of Evangelical Students. She also had very close links with the Pakistan Bible Correspondence Institute, the magazine *Rahbar* and the daily Bible devotional guide *Balai Manzil* and with Interserve, which first started work in Lahore in 1864.

In 1992 she suffered a stroke followed by a total mastectomy in 1993. She resigned from the Pakistan Fellowship of Evangelical Students due to ill-health but continued her services as an adviser. She spent her time productively by writing Bible studies for students and was involved in translation work, and the ministry of prayer until she finished her earthly life on 16 April 2001.

Once, when Tara was having her physiotherapy exercise at Shaikh Zayed Hospital, the lady doctor in charge of the Physiotherapy

Department, on her usual round looked at Tara and remarked, “*Bibi*, your face has the shine and glamour of a pious Muslim woman”. Tara told her that she was not Muslim but Christian. The doctor did not believe her and asked for her medical card and was greatly embarrassed to find out that Tara was in fact a Christian. Tara loved children, delighting in their peals of laughter and frequently visited orphanages and felt privileged to add some joy to their unhappy lives.

The Taras (*stars*) shine, glow and manifest our Heavenly Father’s creational blessings. Stars guide and point travellers to the right direction. Tara Joy James was a beacon for many and brought joy into many lives through her ministry. We believe that she was welcomed in heaven above with hosts of angels surrounding her and singing with her in glory.

Tara left us early on Easter Monday morning to journey to her eternal home. She died in her sleep and looked serene and peaceful as she left this transitory home we call earth. She could not have had a better Easter present than to be ushered into the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ who came to earth to defeat death on Easter Day and give us eternal life.

A service of Celebration and Thanksgiving was held on Saturday 12 May 2001 at the Cathedral Church of the Resurrection, Lahore, well-attended by Christian and Muslim friends. Tributes were paid by a number of speakers including three Muslim friends of the family who recalled her saintly life on earth. Those were lovely moments seeing my wife through the eyes of other people and knowing how fortunate she was and still is to live so vividly in the thoughts of friends and acquaintances who remember her with such fondness and affection. How wonderfully fortunate we were to have shared our lives with her and to have known this truly magnanimous and gentle human being.

Tara, the star, is today no more amongst us, however, her work will live on. The torch she lit will now be carried forward by others to new frontiers. Her high principles were a way of life. Her illustrious career is in itself a testament to her determination, dedication and strength of character, which her name symbolizes.

Another service of Celebration and Thanksgiving was held at St Andrew's Church, Lahore, organized by the Pakistan Fellowship of Evangelical Students on 26 May 2001. Tara always used to talk about ways and means of continuing her cherished work of charity and education on a permanent basis even after her death. Her wish was to establish an Educational Endowment Trust. Unfortunately, because of her health condition in the last ten years or so, she could not attend to this. When the Chairman of the Pakistan Fellowship of Evangelical Students announced in the service that the Lahore Local Committee and Graduates Christian Fellowship Lahore had decided to generate a special educational fund for students in memory of Aunty Tara, I immediately announced a donation of five hundred thousand rupees towards this fund in order to fulfil her long cherished desire.

She left behind seven grandchildren; four born to Miriam and her husband Rev Fredrick John. Fredrick John teaches at St Thomas Theological College, Karachi. Their children are Sarah, Shroon, Tara and Philemon. Samuel is married to Shabana and they have three lovely boys, Senir, Ureem and Eliyashaib. Samuel, a chartered accountant, is the Vice President of Prime Bank.

***Vivienne continues***

The following announcement was made later:

***Aunty Tara Academic Awards***

In recognition of the services of Mrs Tara James with PFES as Executive Secretary for nineteen years, the National Board of

PFES in association with the James family was pleased to announce the establishment of Aunty Tara Academic Awards. These awards are given to PFES related students of college and university level showing excellent performance in their studies. Funds for these awards will be raised through donations from friends of PFES.

***From the 2003 PFES Report***

In 2003 PFES arranged Aunty Tara Academic Awards ceremonies in Lahore, Karachi and Hyderabad. Awards were given to 7 Intermediate, 7 Bachelor, 1 Medical, 1 C A and 1 Master level students. One special award was given to an O level student who secured 10 A's.

***Banner kindly listed some of Aunty Tara's travels abroad***

In April 1969 Tara went to Perth, Australia, to attend an International Conference and in April 1971 she visited Holland, the UK. She also visited Luxemburg, Paris, Brussels, German cities, and Lund in Sweden with her husband.

In 1974 after the Congress on World Evangelization in Lausanne, Switzerland, she went to Mittersill in Austria to attend an IFES student conference. In July 1980 she attended a Leadership Training Course in Pataya, Thailand, sponsored by the Haggai Institute. In August 1982 she was invited by the Presbyterian Church, USA, to attend and speak at a women's conference at Perdue, Indiana.

In August 1984 she set off on a tour of several countries including Korea. From Seoul she went to Tokyo and spoke in a Sunday service and addressed three student groups in colleges and universities. She then went to Manila, Philippines, to speak at a Sunday church service as well as at student gatherings. In

Singapore she spoke to a group of students and exchange notes on student ministry. On the last lap of her tour she went to meet her four brothers and sisters who stayed in Delhi after the partition of the subcontinent in 1947. She made a number of visits to India to meet her own and her husband's relations. She was invariably asked to speak in the churches of the cities she visited.

In July 1990 she was invited to attend an OM conference in Holland. Then she went to UK and spoke about the PFES ministry wherever an opportunity arose. Her last foreign visit was to the UK from mid-June until mid-August 2000, during which time she visited all her friends and relatives and attended Sunday services in a number of churches and also spoke in Pakistani congregations.

***Life Sketch of BANNER JAMES***

Banner blessed the house of his father Rev Birma Singh James at Neemuch, central India on 27 August 1923. He was the fourth child in a family of six, three sons and three daughters. His father, a Hindu Rajput from Beawer, a town near Ajmer in Rajasthan, accepted Christ in 1908 while studying in the Mission High School, Ajmer. At his baptism he was given the name James. On becoming Christian he was debarred of his share of agricultural land and property. He started his life as a teacher at Neemuch and Mhow in central India. He married Huri Bai, a nurse who had graduated in nursing from Dr Brown's Hospital in Ludhiana, Punjab, in 1918. James left his teaching career and joined the Union Theological Seminary in Indore, central India. After graduation he served as a pastor in Banswara, south Rajasthan, and was instrumental in establishing a Bhil congregation around Banswara.

Banner did his initial schooling at Banswara and went to a Vocational Training School at Rasalpura as a boarder from class 6. He passed matriculation examinations from KBEP Memorial High

School, Mhow in 1940. Then he joined the Christian College, Indore, which was affiliated to Agra University and graduated in 1944. In his final year he was elected President of the English Literary Society which is one of the highest honours a student can obtain. He was also the secretary of the Athletics Association and represented the college in athletics, volley ball and hockey. He was football captain while in his third year. After leaving the college, he joined the Army YMCA at Karachi as a secretary with the rank of honorary captain. He resigned from the Army YMCA at the end of March 1945.

In April 1945 he joined Burmah Shell and after initial training was posted to Jodhpur Airport, Rajasthan. There he had the privilege and rare distinction of being photographed with the Qaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan, in November 1946 at the Airport where he was working as a fueling superintendent. At the partition of India and Pakistan in August 1947 he opted for Pakistan and returned to Karachi. In November 1947 he was transferred to Lahore, Punjab, where his uncle introduced him to the Qurban family at 103 E Model Town, where he stayed as a paying guest. Here he met Tara and seeing her for the first time fell in love with her on account of her beauty and charm. Tara who was studying in the Alexandra High School, Amritar, had to leave her school because of partition. Banner's uncle pressured Tara's parents to give her hand in marriage to Banner. After a great deal of persuasion they agreed on one condition - that Tara would continue her studies even after her marriage. The wedding was solemnized at Holy Trinity Church, Nila Gumbad, Lahore on 27 December 1948, attended amongst others by Tara's relations from India who included Bishop Joseph Permand and Dr David Satyanand.

Banner left Burmah Shell in September 1974 with a golden hand shake and an excellent performance record. During his career he

attended several courses in Pakistan and abroad including an attachment with Shell at the Pernis Refinery Rotterdam for five months. After leaving Burmah Shell Banner worked for two years with the Premier Oil Company and later for Pakistan State Oil as Controller of Depots (North Zone) thus finishing his career with the oil industry.

Banner became Co-ordinator of Resources in Pakistan for the Presbyterian Church USA from 1979 until 1993. His accomplishments included participation in the formation of the Presbyterian Foundation Trust of Pakistan in 1981. He served as its secretary, initiated legal action for church-related schools and colleges for their Denationalization. He was instrumental in arranging reconciliation between the factionalized groups of the United Presbyterian Church of Pakistan in 1981, and again with the Lahore Church Council. On numerous occasions, he defended Presbyterian property against illegal sales. He also officiated as Presbyterian Church (USA) Representative in the absences of Rev Richard Rowe from May until July 1991. The various Representatives with whom he worked sent tributes to Tara from themselves and their wives, including Rev Woody Busse, Rev Bill Hopper and Dr Robert Tebbe. Each couple mentioned the great welcome they always received in the James' home. A service commendation medal was awarded to Banner by the UP Church of Pakistan at their centenary Jubilee in 1992.

During his professional career Banner served on a number of boards including the Pakistan Bible Society, Lahore, the Christian Hospital, Tank, the Christian Technical Services Association, Lahore, the Pakistan Christian Recording Ministry, Faisalabad, and the Shalom Christian Centre, Jhelum.

***From Tara's only son Samuel James***  
My Mom

Mummy (*Ami*) went to be with the Lord on Easter Monday 16 April 2001 . It was quite a shock and a heart-breaking event for me as a son. I was quite close to her. She was more than just a Mom or *Ami* as I called her. Why the Lord took her so suddenly I will never know but this I know that he could have taken her anytime throughout my forty-one years but in his grace and mercy he allowed her to see me settled in my career, job and married life. He allowed her to enjoy my three kids. As a young boy I knew that many children lose their parents at a young age so I had always prayed to the Lord to let my parents see my sister and myself settled in life and he answered this special prayer of mine.

Through out my life she helped me with my studies. In my early education she helped me in all my subjects. Later on as I became more independent she not only taught me English and Urdu but helped me in preparing my science practical books and writing short notes in other subjects to read before the examinations. After I had failed to get the required merit for admission into medical college it was my mother who was instrumental in getting me admitted in B Com. Even after I had embarked on my career she helped me in writing Eid cards for my friends, both official and personal.

Despite her busy schedule first as Principal of a school in Karachi and later on with PFES she managed to give her children time. We did lots of things together such as playing indoor games, badminton, table tennis and seven tiles, and other activities such as shopping, taking care of the garden, decorating the house for Christmas, planning and renovating the house.

*Ami* was a friend, partner, a person with whom one could share everything. I did not come to know the Lord directly through her but her choice of joining PFES played an important role. When I was a child she read Bible stories to us at night and even joined Sunday School as a teacher because of me. She prayed with me and for me in all my relationships and through her prayers I matured and grew in my Christian life. She nursed me through my various sicknesses such as typhoid (in the hospital), chronic bronchitis, mumps, and a severe lower back problem. Whenever I was sick and could not say my prayers she would help me. When I was studying for my examinations and sitting late in the night she would prepare coffee in the jug or juices at times along with eatables and kept it on my table for me to have in the night. I remember that whenever I returned home late at night my Mom would not go to sleep until I had arrived home safely.

Before Easter she came down with typhoid and could not go to India with Papa. She could not move up with us so I had to move downstairs to sleep beside her. At times, with great difficulty, she would get up in the middle of the night on her own and go to the washroom but would not wake me up so as not to disturb me. Only after a little scolding she agreed to wake me up. During this time I got an opportunity to share some moments with her and prayed with her, which helped her in her moments of tiredness from her sickness. I still miss *Ami* and at times even my tears flow but I give thanks to my Lord Jesus Christ for his wonderful promise that we will meet again at his feet. If I were given the choice of choosing a mum I would choose *Ami*. She seemed like an angel in human form.

***From Tara's daughter-in-law Shabana James (Kamni)***

I met Aunty Tara in 1984 at a PFES students conference. When I saw her I was impressed by her personality but later when I got to know her more I admired her. She was gentle, kind and most of all

pretty. After that conference we built a relationship through this student organization. She used to visit us in Jinnah College, Peshawar, where I was staying in the hostel with my other two sisters. She brought us some audio cassettes to listen to. I remember she used to wear a *sari* and as usual she looked beautiful and elegant. We felt very proud when our friends at the hostel used to admire her. She prayed with us and asked us to join PFES programmes in Peshawar.

I got another chance to see her when I went to PFES camp in Khanspur in 1989. At that time I was working with the Pakistan Bible Correspondence School, Faisalabad, as a short-term worker. Once when we were late for some sessions she was very annoyed by our irresponsible behaviour. At night when everybody had gone to bed I went to see her and she graciously accepted my apologies and appreciated the openness of NWFP students. We talked about other things. I felt relieved.

After my family's accident she used to visit me in Peshawar before I married her son Sam. I looked forward to her visits because I found consolation in her motherly nature. My next encounter with her was as a mother-in-law. She was more like a friend and we used to talk on various subjects like fashion, shopping and most of all she used to help me a lot in preparing my Bible studies. The day before she died, I made the food for Easter Sunday, and she said she had really enjoyed this food after her long illness. She used to admire me a lot, and in front of other people she always appreciated me. She was very considerate and helpful. The night she died she asked me to bring my youngest son to her to look after him as I was busy with guests. She happily looked after my kids. She taught them not only their syllabus but helped them to grow in their faith. Whenever I was away I always knew that every single detail would be looked after very well. I don't know how to write down every single detail of her deeds of love and care. I write this

with much love and respect for her. I wish I could become more like her.

***Vivienne Stacey explains about the “accident” to which both Shabana (Kamni) and her brother Shehzad (Bunny) refer.***

After studying Urdu for a year in Sialkot and Murree I was seconded in 1955 by Interserve to the United Bible Training Centre (UBTC) in Gujranwala for twenty years. In 1975 God clearly guided me to Bannu in the North West Frontier Province. After some months of leave in my native country of England I moved to Bannu, where I lived on the campus of the Pennell Memorial Hospital for fifteen years until 1991. There I wrote my books for publication in English and Urdu. Four of them were published in Urdu by the Masihi Isha'at Khana in Lahore. From Bannu I also travelled from time to time to meet and encourage Pakistani Christians in the oil countries, some of whom had been my students at the UBTC. I was also seconded part-time to the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students (IFES), joining their pioneer team for the Middle East, North Africa and the Gulf countries.

In Bannu I met and became very friendly with the David family, particularly with Mrs Yasmin (Taj) David who was a senior nurse in the Civil Hospital, and then as they grew older with Sabrina and Shabana (Kamni). Bunny, the only son, was the youngest member of the family. The Davids were an outstanding Christian family who made everyone feel welcome in their home, and their influence reached deep into the local communities. I remember that the four children used to line up to greet people after the Sunday morning service every week. Eventually Sabrina and Shabana obtained their M Sc degrees in Peshawar. Both secured 1<sup>st</sup> division, Sabrina in Chemistry and Shabana in Economics, while Naushaba, the youngest daughter and Bunny pursued medical studies in the Khyber Medical College in Peshawar. Sabrina spent nearly two

years doing in-service training as a teacher at the United Bible Training Centre. Her teaching gifts also were recognized in the three Church of Pakistan congregations in Bannu and twice she gave a message in our very conservative town. The first was at a Good Friday service about the dying thief who believed and was assured by Jesus of a place in heaven that very day. Almost prophetically she challenged the congregation asking if we were ready for heaven if we should die suddenly. Another time in our radically conservative situation where women were not often given leadership she preached at the Sunday youth service on the importance of love and unity. All four David children had come to know Jesus through a Scripture Union Convention in Bannu some years before. They committed themselves to follow the Lord and worked hard among the youth in Bannu founding a PFES group and themselves joining that movement during their studies in Peshawar.

On 16 June 1989 Mr David was driving the whole family back to Bannu after visiting Peshawar. They wanted to return two days early as Sabrina was to preach on the Sunday. Then suddenly a few miles from Bannu and home the head-on collision with a lorry occurred in which Mr and Mrs David together with Sabrina their eldest daughter aged 25 and Naushaba the youngest aged 22 were killed instantly. Shabana aged 24 was severely injured and was taken to hospital, while Bunny aged 19 escaped without severe physical injury and was able to attend the funeral service.

Six weeks before, Samuel James had become engaged to Sabrina. Tara James and Sammy managed to make the long journey from Lahore to Bannu and arrived just before the end of the burial service for the four David family members. On the Sunday morning of 18 June when Sabrina would have spoken at the morning service on Jeremiah, the Bishop of Peshawar, the Rt Rev Khair-ud-Din, came to give comfort and preach at the service. Our vicar, Rev Abid, asked me to preach at the evening service in the

city church. On 19 June a service of Thanksgiving was held at the Church of the Holy Name just outside the Hospital area where we all worshipped regularly. I was requested to give the sermon which I did using the text "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints". Psalm 116:15. Tara also participated in this service, telling us something of Sabrina's life outside Bannu, when she had met her in connection with UBTC and PFES. Tara said that although she was well-educated she wanted not a position of prestige but to serve the Lord and his church through the UBTC. However, for this she waited for the full endorsement of her parents. At UBTC she led many young women and girls to Christ. She would spend time in the prayer room having invited any who so wished to come and discuss their problems and to pray. After the service local women gathered round to comfort Sammy and his mother.

