

*Living the*  
**Abundant  
Life**  
*Our Nonagenarians*



*Dorothy Fowler*



*Rev. Dr. Grace Sathyaraj*



*Olivia Thomas*



*Dr. Kitty David*



*Beryl Samuel*



*Glory Retnaraj*



*Kitty Gojer*



*Bala Jeyasingh*



*Nirmal Nath*



*John Jacob*

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# Editor's note

*Dear Friends,*

What does living an abundant life mean to you? You will find the answer in the pages of this **Pulse** through the lives of 10 nonagenarians of St. John's Church, who are featured in the cover story. Each one of them have had different experiences, different learnings. We thank them and their families for sharing valuable insights into the ABC's of growing old gracefully. There is so much to be learned from the lives of our parents, grandparents, church elders as Deuteronomy 32:7 instructs us: "Remember the days of old; consider the years of many generations; ask your father, and he will show you, your elders, and they will tell you." If we have missed out any member of our church who is 90+, do let us know. Would be happy to feature in the next issue of *Pulse*.

As we celebrate Easter joy through the year, we need to ponder over the temptations that Jesus did not succumb to during his life on earth prior to his crucifixion. How did he respond? How would he want us to respond to the distractions in today's world that don't allow us to focus on Him? Media, technology, social media, money, church politics, relationships, routine, work, home, hobbies, ourselves, Indian and world politics, Russian probes, nuclear summits, climate change, refugee crises, #MeToo, and more. The response from our members has been enlightening.

Rev. Navin John, our Assistant Presbyter, in his Theological Perspective, comments that the Redemption of Christ leads us to Repentance, and this Repentance leads us to transformation which culminates in Resurrection.

We pay tribute to our former Presbyter, the late Rev. Nirmala Vasanthakumar, who served St. John's from 2006 to 2010. We would like to thank members of those who have lost their loved ones for giving us a glimpse into their lives.

Christmas celebrations, activities of the Wings of the Church, and other news bring alive the caring and sharing spirit at St. John's Church.

We would love to hear from you, so do send your feedback to [pulseofstjohnschurch@gmail.com](mailto:pulseofstjohnschurch@gmail.com) / [sjchurchblr@gmail.com](mailto:sjchurchblr@gmail.com)

**Matilda Yorke**

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# Presbyter's Letter



*Dear Friends,*

It is a joy to be in touch with you through *Pulse*.

We live in an extremely distracting world. These days with YouTube, social media and other apps that vie for your attention. One of the most challenging parts of our lives today is being able to maintain our focus on a single task without being distracted by the outside world, and gadgets like telephones, which offer Twitter, WhatsApp, email and other messaging services. Technology is great, our smartphones and tablets are amazing and how they allow us to communicate with our friends, co-workers and family.

The question is "Is there real communication with the family and friends as it used to be?" "Is our daily routine of work under stressful circumstances due to distractions by the technology?

How would we handle the present situation? What would Jesus do?

Jesus while interacting with His disciples said "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you". Jesus knew the times and that he promised this greatest gift humanity wants – "peace".

How do we get this peace? Through the simple act of Prayer. Below I quote what is written at the back cover of a book, titled 'Praying life: Connecting with God in a distracting world'. It reads as follows: PRAYER is simply you – a child of a good Father – making conversation with him a rhythm of your life.

For most of us, prayer is so hard that unless circumstances demand it, we simply do not pray. Cheerlessness is rooted in unbelief. Because of cheerlessness, our lives are often marked by fear, anxiety, joylessness, and spiritual lethargy.

Prayer that regularly and consistently hopes, trusts, and expects God to act. Jesus spent time in prayer. In spite of stressful situations, He carried out everything in his time. The statement made in the Bible: "my time has not come" which means he carried out everything in his fixed time.

Prayer can happen silently within ourselves while doing a job, with people around without being noticed. This will bring the inner strength to stay focused in a disturbing and distracting world.

Now to the news on the church activities;

The coming days will witness the restoration of the Church. Let us raise and build and we need your cooperation and also new talents to be part of the ensuing project.



*Consultant G.N. Heritage carry out a study of the church for the restoration project*

Both Asha Nivas and the Stephen's Home will have new Wardens. We would be starting Bible Studies every Wednesdays from June. We need your prayers.

Let us continue to uphold the family of St. John's and all its efforts to stay focussed on the restoration and fulfill in our time the privilege of restoring our beautiful church to its former glory.

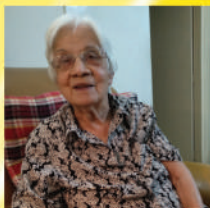
May God be with you.

**Rev. G. Wilson**





*Nirmal Nath*



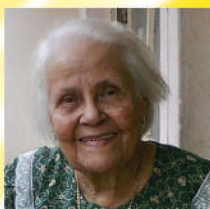
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# *Living the* **Abundant** **Life** *Our Nonagenarians*

The origins of the term “abundant life” comes from the Bible verse John 10:10b, “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” “More abundantly” means to have a superabundance of a thing. “Abundant life” refers to life in its abounding fullness of joy and strength for mind, body, and soul.

This aspect of abundance comes out very clearly in the lives of our nonagenarians, who echo this sentiment: “You can inspire millions through positivity and live in abundance, I did. Life is great,” says interventional cardiologist Genereux Philip. Interestingly, each of them have displayed resilience that has contributed to their growing old gracefully – they have all been able to adjust to circumstances, and focus on gains rather than losses and have appreciated blessings. We thank each one of them and their families for responding, sharing about their lives, which will enable us to learn from their example.



# Growing old gracefully

Dr. Lily John



Any one above the age of 60 belongs to the geriatric group, eligible for travel concession, some increase in interest rate of bank deposit and may be some other benefits too. The number of this population has been climbing, since the life expectancy has also increased from 37 yrs in 1950 to 65 yrs in 2011. The chronological age is calculated from the date of birth, but the biological age is the age at which the body is functional. For example, someone at age 80 can feel like age 65 or 70 and is able to do all normal activities.

Old age is associated with certain physiological changes. There is increased risk of developing non communicable disease like diabetes, hypertension, cardiac disease and also muscular weakness with tendency to fall, disability and frailty comprising inability to lead an independent life. Everyone has a physiological reserve from birth and it tends to decrease over time. The secret of successful ageing is to slow down the loss physiological reserve.

Good life is one of maximum independence which is denied to people with advancing age. We need to make life worthwhile when one becomes frail. Safety and survival remains primary goals in life. Loneliness and neglect are often seen with the elderly.

Everyone is made in the image of God and it applies to people who are easily dismissed whether due to old age, disability or terminal illnesses. God's son Jesus Christ died for all to free us from our sins and to give salvation.

If God cares for every human being and if we are made to be like God, then we are also made to care for each other. A silver haired head is a crown of glory. (Proverbs 16:31)

How can we meet the biblical demand to have love for all? The sickly, elderly and disabled should be seen as a gift to all of us to show unconditional love and not dismissed as a burden. Life style choices made earlier in life at 40 -45 years have a major impact on functional ability later in life. We need to help a fading man's needs for everyday comfort and companionship. We have a deep desire to identify the purpose in our lives that makes living feel meaningful and worthwhile.

The most meaningful experience for a physician or a human being is to help others deal with what medicine cannot do as well. Our responsibility is to provide long-term care; contribute to healthy aging, ageing with grace. We have to remember the contributions made by the elders in our lives, society and the world.

Life is worth living and that is the reason to live. Our duty is to offer friendship in place of boredom, companionship in place of loneliness, loving compassionate care in place of helplessness. They can find support in spiritual practice. Prayer takes the people to the bank of faith and obtains the golden blessing. As Christians we should be offering an extra dimension of care arising from our experience of God's love to us in Christ.



# Meet our Nonagenarians



**Nirmal Basheshar Nath**  
98 years on October 31, 2018

Fragile as old lace and a picture of elegance is my Mom. Nirmal Basheshar Nath still has steel in her back bone. She is very disciplined and has never been known to compromise on the values and principles that have ruled her life these 98 years.

Born in Shimla in 1920, she learnt to be independent at a very young age. Her mother Dr. Ethel Mark was the head of the Mission hospital, Amritsar and had little time for a young child; so mum was left in the care of indulgent nurses and hospital ayahs, her earliest memories are of her playing hide and seek in the vast hospital complex, of enjoying prasad at the Golden Temple and of the daily tonga rides to and from the hospital with her adored mother. She says that it was these early years that made her self-reliant. At the age of four she was enrolled as a boarder in Alexandra High School, Amritsar, and later joined the prestigious Kanaid College Lahore for her graduation. It was while doing her B. Ed that she married my Dad in 1942.

Mum has many firsts to her name. She shocked the then conservative society by refusing to wear a white wedding sari, choosing old rose instead; she refused all jewellery, choosing to wear flowers instead. She refused to enter the kitchen and opted to help the war effort by joining the W.A.C.(I) (Signals). A great athlete, she represented Punjab State for the 100 yards dash and the high jump.

Partition turned my parents' life upside down for they left everything behind, lands, their homes in Rawalpindi and Narowal, the business, job and all friends and relatives. It was Mum who made the

decision. She had just finished reading a book 'The auction of Souls', the book must have made a big impact on her for she declared "I will never allow my children to grow up in a theocratic state".

We came with only 20 pounds of luggage for that was all that was allowed by the airlines per family, and there were six of us, my grandmother, my parents, my brother, I and the cook.



With daughter Kamini Williams

Mum and Dad's indomitable spirit never faltered, even when there was no food. I remember at least two occasions when there was nothing to eat but hard dry rotis. (Dad had not yet joined the OTS). He called us to the table and said, "Today we are going to play a game and eat the food the very poor do." Then in a most dramatic way he spread out six rotis, one for each of us, then with great show sprinkled salt on them, rolled them up and with a great flourish handed us one each. When we found them too hard to chew he put a glass of water in front and asked us to dunk them in to make them soft. Mum never complained or grumbled; in fact, I have never in my life ever heard her complain about anything.

After a few such incidents Mum reacted in her own typical way, she got a job and was one of the first



teachers of Delhi Public School, Mathura Road. Subsequently, she opened two schools of her own. Mum became a widow when she was in her mid-forties, but she continued to run her school and the farm till 1988 when she made her home with us.

At the age of 74, when most of us are content to stay at home, she led a Swedish expedition over Rohtang pass to Lahul and Spiti.

I don't remember her ever correcting us or lecturing us; she led by example. Her greatest gift to us, her three children was to instill in us the same 'never say die spirit', deep rooted values, to always look at the funny side of life and above all to be always kind, considerate and honest.

Each of her diaries (and she has many) have these words on the front page. "I am the Captain of my Soul and the Master of my fate". This is followed by words of her favourite hymn, "Jesus Saviour pilot me over the world's tempestuous sea, Unknown waves before me roll, hiding reefs and treacherous shoals, Thou my chart and compass be, Jesus Saviour pilot me". It is belief and faith in these words that have made her the courageous soul that she is.

Today frail and often in great pain, her wonderful spirit keeps her smiling, uncomplaining and thanking God for His grace and mercy. In her prayers and she prays most of her waking hours, she blesses all her friends, family, the servants and the nurses who take care of her.

*by Kamini Williams (daughter)*



**Beryl Samuel**

**96 years on September 29, 2018**

There are many memories that I fondly cherish. Especially of my wedding, which was the happiest day of my life. I met Harold in 1946. He was in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Punjab Regiment. We met in Bangalore at the

officers' training school, where all the dances used to take place on Saturday. He proposed, but then we couldn't get married because he was going to Burma. After the war, his regiment returned to Ranchi, but then riots broke out, and Harold was able to get his release only after that. He applied to the Union Public Service Commission, appeared for the exam and was selected for the Railways, where he was on probation. And then we got married on December 22, 1948.

Another memorable achievement is when I became headmistress of Frank Anthony Public School (Junior School), where I worked for 10 years. I was a teacher at Baldwin's when I finished my degree. When we went to Bombay I taught in Cathedral & John Connon School for 15 years, and in a private school for five years. For 30 years I worked as a teacher, and I loved being a teacher.

I am very happy to be a homemaker. I love to run my home. Now of course, since I am retired and alone, I have to do it as there is nobody else. I have to see to the buying of the food and there are different things that I have to do. I don't like going shopping as I get very tired. The girl, who stays and looks after me, does the shopping.

In today's world, I think the families are not so close like we used to be when we were younger. Once the children grow up, and find jobs, they become independent and leave home. They go and get their own flat. Like my granddaughter in England has her own flat. In the old days we stayed with our parents till we got married. Even when we were working we were with them, throughout. Only the boys were posted here and there. Girls got jobs as teachers and nurses near our parents and we lived at home.



With her late husband Harold Samuel and family



Today, I see some values that are disappearing. Like obedience. Some children don't listen to their parents. They must listen to their parents when they are young. When they grow up, it's different, they can make their own decisions. And I also like them to be able to say their prayers every night. We were brought up like that. Children must be well behaved.

In the old days we didn't feel so comfortable in the church. Now the padres are more friendly and we can talk to them freely, especially Rev. G. Wilson and Rev. Victor Prabhakar.

Times have changed, and my routine also has changed to keep up with my age. But there are some activities that I continue every day. I love to come to church, and so I try to attend the 8.30 a.m. Service. I try to read the Bible before dinner. I read the Bible with my caregiver. She has a Hindi Bible, so from half past seven to eight every night we read the Bible. And this gives me peace of mind.

*Narrated to Matilda Yorke*



**John Jacob**  
turned 95 on February 7, 2019

My parents were Armenian, and I was baptized: Hovannes Hacobian. However, during school admission, father used the Anglo Saxon name.

The happiest day of my life, the event that I am still nostalgic about, was the day that Jesus met me as a boy of 11 years at St. Paul's School, Darjeeling, and that changed my whole outlook. I was introduced to Jesus by the pioneer Scripture Union worker Mr. Archibald who led me to Jesus Christ. Oh, happy day in 1935, when I fixed my choice on Jesus my Saviour and my God. Teaching for 10 years in school at Ooty, with children from all over the world, gave me great joy. I was the house master and instructed them in the way they should go. The saddest day of my life was when the family of

Rev. Joe Mullins left India as I was very close to their six children.

I have often preached at St. John's Church, and spoken at Sunday School, though most of the year was away from Bangalore for the work of God through the Scripture Union (SU). And that's why I did not marry. Felt it was God's will that I should stay single so that I could continue my travelling work with SU throughout India.

Living in today's age is not difficult; every age has its own difficulties. Nobody is free from them. I use the computer and Internet and find them both very useful. There is one value that I feel that today's world has lost -- the wise use of money. As John Wesley put it -- get some, save some and give as much as you possibly can. And the principle that has kept me in good stead is as Sir Winston Churchill said in his address at his old elementary school, NEVER GIVE IN. A very valuable lesson that I learned is to be patient, I tend to do things without thinking. My advice to children would be work hard with studies; get involved with a hobby and obey your parents.

Though I have been away from St. John's now for six years, the change that I have observed, in Divya Shanti Church, is that both formal and informal worship is conducted, where the congregation takes part in praise and worship and thanksgiving. There is more freedom of expression in the church today than when I was young, free to express our opinions without fear.



John Jacob with family



I lead a disciplined life with what I eat, when I go to sleep, when I go to bed. There are many things that I do that continue to give me happiness. They started in Darjeeling — collecting butterflies, then beetles, later bird watching, stamp collecting and photography and several other hobbies. I love to watch cricket matches as well.

I read biographical books of great servants of God — Pandita Ramabai, William Carey, Sadhu Sundar Singh, Abraham Lincoln, Brother Andrew and also nature books by Jim Corbett. My favourite hymn is "Safe in the shadow of the Lord", and I love Galatians 2:20 'I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.'

If I were to live my life again, I —

- would not become a workaholic
- would not want to disobey God, which I did once
- would learn to swim earlier than I did (which I learnt as a man)

*Narrated to Ashish and Neelima Phillips*



**Dr. Kathleen (Kitty) Gertrude David,**  
celebrated her 94th birthday on  
December 14, 2018

Among the many events that I remember with nostalgia is the day our country became free, but soon the celebrations were clouded by religious riots. Another incident was when I was in Pittsburgh USA, doing my Residency at Montefiore Hospital in Obstetrics and Gynaecology. An Indian doctor who spoke fluent English and played tennis in a saree was a rarity, and this inspired the reporters to write about me.

Becoming a doctor to serve others, is the greatest thing I have done. In fact, holistic healing - treating the Mind, Body & Soul, is what I hold close to my heart. I realised that in caring for the health of women and children, I would have to go beyond my job as a doctor (beyond simply treating the symptoms) and get involved in a programme of health education, hygiene and disease prevention. Yes, I have a soft corner for the old and sick, and would love to visit them with flowers and books. At the Karnataka Welfare Hospital, I worked as the Army Welfare Doctor in Bangalore till I was 75 years.

An important experience from which I learned a very valuable lesson was when my husband Ebbie and I were living in faraway Dehra Dun for several years. This stint taught me to learn a different language, and as a civilian doctor in an army base counselling Gorkha women (wives of army jawans), on family planning, disease prevention and management, and learning so much from them in the process.

The happiest day of my life has been seeing my children Trixie Asirvatham, Jeyanthi Manokaran, Pradeep David and grandchildren settled. And the saddest day was when I lost my husband, Johnson E. David, on September 5, 2001.

