

# *Kirkspire*

The Monthly Magazine of St. Andrew's Church (The Kirk), Chennai

## HE IS RISEN!



Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life.  
He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.  
And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do  
you believe this?" John 11:25-26

*April 2022*

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**Editor : Usha George**

**Ministry of the month : RMDCC**



**Word from the Pastor - April 2022**

## **Providing with Purpose**

*".....He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens."  
(Revelation 3:7)*

It has happened to almost everyone of us that we have either locked ourselves out of the house or lost the key to the house or car or worse yet, stood outside a locked car with the key inside. The frustration is so terrible it tests our patience to the core. Only then do we realize that the *key* which is of very little monetary value is more important than the house or car or bike. *The key is the key!!*

The bible is filled with key moments which can only be described as 'Divine' right, from Noah to Jesus. Here are a few *key* moments.

- a. The Great Flood and Re-start of human race
- b. A ram in the place of Isaac
- c. Dry road through the Red Sea
- d. Fire from heaven when Elijah prayed
- e. Overnight stay of Daniel among hungry lions

But the greatest key moment is the one when there was no wind, no fire, no noise, no manifestation but *one door was opened, one person walked out and no one noticed it*. HIS NAME IS JESUS - This is called the *Provision of God with Purpose*. As we celebrate Easter, we not only celebrate the event of Resurrection but the *Permanence* of Resurrection.

Jesus is not Lazarus to die again...Jesus is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He died, rose again, never to die again. He conquered death itself. 1 Corinthians 15:56-57 say 'The sting of death *is* sin, and the strength of sin *is* the law. But thanks *be* to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the life of the child of God, God has the key to your life both to open a door for His purpose and to close a door for His purpose. Walk under the authority of Jehovah Jireh – even death is gain when we are under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Wishing every one of you 'Blessed Easter' and may God rule and reign in your hearts now and always.

Rev. Isaac Johnson

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*"What is needed is a change of heart. The Psalmist made such a need known to God when he cried 'Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me'."*

War Cry

It does not take great men to do great things; it takes only consecrated men.

Phillip Brooks

I have a great need for Christ: I have a great Christ for my need.

Charles H. Spurgeon

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## **With Calvary Before Us ... And Beyond**

*"But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Corinthians 15:57*

Throughout history whenever the emphasis is on Jesus Christ, there is a burst of energy, activity and vibrancy. Sadly, this too is true – that all around there is a downward slide in spiritual and moral values.

Jesus knew the fickle heart of man.

Our Lord made a dramatic and triumphant entry into Jerusalem as He moved deeper into the shadow of Calvary. The shouts of "Hosanna" rent the air as crowds 'uncontainably' acclaimed Him, "Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord!" The same crowd would soon yell, "Crucify Him!"

Jesus wept! He could look straight into the heart of this historic city Jerusalem. He knew that this 'chosen city' would not make the "Great Decision" to be saved by Him alone. Today a child of God also weeps to see the corrosion of Christian beliefs.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, our Master's prayer with His Father is intense and excruciating. He suffers and struggles under the weight of being the sin-bearer of humanity. But in the bitter cup lies His Father's will. In anguish He whispers, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me". Then comes the great surrender when He says, "Nevertheless not My will, but Yours be done" (*Luke 22:42*).

The victory is won when our Lord surrenders His will totally, to be an instrument to complete His Father's plan of Redemption. Jesus then rises and walks with divine power the torturous way to grasp the dreadful Cross. With hands and feet nailed to the Cross, He throttles Satan and saves us from eternal damnation.

Today we stand under the shadow of Calvary and hear His voice say:  
"This have I done for Thee: What hast thou done for Me?"

Abraham Lincoln stood in the southern slave market watching the bartering of wretched human beings and swore, "If God ever gives me a chance, I will hit this thing (slavery), and, by God, I will hit it hard." He did hit the system with his life and strength.

Jesus waits for you and me to obey His commandments. He wants us to make an inward journey and remove the pockets of hypocrisy, greed, pride, selfishness, jealousy and insensitivity. Let us beware of good intentions that never result in action. Jesus wants His disciples to "Feed My sheep"!

"Don't forget the things that I taught you  
I've conquered death and I hold the keys  
Where I go you will go too, someday  
But there's much to do here before you leave."

*The Commission - a song by CAIN*

Usha George

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Grant us grace, Almighty Father, so to pray as to  
deserve to be heard.