***From Tara's grandson Ureem James written when he was nine***

Dear Aunty Vivienne,

This is for my Grand Ma

She was very wise and intelligent. she used to teach me and used to help me with my home work. she always helped me with my drawings and I think because of her my drawing skills have improved. She died at Easter night. she was talking to guests. she decided to go to sleep early. I went to sleep with her after some time. In the morning every body was screaming, i woke up but she was dead. she was a very beautiful lady. i still love her and miss her.

Ureem

***From Tara's grandson Senir and Vivienne's godson written when he was twelve***

Dear Aunty Vivienne

My grandmother was very helpful and she loved all of us. She was very special and she even took care of me, Ureem and Yashoo. She brought so many people to the Lord and she was a blessing to us

and to the church. She helped me in my studies and she was the best grandmother anyone could ask for. My mother told me that she used to carry me around in her lap. She even kept me in her lap while she washed the dogs. I loved her so much that I'll never ever forget my beautiful grand mother.

This letter was written by

Senir Andrew James

***From Shehzad Kamran (Bunny), brother of Shabana (Kamni) James***

I knew Aunty Tara for over ten years. She was the nicest and the most patient person I had ever met. After the loss of my parents and two sisters in a car accident, she was like a mother figure to me. She would always make me feel at home whenever I would go to visit. After being diagnosed with cancer, followed by a stroke, she was as firm in her faith as ever before. When I think about her, I think about love, faith and hope. Her life was a clear reflection of all three and I feel very privileged to have known her closely. I have not been back to Pakistan since she passed away but I miss her now and know that I will miss her even more whenever I return.

When I started preparing for my post-graduation studies, Aunty Tara would often ask about my studies and encourage me. She wanted me to be successful and she helped me in several ways. When my stay in the United States got prolonged more than expected, before I started my residency, she and Uncle Banner very graciously helped me with some of my expenses. When I got engaged she was happy to the point of crying and the same when I got married. She helped my sister Kamni a lot with all the wedding preparations. Her life was a perfect example of Christ-like love and she touched our lives in ways that are difficult to estimate.

***From Saima wife of Shehzad Kamran (Bunny), Shabana James' brother***

I got to know Aunty for a short time but during that time, I found her the most loving and sweet person. After my engagement, she would take an interest in my wedding preparations and would make me feel special on my visits to her place. I'll remember her as a very loving person.

***From Tara's only daughter Miriam John***

*Remembering my Mother*

I was brought up at the Brenton Carey Orphanage in Karachi as a child. I remember how a lovely young lady wearing beautiful *saris* used to bring sweets and gifts for the girls there. Once she donated a TV set for our entertainment. One fine morning she took me in her car to her flat at Blue Haven in Saddar. After lunch she gave me a few toys and the opportunity to play with her son Sam. In the evening she took me back to the orphanage. This continued for about a week and finally she asked me if I would stay with them as their daughter. I could not refuse. I was six years of age in 1969. What tempted me to stay with them was the love and care which I received from this lady who was at that time the Headmistress of Holy Trinity Girls High School.

She enrolled me in St Joseph's Convent where I was declared the most playful and mischievous girl. My teacher, Mrs Zena Andrade, who was my mother's friend used to give a daily report of my misconduct to my mother who in her loving way reprimanded me, but I was good for some time but bad at other times. I remember one day my mother and I were taking our poodle for a walk in the evening. Three boys of my age were waiting for my mother to complain about my fighting with them in the school. They said, "Madam, Miriam beat us today". My mother said jokingly, "You are boys, why don't you beat her." They replied, "Miriam knows karate and we don't." My mother rebuked me and assured the boys that she would not beat them again. There were endless complaints

about my behaviour but my mother always tried to reform me. Her daily prayers and devotion changed my life.

My mother who was born and brought up in Model Town, Lahore, always wanted to live near her ancestral home 103E Model Town and for this purpose she had already purchased a plot of four *kanals* in 1965 from a Muslim neighbour, Mr Zaidi, with the promise that she would build her house and live as their neighbour. The reason for granting this plot to no one but my mother was that their daughter Attiya was very fond of my mother and often used to be in my mother's house. My mother treated her so affectionately that she used to call her her second mother. Fortunately Attiya whom I call *Baji* (elder sister) also built her house next to our house after her marriage to Mr Rameez Raja, who captained the Pakistan Cricket Team in 1995 and 1996 and was a member of the team in 1992 which won the world cup under the captaincy of Imran Khan. Attiya Baji was similarly devastated as I was on my mother's death. She wanted to speak at the service of Thanksgiving and Praise but knew that she would not be able to control her emotions and instead her brother, Mr Afzal Haider Zaidi, spoke in the service. We have excellent relations with her, with Rameez Bhai as I call him now and their two beautiful sons. They often visit us and we do the same.

After coming to Lahore in 1978 I asked my mother if I could become a nurse but my mother wanted me to be a doctor. However, on my insistence she agreed and I joined the United Christian Hospital in 1984 and graduated as a fully-fledged nurse in 1987. My mother encouraged me to do a B Sc in nursing which I did. During my training in the hospital, I shared my room in the hostel with a junior nurse called Joyce. Her brother John used to come and visit her at weekends. She introduced me to her brother who used to bring sweets for Joyce, which I also shared. After a few meetings he started showing interest in me and always wanted

to talk to me. These meetings developed into friendship, and then one day Joyce asked if I would like to be his life partner. I was not prepared for this and it came as great shock to me. I told her that I would marry the man my parents would choose for me. I was afraid at that time to mention about my contact with John to my parents. However, Joyce said that John would send their parents to meet my parents to find out their reaction. Their parents went and met my parents and were told that they would consult me before giving any final answer to them.

On my next visit to my home in Model Town, my mother asked me if I had met John and if I would like to marry him. I replied if you wish, I have no objection. My mother said that you have to live with him for the rest of your life, so you must decide and we shall honour your decision. John had graduated from the Theological Seminary, Gujranwala, and was waiting for his ordination as a vicar. We married on 20 April 1990 in Lahore Cathedral where the service was solemnized by the Bishop of Lahore, John Alexander Malik. We have been blessed with four children. Sarah the elder daughter was born on 15 February 1991. Sharoon the elder son was born on 8 November 1993. Tara the younger daughter was born on 3 November 1996. Philemon the younger son was born on 2 May 1999.

John used to be the vicar of St. Mary's Church, Rawalpindi, but now he is teaching in St Thomas Theological College, Karachi. All my children go to the same school where my mother used to be the Principal. I am also working in the school as the nurse-in-charge. As I enter the school I recall the fragrance of my mother. Her love and affection cannot be adequately described by me in words. She was most loving and forgiving in spite of my many shortcomings. She taught me the value of prayer and devotion and I shall cherish her memory until the day I die, wishing that all mothers could be

like her. I have also done a theology course and I am trying to walk in her footsteps.

***Memories of Tara from her nephew Michael Roy, son of Sheila Roy***

I was about to get up to go to work in the morning, thinking about what I needed to do that day. It was the morning of Easter Monday 16 April 2001. The phone rang. I picked up the phone. It was my mother who lives in Rawalpindi. She simply said “Maso” (Tara ) has gone home, go to Lahore immediately”, and then being too upset to speak, she put the phone down. My mind went numb. I had wanted to call Lahore on Easter Day to talk to Maso but wasn’t able to, so I had thought I could call her today. She had been sick for some time but had made a recovery. The last time I spoke to Maso was in February. My wife and daughter had gone to Lahore to take a British friend sightseeing and were staying with her. Maso was not well. I asked her on the phone, what she thought of my daughter Hanna. Maso had just seen her for the first time. She replied, “I was thinking I would never get the opportunity to see your daughter, but I am thankful to Debbie for bringing Hanna so that I could see her, she looks very much like you”. I joked with her about her health and told her to be very careful. She laughed and said that everybody has to go one day.

I phoned the airline to get a seat on the flight. I phoned work to tell them that I was not coming and will be away for two days and then made preparations to reach the airport. The forty-two years of my life in which I had known Maso were passing before my eyes. She was my second Mother, a friend, a spiritual guide and I was asking myself and God why he took her. When did I first see her? I was told by my mother that Maso was present when I was born. She embraced me after I was born and I was always her favourite. I was always attracted to her. I remember when we lived in Peshawar. I was about three or four years old and my mother was sick. Maso

came to visit us and took me with her to Lahore. As years went by my mother and Maso were very close. She, Uncle Banner, Sam and Miriam would often come and visit us during their summer holidays. Maso would gather all the children around her and give them books to read. She also read them to us. My father was in the army and as time went on we were posted to Murree. In the summer months the whole family would come to visit us including Maso who was living in Karachi. Then during our winter vacations all of us, except my father, would visit them. Maso was very good at drawing and her talent was very useful for us in finishing our holiday assignments.

In Karachi I often accompanied her to school. She was then Headmistress of Holy Trinity Girls High School. She found library books for me which kept me busy and which I really enjoyed. During this time she became involved with PFES and worked closely with David Penman. She started attending Bible classes at the Karachi Institute of Theology. I was ten to twelve years old at this time. She encouraged me to accompany her and actively participate in these classes. I was able to learn about the sources of the Gospels, the Hebrew Old Testament and the Qur'an. I was also introduced to Watchman Nee's book *Which Flag, which Voice, which Way?* One of our assignments was to translate this small booklet into Urdu. I made an attempt at it, and although my work was not up to graduate standard, she still encouraged me to do it. I was also able to meet some very nice people including David Bentley-Taylor with whom I corresponded until 1988. He was pleased to see me when we met again in 1990 in Bath with Michael Nazir-Ali and John Ray.

After completing my class 7 in Presentation Convent School, Murree, I was transferred to the Public School, Murree. I was the only Christian student in the school and thanks to the Bible classes I had attended with Maso in Karachi, I was able to give appropriate

replies to my class-fellows and teachers about why I was a Christian and not a Muslim. Some of my teachers did not know how to respond to me, perhaps they found me too knowledgeable. Islamiyat was a compulsory subject and I was adamant that I would not study it. This was more to do with the fact that it was in Urdu and I disliked Urdu. I had studied portions of the Qur'an in English at the Bible classes which I attended with Maso. This conflict with my school went on for a year. It was finally resolved when Maso came from Karachi to see us and met my Principal and convinced him to offer me Civics instead, which the Government has prescribed for those non-Muslims who did not wish to take Islamiyat. She even brought the Civics syllabus for my Principal. He was very impressed by Maso in general and also by her commitment to me.

In 1973 we moved to Rawalpindi. I was in Class 10. Maso in the mean time had left her teaching job and joined the staff of PFES. She asked her friend Barbara Lewis, an American lady, to visit me and get me involved in the PFES work in Rawalpindi. When I joined Gordon College in 1974 PFES was very much part of my college life and gave me friends like Samuel Lyall who was a PFES staff worker at Rawalpindi, Irfan Jamil, Anthony Lamuel later General Secretary, Pakistan Bible Society and whose friendship I still cherish. One of the advantages of Maso joining PFES and of our moving to Rawalpindi was that we were able to see her more frequently. Every year a PFES summer camp was held in Murree and she would come with students from Lahore and Karachi by train and that too in third class. I remember how shocked we were when we reached the station and saw Maso coming out of a third class coach surrounded by the students. Prior to that she travelled by air. For her joining PFES was a change of lifestyle, which in a Christ-like way she enjoyed. Now, I was a part of Rawalpindi PFES and was able to go to summer camps with her, which was lots of fun with Bible study, lovely walks and also an

opportunity to make friends. Through these camps I met Mr B U Khokhar then General Secretary of PFES, Rev Aslam Ziai and Dr Christy Munir. In 1978 I went to Gomal University in D I Khan for my Bachelors in Pharmacy degree and once again I was the only Christian student in the institution. The first year was really tough but Maso's letters were then a source of encouragement. She taught me that as a Christian student my witness to non-Christian students around me was through my studies. As a result I studied so hard that I topped all the three years and got a gold medal. After my graduation I showed her the gold medal and Arabic Qur'an with its Urdu and English renderings which I was given with the gold medal. She was very pleased and we talked about the times in Karachi and Murree.

In 1981 I moved to Lahore for a job and further studies. Having Maso in Lahore, (she had moved to Lahore in 1976), was like having a home away from home. My mother often felt jealous and would often say that now you are living with Maso you hardly write to me. Looking back at my time in Lahore I think my mother was right, because in Maso I had a person I could talk to and share my most intimate thoughts. She was more of a friend than an older aunt. I remember whenever I used to complain to her about how pathetic the church was in Pakistan, she would ask me in reply, "Are you using the talents God has given you, because you are answerable to God for them and not for how others are not using their talents?" Because of Maso 134 E Model Town was an open house. Every one was welcome at any time. Students from Lahore, Karachi, Sialkot, Peshawar and the UK enjoyed the warm hospitality. Living in that atmosphere was good for my spiritual and personal development. Soon my three years in Lahore were over and I moved to Libya, a country which is largely desert. Maso's home then appeared to me as an oasis, a place of refreshment for my own spiritual journey.

In 1988 when I informed Maso that I had been accepted for a Ph D programme at Bath University in the UK. She was extremely delighted. She knew of my desire to get a Ph D and would often encourage me to write to universities and funding bodies. A few months before my departure to the UK I went to see her in Lahore. We sat for hours going through my old books, and articles that I had written and tried to sort them out. She gave me addresses of her English friends and encouraged me to write to them. She knew I was going for three to four years and she wanted me to enjoy the land of which she had good memories. She wanted me to have similar experiences. She asked me about my marriage plans but I had none. In England her contacts and friends made me feel at home and then I was able to make my own contacts. I came to Pakistan for Sam's wedding. Maso was very pleased and would tease me about getting married. Later Maso and Uncle came to see me in Bath and we had a nice time. She made a yoghurt and *pakora* dish for my Laboratory friends and brought Pakistani souvenirs as gifts for them which they really enjoyed. They were all impressed by her beauty and charm.

In Dec 1993 I had my Ph D viva and quite soon after I learnt that Maso had suffered a stroke. I was very worried and phoned her. Yes, she was unwell but she was so cheerful that my Lab friends were amazed. She was thanking and praising God. In 1994 when I came back from England, I found Maso in the midst of farewell parties. She was leaving PFES and Christian students were giving her farewell parties to her all over Pakistan. She still had her charming smile but was a bit frail after her stroke and her cancer. Maso was a grandmother by now. Her son Sam had three children and her daughter Miriam was married to a pastor and also had children. She loved her grandchildren and they loved her. My job brought me to Karachi. My trips to Lahore became infrequent but whenever I went to Lahore it was always a delight to see her. She

knew how much I loved a strong cup of tea and she would always have it ready for me. In 1996 I met Debbie who is from Holland. When I sent Debbie's picture to Maso, she was very happy. Unfortunately she was not able to come for my engagement in December 1996 to Rawalpindi as she was not feeling well. When I mentioned our plans of settling in England or Holland after our wedding, she accepted it (later I came to know that she was sad) and asked us to always be faithful to Jesus. In March 1997 I moved to England, got married and settled in the UK (or so it seemed to me) but I was jobless. I was frustrated and was wondering where God was leading me. During this time Maso's letters were a source of comfort and delight, always encouraging, always asking me to thank and praise God for the things I had and to wait on him for his timings. Her letters made more sense because she was going through a hard time herself. Her health was frail and she knew in practice what it was to thank God through hard times. In England I made an attempt to translate Archdeacon Ihsan Ullah's biography written by his brother Archdeacon Barkat Ullah. It is the story of how Ihsan Ullah, Maso's grandfather, became a Christian and how he endeavoured to build up the Church in Punjab in the 1890's. Maso was very helpful and reviewed some of the chapters that I managed to translate. She was very pleased when CMS invited me to participate in the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of CMS in honour of Archdeacon Ihsan Ullah who attended the CMS 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

In 1998 we moved to Ware to work for Glaxo Wellcome Research and Development. Ware is also well-known for All Nations Christian College, where Maso had studied in the seventies. She asked us to visit the college, which we did. We also sent her some pictures of the college, which she really enjoyed as she had such good memories of the college. In 1999 my father suffered a stroke and I returned to Pakistan to be with my family. My father passed away soon after his 83<sup>rd</sup> birthday. Maso was a strong comfort to us

as a family. At the end of 1999 Debbie and I moved back to Pakistan, to Karachi. Maso was very pleased. I think she wanted us to move to Lahore but understood that with our professions it was difficult to find suitable jobs in Lahore, and Karachi was not that far at least by air and we could always pay them a visit or speak on the phone.

As the plane touched down at Lahore Airport, I found that tears were streaming down my cheeks. I was asking myself questions. How could I go to her home? How would I face her earthly remains? Will things be the same without her. As I sat down in the rickshaw taxi for Model Town I heard an inner voice say, "Why are you not practising what you were proclaiming yesterday on Easter Day. Christ is victorious over death". Then the words of the angels came into my ears "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen!" (Luke 24:5-6). It dawned on me that Maso was not dead. Yes, her earthly remains will be there and we will commit them to the dust, but Maso is alive and with Jesus. and I wiped the tears from my eyes as the rickshaw reached Model Town.