In this digital age, the value that today's world has lost is the art of actually WRITING letters. Even though I used to email the children and grandchildren, I found letter-writing and sending cards far easier and more personal! I loved clicking photographs of family events, visitors, babies and



Dr. Kitty David with the family



young ones and my cupboards are overflowing with albums with precious memories of the last century – labelled with captions and dates!

Living in today's age is not more difficult than in my days, in Shwebo where I was born or in Rangoon where I grew up. It is just different, with the computer and the internet, which are amazing.

My husband and I always loved music, and we sang duets. Ebbie was choirmaster at St. John's Church in Dehra Dun, and my children and I were part of the choir. When we moved to Bangalore, we joined Symphonia where I had a long and fruitful association with Gladys Mohanraj.

The biggest change that I have observed is in the church. Membership has exploded. There were small congregations back then. For 50 years being a part of St. John's has been joyful – participating in activities of the church, a choir member and president and member of the Women's Fellowship.

It is my strong faith in God that has kept me going despite health setbacks, heart bypass surgery and broken hip or trochanteric fracture. That's why my favourite hymn is "What a Friend We Have in Jesus". I get my strength by being faithful in prayer and from the Word, especially Psalm 23, and I encourage others too. I tell my children to 'be a Bible-based family' and advise each one to 'be an encourager'. When Trixie and Jeyanthi got teased at school for their dark skin, I would tell them it was more important to be "beautiful on the inside."

I walk, sing chorus, play scrabble, bird watch and pray for all those near and dear to me. And that's why I stay happy every day.

*Narrated to her children Pradeep David,  
Trixie Asirvatham and Jeyanthi Manokaran*

*You will make known to me the path of  
life; In Your presence is fullness of joy;  
In Your right hand there are pleasures  
forever.*

**Psalm 16:11**

*I thought, 'Those who are older should  
speak, for wisdom comes with age*

**Job 32:7**



**Dorothy Fowler**

**completed 94 years on January 7, 2019**

At 94, Dorothy Fowler even while confined to her bed continues to impact and influence the young and the old. Her perspective on life is shaped by her unwavering faith in God who she believes deeply loves not just her but the entire world. What keeps her going forward joyfully is her gratitude to God and from there stems her deep unshaken love for Him. Her keenness and ability to keep in touch with people and extend her territories despite her immobility is a lesson for one and all.

Memories of her parents and siblings keep her joyful through the nights when sleep eludes her. Dorothy Fowler is the youngest of eight children born to her parents. She was born two years before her oldest sister was married. She remembers receiving beautiful embroidered dresses from her sister who was excellent in sewing. She feels blessed to have had brothers and sisters who doted on her. Her father was a lay preacher and spent many hours in his room preparing messages for Sunday worship. Her mother kept her meticulous kitchen buzzing with activities as the staff sincerely carried out their work ensuring that all of them had a tasty and healthy diet for an average of 12 members at each meal.

Dorothy's parents taught her a lot of lessons. She remembers an incident when she wanted to eat a whole bun and her father told her that she could not. She insisted and he relented. However, she was not able to finish the bun and the lesson she learned was that she should not be greedy. Her father always taught her never to covet. Waste not, want not, was her mother's slogan.

Her greatest achievement would probably be her work with the Naval women's services during World War II, where Dorothy was a Cypher operator. She had the privilege of visiting a submarine for information and demonstration and visiting an aircraft carrier for the same purpose as it was a part of her course. "I was proud to be



the recipient of two medals for excellent service." The work gave her a sense of significance and she recalls this period in her life with gratefulness and joy.

Dorothy considers her late husband to have been a perfect gift from God. Her wedding she considers the greatest event in her life. She was blessed to be married to the person she saw Jesus in. Her marriage was truly based on the Word of God. As teachers, they moved to many cities and hill stations as and when the postings happened. Both of them had a passion for reading and even though their teaching schedules were heavy, both of them managed to read many hours into the night.



Dorothy Fowler with her son Richard

In fact, to have married the person she loved and the years of joy they shared, keeps her going till date. She has a store house of good memories and on the many sleepless nights she is able to draw from those happy memories and relive them. For Dorothy, the passing on of her husband was the saddest day of her life

Dorothy remains faithful to her close friends and makes it a point to reach out to people she hears about. The church magazine Pulse continues to bring her great joy. She reads and re reads the many articles and never fails to call the authors to thank them for their precious articles. Dorothy feels that loyalty and faithfulness is something she values and keeping a promise no matter what it costs her. To keep a commitment however mundane is sacred to her. A pledge is not to be taken lightly

Dorothy feels it is a tough world today for all. Her heart goes out to families and children who are struggling because of a breakdown in family structures. Today's generation seem to be searching for so many things and in the process

may miss out on the essentials. Qualities such as punctuality, reverence, modesty, keeping promises, politeness are fast losing their importance to many and this results in people getting hurt.

St. John's Church, according to Dorothy, continues to be a blessing to both her and her son Richard and they are delighted with the Pastors and congregation members of the church who have made the two of them an integral part of St. John's Church. Richard tries to attend both the morning and evening services. A beautiful change she sees is that the kiss of peace is shared today. This was not so prevalent in her days and not all churches followed this practice. Another small change she sees is that those were the days when they used to sing an 'amen' after each hymn. Today the last hymn sung has an Amen.

Dorothy is very traditional and keeps to the old customs and practices that her parents taught her. Pray regularly. Follow the motto of 'pray without ceasing'. In all things to give thanks too, and now has added praise without ceasing! Many a night is spent praying and praising as she sleeps very little.

Dorothy is happy and fit in her mind more than her body. She has a friend in Jesus and the day and night is sometimes insufficient for communication and prayer.

Living in today's age is not more difficult than it was earlier because Dorothy feels that God Almighty takes care of every need of theirs. Dorothy loves to listen to hymns, and among her favourite hymns are: Jesus lover of my soul, O the deep love of Jesus and O love that will not let me go. The Bible is her favourite book. Among the verses which she loves is 'Be still and know that I am God'

Dorothy does not use the computer or internet. However, if she was on the internet she would have used Facebook to share the word of God. Her message for one and all would be to be prepared for the Lord's coming.

*Narrated to Mary Paul*

***Do not say, "Why were the old days better than these?" For it is not wise to ask such questions***

**Ecclesiastes 7:10**





**Rev. Dr. Grace Padma Sathyaraj**  
turned 93 years on January 28, 2019

There are many important events, that I feel nostalgic about, but this one memory has stayed. The first time I left India and travelled by plane to attend the First Women's Training conducted in Singapore by Haggai Evangelistic School. Going through the training, automatically I was placed before public to witness for the Lord and start my international ministry. This event changed my whole life. Visiting and ministering in remote tribal areas in India, Malaysia & Zimbabwe, Africa brought me great joy. The tribals need Christ as much as the most sophisticated in the world.

There is another experience from which I learnt a very valuable lesson. God steps into the most difficult time of your life. There was an occasion when a staff member made a false accusation about me to the higher authority. I was instructed to face an enquiry. I desired to resign my job rather than face the enquiry. It was 10 a.m. The post came bringing me a letter from my elder brother, Samuel in Hyderabad. In his usual way he said, "God steps in at the most intricate part of your life. e.g. God saved Joseph from the pit". I read the letter and went to face the enquiry. As soon as I opened the door and stepped into the room, the lady who had complained about me, walked straight up to me and said, "Madam, please forgive me. I said all those false things because I was angry." The Chairperson got up and said, "The meeting is over. Come, let's have a cup of tea."

I enjoyed my days as a teacher at Kamalabai Girls' High School, Clarence High School, as principal of Tunbridge High School, lecturer at South India Biblical Seminary, Bangarapet, and Dean & Lecturer at Haggai Leadership Training Institute, Singapore.

Living in today's age is very different. My days were golden days. The world is changing drastically in all aspects of life and so is the life of a Christian in India. The world has lost two important values – honesty and self-respect. The value I hold close

to my heart is absolute honesty in thought, word and deed. Christ said, "I am the way, the truth and the life. My view conforms to the words of the Lord. Even the church has changed. The sanctity of the believers, the observance of Sundays as Sabbath and the reading of the Word by all ages, is slowly dwindling.

The birth of my first grandchild, Sangeetha, on November 18, at CSI Hospital, Bangalore was the happiest day of my life. I am grateful to God that my two sons, who are abroad, are walking with the Lord. The saddest days are December 15, 2003 when my beloved husband went to be with the Lord, and April 8, 2015, when my loving son, Ranjit was called by the Lord.



Dr. Grace Sathyaraj with family

I think of pleasant things, and avoid dwelling on sad happenings. I watch the trees and plants in my garden. I enjoy talking to my family and friends. I continue with my personal Bible study and prayer; regularly hold Friday evening prayer meetings with Bible Study, and Tuesday, I conduct a prayer fellowship for a small group of women. I respond to invitations to preach, whenever I am called. I enjoy counselling people with God's Word. I love to sing "Count your blessings" and read Psalm 23. And I am still learning to use the computer and the internet

*Narrated to Padmini Hastings*

***But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.***

**Isaiah 40:31**





**Glory Retnaraj,**  
celebrated her 92nd birthday on  
February 18 this year

I had a very happy, secure and blessed childhood. My parents were very loving and I can still remember my father Canon S.R. Gnanakkan who was a pastor and a well-known preacher, calling me Gloryma. My mother Ranjitham, a very loving and pious lady, was a homemaker who looked after all our needs. We had a cow and a few hens and so fresh milk and eggs were always there! My sisters and I used to have a lot of fun which we cherish and speak about even now when my elder sister Janaki or my younger sister Mangalavathy phone me. We reminisce about the time we used to travel to our hostel in a closed bullock cart specially designed with silk cushions. My eldest sister Grace and my brother Isaac are no more.

I got married in 1950. My husband was very handsome and the whole town of Nazareth celebrated our wedding. I had a very nice and blessed life with my husband and we were blessed with three daughters.

As my husband was in the army, we went to Pune soon after our marriage. We settled down in Bangalore in 1957. God has been good to us. We could get our three daughters, Shanta, Chandra and Vasantha married and settled. We got three loving sons! My husband and I always thanked God for our children. Now we are blessed with six lovely grandchildren and five great grandchildren. I always tell my children that prayer is the essence of life -- to fall on their knees and take everything to the Lord in prayer in all situations.

I feel very sad that my husband passed away suddenly last September. I still think he's around, as he has always been there for me in the last 68 years. I miss him and keep looking for him. I am a trained teacher, having retired from RBANMS school where they used to address me as GR teacher. I enjoyed teaching Mathematics to the boys in middle school and training them for the

7th Std Public Examinations. I used to call the very poor and weak children during lunch time to give them extra coaching and they would come eagerly to learn. I used to feel happy for them when they scored well.

God blessed me with a happy and fruitful retired life. I was also involved in IMS ministry along with my husband. My house was always open to missionaries and mission activities. We also encouraged and invited everyone who needed any kind of help, to come to our house for counselling and prayerful guidance. The IMS Sale was a much awaited annual get-together of families. I used to have a 'pickle and jam stall' at the IMS sale where my tasty home-made fish pickles used to be very much in demand.



Glory and J. Retnaraj with the family on their  
60<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary

We have been members of St. John's Church, for more than four decades. I used to attend the 6.30 a.m. service every Sunday along with my husband till I became homebound a few years ago. I miss coming to church. But the Pastors come and give me communion here every month. I remember many Bible passages. I sing hymns, which I had memorised as a child, from Golden Bells. My favourite hymn is Count your Blessings. It's a very meaningful song which I can keep singing as I thank God for His countless blessings! How good our God is! Now I spend my time thanking and praising God and praying for His provision in the lives of all my loved ones.

I love Psalm 23 and Psalm 34:10. Whenever I say 'I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever', I know that it's true and I will dwell in my Father's house.

*Narrated to Chandra Abraham, daughter*





**Olivia Thomas,**  
celebrated her 92nd birthday on March 27  
this year

Olivia Thomas is characterised by a zest for living. Despite being housebound, she does not wallow in self-pity. Instead, she keeps herself gainfully occupied, solving crossword puzzles. She finishes them so fast, that one has to provide a steady stream of books for her uninterrupted enjoyment.

Once a keen chorister in Madras, Delhi and, briefly, in the UK, she was a valued voice in our church choir for as long as health and strength permitted.



Olivia and Newton Thomas on their wedding day  
on January 3, 1952

Now, she has retired from most of her pleasurable pastimes, which include knitting (sometimes a whole sweater in a day), embroidering fancy table-cloths and writing poems and stories for publication. At one time, she even ran a nursery school called Holly Nook.

My mother draws inspiration from much-loved hymns (too many to list, she says) and from Psalm 23: a favourite of my late father's, and hers as well. Olivia Thomas -- a nonagenarian and member of St John's for over two decades -- not just going on, but glowing strong!

*By Suryakumari Dennison (daughter)*



**Irene Christabel Gojer,**  
popularly called Kitty, celebrated  
her 90th birthday on December 18, 2018

Kitty Gojer made Asha Nivas her home in October 1988. Diminutive and sprightly, she belies her 90+ years. Born in Mangalore, she graduated in Commerce from St. Agnes College and remembers with nostalgia her very first job with Basel Mission. Initially she worked for Dr. Burckhardt, the President of the organization, who looked after her like his own daughter. After a few years, she became the District Head Accountant of Basel Mission, responsible for paying salaries to the staff of all their institutions in South Kanara District. When her family later moved to Bangalore, she came with them and joined the Admin department of HMT Watch Factory where she worked as PA to the Executive Director for 20 years till her retirement.

Above all Kitty Gojer values friendship, kindness and consideration and feels that these traits are sadly lacking in today's world. She takes life as it comes and rejoices in the strong and lasting friendships she has forged. A very special friend was her pen friend from Germany. She kept in touch regularly and took special care of Kitty when she visited them. Her photo album revives many old memories. She was able to go for her god daughter's confirmation and wedding and is happy to still be in touch with the family although her friend passed away last year.

Another friend phones her every morning. The nun in charge of the hostel where she stayed during her working days, who is now Mother Superior, makes it a point to visit whenever she is in town. These bonds keep her spirits up as did the care and concern she experienced from the different pastors, especially the late Rev. Nirmala Vasanthakumar.

In today's internet age Kitty manages very well with just her phone and without the computer and looks forward to phone calls and visits from friends. She loves doing the crossword every day,



and does some exercises every day to strengthen her back and walks outside her room.



Kitty Gojer celebrates her 90th birthday with friends

Bible reading is an integral part of Kitty's daily routine. She misses being able to go for the 8.30 a.m. service every Sunday, because of her back problem. With help she does make it to the evening service now and then. Her faith is strong and she knows she can trust in God's provision. Once, many years ago, she was worried about travelling back alone from Delhi. In answer to her prayers, she found someone she knew doing the same journey.

Choosing a favourite hymn is an impossible task because she loves so many of them. In her youth she helped out as the organist at Shanthi Cathedral, Balmatta, Mangalore. In Bangalore, she was the organist at St. Andrews Church until HMT changed the weekly off and Sunday became a working day.

A verse she often quotes and which she believes will make the world a better place is

"Little acts of kindness  
Little deeds of love  
Make this earth an Eden  
Like the heaven above"

- Renuka Varughese, Friend

*Even to your old age and gray hairs I am  
he, I am he who will sustain you.  
I have made you and I will carry you;  
I will sustain you and I will rescue you.*  
Isaiah 46:4



**Bala Jeyasingh**  
turned 90 years on June 28 last year

As I grow older, I often look back, at my past life, compare it with the present and wonder what the future would be. Then I end up thanking God, and for all the people who helped me to grow in body, mind and soul. It wasn't a super life, nor was it a dull life. It was growing all the way and is still.

Being one girl among five boys to Christian parents, my father brought me up like a boy – playing football, cycling – free and bold, whereas mother tried to teach me the womanly skills which didn't interest me then. Regular Sunday School and my mother made me God conscious from a young age. My school education in Ramakrishna Mission (mostly Brahmins) made me learn Carnatic music, dance, Sanskrit, etc., which gave me the Indian touch. My college education was in Women's Christian College, Chennai, where I graduated in Mathematics. It also gave me an interest in social work and village evangelical work (NSS).

Though mathematic was my forte, I was a voracious reader of English classics – novels of all types. I wanted to be a novelist, a writer, especially after a few of my very short write-ups found space in two local magazines. But God vetoed it. He had other plans for me.

I got married to a relative, who was the principal of a large Methodist school in Sri Lanka, altering the course of my life! I became the mother of three children but also spent time in church activities, women and children's work and choir. Few years later, I had to take up teaching as the school needed a teacher. I didn't like it at the start. Wondered what God was doing to me! But things changed. I changed, too, when I saw the opportunities school gave me to improve my skills in other areas too like becoming the librarian, Red Cross work, choir and got merits too. My attitude changed and I learnt to relate in a good way to both students and co-workers whether they were rich, poor, clever, dull, Chinese, Malays or foreigners.



My husband and I worked in three different countries, teaching in leading Christian schools, attached to evangelical churches. My husband was a lay preacher and I was immersed in women's fellowship, Sunday school and social work, apart from doing school work. I am grateful to my husband who gave me freedom and encouragement to do all these. Often now I recall all those who helped me to grow in faith, to share this great faith, my God and Saviour with others, Pastors of different nationalities, two Chinese Bishops, who gave me encouragement to share God's Word, even when I wasn't well prepared for it. I recall with joy when some whom I knew changed from their faith to faith in Jesus and my true living God.