Jane Austen

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## **OBITUARY**

Mr K Theogarajan, our member, passed away on 16th March 2022, aged 78 years. The funeral service was held on 17th March in The Kirk, followed by burial in Kilpauk Cemetery. We convey our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family.

## By Fire

Then King David said to Ornan, "No, but I will surely buy it for the full price, for I will not take what is yours for the Lord, nor offer burnt offerings with that which costs me nothing." I Chronicles 21:24

Convenience has replaced sacrifice. A half hearted response is deemed sufficient. Lukewarmness has slowly replaced the fire of the early church.

Leviticus exists to show that an offering without blemish made by fire are the only kinds acceptable. David understood that. Sadly we don't. But the Son of God clearly stated that either you are fully in or fully out. There is no such thing as tepid Christianity. Either you are following Him or not. Because if you are not actively pursuing Him, the tides of apathy will render you adrift in the ocean of waywardness.

Father, it seems harsh but nothing short of total commitment will do. Like Cain I substitute by best effort with mediocre ones. Forgive me.

Cleanse me from sloth and complacency. The cost seems high. After all, Your love demands my all- My time, thoughts and will... But in the light of all that You have done for me (redemption, friendship and purpose) it's a small price to pay. Fill me with the knowledge of Your love. I want to know it firsthand. I want to experience it everyday.

Only Your love has the power to change a flickering flame to a roaring blaze. Then no sacrifice will be a burden when offered with fire - the fire of love.

You shall present a burnt offering, an offering made by fire as a sweet aroma to the Lord: thirteen young bulls, two rams, and fourteen lambs in their first year. They shall be without blemish. Numbers 29:13

(There are around 60 verses in the old Testament referring to an offering made by fire)

Let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare His works with rejoicing. Psalms 107:22

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart — These, O God, You will not despise. Psalms 51:17

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, and follow me. If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it. And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul? Is anything worth more than your soul?" Matthew 16:24-26

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it." Matthew 13:45-46

"For the turning away of the simple will slay them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them." Proverbs 1:32

A large crowd was following Jesus. He turned around and said to them, "If you want to be my disciple, you must, by comparison, hate everyone else—your father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even your own life. Otherwise, you cannot be my disciple. And if you do not carry your own cross and follow me, you cannot be my disciple. But don't begin until you count the cost. For who would begin construction of a building without first calculating the cost to see if there is enough money to finish it? So you cannot become my disciple without giving up everything you own." Luke 14:25-28, 33

May you be rooted deep in love and founded securely on love, that you may have the power and be strong to apprehend and grasp with all the saints [God's devoted people, the experience of that love] what is the breadth and length and height and depth [of it]; [That you may really come] to know [practically, through experience for yourselves] the love of Christ, which far surpasses mere knowledge [without experience]; that you may be filled [through all your being] unto all the fullness of God [may have the richest measure of the divine Presence, and become a body wholly filled and flooded with God Himself]! Ephesians 3:16-19 AMPC

Dr Susan Rajkumari



## **Resurrection – First Easter Sunday and today**

### **The Lord is risen. Hallelujah!**

Easter for us is a time to celebrate but for the early followers of Jesus it started as a day of despair and darkness, as a day of seeing and not seeing and as a day of confusion, fear and doubt. Jesus, the risen Saviour let the day be a day of recreation – He let His light dawn on this darkened, confused, sad and frightened world of His disciples and friends. The women came as seekers and left as witnesses. The two on the road to Emmaus started with the crisis- 'In God we doubt' but found Jesus as a good listener, an honest friend and as the risen Saviour and their trust restored.

Paul wrote 'and if Christ has not been raised our preaching is useless and so is your faith' (I Corinthians 15.14) There are a number of evidences that collaborated to prove the resurrection - circumstantial evidence of the Gospels- the empty tomb and the absence of his body (Luke 24.2 &3); the evidence of eye witnesses – Mary Magdalene (John 20.18), Cleopas and his friend (Luke 24.13-32), the disciples both in Jerusalem (Luke 24.36-40), and at Galilee (John 21.1-14) and eventually 500 people at one (I Corinthians 15.6); the corroborating evidence – Josephus, the Roman historians, letters of Paul, eyewitness accounts as recorded in the Gospels; and the evidence of the church which has grown world- wide based on belief in and martyrdom for the resurrection.

A quick survey was conducted among Christians and respondents were asked to answer just three questions: "What does Easter mean to me?, how do I celebrate it? and how does the fact of resurrection affect me?" The survey was open ended with descriptive boxes giving us enriching information. I hope the survey results would help us to form our own response to the risen Lord.