### **Chapter 3 As her friends saw her**

***From Dan and Ruth Bavington. Dan wrote:***

I regret not being able to be at the present at the service of Celebration and Thanksgiving for Tara, and am grateful to Banner for letting me send a written tribute to her memory, which is very precious to Ruth and me. Our friendship goes back to the early days of our stay in Karachi, where we arrived in 1965. We met in the context of worship at Holy Trinity Cathedral. We joined a Bible study group of which Tara was a member. This relationship of fellowship round the Word of God continued for several years until the family moved to Lahore. Tara was always a keen student of the Bible and one of my last memories of her was to see her at the dining table at Model Town, working away at the translation of Bible Reading Notes into Urdu. The Bible was indeed at the centre of her life. We praise God for Tara's commitment to knowing the Bible as well as her dedication to the Lord and her long ministry with PFES.

***Tara herself wrote in the PFES Newsletter Koinonia in February 1975***

It is good to be back in Pakistan with my family and with the PFES. I have much to thank the Lord and my many friends for this past year. In January last year the Lord reassured me about the task entrusted to me. When I was hesitant he confirmed his command by giving me the verse from Joshua 1:9, "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go". I confess I was frightened, but I was quite confident that the Lord was with me wherever I went. In a miraculous way he provided for me, first to attend the Congress on World Evangelization in Lausanne, Switzerland, in July, and then to study at All Nations Christian College in the UK in the autumn. The theme of the Congress was *Let the World Hear His Voice*. I was

personally challenged by this time. Since then I often ask myself, “What am I doing to make the world hear his voice?” In response to this challenge I have given my energies to the Lord’s work with greater dedication than ever before. The three months at ANCC in the beautiful English county of Hertfordshire was an enriching experience for me both spiritually and intellectually. I must confess that coming from a strictly oriental background I was a bit baffled by the life and culture of the West. Within a few days, however, I discovered that there were students from twenty nations. All had come to study the Word of God with a definite call to “Go forth and make disciples of all nations”. My time at the college was a very busy one. There was the constant pressure of tutorials and lectures, church work and assignments. Yet there was time for long walks in the lush green woods of the college, or helping with the making of mince pies, or getting to know others over a cup of coffee, or preparing Pakistani curry for friends. When I look back on the time I spent in the college I see that the Lord was preparing me to return to Pakistan. During the last week the Lord impressed on me yet another verse, “Return to your homes in the land that Moses the servant of the Lord gave you...But be very careful to keep the commandment and the law which Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, to love the Lord your God, and to walk in all his ways, to obey his commands, to hold fast to him and to serve him with all your heart and all your soul.” (Joshua 22:4-5.) What better way to serve than to proclaim and spread the Good News of Jesus Christ.

***Excerpts from Tara’s commendation from the Principal and Vice Principal of All Nations Christian College***

She wins the confidence and respect of people of all ages and cultural backgrounds, and shows unusual understanding and spiritual discernment in counseling...Mrs James is a very intelligent, thoughtful graduate who reads widely. She has good theological and biblical knowledge and a wise grasp of current

issues and of the opportunities and problems facing the Christian church today. She is aware of the importance of young people, particularly students, being vitally linked with local churches and of maintaining good relationships with their families. She sees student work as an integral part of the outreach and upbuilding of the church...above all she brings the presence of God with her wherever she goes.

***Vivienne Stacey writes about Tara and her Bible teaching ministry***

Tara knew more than most of the richness of the deep things of God revealed in Jesus and communicated through the Holy Spirit. She loved the Bible because it revealed the purpose and plan of God. She daily grew in her spiritual life as she fed on the written word of God because it led her to the living eternal word of God - Jesus, the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. Every book of the Bible speaks of him so she was committed to living by the message of the Bible and teaching it to individuals and to small Bible study groups. It is not surprising that she spent so much of her life in this ministry which became an integral part of her home life, her professional life and then in her God-given calling with the PFES. Tara experienced profoundly that, "Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God". (Deuteronomy 8:3 and Matthew 4:4.) In St Andrew's Church, Lahore (part of the Church of Pakistan) she joined a fellowship of people in whom God was working and preparing for leadership. The Youth Fellowship of St Andrew's produced leaders like Bishop Azad and Lesley Marshall, Johnson and Daisy Charles - Johnson led the Scripture Union in Pakistan for many years; Rev Irfan and Rosina Jamil - Irfan was former General Secretary of PFES; Michael and Nargis Abel - Michael is Director of the Language Recordings Institute, and Anthony and Marina Lamuel - Anthony became the General Secretary of the Pakistan Bible Society. It is not surprising that Tara was such a warm supporter of

the Scripture Union, the United Bible Training Centre, the Pakistan Bible Society and other organizations that stressed knowing God through his word. Anthony Lamuel read one of the Scripture readings (Revelation 21:1-8) at Tara's Celebration and Thanksgiving service in May 2001. She was on the Board of the Bible Society and encouraged the creative projects that Anthony Lamuel presented. One of the most recent is the Greek-Urdu Interlinear with Interpretation Project. Already produced is the New Testament with Study Notes, which was widely accepted, and is soon to be available in a second edition. Anthony paid a warm tribute to Tara in writing of his appreciation of her.

***From Attiya, wife of Rameez Raja, Chief Executive of the Pakistan Cricket Board, Lahore***

*Tara Baji, my second Mother*

17 September 2003

My father was from East Punjab and mother from Delhi. Their families became known to each other as my mother's brother-in-law and my father worked together in the customs department. Their families settled in Lahore at the time of partition and my parents married soon after that. They settled in E Block Model Town in Tara Baji's neighbourhood and this is how they got to know her. My association with Tara Baji started in the sixties when my mother was planning to put me in an English Medium School. Tara Baji was a teacher in the Convent of Jesus and Mary and my mother asked her to help me in her spare time. This was the beginning of a relationship that only gained in love, understanding and respect with each passing day. Even with her death the relationship has not ended as I am strongly tied to Uncle Banner, Sam, Kamni and Miriam and they mean more to me than my own relatives. I was still in school when Tara Baji moved to Karachi but the strong foundation laid in me for academic study helped me to get an MBA (Masters in Business Administration) without any help whatsoever. I did not need any help in studies, needle work or

cooking after that, as she taught me always to believe in myself and look for help only from books. My mother called her Tara Baji out of sheer respect and this is how she became known to me. The relationship I had with her is hard to put into words. "Motherly" is the only word that comes to my mind when I think about her. It is always said that nobody is perfect but for me she was perfect in all respects, hence a role model, and like a blotting paper I absorbed all the goodness she offered.

She taught me the ethics of life and instilled in me the qualities and responsibilities of a woman and mother. Not only did she help me with my studies but also taught me the art of cooking, knitting, embroidery, stitching and above all love and affection for all living creatures. She was encouraging and supportive of everything I did, thus giving me much needed self-confidence. It will be self-praise to state the compliments I get in my everyday life so I'll limit them to the statement that whatever success I have achieved in academics, as a daughter, wife and sister it's all because of Tara Baji. Tara Baji was a simple and modest lady. She considered life as a gift of God and wanted to make every minute purposeful by doing something constructive and valuable. I can never forget her smiling face and waving hand as she passed my house while going out to work in scorching heat or freezing cold or rain. A lady young at heart and with the pulse of a teenager she loved talking about the latest fashions, styles and films.

After my marriage I became very busy because of my husband's profession and did not have enough time to spend with her, but whenever I met her we made the most of it and talked our hearts out. Tara Baji had tremendous love for life and braved serious ailments with a smiling face and unflinching resolve. I had such a strong image of her that I never wanted to see her on a hospital bed and that was the reason I never went to see her in hospital and

prayed that she might come back safe and healthy from hospital whenever she got admitted for treatment.

Another unique thing about Tara Baji was that I never saw her impatient, angry, nervous or jittery, even with small children who were her weakness anyway and whom she managed to attract always. Princely grace made her a unique individual. There is so much I can write about her but cannot as it will require books to be written. I saw her age gracefully with a growing contentment and now that she is up in heaven I'm sure that she is even happier and fulfilled with the goodness she imparted and the blessing she received. God bless my Tara Baji.

***Remembering Aunty Tara – reflections by family friend Michael Abel, Director, Language Recordings Institute***

I first met Aunty Tara James in the early sixties. My family and I were living in Karachi where my father was posted at that time during his military career. Aunty Tara and my mother had been classmates at Kinnaird High School in Lahore and were good friends. My first remembrance of her is from the Holy Trinity Cathedral where both our families worshipped. Along with Aunty Tara we met her husband, Banner, and their son Samuel. Miriam would come later.

I remember Aunty Tara as a tall graceful lady in a *sari* who was said to be Headmistress of the Holy Trinity Girls High School. One thing that comes to mind strongly from that time is driving home from Church one Sunday. My parents were discussing the news that Tara was going to leave her prestigious job at the school to join a little known Christian organization called PFES. For me at that stage PFES stood for a long and unpronounceable name. I remember that my mother tried to dissuade Aunty Tara from this madness but she was determined that this was where God wanted her to be.

Then followed a time away for Aunty Tara when she went away to a Christian College overseas. Also, during this time my father was transferred to Rawalpindi and we moved north. We kept in touch with the James family, however, and met them almost every summer when they came through Rawalpindi on their way up to the Murree Hills for the annual PFES summer camps. One memorable time was when both our families went up north to Kaghan and Shoghran for a summer holiday. In the late seventies the James family moved to Lahore and built their home in Model Town. Aunty Tara had by then become the Executive Secretary in the PFES and after her office hours was busy running meetings for girl students trying to disciple them as followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. One thing that impressed many of us was the way she led by example. No cars for her, she would travel by bus as her young students did, she would rough it like the rest. She would spend quality time in preparing her Bible study lessons and would apply the scriptures to her own life before she would present the same challenges to others. She was an inspiration to many of the young college and university students that she ministered to.

I was especially privileged to see her from very close. When I took up my position with Gospel Recordings in 1983 and moved to Lahore I lived with the James family for two years. Aunty Tara was a mother to me for those two years. Her Christian witness at home and outside was the same. A loving wife to Banner and a devoted mother to Sam and Miriam she was “Aunty Tara” to all she came across in and through PFES. To me she was someone I could confide in and seek advice from. For her part she treated me like an older son and I was privy to a number of things in that household that were shared with me. Hardly ever given to anger she was patient, soft-spoken and composed at all times. Her serenity, I believe, flowed from the hours she spent at the feet of Jesus in prayer and meditation. She was wise in her counsel and meticulous in what she did. Though often unwell in the last few

years of life, sick with cancer and suffering from a stroke and heart problems never did I hear her complain about her health or why had God allowed her to be so stricken. Even in sickness she had the wonderful ability to minister to those who went to minister to her. She was truly a remarkable woman whose life mirrored that of the One she served so faithfully.

***From Jim, Michael Abel's elder sister in Canada. Their mother and Tara were life-long friends***

My dear Uncle Banner, Sam, Kamni, Miriam, John and all the children

I hope this finds you all well. It is a very difficult time that you are passing through; but thank God that he is always present and right beside us, to give us strength and help us to move on. He will be with you and guide you, as you adjust to life without Aunty Tara.

Aunty Tara such a wonderful Christian, an example to so many people. Whenever I think of her, the first image that comes to mind is when we were in Karachi and Sam and Miriam were little kids. Aunty used to be so proud of how good Sam was at chess and how good Miriam was with helping her in the house. Her children and family life was so dear to her. She served the Lord whenever she went in whatever capacity she could. She also had a fair share of physical problems with her health, but that never stopped her from being a faithful witness of Jesus. Now we can rest assured that she is with her Lord and Master, and at peace with no worries or illness. She touched many lives and passed on her faith to so many people that we feel blessed that we knew a person like her.

Uncle, this time is going to be the hardest for you as you have lost a loving partner of so many years, but remember that you are in our prayers and God will strengthen your heart and give you the courage to go on with your life. It is not going to be easy for the children and grandchildren either, because what can more difficult

than saying goodbye to a mother. But please know all of you, that we are praying for you, and the Lord is the Rock to whom we can turn and take refuge in. You can be so proud of Aunty that she was such a faithful servant of the Lord. We all share your sorrow and grief at this time, and wish we were there so we could be physically present and to be with you. But spiritually we are one in the Spirit and close, no matter how much the distance. Our prayers are with you all, that Lord will hold you all in the palm of his hand and give you all the comfort and peace and strength that you need right now. I close with lots of love to each one of you from all of us here.

***From Corinne Nathaniel, long-time friend***

I first met Tara in the early sixties during a short posting to Karachi, but it was not until both our families moved to Lahore in the latter half of the sixties that we were able to get to know each other. The beautiful quality of Tara's Christian life was manifested in her commitment to the Pakistan Fellowship of Evangelical Students. Her dedication to the students was evident for all to see and many a student to whom she ministered owes much of their own Christian commitment and growth to Tara's nurture and care of them. At a time when Member Care was not being given a high priority, Tara was standing by her team, sharing in their problems and building them up. She was the grand old lady of PFES whom everyone looked up to because of her example. I can still remember her travelling by wagon to visit her cell groups. These were scattered all over Lahore. In fact she travelled all over the country encouraging and discipling students in almost all the major cities of the country. This did not prevent her from taking in knitting orders to raise money for PFES. Her children bear witness to the way in which she nurtured them in the Lord, and both of them are living a life of commitment to the Lord because of her faithfulness to them.

It wasn't until around the mid-nineties, after Tara had been through a time of ill-health, and she had more or less withdrawn from PFES, that our relationship began to deepen. It began when my husband, Eddie, and I visited Tara and her family at home as part of a Parish outreach programme. Soon after this Tara asked us if we would come and meet with her and her family for a regular time of fellowship in the Lord. Longing for fellowship ourselves we were only too happy to agree. It was from these meetings that our relationship began to grow. What a blessing these meetings turned out to be. Initially, there would be just Tara, Kamni, her daughter-in-law, and ourselves, but gradually others joined us. Before we knew it from meeting once or twice a month we progressed to meeting every week and soon these meetings became full-fledged Bible studies. This is where Tara came into her own and we benefited greatly from her experience in leading Bible studies. The meetings continue until today and we have not forgotten the lessons Tara taught us. The meetings helped us grow closer at a family level, too, and until her home-going, I learned so much from Tara, more from her example, than by her teaching. She was one person I knew who practised what she preached, although she was more wont to teach rather than preach. My memories of Tara are her love, gentleness and patience. I cannot remember hearing one unkind word from her in all the time I knew her, nor did any word of gossip pass her lips. It was as though nothing could ruffle her, and she had the ability to calm others, like myself, who did get easily ruffled. Tara showed Eddie and myself a lot of love during his illness and was genuinely concerned about his health. I know she prayed for him regularly. Eddie was very touched when on a blazing hot morning in June, Tara, accompanied by Banner and her sister Sheila, visited him in hospital the day before they were due to go on holiday to England. Knowing that it was not easy for Tara to walk the long distances down the hospital corridors and yet she had made the effort to visit

him before leaving touched him deeply. Later, after his death, Tara was a support and strength to me in my bereavement.

Tara had had her own share of health problems but she never complained. When she resigned from PFES due to these problems she just went on with life and continued to serve her Lord at every opportunity that presented itself. Her caring attitude for all whom she met drew her to all. Anyone who was privileged to come into close contact with Tara was privileged indeed. I consider it an honour to have been one of her friends and to learn much from her. Tara was humble and unassuming, but for all her gentleness she was a spiritual giant, a saint who had learned to be the servant of all. To sum it all up, Tara was the most Christ-like person I knew. I thank God for having let me share in part of her life. The world was certainly a better place for her being in it, and her death has been an irreparable loss to her family, to her friends and to the Church. May God raise up many more like her to serve the Church.

***From Tara's long-time English friend, Shirley Downes***

I am a long-time friend of Tara James. My husband and I lived at Batapur, about ten miles from Lahore, near the Indian border from 1963-65. John was a chemist with Bata Shoe Company. Tara and I met when we were both teaching at the Jesus and Mary Convent in Lahore. Tara was a senior teacher in the English department and I worked mornings only teaching English and Physical Education. Another link was that her brother Wilfred also worked for the Bata Shoe Company. The convent was a haven to me - so peaceful after the pressure of working in a Secondary School in England even in the sixties! Tara was my mentor, guiding me in the ways of the school, the majority of the students being Muslim; as we worked through the academic year including examinations, open days, displays and so on. She was always there, willing to advise in the "nicest" way possible, which on one occasion came in the form of a little reminder that I hadn't been "signing in" each morning, in fact for a whole term, being totally unaware of the book's existence in the quiet room!

I recall a memorable excursion to Changa Manga by train with Mother Andrew and other members of Staff and Senior Students. After an enjoyable day walking and picnicing in the countryside, we set off, late in the afternoon, for the return journey to Lahore. En route a rail breakdown occurred and our train was marooned on the track. Tara and I were with a group of students in one of the compartments fitted out with wooden benches and slats for windows. The girls were warned to be as quiet as possible but despite warnings to keep well away from the slats students had jewelry and personal belongings snatched from them. We arrived back in Lahore railway station well after dark, somewhat shaken, to anxious parents awaiting their daughters' return. I set out on my drive back to Batapur with some misgivings knowing that I would be stopped by the Rangers who were constantly checking for smugglers near the Indian border. Thanks to the prayers of the nuns

and other friends I arrived home safely - no mobiles in those days and only one telephone on the whole compound!