Bala Jeyasingh (seated left) with the ladies of the Cox Town Neighbourhood Fellowship

Coming back to live in India, in Bangalore, after 40 years, I felt the lifestyle here different and a bit hard to get used to! But again God gave interesting things to do and learn and serve. I did some voluntary work in the Half-Way Home, learnt a bit about drug addiction, left that after a few years, started some work with the poor children in the Bagalur area. Learnt a lot about life among the poor in India. All my big ideas about India fell flat. Later I concentrated only on low income women, in sharing the Word and in small services otherwise.

We chose to worship at St. John's Church as we found the church friendlier. I participated in Women's Fellowship earnestly and took weekly Bible studies for residents of Asha Nivas for more than 10 years, general knowledge classes and teaching math to the boys in the Hostel but gave up after a few years. Now that I am getting older every day, I look up to "my Rock, my Fortress, my Deliverer, in Him will I trust" (chorus) to lead me, protect me and feed me, body soul and mind – ever thankful for all that I had and have now.

*Narrated to Shirin Samuel*

## You're Never Too Old

You're never too old,  
for God to use you  
any year of your life  
be ready to do.

By faith be willing,  
to participate  
in the tasks God has  
for you to undertake.

You're not over the hill,  
until God says so  
any day He may say  
here is where to go.

Just trust and obey,  
where you He sends  
and your inheritance  
will draw dividends.

You're not too old,  
nor over the hill  
to go and do ...  
your Father's will!

## Retired People

Some people when retired,  
are just plain bored  
but I find myself ...  
getting closer to the Lord.

Some people with their time,  
don't know what to do  
but each year I read ...  
my Bible through and through.

Some people sit all day,  
in front of the television  
but I just close my eyes ...  
so heaven I can envision.

Some people never leave,  
the comfort of their home  
but I'm always looking ...  
for lost sheep on the roam.

Some people when retired,  
see no real meaningfulness  
but my life just gets fuller ...  
with God's purposefulness!

Source: <https://poetrybydeborahann.wordpress.com/category/aging-poems/>

# Remembering Rev. Nirmala Vasanthakumar

Rev. Nirmala Vasanthakumar, our Presbyterian from 2006-2010, passed into heavenly glory on March 7, 2019. She was the second woman priest in the Church of South India and the first ordained woman in Karnataka. St. John's Church members offer their heartfelt sympathies to her husband Rt. Rev. S. Vasanthakumar, former Moderator CSI, and Bishop, CSI KCD, son Amar and daughter-in-law Preethi, daughter Arpana and son-in-law Rajeev, and grandsons Varun and Vivan.



The late Rev. Nirmala Vasanthakumar is fondly remembered as a pastor who journeyed along with the people. This journey began, as she recalled to *Pulse*, as a VBS teacher at St. John's. "I had helped a child in just two days to realize that God loves those who are obedient to their parents. I thought that without any training, if I could

touch somebody's life, what a difference I could make to many more with a little bit of training."

This incident and the words of Bishop Gill only motivated her as a young 23-year-old aspiring to enter a male-dominated priesthood when a woman priest was unheard of in the seventies. 'Do you know what responsibility you are taking up? You are the pioneer, and you pave the way for others. But if you fail, you may become a hurdle'. Rev. Nirmala recalled how her father persuaded her to take up teaching after her mother and sister. "We had endless arguments, and finally to

appease him, I decided to get the form for the B.Ed. course. But God works in mysterious ways, and, to my good luck, the last date for submission was over."

In a class of 30 at the United Theological College, Rev. Nirmala was one of the three women who

I was really blessed to be the daughter-in-law of Rev. Nirmala Vasanthakumar. I would like to describe her in three words. A woman who was strong, sacrificing and selfless. Auntie was a doting grandmother to my kids Varun and Vivan. She literally took care of their every need be it spiritual or physical. She would spoil them for choice. A very caring and protective person towards the family, who although a very busy person, knew the likes and dislikes of her family. I have learnt to be patient, prayerful and bold like her.

Auntie proved her leadership in the diocese very especially among girl children and women in the CSI, in AICCW of NCCI, ATTWI. She also represented the Indian church in other parts of the world. Her

spirituality was so deep and her journey was an encouragement to many. Her friendship was cherished by many, her love was experienced by countless people. Auntie would never say no to a person who was in need. Her work and dedication will be remembered forever. She was a real gift to us and she will be deeply missed by all.

*I'm only human, I'm just a woman.  
Help me believe in what I could be  
And all that I am.  
Show me the stairway, I have to climb.  
Lord for my sake, teach me to take  
One day at a time.*

**Preethi Amar, daughter-in-law**



enrolled. But the test of entering a man's bastion had just begun. When she passed out in 1974, only the men became deacons. So she was posted to Kolar Gold Fields, which all felt was a safe place for her. At KGF too, it was strange to have a woman priest and Rev. Nirmala had to prove to her own gender that she was capable, that she as a city girl could walk eight km every day, and that she could adjust and be willing to partake of their simple living. But Rev. Nirmala's simple qualities of head and heart, brought them closer, and soon they were praying that she could become a full-time priest, which happened in 1976.

Even as women's liberation began to gain momentum in the mid-eighties, the road was not smooth for Rev. Nirmala, who felt sad to see people walking out of church because they were not comfortable with a woman celebrating communion or preaching. "I began to question myself — has God really called me? Was I depriving them of something special like communion?"

It is at times like these that her favourite Bible passages — Psalm 23 and Isaiah 43: 1,2 — lifted her spirits, and made her reach out to her parishioners. She managed to connect with people through simple practical ideas ... at one church, once a month, a male priest would conduct the service.

Besides church members, it was the underprivileged that Rev. Nirmala cared for — street children, sex workers, prisoners' children. On Rev. Nirmala's initiative, the Diocese initially opened a Centre for

Street Children for Boys. Her prayers for a Centre for Girl Children and Women in Crisis were also answered. She established the 'Makkala Ashraya Kendra', a children's home in Bangalore.

Another passion of Rev. Nirmala's was to create new ways of encouraging people to read the Bible. Besides the Bible and theological books, Rev. Nirmala enjoyed reading other books, especially by Colin Forbes, Jeffrey Archer, Ken Follet. She also loved gardening.

Besides St. John's Church, which Rev. Nirmala served from 2006-2010, other churches who benefited from her pastoral work included Eaton Memorial Church, Karunalaya Church, St. Matthew's Church, and Kothanur CSI Church, from where she retired in 2016.

Rev. Nirmala was one of the pioneers of the Feminist theology in India, and was actively involved in the movement for theologically trained women. Rev. Nirmala was the former President of the Church of South India (CSI) Synod Women's Fellowship, and served as the Executive Secretary of the All India Council of Christian Women (AICCW), the women's wing of the National Council of Churches in India (NCCI).

Her involvement in Human Rights and Women Empowerment movements and commitment at the grassroots is a great example of her commitment to stay and work with the people, irrespective of their identities.

Source: *Pulse* (October 2006),  
csikarnatakacentraldiocese.org/rev-nirmala-vasanthakumar

## Former Pastorate Committee members and church office staff share their memories

Rev. Nirmala Vasanthakumar, informal and friendly with persons from all walks of life, showed sympathy and empathy especially to those in need. She was a pastor and not an administrator; that is where her strengths lay. She was always thoughtful of the staff who worked for her. When she strung flowers from her garden for her hair she would bring flowers for Christy and Hannah too. I little realized the last time I met Rev. Nirmala that her fond greeting would be the last farewell.

**Shanthi Chacko**

I first met Rev. Nirmala when she was a young, newly ordained Presbyterian in the mid-eighties at a Serampore Seminar on Bible Study Methods. When she became the Presbyterian of St. John's Church in 2006, I had the privilege of being the PC Secretary as we celebrated together the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. It was a great joy to work with her. She always had a soft

corner for those in need. I still remember with gratitude, when she visited me at home when I had fractured my leg and was bedridden. When she shifted to Kothanur she invited me to preach there. A great truly Christian servant leader!

**Dr. Peter S.C. Pothan**

What comes to mind when we think of our dear Rev. Nirmala Vasanthakumar? In a nutshell, she will always be envisaged as a friendly, loving, caring, peoples' person. She was simple to the core and a very generous soul. My experience at the PC brings memories of her balanced views, the way she never took sides and resolved issues very amicably. She always took everyone with her, regardless of position. Her laughter and joyful presence will be sorely missed.

**Ashalatha Joshua**

The late Rev. Nirmala will always be remembered for her passion and compassion in her ministry. The sick in our homes would always look forward to her monthly visits as her presence was a great consolation to them. In fact, after Dad's last communion visit, he thanked Rev. Nirmala and wished her goodbye. We miss her indeed. May her soul rest in peace.

***Catrina Hastings***

Rev Nirmala Vasanthakumar, epitomized three qualities; Humility, Service to all and dedication to St. John's Church. I had the privilege of working with her in the Pastorate Committee, for major part of her tenure in our Church. She was totally committed to the parishioners and the Wings and Fellowships of the Church. However, her special concern was for Stephen's Home & St. John's Boys Hostel. Stephen's Home faced numerous challenges, as the inmates were getting old and their care was a day-to-day challenge. Getting the right inmates was another area of great concern. She was ever willing to address problems of the parishioners, without any conditions and barriers. Just to mention one she went out of her way to get accommodation for one of the parishioners in Trinity Church. All this with great cheer, an ever smiling face and great humility. She had no airs of being 'Bishop Amma'. It was also my privilege to meet up with her at Baptist Hospital on 05 Feb, just days before her demise. I could see she was very ill. But she greeted me with her 'signature smile'. During our chat she did not mention even once her illness and her parting words were 'God bless you & your family'.

***Brig P.I. Abraham***

She was so good, kind and generous, and we staff at the church office, had a memorable time working with her for five years. Whoever came for help, she made sure that she listened to them with patience, and gentleness. She was always ready to help, guide, and never sent away people empty-handed. Humble and very friendly, she enjoyed the simple things of life. Since I knew she was fond of flowers, I would bring her champak flowers, and she would be so happy, and would immediately put it on her hair. During our lunch break, she would share her lunch with us.

Rev. Nirmala was a down-to-earth person, who always encouraged us to forgive and forget, and not keep any grudges in mind. Be cheerful and run your family with peace was her daily advice to us. My husband Jonathan and Rev. Nirmala were together in Sunday School and the Youth Fellowship, and I will always remember the tribute she paid to him at his

funeral. Even after she left St. John's, Rev. Nirmala never forgot our birthdays, and would remember to call us and pray for us.

***Nina Jayadev***

It seems like just the other day we were talking about Rev. Nirmala Vasanthakumar being appointed as the Presbyterian-in-charge, then the years flew past and it was time to say goodbye to her as she finished her term. Now we cannot believe that we have had to say our final goodbye.

I consider myself fortunate to have met such a wonderful, special person like Rev. Nirmala (Ayeramma); a person who cared so much about each and every one of the Church staff. We will always remember her for her cheerfulness and for taking things as it came, for handling things calmly and for her big compassionate heart for anyone who came with a request.

We'll miss you, Ayeramma. One way or another you made quite an impact on our lives in the Church Office. Especially our lunch time together, which we always looked forward to, the jokes and laughter together and the special thought you had for each one's taste buds. We loved you for your simplicity and the way you made us feel free to discuss issues without ever having that boss-subordinate system of working.

We remember you for the Saturday morning devotion and prayer with the staff, during which you remembered each one by name and the concern you showed if anyone is sick in our families. We always looked up to you as a mother and you were there to uphold us in times of trouble, and to talk to when we were upset and needed your advice. I specially admired you for the way you counselled people who came with problems and the patience you had to listen to them despite your busy schedule; we have seen many families come together.

We know that you are with God in your heavenly abode. The love and appreciation you showered on us will always be in our hearts.

***Christy Theodore***

Rev. Nirmala was like a mother to me. She would remember everybody in my family by name, and would pray for us individually. She remembered my birthday and, without fail, used to call me and pray. If I didn't call her she would call me to enquire about my well-being. She was a down-to-earth person and was happy to be addressed as Ayeramma. I miss a prayerful mother and her broad smile.

***Hannah Surendher***



She is a loving mother, who was concerned very much about us sextons, our families, and our children, she will enquire about their studies and health. She used to advise us how to run our family and to handle our children. We miss the office prayer fellowship where she used to pray individually for our families by name. Whenever we needed help, she helped us. She was a wonderful shepherd, caring

mother and humble Ayeramma whom I came across in my 22 yrs of service. We have lost a great person.

**Benjamin J. - Sexton**

A very good Ayeramma who looked after us like her children, with love and affection. She used to advise us and talk to us very kindly, and treated us with respect.

**Ramanna - Sexton**



# Rooted in Christ to witness and serve communities

Rev. Navin John

## Spotlight

The Pastorate Committee of our Church began the triennium with a retreat on October 6, 2018 at SAIACS-CEO Center on Doddagubbi Road. The retreat was a time of planning and introspection for the newly elected PC members. The opening devotion, conducted by Rev. G. Wilson, set the tone for the study and the discussion for the retreat. The first part of the retreat was led by Rev. Jayakiran who is an accomplished missionary and has had vast experience in administration. During the second half of the retreat, discussions centered around various ideas as below.

1. The theme of the PC is 'Rooted in Christ to Witness and Serve Communities'.
2. The aim of the PC is to strengthen the worship, bring together individuals in the life of the Church and Care for the Community through the wings of the Church.
3. Strengthen the Church infrastructure and administrative machinery of the Church and to

facilitate a process for the implementation of plans/projects through progressive decision making procedures rather than regressive decision-making procedures and to bring about a corporate style of administration to maintain accountability.

4. Handle the challenges in mission, outreach, build a second-line leadership, retention of youth, and overall spiritual growth of the Church members by nurturing the neighbourhood fellowships.
5. To be sensitive to the cultural changes in society and the needs of the youth and teens.
6. To increase the participation of the members in the life and witness of the Church, outreach for the poor and charity.

Secretary Vinod David concluded the retreat and the Treasurer Thomas Swaroop thanked members for their contributions and giving their perspective for the triennium.





# N. Shanta Susheela installed as Principal of St. John's High School

## Spotlight

On February 20, 2019, a new chapter began in the history of St. John's High School with the installation of its Principal N. Shanta Susheela.

The programme began with a call to worship and scripture reading by Rev. Christy Rajkumar, Area Chairman – Civil. In his message, the Rt. Rev. Dr. P K. Samuel, Bishop, Karnataka Central Diocese, spoke about the wells dug by Isaac, the challenges he faced and its relevance to the new role of the Principal.

The Bishop then installed the new Principal Shanta Susheela, who was presented by Rev. Paul Dhanasegaran, Diocesan Secretary of the CSI

Karnataka Central Diocese. Dr. Abraham Ebenezer, Convener, Education Committee of CSI Karnataka Central Diocese, welcomed the new Principal.

Principal Shanta Susheela, daughter of N.S.N. Prakasha Rao and Krupa from Andhra Pradesh, grew up in Hubli, where her father served in the Railways. She is the fourth of five siblings. She loves the Lord, loves children and has a passion for teaching.

Shanta Susheela joined St. John's High School as a teacher in 1996 and is now happy to take over as Principal, after Mrs. Suchitra Samraj retired in December 2018.



## Know your Committees

### Communication And Technology Sub-Committee

The Editorial and Technology Committees have been merged into the Communication and Technology Sub-Committee.

The objective of this committee is as follows:

a. Publish the **Pulse** and the church calendar

- b. Update the website  
<http://www.stjohnschurchblr.com>
- c. Promote the activities of the church through social media
- d. Have a dedicated WhatsApp number to keep members informed of events, bereavements
- e. Organise the database of members
- f. Digitize the records and photos

# Neighbourhood Fellowships Complete 11 Years

## PulseBeat

As St. John's Church grows in membership, there is a great need to have more Neighbourhood Fellowships. Do contact the Pastors, any members

of the Neighbourhood Fellowships or the Church office to join one group near your home or open one if there is none in your area.

### Kalyan Nagar

All roads on a Thursday evening lead to the home of the Divakars for the Kalyan Nagar Neighbourhood Fellowship. Around 7 p.m. you will find a warm hearted group of about twelve who, over tea and refreshments join in fellowship and discuss a wide range of matters of interest such as current affairs, sport, church and family news.

At 7.30 p.m. we settle down to a time of Bible study, singing and prayer. The Bible study covers a wide range of topics chosen by leaders, who are members of the fellowship or the congregation,

besides guest speakers. A few topics in the recent past have been – Time, led by Vinod David, our Church Secretary, a series on Family by Juliet Thomas; on Family and Home based on Psalm 127 by Rev. G. Wilson; doing good to all based on Galatians 6:1-10 by Rev. Navin John and lessons learnt from the life of Jonah by Nalini Anbu Samuel, who related it to her experience following her son's demise.

The group is knit together in a bond of love and friendship. Come and be part of us.

*– Padmini Hastings*



For the greater part of my life the Neighbourhood Fellowship has been a major aspect of my lifestyle and existence. The people in our little community have truly helped me develop as a Christian and as an individual, as every one of them has supported me and shown me important parts of life. I view this little network as my family as we have shared the high points and low points of numerous circumstances. The NF has truly empowered me to learn and gain a greater

perspective of God, and our week after week discussions have unquestionably strengthened my belief and brought me closer to Him. It's been incredible to know this little group since it's one of those communities that take you away from your daily routine and bring great relief and relaxation to your existence through the word of God.