Here are the results of the Survey:

Easter is accepted and acknowledged by nearly all participants. Only 7% felt that it need not be remembered as a separate event as every Sunday is a reminder of Jesus' resurrection- a hope to rejoice every Sunday. One responded "There are 52 Easters in a year" But majority of respondents celebrated Easter joyfully and in community worship at church. The word 'Easter' is found only once in the Bible in the King James Version in Acts 12.4. At present some people use the term 'Resurrection day' instead of Easter to remind them and others of the significance of the day.

The day is not as commercialized as Christmas though Easter eggs and Easter bunnies are available at some bakeries. Easter eggs for children to explain new birth and resurrection form part of some family tradition but a sumptuous meal with the family is a must in most homes.

The response to Pastor's "Christ is risen" with a thunderous and joyous congregational response "He is risen indeed" is a unique affirmation of the Christian faith.

The fact that we worship a risen Saviour affected believers in Bible times and us today (as respondents of the survey recorded) in many ways. Here are a few of them –

**The priesthood of Jesus:** Jesus told Mary "Do not hold on to me" John 20.17. The words helped her realize a new relationship. Jesus was no longer the humble Son of Man who was subject to the power play of Roman and Jewish authorities, a teacher limited by time but the divine Lord who reigns with power (Ephesians 1.19-22), and authority over all creation and the great high priest (Hebrews 4.14-16) who intercedes at the right hand of His Father and the God present at all times with her through the Spirit.

As today's disciples the resurrection narrative assures the respondents that they have an intercessor who prays for and with them.

**The presence of Jesus:** Jesus came in spite of locked doors showed himself as risen Lord. (John 20.19)

The respondents recognized that no situation was hopeless for a believer as God could penetrate every locked situation to bring in His presence and power. He is their very present help in times of trouble. God was with them whenever they walk through stormy seas and fiery furnaces and valleys of shadow of death. Jesus also

recognizes those who need an extra touch or care like Thomas and comes to meet them at the point of their need- a comforting thought to some respondents.

**The peace of Jesus;** Disciples were struck with fears without and fears within – fear of authorities who killed their Master and fear of rebuke by the Master for desertion and betrayal of the Master when He needed them most. But He simply showed them His body which bore their punishment and greeted them with His Shalom (John 20.19) to reassure them that His presence brings acceptance and joy to those who acknowledge Him as Lord.

The respondents of the survey recognized God's peace surrounded them in times of grief and death when near and dear ones left this temporary abode for their eternal home, knowing that, death has lost its sting and gave its victory. (1 Corinthians 15.55) Death was to be welcomed not dreaded and every separation brought a longing to the place where there will be no more pain or loss or tears. (Revelation 21.4)

**The purpose of Jesus:** As the Son had fulfilled the Father's purpose, Jesus called and commissioned the disciples to fulfill His purpose (John 20.21). The flawed disciples had witnessed Jesus speak God's words and perform God's works and Jesus sent His disciples to a needy world to share His love, His compassion and His call to enter His kingdom. The disciples journeyed from the locked room of fear to the wide world of missions.

The purpose of God's eternal commission was not considered by many respondents –in fact only 20% of them thought that this was the day to communicate the victory of our Lord Jesus over sin and death.

**The perspective of believers:** Resurrection made a great impact in the life of the disciples. Their outlook on life changed. Resurrection became the core of the salvation message " If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead you will be saved (Romans 10.9). They recognized that resurrection purchased their justification –"He was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification' (Romans 4.25) The resurrection gave them the joy of knowing that Christ is with them till the end of time (Matthew 28.20) The resurrection gave

them hope that goes beyond the grave and the hope that Jesus would come back to judge and rule the world (Acts 17.30-31)

All respondents found their perspective on life had changed dramatically with their encounter with the Risen Lord –they experienced hope especially at the time of death recognizing that they would see their loved ones; the risen Lord was always available to bring hope in every hopeless situation; they could walk and talk with God on a moment by moment basis; they recognized God's work in their lives making them more like Him as they joyfully anticipate His second coming

We as Easter people welcome Jesus into our midst at all times and anticipate His return with joy and share this hope with others.

Dr. Sujatha Elizabeth Prasad

#### John's Corner

### **AMAZING LOVE!**

The message of Easter

Read Rom 5: 6-8

Oh! the wonderful love of Jesus,  
You can't compare Him with another;  
Imagine sacrificing your life,  
To save an undeserving brother.