Outside school we came to know Banner James and of course, the small boy, Sam. When the James family moved to Karachi we kept in touch. Our first daughter, Jennifer Tara, was born in Forman Christian College Hospital in September 1964. Tara kindly consented to be her godmother, returning to Lahore for her baptism in St Andrew's Church on 26 October 1964 - a wonderful occasion. During the intervening years Tara and Banner visited us in the UK many times, especially during the term she was at the All Nations Christian College in Hertfordshire. In the early nineties they travelled with us to Cornwall and Wales, camping in our Bedford Bambi van - a rare experience. Our daughter returned to her birthplace in 1990, staying with the James family and other Parsi and Muslim friends. We retraced our steps to Karachi, Lahore and Rawalpindi in 1995.

***Memories of Aunty Tara from family friend Carol Walker***

First memories:

Student Conference 1981. Teaching concern, and lifestyle; she could still be the headmistress, giving rulings on behaviour, but she loved and enjoyed the students.

Over-riding memory:

Laughter – we seemed to be around so many things that happened in less than perfect ways, but Aunty Tara always had a lightness of touch which meant that the first response was a little chuckle at human idiosyncrasies, matched with an awareness that our loving Father had a way through. It was rare for Tara to view something as an insoluble problem.

I came to know Aunty Tara in 1981 when I accompanied a team of British students on a two-month visit to Pakistan that culminated in involvement in the first PFES conference in Lahore. On that

occasion I was a bit unclear as to who was who. I remember Aunty Tara having to act in *loco parentis* to the girls at the conference, dealing tenderly with the homesick, and disciplining the ones who would get the conference a bad name by staying out late without telling anyone where they were. Some of that confused me at the time, for I did not then know the culture so well. With ongoing involvement in PFES after returning to Pakistan in 1984 I realized how much the reputation of the movement, and so the consequent possibility of the girls attending the summer programmes, depended on the wise maintaining of the boundaries by Aunty Tara. If she were too lax families would not let girls attend. If she were harsh then for sure girls would not want to come. But such problems did not exist, for Aunty Tara was always kind, but constantly guided by a profound sense of rightness and honour that can only be attributed to her close walk with Christ.

Aunty Tara was a true friend and mentor. We laughed together, we cried together, we did little jobs together, and we prayed together. Whilst I was still attending the summer language programme, in my second year in the country, I was allowed to take a week or so away from school to be present at the PFES annual camp, but only if I would continue to work through the prescribed lesson material. This meant reading and understanding some passages from the letters of St Paul, in Urdu. In the midst of a busy camp programme Tara would give me some time every afternoon to work my way through these readings. I used to stay with Tara and Banner when I came to Lahore from Faisalabad, to meet with Bible correspondence course students. I had to do some of the visiting on my own, but I was never completely alone, because Aunty Tara gave me family accountability. When I set out in the morning I would check with Tara that she wanted me back before it was dark. Quite often she would say to me first, "You'll be back before dark, won't you?" It was an understanding we had. Homes that I visited were always respectful of the fact that I belonged somewhere. The

accountability was very liberating, and is an example of the way Tara released and nurtured ministry. The fruit of her life is not only in what she did, but in what she enabled and encouraged others to do.

I do not know how many expatriate Christians have stayed in the home of Banner and Tara. I have certainly met different members of IFES leadership there, and also, on different occasions been able to take both my brother and my mother to stay. It is a remarkable gift that so varied a selection of people could all feel so accepted and at home. There are also numerous students and PFES staff workers who have been through the home. It is not unusual for Asian homes to offer hospitality. What is less usual is to be allowed in the kitchen, to share in cleaning the rice, and helping with the washing up. I am just so grateful that Banner and Tara shared themselves and their home as family, and so that we had special times of honest chatter whilst chopping the coriander. Conversation might be about family concerns, or about the spiritual development of students, things we had been learning from God, or maybe bus routes, family wedding plans, or who knows what. Needs, or matters that needed a decision, would always be taken up in prayer.

I learnt roundness of life from Auntie Tara. Not only was she a passionately committed member of the Board of the United Bible Training Centre, thorough in her preparation and wise in her guidance. Not only was her weekly routine for many years shaped around the need to be in the PFES office in the mornings, and at one or two girls' Bible study groups during the week. Not only was she faithful in her involvement in her local church, and careful and prayerful in getting ready for any preaching engagement. She also had time to know the family of the home help, and to listen to the young cook as he learnt to read. Still beyond this, family was always at the heart. I have sat late around the family table as Sam and his mother talked through issues of life, or sought to resolve

difficult decisions. Many a time I have walked round to Tara's brother's home on the far corner of the block maybe just to share in calling by to see that everyone is OK, or perhaps because something needed dropping off. I travelled with the family to Peshawar, picking up Tara's sister Sheila on the way, to celebrate Sam's engagement to Kamni, and was with the family for the marriage, as I had the responsibility of driving the "wedding car"! ...If these are light-hearted accounts of family life they also illustrate the open-hearted hospitality and mentoring that touched my life in ways more profoundly than any passing pithy comment or single act could have done. Aunty Tara was consistently one whole person living out a truly Christian life, whether catching a rickshaw or addressing a conference.

Did Tara ever get angry? Yes, she did, when wrong was done. It was not common and was always to do with principle and maintenance of standards, and never to do with how something had affected her. She did get angry with girls who had come back after camp curfew time. She did get angry over significant failure to fulfil responsibilities by PFES staff. But those moments never lingered. They were dignity affirming, coming out of conviction about the possibility of doing what is right. Misdemeanours were dealt with and forgotten. I am not surprised she was a good headmistress.

I should have stories to tell from her times of teaching, leading workshops and seminars, for she took many and always gave care to the preparation. She looked for the plain meaning of Scripture, and set that before others, with practical application. But the memories that stay are of her sitting with young staff, Bible open and sheets of foolscap paper held down beside it, helping them in their preparation. She was not the kind to present something on Fun Night at camp, but she did encourage shy young members to feel confident to make their contribution, and commented and

complimented them the next day. She was the one to make sure the team had the programme outlined, the Board agenda ready, and details in order.

Tara belonged to a part of society that could have meant she always lived in comfort. That she shared a dormitory every summer, sometimes with as many as forty girls, sleeping in a creaking metal bunk bed, and guiding in resolving problems with blocked latrines, speaks volumes of her contentment in, and her identification with, Christ. She demonstrated that same spirit of acceptance after she had had her stroke. It was an abrupt full stop to her schedule. She did not complain, but was troubled about how she could continue to still serve her Lord. The fact that she was now able to work on the PFES staff manual, and to take on new work translating material for the Bible Society was a matter of thanksgiving. It also gave opportunity to have more time with her grandchildren, and to be home with Banner - an important gift to her, and the whole family.

***About Tara from Mian A Ghani, Training and Organization Development Adviser, Shell, Karachi***

20 April 2001

Dear Banner

No amount of words can console you, so I won't even try. May God help you overcome the bereavement after such a long partnership of complete mutual devotion and commitment not only to each other but also to high and noble values. I was in the midst of a course but immediately informed Iffat who received so much love from her and from you. I hope she was able to attend the funeral and pay my last respects to Tara. God grant her qualities to more of us. Amen!

***More about Tara from Mian A Ghani***

9 May 2001

It was half a century ago that Banner James invited a few colleagues to tea to his house near the Multan Cantonment Railway Station. That's where I met Tara for the first time and was immediately touched by her gracious hospitality and devotion to Banner. Nothing in that meeting did she say or do which did not have an overtone of nobility. Our friendship grew rapidly. Tara, as I found over all these years, was a combination of many rare qualities. She used to take my daughter Iffat, who lost her mother a long time ago into her arms just as lovingly as Iffat's real mother. Tara's high values were contagious. Banner and Tara honoured me by staying in my apartment when she was invited by the Karachi Community to a farewell function. I was privileged to be invited to such parties with them and it was a joy to know that Tara and Banner who were held in great genuine respect by so many people, treated me as a friend. Iffat and I pray that God may grant Tara's human characteristics to more of us. Amen.

***From our old friend Mr K Mahmud***

Islamabad April 20, 2001

Dear Banner

I talked to you on the telephone a short while ago. But I could not get the right words to express the depth of my feeling over your loss. Let me say that this was no ordinary loss for me also and I can understand, even feel your grief. Tara had been a special friend all these fifty-two years and a source of great joy. She radiated peace and solace. Noble in spirit, charming in person, saintly in habits, she embodied love, beauty and truthfulness. In Tara I had a friend the like of which I could not have imagined I could ever have. As far I am concerned she was a quiet teacher of all the values I have mentioned above. I will surely miss her. So my dear friend, your loss is mine too. She spread selfless happiness. Yet in suffering she was brave and courageous. You have to bear this loss with the same courage and faith that she had.

I want to be with you soon and talk about her soon. *Inshallah*.

***Tribute paid by our old Muslim friend Mr K Mahmud, former Federal Secretary, Establishment Division, Islamabad, at Tara's service of Celebration and Thanksgiving held at the Cathedral Church of the Resurrection, Lahore, on 12 May 2001***

Rt Rev Azad Marshal, Rev Irfan Jamil and Rev Shahid Mehraj  
First of all I would like to thank you and Banner James for allowing me to participate and say a few words in this service, which is being conducted in memory of a very dear friend of fifty-two years. I am here today because I can rightfully claim that I am the oldest and closest friend of Tara. I first met Tara and Banner James in 1949 in Multan, where he was working for a company (Burmah Shell) and I only recently had started my career as a college teacher. It was a casual introduction by a mutual friend. With careers so far apart who could even think that our paths would ever cross again. Little coincidences came to light converting the meeting into almost an instant friendship that was to span a lifetime. An uncle of Tara's was a lecturer at Murray College, Sialkot, where I had studied for six wonderful years, under the gentle guidance of Christian teachers. Tara virtually took me to relive those days, which I was still missing. I felt instinctively drawn towards her. I began to have the feeling that Tara was the visionary and Banner an activist, who would help carry out her vision. Later events showed that my instinct was not far wrong. Banner, who adored his wife, was slowly but surely inspired by her over the years to become a changed man, which he is now - a man of God, which he never was before.

Biblical study was a compulsory subject in my days. So I had to read the Bible and pass tests. I like to read my favourite passages even now. But I say truthfully that what really helped me to understand the teachings of Jesus Christ was the personal, living example of Tara James. Tara was steeped in Christian teaching -

teachings of love and tolerance. She had a transparent personality. Her words and deeds were never in conflict. She was a living gospel. She had another side to her character - determination to accomplish goals. Tara's high school education was disrupted because of her marriage. A few years later in the early fifties she decided to complete her education. Banner asked me to help her with her Urdu course. Those few months of contact with Tara, drew us closer. It is a matter of pride for me that I became a part of her life. I found her intelligent. She learnt easily and I seemed to have no difficulty in teaching her. In spite of her preoccupations as a housewife, she never hesitated or doubted that she could do it. To my great admiration, one day some years later, when I met her at Karachi, she was working as the Headmistress of a prestigious high school. The force that drove her to success was no doubt her strong faith and passion to serve her brothers and sisters in her community and beyond.

Her genius was to come into play later when she started counselling work. She inculcated the qualities of leadership in many young people of her community. She exercised a quiet but sure influence on whosoever came in contact with her. One trait of her character that impressed me most was that she always stressed the commonalities rather than the differences between the great faiths of the world. She emphasized the oneness of God, the accountability of man's moral life, the meanings and value of prayer, and the fundamental values of love, goodness and truth. This, regrettably, is a rather uncommon trait in men and women of various faiths. Tara had it in plenty, which made her a very special ambassador for God. Towards the last few years of her life, she had her share of suffering. One after the other there were critical setbacks to her health. But Tara bore her sufferings with characteristic courage and faith. She passed away with the same grace, with which she lived. Death is an indicator of man's helplessness. The death of a dear and loved one is a trauma that can

only be drowned in tears. It leaves you bewildered. Openly or secretly one tends to ask the question - why? Why did it have to happen at all? What is the point in coming to this world and then passing away like this? It is a very right question, but the fact is that there is no rational answer to this question. The answer lies only in faith - faith that God has a wider purpose and plan in which each death as well as each birth must fit. Each individual has been conferred a position in life, for the furtherance of that divine purpose. Each has been assigned a role to play and having played that retire from life. I believe that Tara James did full justice to her calling in her life. She fulfilled her role with remarkable dedication. She served her community, and in indeed many beyond her community, in a commendable manner. I used to call her Saint Tara and she always thought I was joking. But I swear I never joked. I really meant it. She was saintly in every sense of the term.

Tara is dead but her spirit is very much alive. I should continue to take joy from the peace, serenity and tranquility of her spirit. To my friend Banner, whose loss is the greatest, I offer my share in his grief. I am confident that he will bear this loss with the faith and courage that Tara would like him too. Tara used to talk about ways and means of continuing her cherished work of charity and education on a permanent basis even after her death. Her wish was to establish as Educational Endowment Trust. Unfortunately because of her health conditions in the last ten years or so, she could not attend to this. I hope Banner will now fulfill her wish with whatever resources he has for the purpose.

In the end it is usual to pray for the departed soul. I believe that Tara has an assured place in heaven and my prayers are not needed by her... I also thank the Almighty for blessing me with the friendship and love of Tara, Banner and the James family.

***More from Mr K Mahmud, our family friend of over half a century, who wrote on the first Christmas after Tara's death in 2001***

My favourite verse from the Qur'an is a prayer:

“Merciful Allah, show me the right way, the way of those on whom you have bestowed your blessings and graces.”

Tara was no doubt one of those on whom God's blessings and graces were ample. As that evening of her memorial service proved, she lives in the hearts of many. Take comfort, you are not alone. While I recite that prayer, I send you my love - the ultimate message of Christmas...

***From Afshan, Shahid, Farhan & Salmann, Muslim friends in the UK***

Dear Uncle Banner,

We have just learnt about the sad demise of Aunty Tara. We cannot find words to express our deep sorrow at the loss of a tremendously loving, caring and tender person. Aunty Tara always had time and affection for everyone, her gentle and sincere love will be missed by us forever.

We cannot begin to imagine how big this loss is to you, Sam, Miriam and the rest of the family, no word can in anyway reduce your sorrow. We pray to God to give you all the strength to bear this loss, and to grant the soul of Aunty Tara a special place under His shadow, Amen!

With kindest regards and love

***From John and Dorothy Wilder, former Presbyterian fraternal workers in Pakistan***

Dear Banner and family

How we would love to fly over there and give you a Punjabi hug, to weep with you and also to rejoice with you that Tara is well and strong again and with her beloved Lord and Saviour! Along with

our sense of loss is also a sense of awe that we were privileged to know a woman like Tara. What a gracious, gifted, competent and committed woman she was. What an example to all of us and what a blessing to all her family and friends. Just think of all the people who will be in heaven because of her life and witness. Her work with PFES alone will bear fruit forever! May God grant you much comfort and peace of mind and heart. We thank God for your friendship for these many years. With much love in Christ.

***From Col Retd S K Tressler, Federal Minister  
Ministry of Minorities, Culture, Sports, Tourism and Youth  
Affairs, Government of Pakistan***

My dear Banner Bhai

It was very sad and shocking to learn about the passing away of Tara Sister. I got the news just before I was leaving for Geneva to attend the Human Rights Conference. I am sorry I could not contact you or come to offer my condolence personally. I am sure Tara Sister is at peace with the Lord. I can imagine your grief and the separation after such a long partnership but these are the ways of our heavenly Father and we have to accept his will. May he keep you under his special blessings. I shall try to see you personally as soon as I get time. I only returned yesterday to the office. Mona joins me in this hour of grief and always prays for you. Please convey our sympathies and love to all the members of the family.

***From Shello, daughter of Rt Rev Azad Marshal, Area Bishop, the  
Arabian Gulf States***

Dear Uncle Banner, Uncle Sam, Aunty Kamni, Senir, Ureen and Yashoo

I am so sorry for what you have just suffered, and through my tears on Monday when Uncle Garth told me, all I could see was Aunty Tara's smiling face, so always reflective of the Jesus whom she loved and the Jesus who loved her. I think that is where Aunty's victory lay and that's where she would have us look at this time. I

see her going into eternity so much like I saw Dada's. It is so hard to lose our prayer warriors but we know that the Lord they called on is the one will stand with us in our time of pain. I'm in prayer for you as you go through this. It will not be a quick recovery from this tragedy, as I know how much a centre of every one's life she was. But know, dear loved ones, that through it all I will be upholding you before his throne of grace. Allow him to be the place where you take your pain, and allow his strong arms to hold you and comfort you. I love you all, and hope you are taking care of yourselves. Love and hugs to you all, especially to the little ones.

***From The New School, Model Town, Lahore***

17 April 2001

Professor E Duloy, Board Members, staff and students of The New School, express their heart-felt condolences on the sad demise of Mrs Tara James. Mrs Tara James was a dedicated and cherished member of the Managing Board and a true friend of The New School. She will always be remembered with love and affection by the School Management, staff and children. May God Almighty rest her departed soul in eternal peace and give fortitude and courage to the members of her family to bear this irreparable loss.

***From The OUTREACH May 2001, Holy Trinity Cathedral, Karachi***

In Memoriam – Mrs Tara James

Older members of the congregation were grieved to learn of the death in Lahore of Mrs Tara James. For many years she was a member of our English congregation. She passed away in her sleep on the morning of Easter Monday, 16 April. Her health had been uncertain for a number of years after a serious stroke, but in spite of this she remained active and involved in the Lord's work to the end. Tara was Principal of Holy Trinity Girls High School in the late sixties and early seventies. She left this job to become the first

woman staff worker in the Pakistan Fellowship of Evangelical Students (PFES). Later, after the family had moved to Lahore, she served for many years as Executive Secretary to that movement. Only eternity will reveal the full extent of her influence on generations of Christian students. She set an example of a wise, gracious, humble and godly Christian wife and mother, counsellor and leader. We send our deepest sympathy to her husband, Banner, their son Sammy and daughter Miriam and their families. May they be comforted in the knowledge that she is now “with Christ, which is far better”.