*Shawn Divakar (15) has been an active member of the Kalyan Nagar NF from the age of five*



## Cox Town

Every Monday evening, 6.30 is Neighbourhood Fellowship time for the Cox Town group. An average of 15 enthusiastic members meet. The usual meeting place is the residence of Nita Isaac, while we do meet in other homes.

The group consists of Bible Study leaders who share God's Word. Fellowship members share from time to time. Guest speakers are also invited. This gives variety and makes the Bible study

interesting. Members at the fellowship meeting enjoy singing, discussion and prayer time. The best loved is sharing of the refreshments.

During Christmas, the group enjoyed the Christmas dinner at the home of Dawn and Sam Taylor (missionary couple). We also visited the 26 girls in the C.S.I. New Life Centre located in the Memorial Church compound, where we conducted a much enjoyed Christmas programme.

*- Padmini Hastings*



## Lingarajapuram

The Lingarajapuram Neighborhood Fellowship is led by the able guidance and positive energy of Padmini Aunty. It has become that platform to not only learn God's word but, to also experience God. Many families — from small children to experienced adults — attend the NF every alternate Tuesday. We also are privileged to have our Pastor Navin and his family joining our fellowship in almost all our meetings in bringing God's word. The worship starts with hymns, planned by Mary Rosa Navin, who leads the

members of the fellowship in song of praise and worship. We meet in the home of Lysa and Johnson.

This fellowship has given us opportunities to not only listen to the word of God but also to bring His word to the fellowship. I encourage everyone to join the fellowship groups near your home. It will surely bring change in your life as you move closer to understanding God.

Finally, as the Bible in Matthew 18:20 beautifully says, where two or three gather in my name there is my presence. Praise the Lord Jesus Christ.

*- Prof. Navin Vijay Orlando*



## Jal Vayu Vihar

**Meeting Days:** 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of every month

**Time:** Evening 6.00 pm onwards for about an hour

**Place:** Dr. Eva Bell's residence

**Participants:** Around 10



At the Hennur and JVV NFs, at the beginning we invoke Holy Spirit to guide us in the Scripture portion being studied. We sing choruses or hymns. Members come prepared with their thoughts on the important aspects of the prescribed Scripture portion and its relevant questions circulated

beforehand which we discuss and try to understand with the help of the Holy Spirit. Finally, we pray for various needs of members, our church and other prevailing circumstances and disperse with rejuvenating fellowship delight

– *Rajesh Christian*

## Hennur



**Meeting Days:** 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of every month

**Time:** Evening 6.00 pm onwards for about an hour

**Place:** Rajesh Christian's residence

**Participants:** Around 8

“Rise in the presence of the aged and honor the elderly face-to-face.  
Fear your God. I am the LORD.” – *Leviticus 19:32*



# Building God's House

## PulseBeat

Once in two years, between August and October, missionaries from the Church of England and the Diocese of Gloucester visit Karnataka Central Diocese. The aim is to strengthen the relationship with the Churches. The Diocese of Gloucester the Church of England sends young people for a month to visit the Karnataka Central Diocese for a first-hand experience of the mission fields.

Last year in August 2018, a team of young people who visited the KCD, learned about urban and rural churches, education, children's and health ministries of the diocese. They visited St. John's Church and School and learnt of the rich missionary heritage that we maintain. The team appreciated the projects of the church, especially Stephen's Home and the hostel. Rev. G. Wilson on behalf of the church acknowledged the coordination of the visit by the Diocesan Liaison Officer, Rev. Christy Gnanadas and team.



Our Church continues to extend help and support to the needy churches in KCD

**Christ the King Church, Jalahalli**, which is 35 years old, was supported by us in completing their newly constructed Church building. The Presbyterian in Charge, Rev. Christy Rajkumar, PC members, and the Congregation of Christ the King Church, Jalahalli, express their immense gratitude for the help rendered by St. John's.



## Keep focussed

This Easter I plan to keep focussed on what I want to do. My focus is to keep writing and catch up on my writing work for the TAFTEE course, the Pentateuch or first five books of the Bible. So I first attempted a short project, which gave me the confidence to finish my main project of catching up on my course work for TAFTEE, thanks to my tutor Dr. S.C. Peter Pothan.

– Nita Isaac





The **Kalnayakanahalli Church**, which belongs to CSI Gaurubidanur Pastorate, was supported by our Church in constructing the church building. The entire expense was raised by our Church. On August 1, 2018, the newly constructed church building was dedicated by Bishop, Rt. Rev. Dr. P.K. Samuel. It was attended by Rev. G. Wilson and members of the PC and the congregation. The Kalnayakanahalli congregation gratefully acknowledged the support of our Church in establishing the congregation by providing a church building.



## Financial Assistance for Education

Partner with the Church in its efforts to educate under-privileged children studying from standard 1 to 12, and for higher education in polytechnic and degree courses. If you know of children in our Church who need assistance, do ask them to get in touch with the Church office for more information.

There are five financial assistance schemes.

1. St. John's Church Financial Assistance for children studying from standard 1 to 12, and for higher education in polytechnic and degree courses. You can contribute to the Education Fund or be a sponsor of a child.
2. Sumanam Scholarship for children studying in St. John's High School.
3. The Barbara Hereford Higher Education Scholarship.
4. Sarah Mathew Scholarship for the Girl Child.
5. Indira Vidyadayini James Memorial Scholarship.

## Charity begins at home

*"Tis not the beggarman, perched by the kerb,  
Whose lot is so heavy and hard,  
But sometimes 'tis those nearest, who can't be heard,  
Who are from tranquillity barred.  
We stretch out our hand to the vagabond child  
For large almsgivings open our door,  
Does Charity, feel good with self-righteous pride  
But these nearest to us- we ignore!  
They may not be lacking material gains  
As they go about their daily tasks,  
More important, the mind with unbearable pain  
May be worn; a kind word - all they ask!  
A hand stretched in friendship  
A listening ear, a soft word of comfort and cheer  
Could make all the difference  
Help them to bear their troubles with courage, not fear.  
'Tis no use giving alms, once the person is gone,  
Floral tributes that cannot be seen,  
Show Love, Care and Sympathy, while they are around,  
Not regret for all what might have been!*

**Sent by Beatrice Harding**



# Christmas 2018

PulseBeat

Asha Nivas







## Stephen's Home & Boys' Hostel









## Sunday School















## Parish Evening











# How would Jesus respond in this distracted world!

Theme: Thoughts

Let's be real. It can be challenging to walk day-by-day with Jesus. I've tried hard to stay in-step with Jesus. I promised myself that "this time I'll do it." But something always ends up distracting me. Luke 10:40 ESV "But Martha was distracted..."

**Distracted.** The original Greek word in this verse is perispao - *"to be overly occupied about a thing; to be drawn away."*

When Jesus met Martha that day she was "distracted." We've all been like this, haven't we? There are many things in our lives that can be distracting:

- Books
- Friends
- Music
- Movies
- Smartphones
- Social Media
- Hobbies

There are so many more that I know you could add to this list. So many things in this world fight for our attention... and then allow them to take too much of our time..and attention.. we lose our focus. ***If we are overly preoccupied with other things our ears will not hear Jesus' call to walk with Him.*** The answer may necessarily be to cut these distractions out entirely.

Below, I have listed 3 other common distractions that can interfere with your walk with Jesus.

## Everyday worries

Psychology has taught us that the three basic needs of every human being are food, water, and shelter. It's funny how we add many more to our list in our day and age, like a vehicle, smartphones/tablets, a partner worth one's social status, a decent paying job, and more. You may ask how these basic needs could possibly come in the way of our relationship with Jesus. How could these needs deter our walk with Him? But you know, as well as I do, we can give them our undivided attention. Jesus was very clear when it came to some of these things.

Mathew 6:25- 30 ESV — "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? <sup>26</sup> Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?<sup>27</sup> And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? <sup>28</sup> And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin,<sup>29</sup> yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. <sup>30</sup> But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?"

## Hectic routines and commitments

What happens to most of us in the pursuit to meet the basic needs in life is that we get extremely caught up either with studies, work, or the perfect career/business pursuit. Then, time becomes a very costly commodity for us. Consequently, we tend to not have time for prayer, bible study, or even church. That's why the bible advises us:

Ephesians 5:16 ESV *"...making the best use of the time, because the days are evil."*

We shouldn't blame a lack of time as an excuse for our relaxed walk with Jesus. Make the most of your time in the office, at home, while travelling, and in everything you do. Create a margin in your life and pursue a relationship with Jesus.

## Ourselves

Ourselves. Us. The last one on the list of distractions, and possibly the most likely to distract us. ***We are, by nature, sinful, and if we live by our sinful nature, we will not get close to Jesus.*** No matter what you do, there will be a constant battle between spirit and flesh.

Romans 7:15-20 ESV

<sup>15</sup>*For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.* <sup>16</sup>*Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is*



good. <sup>17</sup> So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. <sup>18</sup> For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. <sup>19</sup> For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. <sup>20</sup> Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me.

**That is why we need to constantly allow God to search our hearts, and purify it (Psalm 139:23-24).** The first step to overcoming ourselves is being aware. So there you have it. Three common

distractions that can derail your walk with Jesus. It is a constant struggle to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, and to not become distracted by the passing concerns and things of this world. But if you are aware of what can, and does, interfere with your walk with Him, with His help you can begin the necessary actions to prevent them. "Remember, seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you as well" (Mathew 6:33)

Question: What would you add to this list?

*Excerpts from an article from the Internet*

# Jesus in Blue Jeans

**Author: Laurie Beth Jones**

## PulseReview

Laurie Beth Jones in the last of her trilogy, *Jesus in blue Jeans*, the first two being, *Jesus CEO* and *The Path*, writes of success and joy in everyday practical life.

The four strengths or qualities of Jesus that we could emulate according to her are Poise, Perspective, Passion and Power.

### Poise

Poise is a red winged blackbird balancing ever so lightly on a reed by the river. The bird rests effortlessly, ready to take flight at a moment's notice, scanning the sky for its next destination-ever mindful of its wings.

The author talks of Jesus as a brilliant communicator and excellent at using similes and metaphors to delight, entertain, educate and communicate truth to others.

Poise is to have the power to release something however dear to us knowing it is for the larger good.

### Perspective

To see the world as Jesus sees it. To have perspective is not to be bound, but to have the ability to move forward. Perspective is all about learning the right lesson from an experience. Jesus was consistent in taking the message of love forward.

Perspective is about recognizing true value.

### Passion

Jesus demonstrated God's passion towards us. He poured out his life in passionate meaningful encounters with everyone he met. He held nothing back.

It is said that memory is the only paradise from which we cannot be driven. On the evening of Jesus' last Passover on earth He chose to make it memorable. Jesus was a fragrance poured out. Our thoughts, words and deeds become a fragrance.

To be passionate is to make sure that we do not hold back our life force, and that we bless others by bearing fruit.

### Power

Jesus came to give us transformative power, to teach us how to experience it ourselves, and to share it with others.

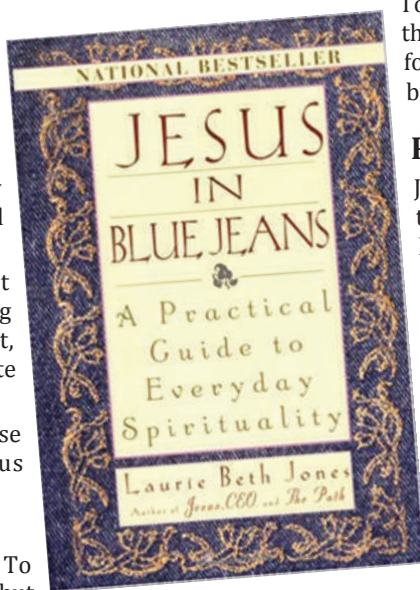
Jesus also had saturation knowledge. This means that he had heart knowledge of every situation. In other words, not to look "at" your problem, look out at the world from inside it.

Powerful people's jobs are to open the gate to new possibilities. Jesus is our gate to all the blessings from heaven. We must take up the fishermen's nets and the empty buckets and the servants wash cloths. It is only the powerful who can be kind. Powerful people do not live the question but live the answer as Jesus did.

Power is to gift your valuable presence to those who are suffering or are in need of any help.

Jesus knocks at the door of our heart and invites us to live a life with Him as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

*Review by Mary Paul*





# All we need is love

Jonathan Joseph Wesley

Theme: Thoughts

We live in a world that is so fast paced, so hectic that we often tell ourselves "I wish I had more time!" So it's not surprising that in spite of our best intentions we get pulled into a life that sometimes fails to look at the world around us, a world that our God exhorts us to touch and make a difference in.

One fine Sunday morning, the Convener of Asha Nivas walked towards me and said ... I've nominated you as a volunteer at Asha Nivas, which is a self-supporting home for the aged, run by St. John's Church. I have always known that it is not just the aged, but that each and everyone one of us needs people who care. It was not that complicated, it only required me to be able to provide our residents the little touches that would bring joy, music and shared laughter to their lives.

I was reminded of a verse in Isaiah 46:4: "even to your old age I am He, and to gray hairs I will carry you. I have made, and I will bear; I will carry and will save.." I realized I had a duty to be part of a team that could be God's instrument in fulfilling this promise in the lives of our Asha Nivas residents. I quickly accepted, and offered myself as a volunteer.

For us as a team at Asha Nivas, I see our mission as a commitment to relieving social isolation and loneliness among the elderly through friendship and companionship. The key value that drives this mission for me is best put in the words of a

Frenchman Armand Marquiset, who founded a large charity to take care of elderly people; it is driven by the realization of *"The unique and irreplaceable worth of each human being and the dignity of each man and woman, whatever their origin, their beliefs, their situation and their physical, psychological or social state."*

I believe that we as members of St John's Church should through collective action:

1. Be a friend to older people who feel lonely and socially isolated.
2. Promote respect for each person's dignity by increasing their confidence and self esteem.
3. Foster independence and help our older friends to feel part of their community.
4. Improve the services provided for the older person by highlighting the difficulties they face.
5. Celebrate the life of the older person and increase awareness of the important contribution they have to offer.
6. Provide links where friendships develop between our older members and younger volunteers.

Therefore, in spite of the immensely distracting world we live in, I am sure we will all do our part to bring joy, music and laughter into the lives of our elderly, if we could only remind ourselves that - *all we need to give is love!*

## His banner over me is love

Years of loving togetherness, companionship  
and all things longed for,  
comes to a grinding halt,  
death defies everything we have held dear and creates a vacuum.  
Yet there is a greater power in the love that knows no limits,  
a love that says I am to die for,  
I am beloved, precious and cared for in completeness.  
A love like no other, without comparison and unrelenting.  
A covenant sealed by blood and forgiveness.  
A love that will never leave me.  
I accept now to live in His everlasting love  
and hide all my sorrow in His bosom so warm,  
my beloved is mine and I am his and His banner over me is love.  
I owe my life to my Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ alone



- Joan Umashankar



# Lord deliver me from distractions

Esther Arul



Theme: Thoughts

Right from the time God created Adam and Eve, distractions prevailed in various forms. Present day electronic devices are the greatest distraction which occupies our time

Distractions shift our attention from something of greater importance to something of lesser importance.

Our basic problem and dangerous problem is that distractions are distracting us from God.

The Bible calls it idolatry. These distractions affect our relationships and responsibilities. The devil

captures us because of our sins and selfish nature. But not all our distraction problems are due to our resident evil. Some are simply a result of the futility infecting creation (Romans 8-20-23). This futility can infect our biology as well as our environment. Environmental facts like poor nutrition, unhealthy family systems, cultural/technological forces (such as constant stream of media) can also affect our ability to focus.

Only God can heal us from this sickness of distraction through a heart revealer, urging us by His grace into greater levels of humble faith and self-control.

## The power of the risen Christ

Janet Roberts



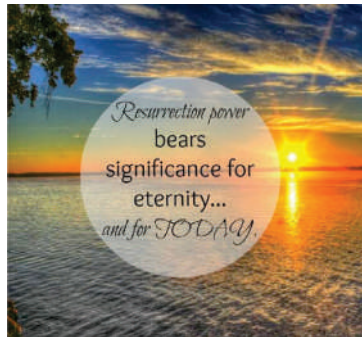
Theme: Thoughts

When Mary Magdalene and other women went to the tomb the day after the Sabbath to anoint the body of Jesus with spices they prepared, the angel told Mary Magdalene "He is not here but is risen" [Luke:24:6]

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is of central importance to the Christian faith. Paul the apostle declared "And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is futile." [I Corinth 15:14] Paul's proof of the resurrection is the appearance of Jesus Christ to others and himself.

The Resurrection is a demonstration of God's power that should evoke worship. Even Mary Magdalene and the disciples when they met the Risen Christ, they worshipped Him. Through His death, burial and resurrection, He paid completely for our sin.