Perhaps one may even dare to die,  
To help a needy beloved friend,  
But doing so for your enemy,  
One can't imagine or comprehend.

Yet that is what Christ for us has done,  
No greater love can anyone show;  
He gave His life that sinners might live,  
And may His Father's love come to know.

Contemplate what our loving Lord did,  
While we were sinners for us He died;  
Amazing love! how can we respond?  
Surrender now and in Him abide.

John H. Bala Singh

## The INRI Monogram



A common symbol of the Passion is the INRI. If this monogram is affixed to the altar crucifix, worshippers see it throughout the church year.

INRI is shorthand. It stands for the Latin *Iesus Nazarenus, Rex Iudaeorum* - "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Pilate ordered the superscription on the cross to be written in three languages: Latin, Greek and Hebrew. Consequently Christian symbolism sometimes shows this inscription in the three languages. At times the INRI letters are written on a scroll attached to the top of the cross.

In John's gospel (19:19-20) we read: "Pilate also wrote a title and put it on the cross; it read, 'Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.' Many of the Jews (other people, too) read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city." It may also have been near a public road. It has been pointed out that people to be executed carried with them a white board inscribed with the accusation. For Jesus the charge was His affirmation of kingship. On arrival at the scene of crucifixion this board, or poster, was nailed to the head of the cross. As for the three languages, Latin was for the Romans, Greek for foreigners and travellers, and Hebrew (or perhaps Aramaic) for the local people.

It seems that Pilate wished to taunt the local leaders by posting this superscription. At least, the leaders were quick to voice their objection, wanting the Roman governor to revise the charge from a statement of fact to a claim: "This man said, I am King of the Jews." But Pilate would not budge.

Jesus Christ, also in His deepest degradation, is Lord of lords and King of kings. All glory be to Him!

From the "Book of Symbols"

## **THE RIBER MEMORIAL DAY CARE CENTRE AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT - A REPORT**

Since its inception, The Ribber Memorial Day Care Centre and Community Development Project has been reflecting the love and hope of Jesus to the poor and needy around St. Andrew's Church. It was Rev. Murdoch Mckenzie, with his passion for Christ and compassion for the underprivileged, who started the Project in 1973. From humble beginnings in a thatched shed, it has grown and evolved over the years. This Christ-centred ministry functions in two places – the Church Campus, Egmore and Balaramapuram. Pre-schoolers from two and a half to five years of age attend the Centre, learning to read and write, absorbing the world around them through songs and stories. The love of Jesus is also inculcated with Bible stories and hymns. The children enjoy playing together in the well equipped playground.

During the pandemic, in spite of various restrictions, innovative changes were made. The Care Kit Programme was started, whereby, kits containing nutritious snacks and school needs were distributed to the children every week through their parents. Homework sheets were regularly sent in the kits to be returned the following week. This kept the teachers and children well connected, promoting healthy bonding. Colourful and informative lessons were planned and uploaded by our teachers and received a positive response. On February 21, 2022, after two long years, the Day Care Centres reopened and once again resounded with the cheerful voices of little children. Tailoring and Zardozi classes were conducted regularly, following strict pandemic protocol.

The RMDCC and Community Development Project envisages the planting of night schools and day care centres, wherever necessary, mentoring and providing practical help for students who progress from the Day Care Centre to regular schools and colleges. We also aim to empower and enrich the women in the community by teaching them economically viable means of livelihood.

We forge ahead with absolute trust and confidence in our Almighty God, who has led us thus far. We also extend our gratitude and appreciation to our Pastors, Elders, Committee members, Staff and members of the congregation for their sustained support to this Ministry. May this Project continue to grow and thrive, serving as a stepping stone to a richer and fuller life for the marginalised in our society.

Chitra Bennett

## **Answers to Bible Quiz No. 124 – March 2022**

### **A Tent-maker's Quiz**

1. The Tabernacle
2. Jabel. Genesis 4:20
3. Goats' skins. Black.
4. Lot. Genesis 13:12
5. Achan. Joshua 7:21
6. Paul. Acts 18:3
7. Aquila and Priscilla. Acts 18:3
8. Psalm 84:10
9. Gideon. Judges 7:13
10. Sisera. Judges 4:16-12

### **The winners are:**

1. **Mrs Sabrina Siga**
2. **Mrs Indira Rajanayakam**
3. **Mrs P Patricia**
4. **Mrs Peace Rani Sudhakar**
5. **Mrs Victoria Basker**
6. **Mrs Aruna Asir**
7. **Mrs Suguna Joseph**
8. **Ms Sudha Stanly**
9. **Dr Sujatha Elizabeth Prasad**

***Hearty Congratulations!***



## **MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH LONELINESS**

Loneliness is a complex phenomenon, and different types of loneliness require different approaches. Relief will be found only when we go beyond symptoms and deal with the root cause.