***From Erusha and her husband Fred Arron, Tara’s  
Deputy Principal at Holy Trinity Girls High School, Karachi  
20 July 2001***

Dear Banner, Sam, Miriam and the entire family

We were both deeply shocked and grieved to hear of Tara’s passing away. I will always remember her pleasant ways. Tara had such promise and was so well-liked that it seems hard to believe she is no longer with us. Banner, our thoughts are with you and your family and we extend our deepest sympathy to you. May the love that surrounds you be a source of comfort at this time. With great personal sorrow, we wish to share your loss and do accept our heartfelt sympathy. “A single star shines brightly in the evening sky... love lives on forever”.

***From Rt Rev Michael Nazir-Ali, Bishop of Rochester, England***

She was a gracious and serene person who, nevertheless, had time for young people and those in need of her wisdom. We thank God for her work among students and for the numbers she disciplined for the Lord. We praise God for her faithful commitment to the Church and pray that her work will be taken up by others who have been inspired by her example.

“Eternal rest grant to her, O Lord , And let light perpetual shine upon her”.

***The year before her death John Edmund Haggai, Founder and Chairman of Haggai Institute, wrote to Tara***

Dear Tara

Can you believe another twelve months, another major milestone is past? I'm thanking the Lord he has brought you safely through another year. I pray that during the coming year the Lord will give you the desires of your heart - because you delight in him. (Psalm 37:4). I rejoice with you in your two birthdays each year. Your physical birthday acknowledges the passing of time. Your second birthday (your new birth in Christ) lifts you above time and connects you with eternity. What a glorious thought! My mother quoted to me hundreds of times, "Only one life; it will soon be past. Only what's done for Christ will last." God bless you always - in ALL you do.

***A tribute to Tara from Jean Mullinger, former Principal, United Bible Training Centre, Gujranwala***

There are just a few phrases that describe Tara for me in her relationship with the United Bible Training Centre, and with me as Principal. She had a vision for the UBTC and was willing to give time - however much was necessary - in a busy life. She served the UBTC well over a long period. She was a co-opted member of the Board and then on the Executive Committee and then Chairman for several years. She was very supportive, wise and caring. She was a gentle figure concealing a person of strong resolve. I have fond memories of Tara both as a friend as well as chairman of the UBTC Board and Executive. She was a great help and encouragement to me and always had good advice to give which I much appreciated. I am sure that only eternity will tell how the Lord used her in many spheres, especially PFES.

***From the Wellingtons, family friends from Canada***

18 April 2001

Dear Bhai Banner,

It was shocking news to learn of the demise of our dear sister Tara. We never expected this as a few days ago we heard that she was doing well. We know she is in very good hands now, relieved of all the agonies of the world. She loved the Lord and the Lord loved her. Now she has a glorious body, and the day will come when we will all see each other, in the company of our Lord. "We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him". 1 Thessalonians 4:14. "God is our refuge and strength, an ever present help in trouble". Psalm 46:1. When we trust in him, he gives us consolation. We are praying for you and your family in the name of our Lord Jesus, the saviour.

*From Miss Esther*

*Inayat, Morrison Christian Girls Religious Training Centre*

Dear Uncle Jee, Sam and Kamni,

Greetings from Narowal!

I have come to know through Rev Irfan Jamil, Vicar, St Andrew's Church, Lahore, that our dear Aunty Tara slept in the Lord. I am very sorry to hear this sad news as it is a big loss to the family and the community as well. Tara Aunty was a woman of God who served the Lord devotedly to spread his kingdom. She will be always be favourably remembered. May God grant you his peace to overcome this sorrow.

*Memories of Tara from Mike Wakely of Operation Mobilization*

I first met Tara when I visited Karachi in 1976. I had come on an exploratory trip to see what the needs and opportunities were for possible future work for OM in Pakistan, and Tara was one of those we consulted. She was easy to talk to, interested in what we proposed and made a lasting impression as a gracious and godly person. That was just the beginning.

When we returned to Pakistan to begin the work of OM teams, based in Lahore, we quickly came to know and appreciate her as a lady of outstanding ability and self-effacing humility and simplicity. As a leader of ministry to students, she opened the door for us to attend conferences, forging mutually valuable ties between OM and PFES. I have good memories of several PFES conferences where I was able to give Bible teaching and enjoy fellowship with the students. Tara's influence on the student ministry was palpable and has had lasting effects on generations of influential men women in Pakistan. Her life spoke more loudly than her words.

Banner and Tara became our close friends. When we formed a Board for the OM teams, I invited Tara to become a Board member. She immediately suggested we invite Banner. It was a dilemma for me, but we finally agreed with her, and Banner became an invaluable Board member of OM for many years. Banner and Tara visited England together and twice stayed with us. Tara taught my wife to cook a good chicken curry. We visited some of Kent's historic houses together – the homes of Anne Boleyn and Winston Churchill, and most memorable of all, Hampton Court. By that time, as a result of her stroke and other illnesses, she was weak and clearly unwell. Tara bore her illnesses with grace and courage, though her paralysis and pain towards the end of her life were obviously distressing. We pushed her in a wheelchair around Hampton Court and had a picnic in the gardens. It was a perfect day and the memories remain precious with us of her interest in everything in spite of her physical weakness and weariness. Tara's example of faith and gentle godliness will remain with us forever – her sweet smile, her interest in people, her common touch, her humility. She was one of Pakistan's most outstanding 20<sup>th</sup> century leaders.

***An appreciation of Aunty Tara from Peter and Saboohi Gill***

I am Peter George Gill at the moment studying at International Christian College, Glasgow, Scotland. It is my privilege to write some thing about our heroine, Aunty Tara James. She was our family friend. Our parents Rev and Mrs George F D Gill enjoyed close friendship with her in Gujrat and Lahore. I met her in 1984 at a PFES conference. She was such a loving and caring lady, She encouraged me to start a students' Bible study group in Gujrat and invited me to a leadership training seminar at the PFES office in Lahore. Unfortunately, I became sick with high fever so she invited me to move to her home for a few days as the seminar accommodation was overflowing with student leaders from all over Pakistan. I cannot forget her motherly love and care. I recovered and was able to attend the rest of the leadership seminar.

Secondly, I remember her visit to our home in Gujrat after the death of our mother. It was a very special time for us especially for my two younger sisters, Doris and Rebecca, as they were going though the grieving and mourning process. Her visit was like a stream of living water in the hot desert. Her words of encouragement were grief therapy to all of us.

Thirdly, my wife Saboohi remembers her trips to her town in Jalalpur Jattan. She encouraged Saboohi to start a PFES group. Saboohi was impressed with her humility and servant leadership. She always travelled on her official trips by public transport. It was a very good example to the young staff members who found it difficult to travel by public transport to these small towns and villages. She was a first class passenger and person but always travelled in third class by train with other student leaders and staff members.

Fourthly, when I became the first national director of Operation Mobilization of Pakistan I was very apprehensive as a young leader. She encouraged me a lot to trust in the Lord for my leadership role in OM. Her husband Mr Banner James was one of

the pioneer board members of OM Pakistan. She had a great gift of hospitality and generosity. We always enjoyed her cooking and fellowship at her home. We were so shocked to hear the news of her sudden death when her health was just improving. It was a big loss to all of us, and especially for Uncle Banner James. I expect to see her in heaven one day with her heavenly Father. She was such a wonderful woman Christian leader in the history of the Church in Pakistan.

***A tribute from the Founder of OM and his wife, George and Drena Verwer***

Dear Banner James

We pray that God's grace and strength continue to sustain you in these days. Mike Wakely told us of the home-going of your dear wife, Tara. We praise the Lord for her life and testimony. May his grace sustain you as you press on in the battle. Please do be assured of our love and prayer.

***Dr Viv Thomas of OM writes of his appreciation of Tara James***

I first met Tara at a student conference in Lahore, Pakistan, during the winter of 1983. Within a few moments we had connected and we remained friends for the rest of her life. Tara was to be my translator for the Bible studies I was teaching to 120 Pakistani Christian students. When we met I could see both intelligence and gentleness in her eyes which was carried through into her speech and demeanour. She also had some suspicion about this 31-year-old Englishman who was going to teach her beloved students. They were her sweet doves and she did not want them to be injured in anyway but sustained and fed so they could develop fully. She communicated to me the importance of my task and off we went. Tara was an excellent translator who seemed to listen carefully to

every word and nuance I articulated but she was much more than a translator of other people's words. Tara had her own speech.

Tara had learned significant speech and delightful dance. I never saw her dance with her body but she danced with joy around the people of her life in the middle of her subtle and loving interactions. She also danced with God through praise and adoration. What was the nature of her speech and dance?

Tara was wise. There are some people who see the issue but Tara could see how and by whom the issue had been formed. She was a spectacular observer of people's hearts and intentions being able to see characteristics in a life and then make room for them. Her wisdom and strength were very important to me when we were in Korea together in the summer of 1984. Sheila and I were leading a delegation from Pakistan to the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Korean Christian church. Tara and Banner were with us. Unfortunately disaster struck on the night before we left Pakistan. The Korean who had arranged the trip, Rev Chung, died of liver disease. The trip had to go ahead and it was Tara's wisdom which saw us through the series of complexities, which we encountered in completing our heavy Korean schedule while we mourned the loss of a good and committed man.

Tara also had charisma. She was attractive in many senses of the word. People were drawn to her because of her winsome personality and her gift in making you feel that you were the centre of her world. This was very powerful for she did not merely communicate the feeling of your importance to her, you actually were important to her and you knew it. Who can resist that sort of love, hospitality and friendship? Not me. She had the ability to make you feel like you were worth the world, and this is a characteristic of God. Tara transformed the gift of hospitality into an art form to be emulated and celebrated. You could see this so

clearly in her relationships with her students. They just loved her and would do anything for her once they saw the love and fire in her eyes.

Tara was a leader. She was not loud and self-focused dragging everyone into her own ego. Tara was a true leader both of men and of women. Her wisdom, charisma and hospitality all combined into someone who knew what was needed and when. Because of her integrity and trust that so characterized her life many would have followed her anywhere she chose to go. This was because of the nature of her dance, her dance with God. It was said of another female leader in the church, Hildegard of Bergen, that she was a “feather on the breath of God”. Tara was the same, living her life sustained by the breath of God as she danced her delightful dance of love, friendship, hospitality and service of her Lord.

***Vivienne Stacey’s interview with Tara’s Korean friend and colleague, Dr Chun Chae Ok***

Tara met Chae Ok in 1970 in Karachi. Chae Ok had arrived in Pakistan in 1961 from Seoul, Korea, to work with the Church in Pakistan when Bishop Chandu Ray had recruited her and two other Korean women. For six months in 1969-70 Chae Ok joined the staff of the United Bible Training Centre in Gujranwala, where I was Principal at that time. Like Tara I have been in touch with Chae Ok all through the following years and have visited her on four of my five visits to Korea. More about Chae Ok is recorded in chapter 4 of my book *Mission Ventured: Dynamic Stories Across a Challenging World*. On my last visit to Seoul in October 2002, Chae Ok kindly allowed me to interview her about our mutual friend Tara.

Chae Ok first met Tara when Tara was Principal of the Holy Trinity Girls High School in Karachi. They were introduced at a committee of Holy Trinity Cathedral. Chae Ok remembers that

Tara was beautiful, outgoing and friendly. She invited Chae Ok to her office and then to her home. Her children Sammy and Miriam were very small and her husband, Banner, was very friendly. "I was included in their home many times". They enjoyed each other's Korean and Pakistani dishes.

In 1960 Bishop Chandu Ray had originally written to ask Chae Ok to start a centre for training Christian women. When David Penman appeared he invited Chae Ok to help with PFES. Tara was on the PFES Executive Committee. Selwyn House is near to the High School where Tara worked and Chae Ok lived on the PECHS housing estate but had an office in Selwyn House. She often had lunch or tea with Tara. The James family lived in an apartment nearby and Chae Ok became included in their family. Chae Ok left Pakistan in August 1974 to pursue her doctoral studies. One summer Chae Ok took sixty students from Karachi and the rest of the province of Sindh for a camp in the Murree hills. When she became ill in Murree she had to rest for three months. Tara wrote to her, "You offer your life like this for Pakistan. I am Pakistani, I think I should resign and join PFES". She sent her resignation to Bishop Rudvin who had become Bishop of Karachi in 1970. Banner objected strongly in the beginning but later became a strong supporter. Tara joined PFES when Chae Ok was ill in bed. The newly formed Karachi Institute of Theology progressed through Tara's influence and the teaching received by students there helped forward the PFES. Chae Ok became such a very good friend that Tara called her "my best friend".

Tara herself wrote about their friendship, "When I first met this beautiful and charming lady, with a holy and quiet dignity all around her I felt that the good Lord had brought us together to glorify his name in Pakistan and to support each other. Through the diocese of Karachi Chae Ok was seconded to the PFES while I was serving PFES as voluntary chairman of the Local Committee

besides my duties as Principal. Chae Ok and I often met to discuss and plan women's work in the PFES. We both shared a deep concern to encourage and bring young women towards Christian maturity and to live as faithful witnesses in their colleges and universities. The more I met with her the more I was challenged to give full-time to the ministry of PFES... I felt the Holy Spirit nudging me towards this mission. My job as Principal was very demanding and I felt as though I could not give as much time to PFES as I wanted to. So I shared my concern with my friend Chae Ok. She said that she would pray with me and for me for the Lord's leading. Other friends, especially Dan and Ruth Bavington and David and Jean Penman, were praying for me. In 1973 I finally resigned and joined PFES.

The PFES was very different from my previous job, more so because I had no theological training and had not attended any student training programmes. They were difficult years but Chae Ok stood by me. She trained me to make student contacts, prepare and lead Bible studies, counsel young people, organize seminars, camps and conferences. All this she did to suit my own culture. I was gradually like Timothy being trained in righteousness and equipped for every good work. When Chae Ok finally left Pakistan in 1974 she encouraged me through letters. She also asked me to help young Korean church workers in their orientation to Pakistan. She had a mother's heart for them and asked me to take care of them, which I did with the same spirit. One such young woman was Meong Hwa. She wrote, 'Tara, she is still a young Christian worker therefore she needs a lot of care and prayer by people like you'. She would often ask for advice, 'Tara, do you really think there is need for another Korean worker for the Centre? I would value your honest evaluation, and comment on this matter'. 'Since ..... is a young teacher, please include her in your prayer and fellowship so that she grows in faith through you'. When my husband and I visited Korea at Chae Ok's invitation to join in the

celebrations of the centenary of the Korean church, we visited Pusan, Meong Hwa's home town and stayed with her for the weekend. Her mother could not speak English nor could I speak Korean, but the language of love crossed all barriers and flowed to each other through holding hands and smiles....The commitment and dedication of the Korean church was evident from the huge gatherings at church services where believers came in thousands to worship at every service. Arrangements were made for us to see the Mountains of Prayers where hundreds of Koreans have weeks of retreat, prayer and meditation. All this gave us deep insight into the making of the Korean church and the faithful witness of believers over the years."

Tara and Banner visited Korea for a month in the summer of 1980 as Chae Ok's guests. They visited EWhA International House and stayed at Chae Ok's apartment in Seoul. Tara spoke in some of the Korean churches about Pakistan and its churches. Tara and Banner travelled by car to the East coast with Chae Ok's sister. Tara met Chae Ok several times in Lahore when Chae Ok returned in 1982, 1996 and 1998 and stayed with them. She last saw Tara in 1998. Chae Ok's friend and colleague, Kim Young Nam, went to Lahore for her research in 2000 and visited the James family. She said, "I received a wonderful welcome all because of your friendship".

**After hearing of Tara's death Chae Ok was unable to travel to Pakistan for the funeral but she was very aware that Tara was "more alive than ever" so she sent this message for Tara's memorial service.**

Tara,

I wish I am at your memorial service in Lahore today with our mutual friends. The distance is great and yet I am thankful that I can at least send you my greetings. When I heard that you are called to eternal rest in the hands of God I found myself deep in sorrow and till late in the evening I cried like a little girl. I asked

myself why I am crying so hard when I know that you are with our heavenly God who is also with me, and also you are ahead of me where I myself long to go to be at rest. I realized that my grief mingled with thankfulness for all that you have meant to me and was because I cannot see you again in Pakistan. I no longer can share with you in words, in Urdu and in prayers. I cannot see your gracious features. I cannot experience any more your heart-warming welcome when I visit Lahore. I wept because of a loss which no one can make up. You had a very special space in my life in Pakistan and till now. I wept because of feeling your absence on earth where we could walk, talk and share meals.

Tara,

You will be remembered for your love and care by myself and other Korean sisters and brothers who labour for love of Jesus Christ in Pakistan. You have been a saintly woman to us. You lived a life which testifies that the gospel is the power of God for salvation for every one who has faith. You showed me through your daily life that God's love is reaching out beyond races and languages in my early period there when we together struggled to establish the PFES. You told me that you wanted to obey God's calling to you to pioneer students' ministry which has no secure life financially. You had a respectable position in the headship of Holy Trinity Girls High School in Karachi, a position which any able teacher would long to take up. You said it was a small thing in comparison to my dedication to God since I came all the way from Korea to an unknown country purely for the work of the gospel whereas you were only changing jobs. You included me in your family circle when I was away from my family. Your friendship enabled me to stay and press on in that land as I was overwhelmed by learning a new language and a new lifestyle in a very different context from Korean life, Whenever I think of the land of Pakistan yours is the first image which comes to me. The image is beauty with love.