At one time Paul had confidence in the flesh. He was confident that he could attain eternal life on the basis



of his circumcision, that he was an Israelite of the tribe of Benjamin and his position as a Pharisee. However the things that were once gain to him, he would count as loss for Christ – The important thing for Paul is to know the power of Christ' resurrection and ultimately to attain the resurrection of the dead. This world has many evil distractions and when we face trouble and challenges of life we

should never panic. If we make our risen Christ our stronghold and take refuge in Him, He will be faithful to protect and rescue us through any trouble, however insurmountable it seems. NOTHING IS A DIFFICULT TASK FOR THE LORD. So let our focus and trust be on the Risen Lord whose spirit which dwells in us will guide us, instruct us, direct us to the way of righteousness and peace. He is an awesome God who holds our future. Glory be to Him!

# O Jesus, what would you do!

Esther Sunil Ellis



Theme: Thoughts

## Look at the world

The work place and the home – Hatred, fighting, turmoil in all degrees.

The world – People hurting each other. In the name of peace, there is war; in the name of religion, there is war; in the name of environmental protection, there is war. People fighting over sharing of water, land, etc.

WHAT WOULD JESUS DO? He would weep.

## Look at the work place

Hunger for power and position, seeking prominence is everywhere, be it secular or religious. Accountability is a forgotten word, so are integrity, honesty, morality - they have all lost their meaning and have taken a back-seat. There is abuse of every kind, rich getting richer, the poor, always suffering, forgotten morals, justice a far-fetched dream, "me-too" surfacing more and on the rise.

WHAT WOULD JESUS DO? He would weep.

## Look at the home - where everything, good or bad originates

Between spouses, there is ill-treatment, abuse, insecurity, blame-game, nagging, high levels of stress, irritability. Precious family time stolen by the idiot box. For children of all ages – independence at an all-time high, correction is old-fashioned and it's the "generation gap". It's the "I-know-it-all" generation. T.V, mobile (WhatsApp in particular), Laptop (fb), have replaced books and sound advice from elders. Whoever thought gaming would claim lives. So called spiritual gurus come up with

Think

He chose the nails.

He chose to become one of us.

Jesus swapped eternity for calendars.

Jesus gave up being a spirit to live in a body.

Jesus became sin for us.

The crown of thorns could have been made - and should have been worn by every one of us.

But it was not, thanks to the greatest gift of all.

God did it for us, just for us,

Because he loves us.

motivational talks and 'gyan' on living. Church and prayer meetings are not needed anymore. It's all there at the click of a button, with a variety of religious entertainment, so why go to church when that will put you to sleep.

WHAT WOULD JESUS DO? He would weep.

## O Jesus, what would you do? Isn't the list endless!

My Lord, if I could cry looking at all this, how much more would you, The One who created man to have a relationship with, is now ignored. The words from the cross, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do" echoes louder now than ever before.

Let us, as the body of Christ, do our bit to change. It starts with us, at the church, at our workplaces, and most importantly, our homes. Let's make it a habit to pray without ceasing. Time is running out, we're at the eleventh hour. We shall arise and change. Hum hongekamyaab, aajhe (we will be successful today).

Let Jesus smile again...

## Relationships



We encounter God's presence in acts of Justice, Compassion and in Loving Relationships. When our Lord asked Cain, "Where is your brother," he replied in anger, "I don't know, am I my brother's keeper?" (Genesis 4:9)

In our dealing with Relationships, especially with the elderly members in homes and in our families, God wants us to have a loving relationship with them, and to take on the responsibility of taking care of them.

– Beatrice Harding





# Apple or God?

**Prof. Navin Vijay Orlando**

**Theme: Thoughts**

Man is becoming conditioned to distractions and it's harming our ability to listen and think carefully, to be still, to pray and to meditate on God's word. This is a spiritual danger, an evil from which we need God's deliverance.

There are two incidents from the Bible worth studying. The first one is from Genesis 3, man is not only tempted but is also distracted. His focus shifts from God to the apple. This happened to Adam and Eve. We also in our lives face various apples coming into our life and distracting us from the focus on God.

The second incident is from Luke 10:41-42. Martha invites Lord Jesus Christ to her home. The scene clearly explains how Martha gets distracted in the household work especially in the kitchen, cooking food while Mary her sister sits at the feet of the Lord. Due to this Martha lost her prime focus; her focus was shifted from God to her kitchen, forgetting the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ at her home. Aren't we also facing the same situation, ignoring the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ at our homes and getting distracted by something less worthy.

Every distraction can be seen as an idol disturbing our focus on God. Let's hold firmly to Romans 8:28 which can truly free us from idolatry and help us to

grow in self control so that we may not lose focus on the Lord Jesus Christ.

An apple or God, the choice is ours; if you choose God, then Psalm 27:4 is yours. I would like to end with a small prayer, as prayer is what the Lord wants us to do in this world filled with distractions.

Prayer: whatever it takes, Lord, increase my resolve to pursue only what You call me to do and deliver me from the fragmenting effect of fruitless distractions. Amen



<http://freetofindtruth.blogspot.com/2016/04/32-50-146-america-apple-snake.html?m=1>: Picture Source

*"Focus on  
Jesus  
despite the  
distractions of  
the world."*

*Drawing by  
Vinita Samuel*



# Firewall your family with Godliness



Dr. Eva Bell

Theme: Thoughts

Families are building blocks of society, built on the scaffold of stable marriages. Unfortunately today, marriages even among Christians are on shaky ground. A judge of the High Court recently predicted that marriage will be totally abolished within 10-15 years, because the tolerance level of human beings has hit rock bottom.

Unstable marriages are the reasons for disintegration of families. Home is only a place to eat and sleep. Disharmony among parents breeds insecurity in children. With no role models to follow, children succumb to the coarse, materialistic, selfish and sensuous atmosphere of present society. Individualism has destroyed family unity. Today the threat to the nation from broken homes is considered more harmful than the threat of war.

What would Jesus expect us to do in such a sad state of affairs? He would want us to bring back the sanctity and relevance of marriage. Spiritual guidance should come from the church. Premarital Counselling should be insisted upon before any

couple can be joined in matrimony. Marriage is not just to make a couple happy but must also make them holy. It calls for a greater degree of integrity and commitment than one would put into a career. It requires resilience, patience and tolerance. The Lord Jesus Christ should be the third binding strand in the cord of matrimony. That is why the Bible cautions, "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers."

When the presence of God permeates your home, the family is likely to stay united. There should be no embarrassment in discussing God with children. Values like kindness, frankness, honesty and loyalty must be passed on to our children. Family prayers and close links with the church will help retain values. In this age of moral dishonesty with its secularized view of sex, parents should be aware of the temptations that face children. Therefore there should be free communication between children and parents on prevalent issues. Children need boundaries. Creative parenting will help them mature faster and imbibe moral values. This will prevent disintegration of the family.

## Christian fortitude

*Oh! Pain that will not let me go  
Oh! Pain that will not let me go,  
I have had enough of you, you know  
But the Lord does not think so,  
So I have to carry on with Christian fortitude  
And strengthen my enduring power as every Christian should.  
I know you cannot relent  
Because you are heaven sent  
But this won't go on long, I know,  
Because the Lord is very compassionate and He loves me so.  
So, one day soon, He will gently draw me to His side  
And say in the tenderest of tones,  
"My child, you have had enough of this,  
Now go and live your life in pain-free, blessed bliss".*



by Dorothy Fowler



# Distracted from distraction by distraction

Bala Jeyasingh



Theme: Thoughts

The poet and critic T.S Eliot (1899-1965) in his extended poem, *Four Quartets*, described modern man as “distracted from distraction by distraction” perfectly capturing the triviality of 20<sup>th</sup> century life styles. I wonder what he would have said about our 21<sup>st</sup> century with its countless attractive distractions offered by digital technology such as the internet, social media, 24 hour news channels, artificial intelligence and robots, not to mention the tempting adverts trumpeting the allure of wealth, information, sex, status etc? Would Eliot have considered these distracting or indeed depraved? We can't be sure. However, what is certain is that these 21<sup>st</sup> century distractions have the power to enslave people regardless of age, health or financial status.

I read that India tops the list in the use of mobile phones. I very rarely see anyone without their mobile phone either glued to their ear or tucked safely into the palm of their hand ready for constant reference! The argument is, of course, that life has become so much easier and economic, energy wise, due to such small and bigger machines.' Knowledge and information on anything under the sun is available at the click of a mouse. We are all Google experts! What we forget is that energy and time thus saved is not put to good use but often used up in other distractions and even at times in destructions. The world is just waking up to the psychological, mental, social and physical damage caused by the over use of digital devices.

Did God create humans for an easy, rapid and pleasure seeking life? The Bible says that God created man in His image to have a relationship with Him and to have a caring relationship with other humans and Nature. “Seek and find Him” says the Bible so that you may be slowly transformed into the likeness of Jesus which means a life of holiness, love and witness. Any seeking and finding needs time and determination. Time is the one thing that cannot be bought or brought back and has to be used in the

best possible way. Time, for a Christian, is first and foremost to be used to develop a strong relationship with this transcendent and immanent God who, in turn, will show who you really are in His sight and will certainly direct you to use your time beneficially – time for one's work, family, leisure, bodily and mental care as well as time to know and help others and to witness to your Christian faith. God did not create humans to be “one” in the world but to be humane.

“No man is an island, entire of itself” as the poet John Donne puts it.

Interaction with others educates you first hand – at times better than videos and books. One learns valuable lessons through active experience. When I first arrived in the city I had to use the bus for travel and queue up for various things jostling with the crowd. It gave me a valuable and useful insight into the hard life of the ordinary person. Recently I went to my local bank for a standard transaction. The kind staff, noticing my age, suggested that I may find it easier to do my banking online thus saving me time and trouble. “But my laptop is cold and won't smile at me or greet me warmly like you do!” I replied. They burst into happy applause and requested that I keep coming to the bank in person! A beautiful friendship was built from that moment.

I urge fellow Christians, whether in groups or as individuals, to give time to others specially to those who they may not regard as equals or who belong to a different church. We should strive to create Christian programmes that are an attractive alternative to the digital distractions currently on offer to the young and to the old. The late, celebrated and physically disabled scientist, Professor Stephen Hawking warned against the danger of excessive trust in technology (despite the fact that his life depended on various machines) where robots might make humans redundant. May God protect us from that ever becoming so. Amen.

# Ferdinand Kittel – The Kannada Saint

Vinita Samuel

## PulseInspire

Reverend Ferdinand Kittel was born on 7<sup>th</sup> April 1832 in Resterhafe, Germany to Gottfried Christian Kittel and Helen Hubert. Kittel was a priest and an Indologist who joined the Basel Mission as a priest in South India. Kittel was only 21 when he arrived at Mangalore to spread Christianity among the local people in Karnataka. He worked primarily in Mangalore, Madikeri and Dharwad in the state of Karnataka. The Reverend is fondly known as the “Kannada Saint” because of his studies of the Kannada language and for producing the first Kannada-English dictionary of about 70,000 words.



*The young Ferdinand Kittel in India*

## Life and mission work in India

German missionaries, with knowledge of the Bible and the life of Christ, entered India to propagate the religion against all odds. Rev Ferdinand Kittel was one of them and arrived in India in 1853. Noticing the dearth of literature on religion in the local language, Kittel decided to learn Kannada. As a missionary, he endeavoured to follow Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians and “become as an Indian unto the Indians”. So, he undertook exhaustive studies to learn the local language, customs and music. Kittel primarily lived in Mangalore, but travelled the length and breadth of Karnataka for more than two decades. After a stint in India, Kittel returned to Germany, but visited India again in his fifties to complete his Kannada dictionary. Kittel was married to fellow missionary Pauline Eyth, who

hailed from Tübingen, Germany. The couple had two sons. After Pauline's untimely death in 1864, Kittel married her younger sister Wilhelmine Julie, with whom he had two sons and two daughters.

## The first Kannada dictionary

Rev. Kittel is most famous for producing the first ever Kannada-English dictionary of about 70,000 words in 1894. The Kannada dictionary is indeed the most monumental work of Kittel. The officials of the Basel Mission were very appreciative of Kittel's scholarship and the task of preparing a dictionary for Kannada was entrusted to him. The work began in the year 1872 and the publication of the dictionary took place in 1894, after twenty-two years of hard labor. Capable native scholars such as Vastrada Shivalingaiah, M.C. Srinivasacharya and Shivarama Bharadhwaj assisted Kittel in this difficult task.

This dictionary is a veritable and authentic source of knowledge even to this day and very few Indian languages can boast of such a comparable work. The dictionary has many scientific and unique features. Kittel has given many illustrations for almost every word from the spoken varieties of the language as well as many literary texts (both ancient and modern). The proverbs and idioms given by him are really charming. The original words are given with an appropriate English translation and have many shades of meaning. Kittel's awareness of the fact that Kannada was a Dravidian language has made his deductions and conclusions very objective and correct.

The Reverend travelled the length and breadth of Karnataka for more than two decades trying to collect words for the dictionary. With 70,000 words on 1,752 pages it was, in the true sense, a labor of love. The production of the first ever Kannada-English dictionary, for which he invested 24 years



To be aware of God's constant presence, by my side, guiding me to take one day at a time, one thing at a time and one step at a time... this is what helps me to cope in this distracted world.

– Linda Rao



of his life, brought him world fame. His hard work on the dictionary won him an honorary doctorate degree in 1896, from the Tübingen University in Germany.

## Writing literature in Kannada

Apart from the dictionary, Kittel wrote several pieces of literature in Kannada. He was an accomplished poet and composed numerous Kannada poems. Kittel penned 'A Grammar of the Kannada Language'. In 1862, he published his poetical Kannada work 'Kathamale' which presented the life of Jesus Christ in the form of Indian musical metre style. He also translated Nagavarma's work on Kannada prosody. Another accomplishment was the "Mangalooru Samachara", the first Kannada newspaper to be published in Karnataka. Kittel wrote articles in Kannada daily for the paper.

Kittel wrote 'Paramatmana Jnana' in 1863, which included four chapters dealing with Hindu rituals, nature and God. Another literary work was 'Yesukristhana Shramacharitre' written in 1865 which deals with incidents prior to the crucifixion of the Christ. In 1870, he brought out 'Christ Sabhayatre', a guide for Protestant Christians. He published some textbooks along with 'Karnataka Kavyamale' (1874) and Kannada Panchatantra (1876).

The Reverend edited 'Shabdamani Darpana' of Keshiraja and named it the 'Jewel Mirror of Grammar' in 1872 and also edited 'Chandombudhi' a prosody of Nagavarma in 1875 and called it 'Kannada Chandassu'. He also composed Kannada poems on the life and teachings of Christ and translated carols into Kannada.

## Kittel's 112-year-old Kannada dictionary is online

On October 18<sup>th</sup> 2018, nearly 112 years after the Kannada lexicon was published by Reverend Kittel, the dictionary was uploaded on the Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL) website. Prof. RVS Sundaram, the chief guest at CIIL said that Kittel's Kannada dictionary is unique among lexicons, as he had collected over 70,000 words in Kannada and explained their meaning in English. He explained that the salient aspect of the dictionary is that Kittel has also provided synonyms for words in other languages. *"It is an important work in the Kannada language, unsurpassed till date"* believes Settar a historian, who owns an original copy of Kittel's magnum opus. *"Kittel not only included literary terminology but also commonplace words and everyday sayings that he picked up during his travels*



*The statue of Kittel at the intersection of M.G. Road and Residency Road. This statue is Karnataka's tribute to a missionary and lexicographer whose contribution to the Kannada language remains monumental till date.*

*in Karnataka. Illustrating words with examples of folk traditions is unique to his work," said Settar.*

## Leaving a lasting legacy in Karnataka

The Reverend breathed his last on December 18, 1903 in Tübingen. Kittel is widely recognised in Karnataka and he is credited with shaping the Kannada language and the regional identity of its speakers. "What made him different from other missionaries is that he spent a lot of time among the local people understanding their culture and way of life," says historian Settar.

Today, Kittel is almost forgotten in his home country of Germany, but widely recognized in Karnataka. Many educational institutions in Karnataka have been named after him. A statue of the reverend proudly stands at the end of Mahatma Gandhi road in the city of Bangalore. Another statue can be found in Dharwad. Austin Town, a place in Bangalore was renamed "F Kittel Nagar" to honour him. Kittel is fondly remembered as "The Kannada Saint" in Karnataka.

# Is it easy to forgive?

We reproduce this testimony, written by Gladys Staines

## PulseInspire

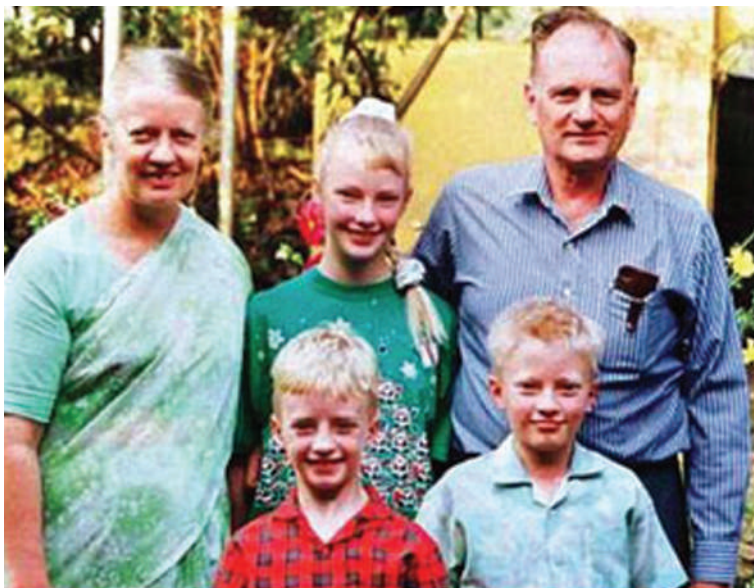
### Singing through the difficult moments

At the age of 16... I went to a school camp where we learnt the song "I know who holds the future and He guides me with His hand. With God things don't just happen, everything by Him is planned" This was the beginning of my placing problems in His hands. Later I learnt the song "Because He lives I can face tomorrow, because He lives all fear is gone, Because I know He holds the future and life is worth the living just because He Lives."