Research has revealed that the experiences most conducive to acute loneliness are: the death of a life partner or other family member, a separation or divorce, a broken engagement, leaving one's homeland for a new country and migration from villages to cities. All of these cause deep emotional trauma. Leaving familiar school environment and going to college, leaving one city/state for another with a different language and culture, are all very traumatic. For older people and migrants, the breaking up of the family home, with the consequent loss of familiar friends and scenes, can prove a traumatic experience. They feel rootless and find it desperately difficult to strike up a new relationship in strange surroundings.

While there points of similarity between solitude and loneliness, it is quite wrong to equate them. Loneliness is the result of the absence of personal intimacy or meaningful activity. Solitude is not being in the company of others. Our Lord Jesus Christ often went alone to pray.

Loneliness is always a negative experience, while solitude is often positive and renewing. Loneliness brings a feeling of desolation and depression that can be destructive. It tends to stifle hope and quench aspiration. Solitude can generate a sense of solitariness that is both creative and motivating. The one is involuntary, unwanted. The other is voluntary and deliberately chosen.



Following His claim that isolation was not good for Adam, God created "a helper suitable for him." So early in human history, God indicated that mankind was made for companionship. We were created social beings, capable of sustaining loving and congenial relationships with both God and our fellow men and women. Our full creative purpose can never be realized in isolation, but only in association with other men and women. Because we are social creatures by nature, the absence of a friend or companion creates an emotional vacuum that can work havoc on both body and spirit.

Lonely persons must first take the initiative to come out of the condition. They must stop blaming parents, the environment or other people or circumstances, and create conditions for change. Get rid of secret resentment against others and forgive them. This will restore and heal broken relationships. Unburden oneself to God just as the psalmist often did. "Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart to him, for God is our refuge (Ps.62:8). We should cling to his promise "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you" (Heb 13:5). Reading Psalm 23 gives us great comfort. Members of the family must go out of the way to spend time with lonely people among them. Counselling is also very helpful. Loneliness associated with clinical depression or anxiety needs medical treatment.

Dr. (Mrs) Rajinikantha Narendranath

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"Where do we find the meaning of life except in the God who created it? '*God only knows*' isn't just slang: it is deep truth..."

The other fellow's sins, like the other fellow's car lights, always seem more glaring than our own.

Wisconsin Dells Events

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**Bible Quiz No. 125 – April 2022**

## **A Goldsmith's Quiz**

King James Version (KJV)

Give only one reference.

1. Where is the earliest mention of gold in the Bible ?
2. Was gold scarce or plentiful in ancient times ?
3. Who was stoned to death because he hid a '*wedge of gold*' under his tent ?
4. What precious article in the tabernacle was overlaid with pure gold ?
5. Where did much of the gold in use in Bible lands come from ?
6. Who said he '*coveted no man's gold*' ?
7. According to David, what is '*more to be desired than gold, yes, than much fine gold*' ?
8. Which king of Judah '*cut off the gold from the doors of the temple, and from the pillars*', and gave it, with thirty talents of gold to the invader, Sennacherib - King of Assyria ?
9. What city was said to be '*of pure gold*' ?
10. What three golden calves are mentioned in the story of the Israelites ?

Taken from a Bible quiz book by May C. Smith

Kindly send your answers to the church office or email [admin@thekirk.in](mailto:admin@thekirk.in) by 24<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

Usha George

**RMDCC Project Sunday**



**Night School  
Balaramapuram**

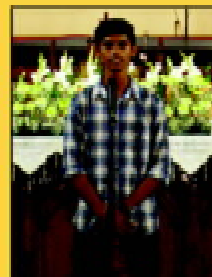
**Night School  
Perlamet**



**RMDCC Children**



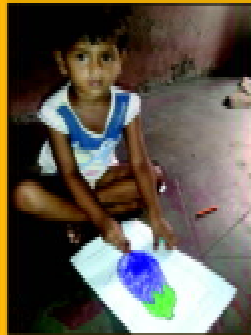
**Staff and Parents**



**Testimony - RMDCC alumnus**



Video Lesson



Creatively engaged



Happy Play time



RMDCC Balaramapuram

