

United Christian Hospital is struggling with UCH Lover and Friends for regaining its lost glory

Prominent among the missionaries were Dr. F Collier, Dr. J Vroon, Dr. R Blocksma and Dr. J Ballard. They chalked out a plan to build a hospital for the Christian community in Lahore where those not belonging to the community would also be treated. UCH was established in the 1960s. Presbyterian Americans purchased a piece of land, and the Methodist Church of USA constructed the building with the help of the Anglican Church, UK, and the place was named United Christian Hospital (UCH).



Back then, it was a state-of-the-art facility. This was also where Pakistan's first open-heart surgery was performed, in 1964, by Dr. Boss, on a Muslim man who is still alive and based in Lahore.

Over the years, this teaching hospital, with 250 beds, hospital-trained nurses, and laboratory and X-ray technicians has been serving people around the globe. But now it faces difficulties. The reasons cited are shortage of funds, mismanagement, internal intrigue, obsolete and out-of-order medical equipment, etc.

Pastor Sajjid Saraj, Pastor Amjad Nimat and Mr. Riaz Munir invited to Fr. James Channan OP (Regional Coordinator URI Pakistan, Director Peace Center Lahore), to visit United Christian Hospital (UCH) Lahore. On 21st July, 2020 Fr. James Channan OP and Mr. Asher Nazir (Executive Secretary URI Pakistan) paid a visit to UCH. Mr. Imran Titus (administrator UCH Lahore), Dr. Akash Matthew MS UCH, Mr. Riaz



Naveed (president of UCH Lovers), and Pastor Sajjid Saraj.

They warmly welcomed Fr. James Channan OP and presented beautiful flowers. The team of UCH Friends and UCH Lovers; Pastor Sajjid Saraj, Mr. Riaz Naveed, Mr. Saleem Sylvester, Mr. Francis Sodagar, Mr. Alven Nayyar, Ms. Lovisa Yaqoob, and Mr. Richard; gave a brief introduction about UCH and shared the situation of past and present and what they are planning for the future.

In the present, many areas and departments are not working by the reason of finance and building maintenance and we need new medical equipment and other things. This is very old and big hospital building and now need renovation for that purpose we need funds for the survival of UCH and its mission "To serve the un-served and to reach the un-reached". UCH is going through its revival phase with his Lovers and friends, and together we can make it possible.



UCH Friends are renovating consultant's rooms and an outpatient department. We plan to start admissions in UCH Hospital for four-year bachelor's of science degree in nursing in October 2020. Mr. Riaz Munir, president of UCH Lovers, said that now we are working for the renovation of 10 beds in the Emergency Ward and we hope that soon we will complete it with the support of UCH friends and UCH Lovers.

Fr. James Channan OP asked Mr. Imran Titus and Pastor Amjad Nimat what about the results and impacts of meeting and decisions of EX-Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Saqib Nisar for the improvement of UCH Lahore. They shared that Supreme Court of Pakistan (SCP) ordered constitution of a steering committee that would make recommendations for improvement. It was suggested that a separate account be created for the purpose of raising funds for the hospital.

Amidst allegations of abuse of authority, the Auditor General of Pakistan was directed to immediately constitute a team that would hold a forensic audit of the UCH for the previous 10 years, and submit a report within six weeks. Led by Prof Jawad Sajid, the committee submitted a joint proposal for improvement in the state of affairs. The committee was supposed to comprise seven members from different walks of life including the Christian community, and take charge of the hospital administration and its functions.

The CJP remarked that it was not the duty of the court to rehabilitate the UCH, yet he was trying to revamp it. He appreciated the role of the Christian community, and heard Dr. Peter J David who offered a detailed plan and announced a Rs 10 million donation. Bishop Azad Marshal also announced a Rs 1 million donation for the UCH.

The CJP also announced an Rs 0.1 million contribution, and ordered that a separate bank account be opened in the name of UCH rehabilitation. He suggested that a Steering Committee be formed that should include professionals and Christian army officers etc. The committee was supposed to start monitoring the professional, financial, and administrative activities at the UCH on a monthly basis.

According to Imran Titus Bhatti, the UCH administrator, the Steering Committee held meetings on the directions of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, and submitted their reports. Later, the committee was dissolved. Currently, the number of employees has diminished there are fewer patients, causing huge deficit to UCH every month, and making it hard for the administration to pay bills and



salaries. The management is compelled to look into options to raise funds, such as renting out their pharmacy as well as a portion of land to Shaukat Khanum Diagnostic Centre.

Pastor Sajjid Saraj and his team UCH Friends said that we are here for only one reason: UCH is our Christian hospital. “This is the property of Christians and why we are thinking that we should give this hospital to other people because we have not financial resources?” (Although the hospital is owned by



Christians, it is open to serve patients of all faiths.) “So together we are here and collecting donations, and for that purpose we are involving many Christian people from Pakistan and overseas. They are giving donations and working with us for the renovation of UCH. Today we are happy that Fr. James Channan OP is here and this is a great blessing for us. Fr. James Channan OP prayed and blessed United Christian Hospital Lahore.

In his views, he requested to Christian people, and with them, to all interfaith people, to give donations to UCH because now UCH needs your helping hands and support. UCH is going through its revival phase and this is a big challenge, but together we can make it possible. This is our Christian hospital with the

name of United Christen Hospital and we have to save it. He appreciated UCH Lovers and UCH Friends working for United Christian Hospital with this great deviation and commitment as Christians. He



appealed to all Christian denominations and their authorities to visit UCH and gave donation for its renovations.

UCH mission is “To serve the un-served and to reach the un-reached.” Pastor Sajjid Saraj and his team UCH Friends said that we are here for only one reason: that UCH is our Christian hospital and is working for the people of all religions in Pakistan. So together we are here and collecting donations and for that purpose we are involving many people from different faiths and religions in Pakistan and overseas.

Reported by:

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