### Coming to India

As I left Australia, knowing that God had called me to be His servant overseas, I knew that no matter what happened, He would be with me. During my preparation time, I recall once making a public statement: "I don't know what the future holds, but I know who holds the future. I also remember another time thinking about my future, including all the scary things; but God spoke to me very clearly, "The safest place to be in is the will of God." I have seen it proved over the years.

India was for me a new country with a different language, culture, custom, and food, and it was not an easy experience. At times, it was extremely challenging, but having the assurance that this was where God wanted me, helped me through in those early days. Through different experiences, I have learned to trust Him - like, when finances were low, we prayed. Before my marriage to Graham, I had come to India with a team of three foreign girls. We were on our own, driving a van, and we got into a traffic block at an interstate border crossing - some of you might know the long line ups at the toll booths. We prayed, 'God, please put your angels around us to protect us from any danger.' We had only helpful people who came near our van and guided us through the jammed traffic. In retrospect, that was a



marvellous experience. We knew then that God was with us and was real.

God's word assures us, "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5). He has not forgotten us, though we may, at times, feel like He has. Though we know all of these things in our mind, yet when the testing comes, we feel as though the world around us is collapsing. On 23rd January 1999, I got the news that my husband Graham and two sons Philip, 10, and Timothy, 6, had been killed in Manoharpur village in Keonjhar district, Orissa. It was a terrible feeling.

### Forgive one another

I used to pray for China and had read earlier in some magazines that one of the reasons that the Church in China has grown was because the Christians who were persecuted had forgiven those who persecuted them.

During the Christmas of 1998 many churches in Gujarat were burned and the Christians went through a lot of terror and anxiety. I remember making the statement to my staff just before Graham went to the camp, that Christians must learn to forgive. Little did I know then that something like this would happen to my family.



A few days before the tragic incident, in one of my daily readings, I had read about Abraham being asked to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice. The question was put, 'If illness or something happened, would I be willing to offer that difficulty to God or would I fight with Him? After a lot of consideration, with a heavy heart I told the Lord that I would be willing. I never dreamt that anything like this would happen.

It is said that it is not our actions that count, but our reactions in a time of difficulty. God enabled me to respond in the way I did. God gave me the words to forgive those who had killed my family members. I knew that it was not an accident. I knew without even knowing the details that this had been a deliberate action.

That is why those who did this needed to be forgiven. Even in those words the healing started to flow into my own life. In Scripture, there are many instances wherein we are asked to forgive. In Ephesians 4.32, at the end of the teaching on the way we should live are the words, "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

If we are unwilling to forgive the person who has wronged us in any way, large or small, then we allow bitterness to come into our relationships and friendships, and we are the ones most affected. Forgiveness does not mean that we are free of the consequences of what has happened. Forgiving the murderers of my husband and sons has not brought my family back, but that action has given me peace in the midst of sorrow. **It does not mean that the murderers should not face the consequences of their actions - we will always face the consequences of our actions.**

## Jesus, the glory of my life

In retrospect, as I look back over the five years I wonder how I ever coped during the first year, let alone later. During the first year, I had hundreds of people who came to visit me, to give condolences as well as to interview me, I found that God enabled me to meet each person and I, in turn, was often able to encourage those who came to encourage me. I was able to share the hope that I have in Jesus Christ.

I want Jesus to be given the glory in my life - that through my life and testimony Jesus can be seen. For a stone to let the light shine through, it needs to be highly polished. There is another song that I want to share with you, I learnt it 17 years ago, "Jesus take me as I am, I can come no other way, Take me deeper into you, Make my flesh life melt away. Make me as a precious stone, crystal clear, and finely honed, Life of Jesus shining through, giving glory back to you."

## God is in control

As I go through life, the poem by Annie Johnson Flint encourages me a lot.

*He giveth more grace when the burdens grow greater,  
He sendeth more strength when the labours increase,  
To added affliction, He addeth His mercy,  
To multiplied trials His multiplied peace.  
When we have exhausted our store of endurance,  
When strength has declined ere the day is half done,  
When we reach the end of our hoarded resources,  
Our Father's full giving is only begun.  
His love has no limit, His grace has no measure,  
His power no boundary known unto men,  
For out of His infinite riches in Jesus  
He giveth and giveth and giveth again*

Many a time when I have been, humanly speaking, at the end of my resources, I have found that God in His grace has supplied what I needed - strength for the next moment, the next decision, or the next meeting.

II Corinthians 12:9 says "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness . . ."

At times, when all around seems tough and the pain inside is so deep (as I think of my family), yet still there is a secure reassurance that God is in control. I know that one day I am going to meet Graham, Philip, and Timothy again, in heaven, because He has promised that He will come back again, and that He has gone to prepare a place for us (John 14:3). Presently they are with Jesus. What a hope we have! They have not just died and are lost, they are rejoicing in the very Presence of God Himself.

Let me share with you something that still cheers me. When He was on earth Jesus went hungry and thirsty. He was tempted and He knew sorrow. Jesus knows what we go through. Last year, Esther and I needed a visa to travel to a neighbouring country. We had a time frame in which it needed to be done. It looked impossible, but at the last moment it worked out wonderfully. We knew that God was in control.

This week again, we were to travel on a train; we had an unconfirmed ticket for the AC chair car, but were told to board the train anyway. There was not one seat available, yet through this inconvenience, I was able to talk to people and ended up making friends with many people and was even offered a seat. I still marvel at that. At times, I have felt as though I was walking through the jungle and having to cut a path as I went. Yet, Jesus was with me.

## Jesus is alive

He hears our prayers; He is with us day after day in the large and small things. Because He (Jesus) lives I CAN face tomorrow and so can you.

# Reducing the carbon footprint

Dr. Peter S.C. Pothan

## PulseInspire

The major ecological problem today is the high carbon emission levels in modern developing and developed countries. This is due to the high emissions of carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide, which because of the overuse of carbon-heavy fuels (coal, petroleum, etc.) leads to both air pollution and climate change. Global warming will impact sea levels and rain patterns and so will eventually affect our agriculture, food supplies and water resources. The pressure worldwide is to set emission targets for all countries.

Following the Rio World Summit on Ecology, the developed nations met in Kyoto, located in the Kansai region of Japan, to fix carbon emission targets so as to control global warming. Following the Kyoto agreement, developing countries like India, China, Brazil and Russia are also under pressure to reduce carbon emissions. This was one of the hot discussions at the Copenhagen Conference in 2009. The developing countries argued that the problem was caused by the developed nations who should take responsibility for it and that US and other developed countries should first take emission cuts and pay for those in developing countries.

However as Nandan Nilekani, Indian entrepreneur, bureaucrat and politician, points out: Climate after all is mobile, and so are its problems, and India is the afflicted, passive smoker when it comes to emissions the developed world has created over the last century ... our rivers are shrinking and our forests have retreated, leaving behind arid earth on which nothing grows, and the glaciers that feed our rivers are melting. The reality is that no matter who we believe deserves blame for climatic change, or how we try to explain away the crisis with conspiracy theories, our environment has already become an uneasy one. And by ignoring this, we are allowing a crisis to fester. (*Imagining India*, 2008: 426-427).

One effective way of creating a market driven mechanism for environmental costs is by pricing of carbon as suggested by Dr. Nicholas Stern. Thus there will be a credit for control of the carbon generation or a debit on loss due to the destruction of carbon 'sinks' such as forests and water bodies.

This could lead to pollution caps and credit exchanges which could give countries like India bargaining power to negotiate transfer of technology and funding for emission cuts. The rich countries that have used up most of their emission 'reservoir' since 1850, could purchase carbon credits from developing countries in this way. This was one of the matters discussed in the International Copenhagen Conference in December 2009.

## Some ecological solutions

### i. Pursuing Alternative Energy Sources

Traditionally India for electric power generation has used water generation (a problematic source due to the irregular monsoons) and thermal or coal generators. We therefore need to explore alternative energy sources.

### a. Solar Power

It is a pity that this is not taken seriously in India. We need to harvest solar energy for domestic power and heating, for electric generation on a large scale and for solar powered vehicles. Solar powering for traffic lights is just being implemented. All houses should be made to use solar heaters to cut down electric consumption. In fact, the cost of solar generation has fallen considerably in the last ten years.

### b. Wind power

The generation of power by wind through huge windmills is still in the experimental stage in India. It can be seen in the southern part of Tamil Nadu (like Nagercoil) and Kerala where these towers border the large highways. The wind generated energy for electric generation can be stored and given for domestic use and it is cheaper than thermal electric generators that are currently being used, being less than Rs. 5/- per kilowatt-hour (kWh). Considering the soaring domestic prices for traditional energy, this could be an area well worth exploring by different states.

### c. Nuclear power

In spite of its risks, nuclear energy is still a cheaper and respectable alternative source for our cities. Improved safety technologies and



disposal methods have helped to revive it as a part of our energy solution. It has been calculated that we could easily increase the share of nuclear energy in India's energy consumption from 3 percent to approximately 9 percent (Nandan Nilekani, 2008: 464).

**d. Bio-fuels**

Our dependency on hydrocarbon fuels (petroleum based products) can be reduced by the use of bio-fuels. Planting bio-energy crops like jatropha and switch grass that generate bio-fuels can utilize large tracts of wastelands in our central regions. These crops need very little water and fertilizers, are drought resistant, and so perfect for growing in the arid lands of the northern states. Nandan Nilekani suggests that by doing this the BIMARU states (Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh) that missed the Green Revolution, could find a source of new economic renaissance along with the wind and solar projects, which are suitable for these arid areas. He points out that with seven million hectares of land across this central region, we can realise a potential biofuel production of seven million tonnes, which is more than 5% of India's total energy needs. The large scale production of bio-energy crops can also cater to the surging market for bio-fuels. (Nandan Nilekani, 2008: 468).

**e. Water harvesting**

Water is one of our most precious resources and yet so much of it is polluted in India as we have seen earlier. Rain water is usually a cause for floods during the monsoons and then it flows to our rivers, to the sea, and we have continual droughts in summer. Water harvesting in small or big ways can be a great help in the urban areas. It can help to recharge the ground water as well as provide water for local use. A case is that of the city of Chennai that had a very bad drought situation in the mid nineties but with water harvesting becoming compulsory the problem no longer exists. In our villages the common lake near which the village temple stands helps to charge 16 wells as per geological studies. We need to create similar lakes in the urban areas or as part of local parks which can carry out a similar purpose.

**ii. Replacing carbon 'sinks':**

With the large scale cutting down of trees in both rural and urban areas, we have lost a big "green" resource that helps to convert the high emissions of carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide into oxygen. Deforestation leads to other problems like soil erosion, lack of rain in the area and

formation of deserts as mentioned earlier. With the growth of our population, forests are being destroyed and trees cut down. As I was travelling to work daily a year ago, I was sad to see the massive ancient banyan trees and other forest giants that border the Hennur Road being cut down to widen the road into a new four track highway to the Bangalore International Airport. We need to reverse this trend.

**a. Planting more trees**

There is a need to plant trees in the urban areas along every road and in open spaces. These should be maintained by the local residents to prevent them being eaten by stray cattle. Where trees have been cut down for road widening, new trees must be planted

**b. Re-forestation**

In the rural areas where trees have been cut down for firewood, new trees should be planted in those hills to give shade, convert carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide into oxygen and prevent soil erosion.

**c. New parks in the cities**

In all new residential areas or layouts in the cities, parks should be established with trees and flowering plants. Small lakes can also be formed there. These will act as the 'green lungs' of that area.

**d. Maintenance of traditional wetlands**

Wetlands are being converted into housing layouts which affects the bio-diversity existing there and also lead to floods during the monsoons as the rain water has nowhere to go. These should be maintained.

## Our response

The question is how can we be involved as individual Christians? I would suggest the following ways:

- Plant trees in our areas and nurture them. Trees planted by the municipality near our houses should be watered and protected from cattle till they are big enough. An urban Church Youth Group in Bangalore who I spoke to on Ecology some years ago were encouraged to plant trees near their new church. The St John's Men's Fellowship has planted trees in the church compound at least twice.
- Start water harvesting in your home and encourage others in your area.
- Use bio-degradable substances and avoid use of plastic bags, etc. This means buying a cloth shopping bag and taking it with you to the market.
- Take care of nature and prevent misuse if possible.
- Join A Rocha, a Christian agency involved in ecological concerns.

May God help us to be good stewards of His creation.

# Easter 'Eggs'tras

Suryakumari Dennison

## Children'sPulse

Resurrection Sunday! Some people feel that the day on which Jesus defeated death should be called that. 'Easter', they say, derives from Eostre, a pagan goddess of spring. Many Easter customs and conventions predate the coming of our Lord. They were later improvised and included in Christian observances.

Find out more about Easter --- truth and tradition. Complete each of these statements by choosing (a) or (b).

Example: A familiar name in the Easter story is (a) Mary (b) Elizabeth. Answer: (a)

1. Easter eggs are also known as (a) Pastoral eggs (b) Paschal eggs.
2. The women went to the tomb of Jesus at (a) dawn (b) dusk.

3. A figure from folklore, bringing eggs and candy, is the Easter (a) bear (b) bunny.
4. The stone blocking the entrance of the tomb was (a) rolled away (b) split in two.
5. The flower commonly associated with Easter is the (a) lilac (b) lily.
6. 'He is not here; he has risen - - -' was announced by an (a) angel (b) apostle.
7. A young bird likely to feature on an Easter card is a (a) chick (b) gosling.
8. On the road to Emmaus, the risen Christ walked with (a) Thaddeus (b) Cleopas.
9. According to an old superstition, on Easter Sunday, the sun (a) darkens (b) dances.
10. After the resurrection, Jesus appeared to the disciples in (a) Galilee (b) Gilead.

Answers: 1.b 2.a 3.b 4.a 5.b 6.a 7.a 8.b 9.b 10.a

## PulseClap

### Congratulations, Dr. C.S. Rajan

**Dr. C. S. Rajan**, Senior Consultant & Academician, Ex-HOD, General Surgery, St. Martha's Hospital Bangalore, has been conferred the ANBAI 'Distinguished NBE Teacher' Award. Dr Rajan received the award in Bangalore, on April 20, 2019, for his contribution to further the cause of medical education quality and excellence in the country. This award is presented to eminent medical teachers/ professionals and institutions / hospitals by National Board of Examinations (NBE), New Delhi, & the Association of National Board Accredited Institutions (ANBAI).



### A mother's joy



It was a proud moment for Rev. Dr. Grace Sathyaraj when her son **Revd Canon Rajkumar Sathyaraj**, met Queen Elizabeth at the Buckingham Palace on February 14, 2019. He attended a reception organised to recognise the contribution of people from the Commonwealth countries to life and society in the UK. He also met Prime Minister Theresa May and the Foreign Secretary, Boris Johnson. There were people from different walks of life including the Ambassadors of the 52 commonwealth nations, Protestant and Roman Catholic clergy. Rev. Sathyaraj is Curate at Seagoe parish or St Gobhan's parish, an ecclesiastical parish of the Church of Ireland that is located in Portadown, Northern Ireland.



# Stephen's Home

## Wings of the Church

I thank God for the opportunity to write for the *Pulse* magazine on the wonderful hands of God, who created us, protects us and provides for us at K.D. Stephen's Home. Here related Bible verses.

- |                                 |              |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. Wounded Hand:                | Luke 24:40   |
| 2. Healing Hand:                | Matthew 8:3  |
| 3. Leading Hand:                | Isaiah 41:13 |
| 4. Washing Hands:               | John 13:5    |
| 5. Writing Hand:                | John 8:36    |
| 6. Exalting Hand:               | 1 Peter 5:6  |
| 7. Right Hand of Righteousness: | Isaiah 41:10 |

- |                             |               |
|-----------------------------|---------------|
| 8. Mighty Hand:             | Deut. 7:8     |
| 9. Moulding Hand:           | Jeremiah 18:6 |
| 10. Blessing Hand:          | Luke 24:50    |
| 11. Raising Hand:           | Luke 7:11     |
| 12. Cleaning Hand:          | John 2:15     |
| 13. Binding Hand:           | Job 15:18     |
|                             | Hosea 6:1     |
| 14. Holding Hand:           | Psalm 139:10  |
| 15. Protecting Hand of God: | Psalm 18:35   |
- I thank God for His mercy on all of us who reside at Stephen's Home.

*Neela Lochini, Resident*



# Teens Fellowship

## Wings of the Church

Our Teens Fellowship is a vibrant, talented and happy bunch of 25 young adults between age of 16 and 19 yrs.

With Christ above all as our prime focus – we are committed to serving God and finding His will in our lives. We know that if we prioritize Him in our lives, we can do all things with his strength (Philippians 4:13).

The last six months have been filled with activities like, the Harvest Festival where we had two game stalls. Besides all the fun, we also raised about Rs. 18,000 for the church.