Tara,

I feel you are close to us. You are with us in God's presence. Your image is beauty with love, it will be always with us. An unknown country to me in 1960 became to me a beloved country ever since I met you in Karachi because of your friendship and love. I with my fellow Korean colleagues there at your memorial service want to give a big and beautiful bouquet of flowers drawn from our hearts.  
Chun Chae Ok, Seoul, 12 May 2001

It seems appropriate now to hear from a Korean family whom Banner and Tara welcomed into their home in Lahore. Matthew (Keung-Chul) Jeong and Sue (Eun-Sook) Jeong from Seoul write about their dear Aunty Tara.

As a family we lived in the upstairs section of Aunty Tara's house for a year from September 1993 to August 1994. Then we were located in Peshawar. After that my wife and I visited Tara whenever we went to Lahore. You may ask us how we got to know her and her family. Before our arrival in Lahore a Korean church leader and dear friend of Aunty Tara, Dr Chun Chae Ok, introduced us to her in 1992 in Korea. The next year she and her husband Banner kindly allowed us to rent the upstairs of their house as our first accommodation in Pakistan. After that we got to know her closely as well as her dear husband, Uncle Banner James, her son Samuel, her daughter-in-law Kamni and her three grandchildren – Senir, Ureem and Eliyashaib . It has been a great privilege for us to get to know her and her family.

I observed that

*1. She was a person of prayer*

When we lived at Aunty Tara's house my wife and I used to have early morning prayers with Aunty and Uncle Banner James downstairs three days a week. She was always there in close relationship with the Lord in her small dining hall. I used to see her teaching her grandchildren how to pray as well as giving them her

prayerful life model. The children were good at copying her and learnt how to pray to the Lord.

*2. She was a person of discipline in her speech*

In my first year in Pakistan I learnt many new things - good and bad - about Pakistan. I was so keen to know the actual situation of the Church of Pakistan. Whenever I asked Aunty Tara about the Churches' situation she gave me positive answers. After I moved to Peshawar to work in the Peshawar Diocese of the Church of Pakistan I often asked about Pakistani Bishops and Church leaders by name. Her answers were always positive, never negative. I cannot remember any negative comment about Church leaders which she made in responses to my questions. One day I asked her about the character of a specific Pakistani Bishop. She was just pondering on my question and answered to me, "Matthew, I have respected the Bishop so much". It is so easy for us to criticize any church leader with light-mindedness. But she never did it in front of me. I learnt from her personal life about how to work with integrity under Pakistani leadership.

*3. She was a person of diligence with love*

My wife, Sue, commented on her life. After she was partly paralyzed at the end of her life she still raised up her three grandchildren so joyfully. Her right arm and leg were badly affected by the paralysis. Nevertheless she was active in service for her family. Moreover, she continued to teach English to a poor and young Pakistan Christian girl at her home. She mentored the young girl sharing her Christian ethos constantly.

*4. She was a person of kindness and hospitality*

In Pakistan people normally have a cup of tea in the afternoon after a siesta. Aunty Tara used to invite us to have a cup of tea with her.

My wife and I enjoyed having the tea with her. She loved giving hospitality to others. We met many friends and guests who visited her not only from Pakistan, but also from different parts of world. She entertained them so gladly showing the love of God so naturally flowing from her heart.

***Matthew and Sue wrote further on Aunty Tara's giving them and their children helpful orientation about Pakistan***

Pakistan was totally new to us. Through living with Aunty Tara and her family for a year we had the privilege of knowing her and observing her life closely. She showed us several lessons we had to learn as orientation. I don't think that she consciously meant to teach us orientation. She just communicated naturally just as she was. Here are some examples.

*1. About relationship with Muslim neighbours*

I was getting to know a Muslim neighbour family near to Aunty Tara's home. I didn't know much about Muslim culture in Pakistan because I was very new to it. So when I asked about Muslim culture and the family Aunty Tara kindly shared with me her knowledge. In fact she knew this particular family very well. The most remarkable lesson I learnt was that she didn't befriend the family to convert them to Christianity. She just made a genuine and natural relationship with them as her neighbours. Actually, I was prejudiced about Muslims. They seemed to me aggressive towards other religious people and fanatical about their own religion. But through Aunty Tara's good relationships with her Muslim neighbours my negative thoughts about them were somehow changed into a more positive and healthier understanding of them.

*2. About relationship with the Christian community in Pakistan*

As an expatriate it is easy to criticize any bad models and lapses in church leaders. I noticed that Aunty Tara didn't criticize the Pakistani Churches and leadership in front of me. Rather she

continued to pray for them with a loving and caring spirit. So, I learnt from her about how to serve God's Church wisely in difficult situations, not offending Pakistani leadership unnecessarily. I am a Reformed Presbyterian. I worked mainly in the Church of Pakistan which since Church Union in 1970 was comprised of four different denominational streams - Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian and Lutheran. The Anglican influence was more dominant in the areas where I worked. The Church of Pakistan was working on common liturgies but a lot has yet to be done. I was not familiar with this liturgical framework. Aunty Tara attended services of the Church of Pakistan – at the Cathedral and at St Andrew's Church which were Anglican in their background. I sometimes attended her church with her. So I understood that these liturgical services were also scriptural. It must be a good church because Aunty Tara was a member! Later on I got to know two vicars of St Andrew's Church. The senior vicar was Dr Frank Khair Ullah. After his death Rev Irfan Jamil succeeded him. When I moved from Lahore to Peshawar to serve the Peshawar Diocese of the Church of Pakistan in 1993 the lessons I learnt from Aunty Tara were real blessings to my wife and me.

### *3. About Aunty Tara's love for strangers*

She often invited our two children to play badminton with her family and grandson, Senir, in the playground at her house. Our children enjoyed it very much. Through this and other activities, they got to love Senir. On 10 April 1994 the second grandson Ureem was to be baptized. Tara invited me to be his godfather. I agreed and have become a part of her family spiritually. Tara was such a sweet person who loved people. So we learnt how important it was to maintain good relationships with other people and how Pakistanis valued people as people quite apart from their tasks and goals and how much they valued and demonstrated hospitality even to strangers like us.

***Vivienne comments***

Let the final tribute come from a journal that generally reports in most issues on people who have had significant influence on their communities and nation.

***From Al-Mushir (The Counselor)***, the *Theological Journal of the Christian Study Centre, Rawalpindi* (Volume 43 No. 2, 2001)

*Al-Mushir* concluded its obituary about the life of Tara James with the following comment, “Today we remember her as a woman of great dedication, love, intelligence and wisdom. Her gift of speaking touched the hearts and minds of innumerable people at home and abroad. Her vision and commitment, her strength and her faith will always be a source of inspiration for all those whom she touched directly and indirectly. We celebrate her memory, the life and love that God bestowed upon her.”

#### **Chapter 4 As PFES saw her**

***From Lindsay Brown, General Secretary, International Fellowship of Evangelical Students (IFES) to which PFES affiliated in 1975***

Dear Mr. James

We, at the IFES office in London, were very saddened to hear of the death of your beloved wife, Tara. She made an outstanding contribution to the work of PFES during her lifetime. We have cause to thank God for her. Thank you for sharing her with us. May you be covered with God's grace. Special hugs at this time of sorrowing.

***From David Bentley-Taylor Travelling Secretary of IFES***

We corresponded for years. I passed to a crucial interview with Tara James, swathed in a pale green *sari*, the elegant Punjabi, Anglican Headmistress of Holy Trinity Girls School, which by then had 32 teachers and 700 girls, 90% of them Muslims. She was only allowed to teach the Bible to the 8% who were listed as Christians... I discovered that Tara had visited Australia, gone frequently to India, and had recently been at Quetta in Baluchistan where she had led three Bible studies for the Christians she met in the nurses' residence at the Government Hospital. This had resulted in the formation of a Nurses Christian Fellowship and increased her desire to get free from administration and devote her time to a similar ministry among students... Soon after this she resigned her school post to take up a key role on the staff of the Pakistan Fellowship of Evangelical Students.

She told me, "I have been married for twenty years and now that I am a mature person I feel almost angry when I think of the work of earlier missionaries in British India. They gained large numbers of converts among illiterate outcaste Hindus, but they did not really devote themselves to the harder task of explaining the gospel to

Muslims and high caste Hindus. There were exceptions. My grandfather was converted from Islam and my mother, a doctor's daughter, from high caste Hinduism..."

On Sunday morning I preached at an English service at Holy Trinity Cathedral, Karachi, led by Rev David Penman. Tara James read one of the Bible readings. Sitting with her was her remarkable nephew Michael Roy, aged twelve, who accompanied her to all the meetings I addressed and often spoke to me. I was a Travelling Secretary for IFES. David Penman was loaned to us by the Church Missionary Society. He was heavily involved with Tara in PFES. He later became Archbishop of Melbourne. He died in 1989 aged 53. He was the greatest ambassador for Christ I ever met.

***Tribute from Philip Chandi, PFES General Secretary***

"Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever." Daniel 12: 3.

It is a privilege and honour to write of association with Aunty Tara James. At a PFES conference in 1990 I first met a graceful person with a smiling face in the form of Aunty Tara at the registration desk at Shalom Centre, Jhelum. The next few years I had privilege of serve among students with her. She was polite, encouraging and optimist by nature. I cannot recall any event when she said anything negative about anybody. She encouraged me to join PFES and to serve the Fellowship as General Secretary. I still remember the words "Philip, you can do it." It was always comfortable to sit with her and learn from her wisdom. She had teacher's heart and patience. Her ministry influenced many students who are serving in the Church for the glory of the kingdom of God.

She was (and surely she is) a model Christian worker and especially a model for PFES staff. Aunty Tara not just ministered

to students in her life but she left behind rich Bible study material for the coming generation. She compiled and translated a couple of Bible study guides into Urdu. These guides cover the basic doctrines and topics for the growth of new believers. Aunty Tara with her experience in the student world made these guides relevant to the students and their situation. These guides are also being used widely in the Church. She was unique in her personality, a tower of refuge to students and PFES staff, and a lighthouse for many lives. She was Tara (source of light) and will remain a source of light and guidance (*Note: For a short history of PFES please read Appendix 3*)

***Tribute to Mrs Tara James (Aunty Tara) by Rev Irfan Jami, former General Secretary of PFES***

”Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.” Hebrews 13:7

I am delighted to write about Aunty Tara with whom I had association for more than twenty five years, as a Board member of the Pakistan Fellowship of Evangelical Students and as a co-worker. Above all she was motherly figure, who encouraged and supported me in every step of my life. It was so good to be part of the team. Even after her retirement from PFES as a full-time worker, we still had fellowship. I became her pastor and our fellowship got stronger and stronger. It would take many pages to describe her life and the work she did for the glory of God. I believe if you want to see the life of anyone you should look at the outcome. There are hundreds of students all over the country and overseas whose lives have been changed through her ministry.

She has lived her life according to the very name she bears. She

really is a true Tara (star) of Jesus... Her life could be summed up in the four letters of her name T-A-R-A.

T - Trustworthy and Thankful personality

A - Accessible and Accommodative

R - Reliable and Realistic

A - Authoritative

*Trustworthy and Thankful personality* - All those who had the privilege of working with Mrs Tara James would have noticed that she was a trustworthy person. Parents fully trusted her, and allowed their young daughters to attend Bible study groups and other meetings. She very seldom complained about anything. PFES went through a lot of financial crises. Even in the midst of problems Mrs James always thanked God and taught others to do the same.

*Accessible and Accommodative* - She left the headship of a good school to serve as a full-time worker of PFES. The students had no problem in relating to her. She had the special ability of adjusting herself to all situations. This made her popular among students. She had a unique quality of loving and caring for people. She adjusted well to rich and poor, educated and uneducated.

*Reliable and Realistic* - God gave her the special grace of keeping confidentiality. You could rely on her for all matters. She was dependable in work and relationship. She was also a down-to-earth person. She saw things in depth, not emotionally and superficially, but realistically. She was a far-sighted lady with a depth of insight.

*Authoritative* - Her authority did not lie in pride and boasting, but in humility. She believed in servant leadership. She ruled in the lives of people through her love and her commitment to the gospel of Christ. She was a balanced lady giving proper attention to her

work as well as her family. She will always be remembered for her work and the lives blessed by God.

***Aslam Yuhanna, Chairman of PFES, writes about Mrs Tara James***

“Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.”  
Philippians 2:5

It is an honour for me to write about Mrs Tara James. My first contact with her was in the early seventies when she had just left the headship of Holy Trinity Girls High School, Karachi, and joined the Pakistan Fellowship of Evangelical Students as Executive Secretary. It greatly strengthened the hands of Rev David Penman and Mr B U Khokher who were already ministering in the work of PFES in Karachi and Hyderabad respectively. I had the privilege of working with this remarkable lady and attended administrative meetings with her. She had a good command of the English language, deep knowledge of the word of God and the qualities of an administrator. While she was very strong in making administrative decisions, she was full of humility and had great respect and love for her co-workers. Her Christian service among the students in different towns and cities of Pakistan will remain alive in the history of PFES. Someone has said that when a person disappears from this world their personalities always remain alive and so it is the case with Mrs Tara James. It is my prayer that God may bless the Church with many such effective witnesses to carry the good news to this needy world.

***From Rev Sammy Lyall, FEBA, Pakistan, former PFES staff worker***

In 1974 I became involved in youth ministry. The Lord guided me to PFES. Under the able leadership and guidance of Mr B U Khokhar and Mrs Tara James I developed in the realm of ministry so that there was no turning back. When I reflect on my years with PFES I always cherish the time spent with Mrs Tara James. I still remember visiting her home in the Blue Haven building in Karachi. It was quite a high mansion and we had to walk up many floors as there was no lift in those days. She was such a lovely figure in the PFES team that I always looked on her as a mother-figure full of love, concern and kindness. PFES was not a very well-off organization compared to other sister organizations but still we were such a happy family. We shared what ever we had. "Aunty Tara" was especially concerned about me as I was the sole bread-winner in my family. She would try to arrange for my salary regularly. I still remember that during the time of preparation for my marriage she went with me to Anarkali to do the needful shopping. She was an excellent communicator, teaching us through her lifestyle. She taught me to say "no" if there was a clash between the priority of PFES and other invitations. I never saw her losing her temper while trying to correct young staff like me. Once I shared a thought in the staff meeting on "Jesus as servant" and she went out of her way to praise it and I was greatly encouraged by her remarks.

I remember that she was always highly praised by Uncle Banner James. One day in Blue Haven Uncle Banner said, "I have been blessed by God especially in three fields of my life. God always gave me a good job. He blessed me with a beautiful wife and he gave me lovely children." Sam and Miriam were really lovely kids! I must testify that the Lord has brought me to this level of ministry mainly because of my exemplary father, a man of faith and prayer, and Aunty Tara James and my dear Uncle B U Khokhar. They have all gone to their eternal abodes but they will always live in my memory as long as I am on my earthly pilgrimage.

***From Dr Christy Munir, Vice Principal, Forman Christian College, Lahore***

*How Can I Forget You?*

In summer of 1967, a beautiful charming young lady wearing a peculiarly pleasing smile, came to see me at my residence in Rawalpindi. Mr Samuel Lyall, a staff worker of the Pakistan Fellowship of Evangelical Students (PFES), was with her. I thought they had come for some help in admission in Gordon College where I on the faculty. My guess was wrong. Tara, after preliminary conversation, humbly requested me to take charge as chairman of the PFES Rawalpindi Committee. I refused as I had absolutely no interest in such activities nor was I part of any such organization. I scarcely remember how she argued to convince me to undertake the job but I yielded and accepted the responsibility. Tara was a God-fearing lady and I am sure she must have prayed before coming to enrol me for the Lord's work. Since that day I have been closely associated with PFES and have greatly influenced the lives of young students. I am still associated with this fellowship as a Board member. In PFES, besides Tara another person who greatly influenced my life was Mr B U Khokhar, a great man of God. I loved both Tara and Mr Khokhar.

This single meeting with Tara changed my whole lifestyle. I started taking part in Christian student camps, lectures, seminars, and group discussions. Tara was present in most of these meetings. She was always the most popular and wanted person. The whole thing helped me grow in Christ. I became closer to my community and church, developed a passion for uplift and development of Christian students. As a result, I have been enabled to contributed a

lot to the lives of Christian students in different ways. This passion is still in my heart and soul. While I am writing this I remember Tara who so practically demonstrated the Christian values of love, tolerance and sacrifice and thus influenced many persons including me. I now vividly realize that it was Jesus who had sent Tara to me to guide me and lead me for God's glory and work. I had been reading the Bible and attending church regularly since my childhood. My parents wanted me to do so in order that I might learn and practise the teachings of Christ. I regret to say that both exercises did not help me as much the living examples of some godly persons including Tara. She truly reflected the teachings of Christ through her personal life.