We supported the church during the Advent season in conducting the second Sunday service, assisting the church service in Bible reading, ushering and passing the peace. James Prajwal helped the Teens choir perform some beautiful numbers.

We are beginning to discover new talents in our group for singing, leadership, communication, games, etc. We are committed to bring out our future leaders in our church.

Appealing to all the members of our church to send your teenage children to join our fellowship.

*Daniel David, Convener*

# Women's Fellowship

## Wings of the Church

By God's immense grace and guidance, the ministry of Women's Fellowship is going strong for which our hearts overflow with gratitude and praise God for His goodness. The Fellowship continues to meet every Tuesday evening at 5:00 pm for Bible Study and outreach work, and its members are encouraged to join in the activities.

For our Christmas celebration, our special guests were residents of an NGO, 'Abhayam' and their Director Albert P.J. who is helping the young people to come out of their various addictions and bring them to the mainstream.

The Parish Evening is one occasion to exhibit our talents in choreography and our members performed a special Rajasthani cultural dance set to a Christmas song.

We started the new year with a Holy Communion service led by Rev. G. Wilson challenging us to go forth in 2019 relying on God's promises. This past term we have had Bible study, Bible quiz, devotions, intercessory prayers, reports from Maharashtra Village Ministry, talk of challenges in mission fields, visit to Stephen's Home and CSI Hospital geriatric ward and a breakfast sale.

The picnic is an outing which we look forward to. So in February we went to Guhanthara Resort, off Kanakapura Road. It was quite an experience for us seniors to trudge through all those artificial caves going up and down the steps. Luckily we had a good hall in which we could conduct the devotions, games and entertainment programs. The younger members

of the group put up a fancy dress show and even enjoyed a rain dance.

On International Women's Day, March 8, a one-day retreat for women of St. John's Church was organized by Women's Fellowship and Angels of Change at Shanthi Sadan.

With the need for prayer all over the world, this year too on March 15, members participated in the World Day of Prayer (WDP) at Divya Shanthi Church. The focus country this year was Slovenia, which provided us the order of service. The theme was 'Come, everything is ready', based on the parable of the great supper (Luke 19:15-20) and the message on it was delivered by Rev. Christopher Samuel.

In February, we attended the workshop for WDP at St. Mark's Church where Rev. Allan Pallana correlated the parable beautifully with the several feasts in the Old Testament. This workshop is organized by Inter-Church Women's Fellowship from CSI, Methodist, Marthoma, Orthodox and Catholic churches. This is a good sign of fostering unity among churches.

Lenten season was observed with piety with Lenten devotions in the church. The offertory collected during the season was used for Easter hampers to 16 needy families. Our members helped at VBS, towards which Rs. 10,000 was contributed from our funds. May God's name be praised through our ministry to the church.

**Niveditha Navin, Vice-President, &  
Bimla Phillips, Former Vice-President**



*Picnic at Guhanthara Resort*





*Residents of 'Abhayam' with their Director Albert P.J.*



*Breakfast Sale*



*CSI Hospital geriatric ward visit*



*Mercy Home Visit*



*Members participated in the World Day of Prayer*



*Picnic at Guhanthara Resort – Fancy Dress Competition*

# Asha Nivas

## Wings of the Church

Our Christmas Party at Asha Nivas was special, All the residents, the Presbyter Rev. G. Wilson, Assistant Presbyter Rev. Navin John, and the committee members met together for a joyous celebration of Christmas. There was singing, music and fun. The ladies rendered a special song which was enjoyed by all present. Rev. Wilson distributed gifts of electric water kettles to the residents.

Saro Williams gave a very pertinent message. She said, "We all enjoy our youth and earlier days; but have we ever thought about old age? Our senses grow dim, we are lonely and cannot do so many things. It is then that a home like Asha Nivas helps out and gives us a home".

Susie Verghese organised a fun game. In one game, each one was given a small gift (soaps, caps, towels, powder and such) Then the narrator read the story of Christmas with a lot of "lefts and rights" in it. Each one had to pass the gift accordingly to the left or right- finally each one could keep the gift they had. It was hilarious.

Our Convener Jemima Edwin did a superb job of organising the event in the garden. Saro Williams personally made an extra dish of lasagne, which was much appreciated. The Church Office staff worked hard to make the party a grand success. And in the end it's not the years in your life that count—it's the life in your years.

**Vasantha Peter**  
Asha Nivas Managing Committee

# Angels of Change

## Wings of the Church

Psalm 27:1 says "The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"

December saw hectic preparations for Christmas by Angels of Change. For Advent, the church was beautifully decorated by our Angels. We praise God for the angels who put in a lot of effort in decorating the church so beautifully, which was much appreciated. The Christmas party on December 2, the first Sunday of Advent, was much looked forward to. On December 8, the angels visited two homes viz., Friend in Need Society and Lisa Home cheering and giving the hope of Christ through our carolling. We were able to give gifts and donations to these homes.

The Annual Retreat-cum-Mission trip of the AoC saw the angels gathering in the early hours of the 12<sup>th</sup> in the cold month of January to hop into a bus that would take them to the Niligiri Mountains in Tamil Nadu. Nestled at the foot of the Blue Mountains and bordering the Madhumalai Wildlife Sanctuary, the sylvan and green environs of Quiet Corner would be their abode for the one-day retreat. A brief introduction to the ministry of Quiet Corner, the team proceeded to the feeding programme in the village of Masinagudi, armed with gifts and resources for the children.

We were warmly welcomed by the children of the feeding centre, and we ministered to the children by



singing hymns, teaching them an action song, and a scripture based puppet show depicting the love and goodness of our heavenly father. The puppet show was a big hit with the children, their wide open eyes bubbled with merriment, and much peals of laughter greeted the antics of 'Bhaji' and 'Bhonda' and 'Chutney' the chief actors of the show.

The evening retreat session on the topic 'Meaningful Prayer' by Rev. Salome Joshua dealt with the main elements of prayer — ACTS (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving and Supplication), wearing the armour of God always to stymie the schemes of Satan and lastly to Position, Prepare and Possess — the three ideas of prayer based on the reading from 2 Chronicles 20:1-22. Rev. Salome stressed the need to pray for future generations and not restrict our prayers to our children only. The night wound up with dinner and a bonfire warming our cold hands, feet and lips to clap and sing praises to God around a roaring orange flamed fire.

The final retreat session on 'Intercessory Prayers' commenced with heartfelt worship, singing and thanksgiving in the open under a deep blue sky and





the peaceful green solitude broken by the endless chirping of birds. The conditions required for 'Standing in the Gap' was elaborated by Pastor namely the 3As — Availability (humbling and forgiveness), Accountability (alert to hear the voice of God and to the needs of others around us) and Aggressive (becoming a vigorous and persistent prayer warrior despite challenges). Blessed and emboldened to become mighty intercessors, the angels bid adieu to the campsite to return late evening to Bangalore, nourished and renewed in the wisdom of God, to face their tomorrows with newer prayers and a fresh commitment to be intercessors.

In the first week of February, the Angels celebrated the motherhood of two of our own angels Blessy and Archana. We had a get-together at the Parish Hall after morning service with a baby shower for these



*Blessing the two new mothers Archana (left) and Blessy*

two beautiful mothers to be. Women's Fellowship members were also invited to join the Angels. The programme was such a blessing for these two angels which ended in potluck lunch that was thoroughly enjoyed by one and all.

*Manjula Swaroop, President*

## Choir

### Wings of the Church

The Bible says in Ephesians 5:19 "addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart". In keeping with this spirit, the Choir of St. John's Church is grateful to God Almighty for the unique privilege granted to each choir member; the talent to worship God and bring His message to His people through song.

Adding completeness to the Christmas celebrations in the church, the choir brought the message of Christmas through song through their programme, Carols by Candle light on December 16, 2018. Along with other enthusiastic members from the congregation, the choir also visited, on invitation, the home of the parishioners over three nights, and rang in the Christmas joy for their family and friends; and as some would put it, the visit most looked forward to in the year!

The choir worked tirelessly practising, twice a week, to render their Palm Sunday musical. This year, the selection of songs comprised hand-picked contemporary gospel music that also

included some old classics from ancient and modern hymns. This rekindled the memories of some good old hymns that most of us grew up listening to but are now forgotten.

The choir has been incorporating contemporary arrangements of classic hymns and pieces. We extend a warm welcome to anyone who has a heart to sing praises to the Lord. We are looking to increase our repertoire in the musical instruments that are played to make singing a melodious and joyful part of every service. Please contact the choir-in-charge James Prajwal for further details on how to be a part of this family that continues to magnify God in harmony.

*Samuel Elisha, Choir Member*



# Youth Fellowship

## Wings of the Church

The St. John's Church Youth Fellowship strives to give youngsters a platform to come together in the name of Christ, to worship him and magnify his name with our gifts and talents.

We meet every Sunday after the 8:30a.m. service. Resource persons are invited regularly to speak on topics which address issues that we face. Youth members are encouraged to lead devotion and intercession during the meetings.

Our Youth Fellowship has taken part in **inter-church youth competitions** organised by neighbouring churches like St. Andrew's Church, East Parade Church, and Holy Trinity Church. **Karun Verghese** and **Daniel Jacob Paul** won the third prize at East Parade Church for solo singing. At Holy Trinity Church **Paulson Anandan** won third prize for his solo, and the vernacular group singing team – **Thomson Anandan, Paulson Anandan, Daniel Jacob Paul**, and **Andrew Kirubakaran** won the second place for their group song. A promo video of our Youth Fellowship which was made by **Josiah Leslie** won the first place at Arpith 2018 organised by St. Andrew's Church Youth Fellowship. The video can be viewed on YouTube through the link: <http://tinyurl.com/sjyfvideo>

**Fireball 2019** – the Inter-church Basketball and Throwball tournament organised by our Youth Fellowship, in memory of Dr. Chitra Solomon, was

held on January 26. Fifteen churches participated in the half-court Basketball tournament and five churches in the Throwball tournament. Richmond Town Methodist Church emerged winners and St. Mark's Cathedral was the runner-up in the basketball tournament. All Saints' Church won the Throwball tournament after beating David Memorial Church. Fireball 2019 saw a display of good sportsmanship and healthy competition and most importantly a fellowship of youth from churches of various denominations.

The Youth Fellowship visited St. John's Hostel and spent time with the children. This was aimed at getting to know the boys, and to stay in touch with them every week and provide guidance to them.

An increasing demand from the youth of our church and neighbouring churches, to have collaborative youth meetings and programmes, finally kicked off. Our Youth Fellowship was invited by the Youth Fellowship of St. Mark's Cathedral to sing at their contemporary evening service on February 25. It was a memorable evening of singing and fellowship. We look forward to more such collaboration with other youth fellowships.

All youth are welcome to be a part of our Youth Fellowship and join us as we grow together in faith for the glory of God.

*Tejonidhi Paul S., President*







# Sunday School

## Wings of the Church

"Children are a gift from the Lord..." Psalm 127:3

The Father gave the Son, The Son gave the Spirit, The Spirit gives us life, so we can give the gift of love, and the Gift goes on. The season of giving and sharing started off way back from the month of October. Children of all age groups were looking forward for the **Annual thanksgiving day** with great excitement to give the best works of their hands at the Sunday school stalls! Every volunteer, teacher and child worked with enthusiasm to create a flamboyant stall filled with paintings, candles, glass decors, lucky dip items, games, eats and countless tiny handicrafts, giving thanks to the Creator.

**World Sunday School Sunday** is celebrated throughout the world during the first week of November as a remembrance of Robert Raikes (1735- 1811), an English Publisher, who started the first Sunday School in the city of Gloucester in England in 1780.

In our church too we celebrated the day with much zeal. Children came in early to church with much enthusiasm and participated in leading praise and worship, reading the Bible, giving a special number and in taking the offertory.

After the Christmas Break, Sunday school re-opened in January and the children were in for a pleasant surprise as they enjoyed the '**Gospel via Magic**' by guest speakers Bob and Suzie. The message, Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding Proverbs 3:5, pierced into every heart.

The year also began with the theme, '**Hearing His Voice**' based on John 10:27. Amidst several noises of this world, children were made to focus on God's Word as a guiding path to hear the Shepherd's voice!

A new series titled "**Characters of the Bible**" during assembly time began, to enrich the knowledge of the Bible. Namaan's servant girl, Noah, Abraham, Moses

and Samuel were the characters taught so far, to learn the qualities of these heroes of faith when they heeded His Voice.

Sunday school through the Quiet Corner ministries shared their warmth by **giving away warm clothes** to the less privileged in a remote Nilgiris village to spare children from the cold winds.

**The Intra Sunday school events day** based on the theme of Hearing His Voice was much awaited - a day of fun and learning! Meticulous hands of all teachers and volunteers worked hard to prepare for every event and children were given opportunities to participate in multiple activities of either an outdoor event, splash with colours, memorize and sing God's Word. Children of all age groups came in enthusiastically participating and thereby learning to identify their talents and eventually to use it for His Kingdom work.

## Study God's Word

Sunday school assessment, is yet another way of inscribing the Word of God in their hearts, as they study and memorize at this young age.

## Graduation Day

Our senior children of class 9, graduating out of Sunday school, with sighs of leaving the fun behind, were looking back nostalgically, at all the events where they had times and opportunities, to get connected with God and to grow in Him each day! We thank God and pray for our young early teens, as they move out to teens fellowship!

Children are indeed a gift from the Lord. Please remember them as you bow your head in prayers every day.

**Anita Beniston**

*Sunday School Superintendent*

## It's Christmas

The most exciting season breaks in with preparation for the most awaited celebration, the birth of Jesus Christ. Children, parents, teachers and volunteers pull their sleeves up to contribute their best.

The Pulse theme of the December 2018 issue threw up a thought-provoking question- Can we identify with any of the characters of the Bethlehem drama?

**Just on Time** is an imaginary play, where characters of the Bethlehem drama are moved forward in time (2018), using a time machine, to see if they would be able to fit in and will fulfil God's plan on time. The title is based on Romans 5:6, "For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly". In today's world, which is filled with selfish desires and self-centredness, this play breaks the ordinary, making every one think hard. If I would have to be part of the nativity, would I fulfil that role, giving up my own ambitions and surrender to His will on time? Most of the time, we hesitate and use our logical mind to think through before submitting to God's fullest desire. Each character in the play hesitates likewise before submitting to God's plan and as they trudge, the narrators intervene and are

worried that this was not what happened before as foretold.

The play then pulls the time machine back to the traditional Bethlehem days, when the world witnessed history being split, displaying a dramatic climax of the historical event, Before Christ and Anno Domini. This play unveils it beautifully that Nativity wouldn't be the way it was, if we don't submit ourselves fully in His time; and finally throws a call to the audience that, "You could be the Mary or Joseph or the Shepherds or the Wisemen or the Angels in the places where God wants us to be in. Let's stop our self-centred busy lives and focus on the reason to bring Jesus into many lives. Our families, our communities, our state and our country need to have Jesus born in their hearts! Will you say, before it gets too late, Yes Lord, your will be done in my life **JUST ON TIME.**"

The children put up a scintillating performance, thanks to the training and untiring efforts of teachers and volunteers!

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"  
Luke 2:14



When I see the enthusiasm and energy of these youngsters who spend their valuable time to serve the Lord in this demanding fast paced world, my heart goes on singing "How wonderful your love is..."

These youngsters have tasted God's wondrous love so much they are ready to spread and share his love to the young ones who are learning to 'walk the rope'.

The youngsters I'm referring to are the 'Famous Five' Jonah, Tejo, Abigail, Evelyn and Akshita.

The 'Famous Five' come to church with a smile on their ever radiant faces, full of warmth and love, and cheerfully handle the Praise and Worship at Sunday School.



I thank God for guiding us with His everlasting word and that these young children walk in their faith. The Good News, sung in song every Sunday morning, is an inspiration and motivation to all of us who listen and are led to grow in our own faith under the armour of God.

*Beatrice Wesley, Sunday School teacher*

## Boys' Hostel

### Wings of the Church

As many believers of Christ along with other faiths, were fine tuning their voices to sing the birth of our Lord and Saviour Immanuel, our Lord gave me an opportunity to organize the Christmas program for our hostel children.

There was a frenzy of activity when these lads heard about the Christmas celebration. and participated with a cheerful heart to proclaim the birth of Jesus through two of the Christmas numbers that was apt for the season, and even delighted the residents of Stephen's Home who jointly celebrated with the Hostel boys. Christmas gifts were presented to all the kids to make them feel special. Invitees were overwhelmed to hear the career aspirations of our boys. We should not be surprised to have in-house reverends, chartered accountants, police officers, pilots and sports personalities.

Our Hostel boys also participated in the Parish Evening and exhibited their talents in choreography.

St. John's Church is dedicated to helping and providing care for boys from homes of difficult circumstances. We have 14 boys aged from 7 to 15 years old. Each one is blessed with unique talents making them special in their own way. All of them study at St. John's School. The daily expenses of the hostel are met by our very own church members, and we would like to thank each one of you. Your support by way of mentoring, coaching in studies, suggesting healthy diet or monetary contributions is very much appreciated.

Here is something for you to ponder on – Is there any one ready to give life to the career aspirations of our Hostel boys? We would love to meet you to support this greater cause.