Tara was one of the pioneer PFES workers. PFES often lacked finance and at times did not have adequate funds staff salaries. Tara has worked through such hard situations. Before joining PFES, she was Headmistress of a prestigious high school in Karachi. I wondered why she ever left such a respected career job. It is a mystery to me. I think it was her passion to serve her community and to build and train leadership for Christ that drove her to such a decision. Very few people can do that. She came with full determination and accomplished her goals in the lives of many young Christian boys and girls. She was a caring and daring lady. She always remained focussed on her targets. She had a magnetic personality and always made a deep impact on the lives of her audience. She quietly influenced my life as well. She was undoubtedly a true and practical Christian.

In her last days she was partly paralyzed. I can't understand why such saintly persons should suffer at all. The only answer I get is in Paul's letter to the Romans chapter 8 verse 28, "We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose". I met her once during her days of sufferings. She greeted me with the same old pleasing smile. There were no signs of grumbling or complaining, she was full of faith, confidence and courage. She is no longer with us. She

has passed her life as a faithful servant of Christ. In her I have lost a good colleague and a co-worker for Christ. She was an example and her life continues to be an example for us. She is now with our Lord. I am thankful to God for Tara's life, which gave a real savour of Christ to many of us.

***In memory of Aunty Tara by Ifrahim Mathew, former PFES staff worker***

"Aunty Tara" as we called her, was just like a mother,  
She was a mother to her two children,  
She was a mother to me,  
She was a mother to all the PFES staff,  
She was a mother to all the PFES students,  
When she left, we sighed and mourned,  
because we all were deprived of a mother.

***From Peter Muntaz, Chairman PFES Local Committee, Karachi***  
Mr James

It is with deep sorrow that we learnt of the sad demise of Mrs Tara James. All the PFES Members cherish memories of her. Really it is a great loss for our Fellowship and we will never forget her services. Please accept from all of us our heartfelt condolences... May you and your relatives have the fortitude to bear this irreparable loss. With kind regards.

***From Johnson and Daisy Charles, former PFES students now in Calgary, Canada***

20 April 2001

Dear Uncle, Sam, Kamni and children

We are saddened to hear about the passing away of Aunty Tara but are so sure of her place with Jesus. She ran well and has left a good heritage. Our prayers are with you as you adjust to living without her. God bless you. We send much love.

***From Aslam Ziai, Vice Principal, Gujranwala Theological Seminary***

A face that never lost its smile - In my early twenties, in November 1971, I was appointed a staff worker of the Pakistan Fellowship of Evangelical Students (PFES) in Hyderabad with partial responsibilities for the work in Karachi as well. Soon after my appointment the 1971 War broke out between India and Pakistan. I was away from my hometown of Gujranwala and from my parents for the first time in my life during such times. I had to attend a meeting at Selwyn House in Karachi. There I met Engineer Dan Bavington, Professor Inayat Din, Mr John Ray and Rev David Penman. They shook hands with me. A lady in a beautiful *sari* with a smile on her face approached and hugged me and said, "Aslam Bhai! Welcome to PFES and to Karachi. I'm Tara James. You are going to stay with us for a week and my home shall be your home in Karachi." These words left an indelible an impression on my mind for the rest of my life.

A time came when Mrs Tara James left her position as the Principal of Holy Trinity Girls High School, Karachi, and joined PFES in the early seventies. A person with her qualification, experience, calibre, maturity, and deep spiritual insight was an auspicious addition to PFES. PFES was also blessed with the leadership of Mr B U Khokhar as the General Secretary of the national movement. These two senior figures were a kind of beacon house for the younger staff workers like myself. I left PFES after seven years to equip myself for the ordained ministry with the United Presbyterian Church (presently the Presbyterian Church of Pakistan) but Mrs Tara James continued in its ministry. My relations and ties with the movement as a former staff worker still continue in one or the other way and with the James family even today. When she was called home on Easter Monday 2001, Sudaish (my wife who was called home on 15 November 2001)

and I were present at her funeral. I had the privilege of speaking on the occasion of her Memorial Service as well.

Many facets of her person and work had been admired during her lifetime and after her death. How do I see her as a person? What challenges did she give me to face the day to day realities of life? I have seen her both during normal moments of her life and during her infirmities, sickness and multifaceted health problems close to the end of her earthly pilgrimage and sojourn. I can witness to the fact, she did not grumble or murmur regarding her health conditions. Every time I saw her even during those problem days, I saw the same smile I had seen in 1971 at Selwyn House, Karachi. I did not hear a word of complaint, resentment, or bitterness about God. How could she do that? It is only because she had the peace of God that surpasses all understanding (Philippians 4:7). It is through that peace granted by our Lord Jesus Christ (John 14:27) that God takes us through the challenges we face on our Christian pilgrimage (John 16:33). Do we know and experience that peace? She did.

***From John Ray, son of Bishop Chandu Ray, former PFES staff worker, later IFES staff worker seconded as youth worker in the Diocese in Iran***

Aunty Tara was a great influence on my young life in the early seventies when I returned to Pakistan from theological studies in New Zealand. After teaching for a while at Karachi Grammar School I joined PFES full-time. I learned from her the importance of patience, of listening to others, of making time for people, of being tender-hearted to everyone. This was what she was like all the many years that I knew her and my life has been shaped in so many ways by hers. With my youthful enthusiasm and her wise experience we made a good team that tried to do something useful for God in Karachi.

***From Banner James regarding the long friendship that he and Tara had with Frank and Ethel Khair Ullah***

We met Mr Frank Khair Ullah for the first time in Multan in 1949. I was working with Burmah Shell and we were sharing a bungalow with Mr and Mrs Victor Mall on the Railway Road close to the Cantonment Station. Mrs Mall was the elder sister of Mrs Ethel Khair Ullah and the Khair Ullahs were visiting them from Sialkot where Mr Khair Ullah was a professor (later Principal) of Murray College. From the first meeting of a few days in Multan we became very friendly and this friendship was renewed when we returned from Karachi to Lahore in 1978 and Tara started working under the kind and gracious leadership of Dr Khair Ullah who was then chairman of the PFES National Board.

Dr Khair Ullah's farewell message for Tara (star) with Banner is reproduced below. He loved to draw out the meanings of words! She worked heartily with PFES for more than nineteen years. Here he has chosen six verses from the Bible for Tara and Banner.

1. A teacher, an emeritus principal, who gave up her job to guide students in studying the Bible.

“The wise leaders will shine with all the brightness of the sky. And those who have taught many people to do what is right will shine like **stars** forever.” Daniel 12:3.

2. A husband who with his love helped his wife to do excellent work for the Lord.

“He brought me to the banquet hall and raised his **banner** of love over me.” Song of Songs 2:4.

3. His **banner** with her **star** has been unfurled over Pakistan to call others to repent and follow Jesus our Lord and Saviour.

“But for those who fear you, you have raised a **banner** to be unfurled that they may escape from the bow”. Psalm 60:4.

4. She was a dynamic evangelistic worker.

“Announce and proclaim among the nations, lift up a **banner** and proclaim it; keep nothing back”. Jeremiah 50:2.

5. Like a **star** she guided students to find and follow Jesus Christ. She always went in a wagon, bus or train to lead Bible studies everywhere.

“We saw his **star** in the east and have come to worship him”. Matthew 2:2, 7, 9, 10.

*From Paul and Shirin Pakyam, family friends from Canada, Shirin is the daughter of Dr and Mrs Khair Ullah*

8 May 2001

Dear Uncle Banner:

Hope you are well. We have been thinking and praying for you since we heard the news of Aunty Tara. I know that she must be at peace and looking down and praying for us all. She was a wise and wonderful woman. My own life has been enriched through my interaction with her. Aunt Khair Ullah was particularly sad and asked us to convey her love and support at this time. Love from us all.

## **Chapter 5 Tara speaks for herself**

### ***Aunty Tara's farewell speech to the PFES in Karachi***

21 January 1994

My dear children

Allow me to begin by offering my grateful thanks to the members of the Local Committee, staff, and all those who have organized this function. My husband and I are delighted to be with you on this very happy occasion when we celebrate together the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Most of you know that I suffered a stroke in November 1992 which paralyzed half of my body. 1993 brought further trials and physical ailments. I underwent a right total mastectomy in November and in February had to go through a period of radiotherapy which was later followed by angina pain. Regular treatment by a heart specialist put me on my feet again. God Almighty has given me added strength even in my present health condition to come and meet you here, and believe me, I am so happy and excited to be amongst you. I am always fascinated with the prospect of visiting Karachi where I have found memories of my stay for nearly twenty years from 1958 –1978. I did my M A and B Ed from Karachi University. Not only this, Karachi is the city from where I started my initial work with PFES when I came in contact with Dr Chun Chae Ok who was instrumental in bringing me into the PFES ministry in 1973 when I was working as Headmistress of Holy Trinity Girls High School. It was not easy to leave an office and a ministry that you love so much, but I left, knowing that this is not my work but God's. I believe that it will continue to go on and be the lighthouse and blessing that was envisioned by its founders many years ago. I am grateful that I have had the opportunity to be a part of his workforce here for these twenty years and I will be praying daily for those who carry on this responsibility.

At this point I would like to refer to an episode which many of you might have heard. One night a man had a dream. He dreamed he was walking along the beach with the Lord. Across the sky flashed scenes from his life. For each scene he noticed two sets of footprints in the sand; one belonging to him and the other to the Lord. When the last scene of his life flashed before him he looked back at the footprints in the sand. He noticed that many times along the path of his life there was only one set footprints. He also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest times of his life. This really bothered him and he questioned the Lord about it. “ Lord, you said that once I decided to follow you, you would walk with me all the way, but I have noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life there is only one set of footprints. I don't understand why, when I needed you most, you would leave me.” The Lord replied, “My precious child, I love you and I would never leave you. During your times of trial and suffering, when you see only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you.” I have quoted this account, written by an unknown author, as I have experienced the closeness of the Lord and his gentle healing touch in spite of all the upheaval during the last stressful years. I would like you to pray for me and my family. I take this opportunity of advising you, my young children both boys and girls, to strive for spiritual maturity and integrity using your God-given gifts. This will make you particularly well qualified for PFES ministry. You should try to win the confidence and respect of people of all ages and cultural backgrounds and show unusual understanding and spiritual discernment in counselling. You should be able to handle questions creatively in leading small groups. You should have good theological and biblical knowledge and a wise grasp of current issues and of the opportunities and problems facing the Church today in Pakistan. Whether in a position of responsible leadership or as an ordinary member of a team, you should have an unassuming, gracious ministry which draws out the best gifts and qualities of others to train them effectively for service. You should

view student work as an integral part of the outreach and building up of the Church. In conclusion, I would I would request those who have been associated with PFES to help this ministry financially and prayerfully so that the work of the Lord goes on unhindered, with out facing financial constraints. Thank you very much. These twenty years of my association with PFES have made me so fond of you that I shall find it extremely difficult to remember you with any feeling other than that of deep affection . May God bless you. May you carry the presence of God with you wherever you go. Amen.

***Abandoned to Christ***

***The Testimony of Mrs Tara James***

Published in the magazine *Rahbah*

Among the Christian students who have had any contact with the Pakistan Fellowship of Evangelical Students, Mrs Tara James, “Aunty” as she is fondly called, has become the spiritual mother and mentor of many. As a result of the lasting effects of ill-health Aunty was forced to resign from a ministry that was God’s call on her life. The Easter 2001 issue of the Christian family *Rahbar* reported on the Farewell that the Pakistan Fellowship of Evangelical Students gave to Mrs Tara James in Lahore, including part of an interview that it was able to have with Aunty at her home.

Q. How did you come to faith in Jesus Christ as your own Saviour?

A. I think it must have been sometime during my school days, certainly earlier than my high school days. I didn’t have an experience like one might have at convention when you give your heart to the Lord. Our parents were always concerned about our Christian education. I also went to a Christian boarding house and so it was part of my education and part of my upbringing.

Q. How did you recognize the call of God on your life?

A. While I was headmistress of Holy Trinity Girls High School in Karachi I was on the local PFES committee. When I looked at the vast student field, I saw the emptiness that surrounded them. The students just wanted to study. They had no vision, and no spiritual commitment or spiritual maturity. This was a challenge to me, and I wanted to help them.

Q. Wasn't that a big step to take to leave your position as a Headmistress and join an organization that could not guarantee to pay you an allowance?

A. It was with much thought and prayer that I joined because naturally finance was a consideration. On the other hand it was not a hindrance. In those days I shared with my friends and we prayed together. It was not a family problem but when one leaves a good job one thinks about such things. My husband had a good job with Burmah Shell and that provided basically for the family. It was a step but not that difficult a one.

Q. Did you receive any formal training for this ministry?

A. Of course I had my skills as a teacher but I still had to learn many things. I like reading and studying and learnt a lot that way too. In PFES we often had visits from the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students (IFES) teams who would come specially to do staff training. I didn't find it so difficult. Even though I had my basic training I still needed to learn a lot from the people who were doing the work. I also learnt from my juniors. I learnt from the camps, where in PFES we do a lot of training. In our staff times we really enjoy fellowship with each other and that helps one to learn also. You see we train each other.

Q. What was your role in PFES?

A. At first I was just a staff worker. Then later I was made Executive Secretary. I was responsible for leading groups, training of younger staff, managing the office, doing correspondence and

making contact with other organizations and churches. I would not have done this, if I had just remained a headmistress. In PFES we didn't have peons or clerks. We did things ourselves. If other staff were not around, I even went to the bank or post office. Even now the staff do jobs like that. We just worked together.

Q. How did you as a former headmistress feel about doing jobs that were really peon's work?

A. I didn't find it very hard because I didn't feel it was a peon's job. Any task, I did, I understood that it was part of the ministry.

Q. As part of your ministry you had to travel to the various Bible study groups. How did you cope travelling alone on buses and wagons?

A. It was difficult, but you know since I was an elderly lady it wasn't that difficult. I enjoyed it. For young girls it might have been more difficult. So for me it wasn't difficult as such but it was always a problem to get into the wagon ... getting a seat ... or pushing your way through. Sometimes I would stand at the bus stop for quite a long time. Yes, there were these difficulties but I managed.

Q. Aunty, how did you cope with managing your ministry and your home?

A. In this I have been very fortunate. My husband has supported me a lot. My family too have been very good. My children, also have been co-operative. Of course when they were young it was difficult to leave them, especially when they were having their examinations or when they were sick, but we still went to the groups. Yes, it was difficult, but not impossible.

Q. Looking back over the past nineteen years of ministry what would you say has been the most rewarding part of the ministry?

A. Of course the most significant thing is my contact with the students. Most rewarding is seeing those young girls and boys studying the scriptures, growing strong, being faithful in Bible study, maturing in their Christian commitment, serving their churches and living Christian lives in the jobs that they are now doing. It is also encouraging to see their commitment to the work of PFES.

Q. Have there been disappointments as well?

A. Oh yes, there have been, and frustrations too. There have been times when I have gone for a group and the students at that time would not be committed. They would not be at home. Their parents would see me and say, "Please, come and have a cup of tea", so I would sit with them for a while. Then as I travelled back home, I used to ask the Lord, "Should I go there again?" I always felt that the Lord answered, "Yes, I want you to go again." So I would go again. Then later those very girls would confess and would begin to mature. It required dedication and prayers and perseverance.

Q. Aunty, what would you see as the goal of your life?

A. It is to be like Paul, abandoned for Christ, giving oneself wholeheartedly. I have no regrets. The only thing is that I often think that may be I have not done my job as well as I should have.

Q. Aunty, looking back over all these years of experience, what advice would you give to today's young people?

A. To love the Lord your God. Study the scriptures. Be well-equipped not only on the spiritual side but also academically. Strive for real spiritual maturity and integrity with the gifts God has given you. No one is perfect and young girls and boys have temptations. If they are walking with the Lord, and regularly studying his word and submit themselves to the Lord, and have regular fellowship then they will grow and mature spiritually.

Q. Is there anything that you would like to share?

A. Getting sick has been difficult and hard but it has been a blessing. I have learnt to rest and rely on him. I have learnt that God gives strength. It has taught me to wait on him.

Q. Is there any other work that you have desired to do that you haven't done?

A. Yes, the work that I want to do is to write Bible studies for the students. There is a big lack. Then I also want to continue in a ministry of prayer. I can pray for people and I want to pray for people. I feel that is my special ministry now.

## **Chapter 6 As God sees her**

### ***God sees Tara as one who during her life on earth accepted his gift of salvation in Jesus Christ.***

Jesus took her sin and gave her his righteousness so that she is now clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul wrote, "God made him (Jesus Christ) who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." 2 Corinthians 5:21.

### ***Tara is one whose name is written in God's book of life.***

Jesus said, "I will never blot out his/her name from the book of life, but will acknowledge his/her name before my Father and his angels". Revelation 3:5

### ***Tara is one of those who are now worshipping God and Jesus the Lamb of God.***

The Apostle John wrote of, "a great number that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice 'Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb'." Revelation 7:9.

The Apostle John also wrote, "We know that when he (Jesus Christ) appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." 1 John 3:2.

## **Epilogue**

**Shabana (Kamni) James wrote of her mother-in-law Tara,**

***“I wish I could become more like her.”***

**Amen.**

## **Appendix 1 Archdeacon Ihsan Ullah**

Chapter 1 contains a brief sketch of the life of Ihsan Ullah but was not the place to explain more of his remarkable ministry. Even in the account in chapter 1 we see that there were wide influences at work in his early Christian life in that General William Booth of the Salvation Army took him to the UK in 1883. He was ordained a deacon of the Church of England in 1891 and then a priest in 1895. He worked in Narowal District as a member of the Church Missionary Society. It became clear that he had outstanding gifts as an evangelist, church planter and Bible teacher. No single denomination could contain him. Rev Ihsan Ullah believed that his ordination vows were made to God and not to the Church of England and requested freedom to minister more widely than was considered usual. In Narowal he was responsible to Rev R Bateman. Bateman wanted to encourage the full use of his gifts and not constrain him unnecessarily. He said that he was a great evangelist and won an increasing number of souls to Christ.

At this period in the history of the Punjab church there was great debate on the best way to disciple and teach the large numbers of illiterate enquirers or new believers who were seeking baptism. Newspaper cuttings about the Lahore Diocesan Synod of November 1895 mention the position of the catechumenate in the growing church system and the importance of instruction. (A catechumen according to *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* is a Christian convert under instruction before baptism.)

An elementary Punjabi catechism written by Rev R Bateman was used for the instruction of catechumens. Besides this specified course of instruction and a separate place in the church for catechumens, Bateman advocated:

1. A carefully kept register of names of catechumens.

2. A clear understanding of the specific duties of a catechumen.
3. That catechumens be allowed marriage and burial by Christian rites.
4. The exercise of discipline by suspension, exclusion or delay of baptism.  
Bateman's assistant Rev Ihsan Ullah stressed the need for a probationary period to counter the adverse effects of hasty baptism and the resolving of difficulties experienced on account of CMS accepting in 1888 1,200 men and women from a neighbouring mission who had been baptized without proper care and preparation. Ihsan Ullah referred to his own experience before baptism in attending church services and the accompanying open confession before family and fellow townsmen.
5. The use of a printed form of words at the admission of catechumens.
6. The model of the careful training of his disciples by Jesus. 159 were enrolled in 1894 and 7 baptised after six months. The probationary period gave opportunity of getting to know more about the catechumens and their character and also enabled them to witness to friends and relatives with more freedom and acceptance than was often possible after baptism.

In a letter from Narowal on 23 May 1886 to Mr Ireland Jones, the CMS Secretary, Rev R Bateman wrote of Ihsan Ullah as his greatest difficulty and his greatest hope. He suggested that he might be the man who under God would lead the church into much more fruitful outreach. He was continually weighing his allegiance to the Church of England against his allegiance to Christ. He maintained that his ordination vows as priest were made to God and not to the Church of England. Bateman wrote, "What will come of it I don't know, but one thing is certain - that he has

received in his soul and on his lips such an anointing of the Holy Spirit as has made him a much more... effective soul winner than he was before. This is so manifest to all that I already have more applications than I can list to send him here and there to address this congregation or that seminary. And our people here from the soberest (Miss Catchpool) to the youngest convert hang on his lips with delight. I have the greatest hope that he will prove to be dear Bishop French's long prayed for Indian apostle. And I am trying to arrange my work for his benefit." By 1896 Ihsan Ullah had decided to forgo the CMS allowances he had been receiving the previous six or so years and rely on God's provision through the Christians of the Punjab for Rs.40 monthly. He continued to work under Rev R Bateman's direction. Bateman gave him plenty of work in connection with the Native Christian Council and his evangelistic activities were not limited to congregations of the Church of England. Bateman thought that God might well use Ihsan to wake up the Church of England as well as the native church in the Punjab. God used Ihsan Ullah to show forth his power wherever he went in the deepening of conviction of sin, resulting in confession and abandonment. "He is in no hurry, but very calm and thoughtful, as well as devoted and determined."

## **Appendix 2 Archdeacon Barkat Ullah**

Barkat Ullah, Ihsan Ullah's brother and Tara James' great-uncle, wrote an account of his early spiritual experiences in an Urdu booklet entitled *From Karbala to Calvary*. Barkat Ullah was born in 1891. Although from a Shia Muslim family he received Christian teaching in mission schools. At school he was taught the catechism in Punjabi and later he memorized Selected Verses (*Khas Ayat*) consisting of one hundred verses from various parts of the Bible. In the fifth class he studied the Gospel according to Matthew in Punjabi. His bigoted uncle decided to take his religious education into his own hands and lent him some books. Armed with arguments from these books he challenged the Christian pastors in the bazaar. He zealously took part in the procession at Muharram.

However, the boy Barkat Ullah never throughout his life forgot the experience of watching someone react in a Christian manner. A certain Mr Thomas was preaching near a dyer's shop. Suddenly the dyer, Sikandar, a large burly man appeared. He spat on the preacher's face and slapped it. Mr Thomas was a hefty man. The onlookers were amazed when the preacher calmly wiped his face with his handkerchief and said, "May God bless you". Then he continued to preach as if he had not been insulted. The dyer sheepishly returned to his shop. Barkat Ullah was astounded especially as one of his main objections to the gospel was that the teaching of Christ in the Sermon on the Mount was impractical and contrary to human nature and therefore unacceptable. After leaving the eighth class he became a boarder in a mission high school. He continued to win Scripture prizes but opposed Christianity. His sense of sin, guilt and the need for forgiveness increased. When he arrived home at the end of the school year he found that his parents, two sisters and two brothers had become Christians. His uncle offered to adopt him but he chose to stay with his family. Later that night his father told him of his twenty-year search for

truth and that he had finally found it in Christ. Barkat Ullah seeing his father's calmness and dignity and the patient way he endured persecutions decided to read the New Testament again. His father lent him books by C G Pfander, W St Clair Tisdall and L Imad-ud-Din. He became convinced about the reliability of the Bible and that the revelation of God as a loving heavenly Father is found in the New Testament.

Later Barkat Ullah wrote, "The cross of Calvary, on which Christ died, became meaningful to me, in that Christ had lived and died because of my sins, as Christ had loved and forgiven sinners. At the time of my baptism on 7 July 1907 I felt that the great burden of sin was lifted off my shoulders... I was only a boy when I came to experience the forgiveness of sins and the new life in Christ Jesus. Looking back on my Christian experience these many years, my heart is full of thankfulness for God's unmerited grace. Advancement in knowledge and years has only increased the reality and depth of my Christian experience. It has deepened the conviction that the only hope for lost humanity is the living, crucified and risen Christ."

Barkat Ullah was only sixteen when he became a Christian. After obtaining a Master's degree in Philosophy in Lahore he lectured at Edwardes College, Peshawar, and then at Forman Christian College, Lahore, about the Bible, Christianity, Islam and Church History. He wrote extensively on all these subjects in Urdu. His writings are still much appreciated today and are a valuable resource for the Church.

### **Appendix 3 History of the Pakistan Fellowship of Evangelical Students**

#### ***Background***

In 1956 Mr Gordon Olson came to Pakistan. In the early years he worked single-handed among students of various educational institutions. He organized Bible study groups and discussion groups among Christian college students. Until 1963 the work extended to Forman Christian College, Central Training College, King Edward Medical College, University of the Punjab and St. John's Hostel, Lahore. At that time the Fellowship did not have its present name. During this period Mr Olson met Mr Maqbool Gill, a student at Central Training College. Mr Maqbool Gill had the vision of spreading the gospel among the students. He served voluntarily with Mr Olson and met a group of Christian workers for weekly fellowship at Masihi Isha'at Khana in Lahore. In 1964 Mr Olson returned to his country due to medical reasons. He handed over the student ministry to Mr Maqbool Gill, who dedicated himself whole heartedly to this work. This same year the first summer camp was held at Changla Gali. Twenty-two students from Faisalabad, Rawalpindi and Lahore participated in this camp. After this camp the work expanded with the help of national and expatriate friends. In Lahore a Local Committee was formed under the leadership of the Rev J D Arthur, Mr James Gill, Mr D C John, Brother Michael Clement, Mr M B Massey, Rev John Wilder, Mr Paul Marsh and Miss Barbara Lewis. The Fellowship made visible progress with the guidance, prayers and cooperation of these friends.

At this time YMCA, YWCA, SCM, and Campus Crusade for Christ were the groups spreading the gospel among students. The founders of this Fellowship did not think it wise to form another separate group but decided to work with SCM. They got in touch with the SCM committee. At this time SCM was striving to make

its first Constitution and give SCM a national status. But the Fellowship also realized that SCM was not fulfilling its evangelical commitment and that it was therefore for the Fellowship to give some recommendations to SCM. These were worked out at Gordon College, Rawalpindi, and presented to SCM but without successful results. From 1967-69 efforts were made several times but to no avail.

#### ***Formation of the Fellowship***

The founders of the Fellowship felt that the time had come for the Fellowship to be given an independent status. The people associated with this Fellowship were deeply interested in the evangelical witness in the student world. So in August 1969 a few friends interested in the formation of such a Fellowship were invited to a meeting in Murree. The participants were Rev K D Vincent then Pastor of Central Church, Karachi, Rev Bashir Jiwan, Professor Inayat Din of the University of Karachi, Rev John Wilder founder of the Pakistan Bible Correspondence School, Miss Barbara Lewis of Kinnaird College, Lahore, Rev David Penman and staff workers of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students, Mr Dan Bavington of Zor Engineers and Rev Sam Pitman of Karachi. Two important subjects were dealt with at this meeting. First, that this Fellowship would be an autonomous body under the leadership of a National Administrative Board. Secondly, it was officially given the name of Pakistan Fellowship of Evangelical Students.

#### ***Beginnings of the Fellowship and Subsequent History***

In 1969 the Fellowship, under the guidance of its National Administrative Board expanded its work but the national staff worker, Mr Maqbool Gill, resigned after five years of dedicated pioneer work. At this time David Adeney, secretary for the South East Asia area of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students, visited Pakistan. After him David Bentley-Taylor was

appointed area Secretary for Islamic countries. He too visited Pakistan several times. During this time Rev David Penman served the Fellowship with zeal and dedication. He worked from his office at Selwyn House, Karachi. Mr Michael Nazir-Ali, fresh from college graduation enrolled as the first staff worker in the south. He later became the first Bishop of the Raiwind Diocese of the Church of Pakistan. During this period Dr Toyo Tomi, a Japanese American evangelist, came to Pakistan and gave instruction in the forming of cell groups in order to study the Bible. Programmes were held in Lahore and Karachi in which the students received instruction in studying the Bible and in presenting Jesus Christ as Saviour to others. The Local Committees in Lahore and Karachi undertook to carry forward the work of the Fellowship because both staff workers, Mr Maqbool Gill and Mr Michael Nazir-Ali, by this time had left PFES to pursue further studies. The Administrative Board had the important task of looking for another national staff worker.

***First General Secretary - Mr B U Khokhar***

In 1970 the Administrative Board, after much thought and prayer invited Mr B U Khokhar to join the Fellowship as full-time staff. At that time Mr B U Khokhar held an important position in Burmah Shell in Hyderabad, Sindh. He had all along involved himself in the service of the Lord as an evangelist for the gospel and was speaker for many big national conventions. His frequent participation in summer camps and conferences made him very popular with students. He accepted this offer after much prayer and decided to become a full-time staff member in PFES. He travelled far and wide in the country and made and strengthened contacts with students, Church leaders, Board Members and Local Committees. He was the first General Secretary of the Fellowship. He brought stability to the Fellowship during his ten years of faithful service. He also prepared a team of dedicated co-workers. He, himself, started work in Hyderabad.

The work was now expanding so that Board Members decided to appoint two additional staff workers, one for Hyderabad and the other for Lahore. Mr Salamat Masih was appointed in Lahore and Mr Aslam Ziai in Hyderabad. In the same year Miss Chun Chae Ok returned from Korea. Prior to this she was a Bible teacher at the UBTC, Gujranwala, and in Hyderabad. She went on to become a Professor at EWha University, Seoul, Korea. She served the Lord for several years as a member of the PFES staff team.

Another notable step in the life of PFES was the formation of the Karachi Institute of Theology (now the St Thomas Theological College). Rev Sam Pitman played an important role in this Institute. In 1972 Miss Anja Sainio joined the Fellowship for two years. Mr John Ray, son of Rt Rev Chandu Ray, replaced Rev S Pitman as Executive Secretary. Mr John Ray later joined IFES and served as Regional Secretary for nearly twelve years. Miss Ada Lum, IFES Bible Study Secretary, visited Pakistan and gave instruction on how to study and lead Bible study groups for students and staff in Karachi, Hyderabad, Lahore and Rawalpindi. At this time Miss Farida George pioneered the work among women students and served PFES with zeal and dedication for four years.

In 1973 the National Office of PFES moved from Karachi to Lahore. Mr B U Khokhar was also transferred from Hyderabad to Lahore. Rev David Penman's and Mr John Ray's resignations from their respective posts created a vacuum. It was necessary to look for a responsible person to look after the Karachi office and guide the staff. The same year Mr Salamat Bhatti resigned and was replaced by Mr Munwar Alam.

***Mrs Tara James becomes Executive Secretary***

In 1973 God answered prayers and Mrs Tara James offered herself for PFES as a full-time staff member. At that time she was the

Principal of Holy Trinity Girls High School, Karachi and a well known figure in Church activities. She resigned her post as Principal and joined PFES. She served the Fellowship for nineteen years, most of the time as Executive Secretary. God used her to bring many students to Christ. These students are now serving their community and nation in Pakistan and overseas.

The same year Mr Ed Bradley was seconded to PFES by IFES. Mr Samuel Lyall worked for PFES as full-time staff worker for three years in Rawalpindi. He is the son of the eminent evangelist, Mr William Lyall. Mr Irfan Jamil was appointed to relieve Mr Aslam Ziai in Lahore who was sent by the Fellowship to the Discipleship Training Centre, Singapore, for further theological studies. Mr Irfan Jamil is a man with endearing qualities of head and heart and has a ready sense of humour. In 1981 he replaced Mr B U Khokhar as second General Secretary and served the fellowship as General Secretary for seventeen years. During this time the work expanded into almost twenty cities of the country. In 1997 he resigned from the Fellowship to serve in the Church of Pakistan, Lahore Diocese, and was posted to St Andrew's Church as Vicar. These days he is serving at St Thomas Church, Islamabad.

In 1976 Mr Dilshad Alam responded to God's call by joining the staff team at Karachi. He served the Fellowship for fourteen years at times under very difficult circumstances and now he is serving a Church in Philadelphia, USA. During this time Mr Robert Joseph gave two years for the service of the Lord, soon after the completion of his electrical engineering degree from the University of Engineering and Technology, Lahore.

Up to the year 1976 the services of PFES were limited to Karachi, Lahore, Rawalpindi and Hyderabad. The Board decided to extend the work to Faisalabad too. Mr Aslam Ziai was posted at Faisalabad where he worked for nearly two years. In the years

1978 when Mr Aslam Ziai went to Gujranwala Theological Seminary, Mr Emmanuel Bahudar was posted at Faisalabad and worked there for three years. These days he is serving as an ordained pastor in Dubai.

***The Expanding work of PFES***

During these years God used many people for his service and many were being prepared for ministry. In 1980 Mr Ifrahim Mathew joined the staff team and served for four years at Rawalpindi. In 1982 Mr Patras Javaid joined PFES as staff worker and worked for three years. The same year Miss Farida Khokhar joined PFES and worked until 1986. These days she lives in India with her husband and both are serving in a church in Delhi. In 1984 Mr Silas Samuel joined the ministry and started work in Faisalabad. In 1986 Mr Adwin Karim was appointed staff worker in Faisalabad and Mr Parvez Akhter in Lahore. In 1987 Miss Ellen Engles joined PFES as a full-time staff worker. Those who served during this time were Mr Griffen Naz and Miss Yasmin Anthony in Karachi and Miss Esther Rehmat, Miss Julia Safdar, and Miss Cynthia Gill in Lahore. Mrs Sylvia Sohail is still serving the Lord faithfully with the Fellowship.

Besides full-time staff workers, many associate staff workers have served in PFES; amongst these are Mr Christopher Nazir-Ali in Karachi. He is the younger brother of Rt Rev Michael Nazir-Ali. Mr Christopher Edgar served first as associate staff worker and then as full-time staff worker in Lahore. In addition to these Mr Saleem Massey in Lahore and Mr Sabir Bashir in Rawalpindi served the Lord through the PFES ministry. After the resignation of Rev Irfan Jamil in 1997, Rev Silas Samuel, who was once a staff worker came back to PFES to serve as General Secretary. He served for two years and then emigrated to the USA in 1999. Those who served with him as staff are Mr Philip Chandi in Rawalpindi, Mrs Sylvia Sohail and Mr Naeem John in Lahore, Mr Nadeem

John in Gujranwala, Mr Rashid David and Mr Griffen Naz in Karachi and Mr Shamaun Nazar in Faisalabad. Mr James Mall replaced Rev Silas Samuel as Executive Secretary and served the Fellowship for two years.

In 2001 the Administrative Board appointed Mr Philip Chandi as General Secretary. Now the PFES is serving in sixteen cities in Pakistan. Those who are serving on staff these days are Rashid David and Saima Kiran in Karachi, Nadeem John and Mumtaz Bhatti in Hyderabad, Mrs Sylvia Sohail and Obaid Iqbal in Lahore, Saleem Iqbal in Gujranwala, Sohail Bahadur and Kiran Daniel in Faisalabad, Khurram Younis and Kamran in Jhelum, Naeem John in Rawalpindi and Islamabad and Dilawar Samar in Peshawar.

Over the years God has blessed the Fellowship in miraculous ways. This small team of dedicated staff and Board members is a witness in the Church as well as outside the Church. It has prepared young people to serve in the Church as pastors and lay leaders. In fact we are building on the foundation laid by our dedicated founders. It is our prayer that God will continue to bless the Fellowship and use it for the building of the future Church in Pakistan.

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