**Kavitha Reuben, Convener &  
Sarguna Dorai, Member of the Hostel Committee**



# Church was home

**Indrani Sudarshan (nee Thangiah)**

## Down Memory Lane

Born on February 22, 1919, my father the late Mr. Edward Thangiah would have celebrated his centenary birthday this year. 100 years on and it is memories that we hold on to.

My dad's career was with Binny Ltd. as the Administrative Officer of the Mill. Besides his work, he dedicated his time to many organisations like the Bible Society of India, Leprosy Mission, Anathashram, Father Muller's Udipi, Friend in Need Society etc. He also served on the Board of YMCA along with my grandfather the late Mr. Mark Thangiah who was the General Secretary and the Hon. Chairman of the Bench of Magistrates. My dad was an active member in the 'Membership Campaign' and would draw a large number of people into the YMCA.

His contribution to CCCYC after his retirement from Binny's is fondly remembered by many who benefited from his encouragement in education for the under privileged. His involvement for around 20 years as Hon. Treasurer brought in much success. He was also a member of the Synod and CSITA.

Tall, with a dynamic personality, his vision was to see progress in his church which was 'home' to him. Being the youngest of four, trying to recall the early

years of my life is tough. However, I do remember my dad dedicate his time to his church - St. John's.

Eleanor and Edward Thangiah, my beloved parents served St. John's Church and School faithfully for years. They took membership in the late 1950s and were a part of this church for more than half a century! Till date my sister Shoba Bangara and myself along with our families are communicant members. In the 1960s, my mother served as a teacher at St. John's High School. My dad also served on the School Board of Governors as it was known in those days. He was the Treasurer of the School Board for several years.

My Dad served as the Treasurer of the Church for 18 years – the record still stands! He was the first Indian Treasurer of St. John's Church – something I, as his daughter, am so proud of. Meticulous, accurate, honest to the core was this man who loved and served this church relentlessly. He saw several pastors - Rev. Kenworthy, Rev. Holder, Rev. Mullins, Canon Vinaykumar Samuel, Rev. Flinders Stephen,

Rev Selwyn, Rev. Victor Joshua, Rev. Vincent Rajkumar and our present Bishop Rt. Rev. P.K. Samuel. He used to wait for their visits and, besides family the topic would always be church. My dad always wanted the best for St. John's and he was one among the committee to see the need for Asha Nivas and the Community Centre. His forethought and vision for a consistent revenue culminated in the construction of buildings along the periphery of the church.

We used to be in church well before service. He would go about checking



Sitting ( L to R ) : Mr. P.E.Thangiah, Mr.E.R.Baskett, Mrs.V.Kenworthy, Rev.J.M.A.Kenworthy, Mrs.I.Baskett, Mrs.J.Moore, Major E. B.Holt.  
Standing (L to R) : Mr. O.W. Oliver, Mr. C. H. Marshall, Mr.W.J. Satur, Mr. D.E.Leister, Mr. P.E.C. Thurston, Mr.G.N.Blaker.



each pew as if every row had a story to tell! Contemporaries – Mr. Baskett, Mr. Ringrow, Mr. Oliver, Mr. Selvaraj, Mr. David, Mr. Satur, Mr. Thomas, Gen. Mani and many more would come in and invariably they met before service much to the dismay of the ladies! I remember his ToCH Meetings, Remembrance Day, several PC meetings – not forgetting the Pastors coming home for a cup of tea.

He had his own anecdotes to tell. He saw St. John's Church offertory grow from Rs. 15 to Rs. 20,000 in those days. My dad served for two terms as Treasurer

of the Diocese. The time he spent with our former Bishop Rt. Rev. S. Vasanthakumar and Rev. Moses Jayakumar were special to him.

Today he has left behind four daughters, nine grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren with a set of twin boys .. the first in his family. I wish he was with us today. I know he would have had more stories to tell. Till the end, he loved the red church with the tall steeple.

My grandfather – Mark Thangiah — uncles and aunts served, and still serve at St. Mark's Cathedral but my dad –Edward made St. John's Church his Home.

## Milestones

### NEW MEMBERS

T. Anandan & Margeri J Anandan  
(Benson Town)

Dikshith & Roselin Manohar, and son Rithish  
Nathanial (Ramamurthy Nagar)

Rajasekhar Yelluru & Malleswari Baddela, and  
daughters Reshma & Ridhima (J.C. Nagar)

### BAPTISM

Alex Wather, son of Natasha &  
Sudarshan

Tia, daughter of Anitha & Amith  
Nirmal.

Shawn Jeremy, son of Shwetha & Pritish David

Elakshi, daughter of Chaithra & Naveen Arul

Thalia, daughter of Rebecca & Roy Varghese



### WEDDINGS

Bhanu Bhat & Daniel Dinaker  
Frederic

Mekha Susan Philip & Jacob  
Thomas Chacko

Leena Jacob & Utsav  
Bose

Usha Prasad & Joshua Charles

Stephanie Roseanna Gonzago & Daren Elvis Narcis

Jessica Sanjeeva Rao & Sushanth Joshua

Preethika Charles & Jerome David

Kamalan Asha Naidu & Mithran Daniel Dennison

Rupa Kiran Nerella & Roshan Edward Williams

Bindiah Gloreka Reuben & Ranjith Paranjothy



### Make the Most of Your Talents

St. John's Church has many opportunities for its members to participate in different activities. As 1 Peter 4:10 says: *Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.*

<b>Women's Fellowship</b> Tuesday, 5 p.m.	<b>Men's Fellowship</b> First and Third Thursday, 6 p.m.
<b>Angels of Change</b> Third Sunday 10.30 a.m.	<b>Youth Fellowship</b> Second and Fourth Sundays after 8.30 a.m. service
<b>Teens Fellowship</b> All Sundays (except fourth) 8.30 a.m.	<b>Sunday School Teachers Fellowship</b> First Sunday 10 a.m.
<b>Sunday School</b> All Sundays (except fourth) 8.30 a.m.	<b>JVV Neighbourhood Fellowship</b> Second and Fourth Friday, 6 p.m.
<b>Caregivers Fellowship</b> (volunteers needed)	<b>Cox Town Neighbourhood Fellowship</b> Monday, 6.30 p.m.
<b>Golden Age Fellowship</b> Once in two months 5 p.m.	<b>Hennur Neighbourhood Fellowship</b> Second and Fourth Thursday 6 pm
<b>Choir</b> Sundays 10.30 a.m.	<b>Kalyan Nagar Neighbourhood Fellowship</b> Thursday 7 p.m.
<b>Prayer Fellowship</b> Saturday 6.30 a.m.	<b>Lingarajapuram Neighbourhood Fellowship</b> Tuesday 7 p.m.
<b>Bible Study</b> Wednesday 6 p.m.	

Be a Friend of Asha Nivas, St. John's Hostel and Stephen's Home for the Aged

# In Memoriam

He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.

*Revelation 21:4*



## John Jeremiah Parker (43 years)



My brother John Jeremiah Parker passed away in his own home with his family around him on March 18, 2019. Popularly called Johnny and John Prawn, he was a son, brother, uncle, and the best friend in the world one could ever have. John last worked for Amazon and was actively involved in working with NGOs, played hockey for his school and state, was involved in Sunday School and VBS, took part in marathons and helped out in the logistics for elections.

John was the son of the late Retd. Lt. George P. Parker, AMC, who, after voluntary retirement served at St. John's Church for over 38 years. Our mother Blossom Olga Parker also ran the St John's School Tuck Shop and was an active member of the Women's Fellowship. Now she is a home maker.

I learnt a lot from Johnny who was a friend to us first and then a brother. Not once have I heard him gossip or say anything bad about another person. He used to keep everything to himself as he didn't want to trouble anyone: he got into severe depression which led to many health issues which were unknown to him and to us.

John was a giver, never expecting anything in return. He was fun loving, happy, grateful, kind, loving, hardworking, patient, and a lover of kids and animals. He would go all the way to help someone to the best of his abilities. He has left us with a void in our hearts which can never be filled. We love and miss you dearly Johnny. His last message to me was – God will bless us, girl. Never lose trust in Jesus.

Says his sister Christina Parker – My diamond brother, you are so precious that no one else can take your place. You are unique. "Keep me as the apple of your eye; hide me in the shadow of your wing" Psalms 17:8.

Our family chain is broken and nothing seems the same, but as God calls us one by one the chain will link again. God bless and rest in peace.

*Sarah Parker, sister*

## Clarisse Thompson (82 years)



Clarisse Maureen Grace, the eldest daughter of Noel St. Clair Corneille and Isobel Nester (Wouterz) Corneille, was born in Bangalore on August 6, 1936. She left her earthly home in Bangalore on December 22, 2018, and is now resting safe in the arms of our Lord and Saviour. Clarisse is survived and mourned by her sister Esther and brother Winston, daughters – Deborah, Michelle and Sherrilyn, sons-in-law – Daric and Sean and grandsons – Darrin and Darrel. Her sister, June passed away in November 2009.

While growing up, Clarisse lived in Bangalore, Madras, Podanur, Mysore, among other places. Soon after her father expired in January 1949 Clarisse went to boarding school with her two sisters, and took care of her younger siblings during her holidays while their mother was working on the Coffee Estates and the Palace in Mysore. Her siblings loved and looked up to her till the end of her life.



Clarisse graduated from Bishop Cotton Girls' High School, Bangalore in 1952 and worked as an elementary and middle school teacher. Aside from teaching, Clarisse had many talents and interests in life. She was an excellent cook, baker and homemaker. An avid reader from a young age, she loved crossword puzzles. She was talented in needlework, batik, sewing and knitting. She enjoyed organizing several events on a large scale especially her annual Christmas Tree parties and elaborate handcrafted birthday cakes; and was very good at putting together short quizzes and games on various topics for the parties she organized.

On June 10, 1959, Clarisse married the love of her life - Denzil Peter Thompson in Mysore. Together they had a very happy married life with their daughters - Deborah, Michelle and Sherrilyn. Clarisse and Denzil moved back to Bangalore and became members of St. John's Church in 1962 and regularly attended the 6:30 a.m. service and sometimes the 6 p.m. service. She was very active in the church during her younger days and was the Secretary of the Women's Fellowship for a while and spent a lot of time visiting the old folk at the Wesley Home.

Clarisse was a kind, loving, generous, caring, and sincere Christian. One could see this in her daily life. Even though she had a busy schedule, Clarisse made sure she spent time with God in prayer and reading his Word in the wee hours of the morning and made sure her family set aside time at night for God's Word and prayer. She rarely complained about the hardships in her life; instead she always managed to

make life seem normal for her family regardless of the circumstance. She faced hardships and never let anyone know that they were going through a crisis, because her faith was so great that she knew she could weather the storm as Jesus was at the wheel and he would steer them through, and He did. Her faith and trust in Christ were rock solid and that was her passport to glory. She had strict principles and values which moulded us into being responsible children with high values that we imbibed. She will be greatly missed.

#### *Clarisse's Family*

### **Lalitha Choweller (83 years)**



Lalitha Choweller MA, MPhil was a resident of Asha Nivas since 2007 after her retirement in Chennai. On December 22, 2018, she collapsed in her room and passed away without signs of much suffering. She liked her life at Asha Nivas because of the church being nearby and the Bible studies that she could attend. I spoke to her that evening around 7.30 p.m. and she wanted to know what our plans were for Christmas eve. When the warden called me at around 8.45 p.m. to tell me she had expired, it really came as a shock to me and my wife.

I am her younger brother and her local guardian. Lalitha was a loving sister to me and I sometimes thought of her as a third parent. Being the eldest of six children, she helped in the education of her last two sisters, Usha and Shobha who were students of Women's Christian College, where she served as a lecturer and warden for over 33 years.

Lalitha was a gifted pianist, and could sight-read music effortlessly. She started playing the piano at the age of three, and passed her LTCL from the Trinity College of London at the age of 18. Though she was a lecturer in English, her love for music made her train the college choir from the very beginning of her service there. A regular artiste on All India Radio, Chennai, and later Doordarshan TV, Lalitha was well known in the music circles and sang alto in the choir.

No one expected her to cross over so peacefully and suddenly, and I am thankful to our Lord for that. I am certain that her soul rests in peace and she has found eternal rest.

*Christopher Choweller, brother*

### **Sanjay Vishwanathan (49 years)**



Passed on on February 13, 2019.

## Alma Harriet Santwan (67 years)



Alma Harriet Santwan nee Gojer (aged 67 years) passed away in Bangalore on February 19, 2019.

She had been a member of St John's for the past six years, since she and her husband moved to Bangalore after retirement.

Alma was born and grew up in Bombay. A graduate in Psychology, she was a very organised person, generous and hospitable. She loved music, and sang in many choirs over the years including the Bombay Christian Chorus, the Delhi Christian Chorus and in the churches they attended in Bombay, Delhi and Zurich.

Alma and her husband Rajiv had been married for 46 years. They have two daughters, Sunanda and Kavita, a son-law, James, and grandson, Oliver.

*Karuna Baskar, Sister-in-law*

## Christopher Selvaraj (71 years)



Passed on on February 14, 2019.

## Lazarus Salins (80 years)



My husband Laz was a man of few words, but when he did speak, he was kind, gentle, and soft-spoken. There was a sense of calm about Laz, a quiet strength that made me feel safe. Laz was a loving and devoted husband, patient and incredibly caring. He always made sure I had everything I needed. Just a few weeks before he passed on, he brought me a walking stick, so I would have something to lean on when his arm was no longer in reach.

Laz and I moved to Asha Nivas from Mumbai after we retired. He loved it here. He took long walks in the church campus and at Coles Park, enjoyed Mangalorean food from Mangalore Pearl, loved shopping at Thoms, and looked forward to our chats in the evening on our favourite garden bench. After spending 48 years in the hustle and bustle of Mumbai, the peace and quiet of the church campus and the fellowship of the St. John's community was something he truly cherished.

If you knew Laz you knew that he took special care in the way he dressed. He liked for both of us to look our best and quite enjoyed the compliments he received. I always thought he looked very smart and handsome.

Laz and I spent 49 years together. He was my husband, my partner, my strength, and my best friend.

Through everything that life threw at us, Laz stood by me, and I by him.

I feel fortunate to have known and loved Lazarus Salins, and to have shared life's journey with him.

*Violet Salins, wife*

## Charlet Pushpa Malani Duraisingh (71 years)



Our mother's name Charlet, which means 'free person', marked her out as a free woman who was very independent and a lady who professed a lot of faith, hope, love and wisdom.

Born on September 16, 1947, in Bangalore, she was married to my father who hailed from Tuticorin, Tirunelveli District, on September 6, 1973, and they settled in Bangalore.

During her youth days, our mother was a very active member, she used to teach the Sunday School and Youth Fellowship when she worshipped at The Holy Trinity Church in Bangalore. She also was a chorister singing soprano.

At St. John's Church, she used to worship at the 6:30 morning service along with our father. They were blessed with two sons, and later two beautiful and lovable daughters-in-law who were like daughters to our mother, and also with a grandson. We, brothers, remember, when we were small, sitting on her lap,



wrapped in a towel after our bath. She would sing songs and teach us Bible stories and verses. Many a time, she made up just for us quick stories based on situations, and we felt like we were wrapped in love.

She was a great mother, caring and loving, a wonderful cook, on the toes always extending hospitality towards those who visited us. Her heart was light and her pleasant character won her many friends.

We recall most of our childhood from the pictures we keep in our family album. Our mother would re-tell the story of each picture, and it always depicted the good times. She would mention the

names of the people in the pictures like our uncles, aunts, cousins and family friends. Even though we don't recall most of them, she would softly tell us, "You will, when you meet them again." It gave us a sense of belonging. Her stories made us feel loved by many.

We have seen her cry when she was hurt. The pain showed in her eyes when she felt she was wronged. But she would forgive easily and let things go without remorse.

Since 2016 she suffered a lot of pain from cancer but would never tell us as she never wanted to trouble, and always carried a smile to portray that she was hale and

healthy. She finally went home to be with the LORD on January 24, 2019.

The pain and heartache of losing her is numbing. Even though we are aware that she was ill, the hope of her recovery burned bright, and if we could decide, we would have wanted her to go on forever.

We missed the opportunity of being close to our mom in her last moments. We didn't have the chance to kiss her goodbye, or stroke her hair, or hold her hand for the last time. She carries so much of our memories. We all miss her a lot. The hope of meeting her again strengthens us.

*Jeffrey Johnston D., Son*

## "An empty tomb because Jesus is alive."

by *Kevin Isaac (9 years)*



Accept your reality.

Be present. Be bold.

Create something exciting.

Drink plenty of water. Dance.

Exercise daily. Eat fresh foods.

Feel your emotions. Face fear.

Go outside and observe nature. Give.

Hug often. Help others.

Ignite your passions.

Jump through your comfort zone.

Kiss passionately. Keep looking forward.

Laugh. Love. Learn to let go.

Meditate daily. Make goals.

Never give up on what you want.

Own a pet. Observe beauty.

Pray. Paint. Play an instrument.

Quit a bad habit. Quiet your mind.

Read. Relax. Reinvent yourself.

Smile. Sleep. Simplify.

Take power naps. Talk wisely.

Unleash your strengths.

Vent. Visualize your dreams.

Walk. Write. Watch the sunset.

Xerox your smiling face.

Yell less. Yield your thoughts.

Zap negativity.

## *The* **ABC's** *of* **Growing Old** **Gracefully**