



# *Kirkspire*

*Blessed be the  
Lord God of Israel,  
for He hath visited  
and redeemed  
his people.*

*Luke 1.68*



December 2013

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*Editor : Mrs. R. Chandy*



## Word from the Pastor

The season of Advent may bring joy to some, but to others it brings gloom and sadness. The reason for this could be our faculty of memory. Our memories are capable of remembering both good and bad things – either of which can trigger depression. I have interviewed several senior citizens during the season in the past and have discovered one predominant memory which lingered on as expressed in this oft-repeated statement: "I can't forget the good old days and the lovely times during the season.....but now it's all different. I am downcast and depressed."

A teenager said, "My main memory of Christmas is of my father coming home with a tree, but now he is gone and will never do that for me again." A woman said, "My childhood Christmas had so many disappointments and bad memories that no matter how I try, I can't enter into the spirit of the season." Memories good and bad, each one in its own way, triggers the same reaction.

The prophet Isaiah reminds us of Christ Jesus as a 'Wonderful Counsellor and Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace' (Isaiah 9:6). What makes Christ Jesus our Lord, a Wonderful Amazing Counsellor? Psalm 147:3 says: 'He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds'.

The writer of the Book of Hebrews says in Heb.2:16: 'For surely it is not angels He helps, but Abraham's descendants'

Hebrews 4:15-16 says Jesus our High Priest is able to sympathise with our weaknesses as we approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

John 1:17 says: 'For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.'

During this season of Advent let us lean on Jesus our Wonderful and Amazing Counsellor, who can only sympathise with all our weaknesses, wounds, hurts and deep bruises. Jesus our Lord is our Wounded Healer. He is our Great Physician, our very Present Help in trouble. Coming to Christ is not merely informational, it's transformational. Jesus says, 'Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden' (Matthew 11:28). 'Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you.' (John 14:27).

May the blessings in Christ Jesus our Lord remain with us not only during the season but be extended through the whole year.

Love, Joy and Peace.

*Peter Francis  
Pastor*



## The 'Search'

One of the largest forest fires in history to sweep across the Rocky Mountains – 'The Great Burn of 1910' was destroying about 3 million acres of timberland. And right in the wilderness a forest ranger by the name of Ed Pulaski had been given charge of forty five volunteer fire fighters. In the morning they were fighting back the fire with all their might, but during the course of the day, strong winds blew and supercharged the inferno. Ranger Pulaski thought fast and formed a plan. In the midst of the deafening roar of the approaching fire and the thick smoke and ash that was billowing up, he led the men up a mountain trail. As an old fire-fighter clutched his side in pain and couldn't take a step further, the Ranger dismounted and helped him onto the back of his horse. Right before the fire reached them he searched in the darkness and found what he was looking for- an abandoned mining tunnel. It was just enough for all of them and a small stream of water ran along the floor of the tunnel. Oh! What a hiding place and refuge it was at that moment for them! But the Ranger continued throwing water from the stream with his hat toward the entrance of the tunnel. Finally when they came through the fiery ordeal the volunteer fire-fighters ran to thank their leader. But what a sight it was, as they found him completely blind. Thankfully a fighter as he was, he prayerfully hoped against all hope and history records that he miraculously regained his eyesight in a months' time.

As 'one' more season of Christmas is fast approaching, we who profess to be active and alive in CHRIST may be searching for new ideas to decorate or demonstrate, "This so great a Salvation". In all the hustle and bustle, can we humble ourselves, pray, seek HIS face and turn from our wicked ways? Oh! What a joy then, when HE washes away and forgives all our sins and heals our land! Many in our land are still searching for the truth- can we "Be merciful to those who doubt, snatch others from the fire and save them; to others show mercy

mixed with fear- hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh". How about going the 'second mile' too, 'building ourselves up in our most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit'? Then the eyes of our heart will be enlightened and we can go beyond just thinking about the Babe of Bethlehem. Desiring to know HIM better and living in the power of His resurrection, we can continually sing with our mind and understanding, the song of Hope –

\* 'For He searches much deeper within': When 'Saul' who was anointed King over Israel, was not to be found, the Lord said to those who were searching for him, 'Yes, he has hidden himself among the baggage'. And for Saul who searched for the 'people of the way' in order to put an end to whole lot of them, JESUS said, 'Saul, Saul why do you persecute me? And through this 'Saul' who became the apostle 'Paul' the new identity of being 'hidden in CHRIST' and setting our hearts and minds on things above, has become a legacy. And as we refresh ourselves once more with family and friends with the promise of Peace & Goodwill, how about soaring with hope? Oh! Nothing compares to the promise we have in 'HIM' – Joseph the dreamer, became the fruitful vine and eventually inherited the double blessing. But, to Joseph the son of David who was not afraid to take Mary home as his wife, an Angel of the Lord appeared in a dream and cautioned about 'Herod' who was searching to kill the Baby JESUS! And so was fulfilled the promise, 'Out of Egypt, I called my son'.

Now, how about taking up the challenge this Christmas to continually search HIS Word? Then the beauty and blessing of the LORD GOD searching our heart, and testing our anxious thoughts and motives, will become more and more evident as we 'walk-on' in accordance to HIS will. In a world that is rushing around and searching for success, 'JESUS' becomes the reason for our hope and HE is our reward. 'CHRIST' the new born King – isn't the promise of the Second Advent encouraging, for no one ever touches and changes hearts like JESUS! Yes! We can search for all eternity and find that there is none like HIM!!!

*Dr. Christina Ambrose*



## God's Boxes of Love

I have in my hands two boxes which God gave me to hold  
He said, "Put all your sorrows in the black and all your joys in the gold".  
I heeded His words and in the two boxes, both my joys and sorrows I stored  
But though the gold became heavier each day the black was as light as before.  
With curiosity, I opened the black Box wanted to find out why  
And I saw, in the base of the box, a hole which my sorrows had fallen out by.  
I showed the hole to God and mused aloud, "I wonder where my sorrows could be"  
He smiled a gentle smile at me "My child; they are all here with me".  
I asked, God, why give me the boxes, Why the gold with no hole and the black with the hole?  
My child, the gold is for you to count your blessings and the black is for you to let go.  
Yes, what a caring Heavenly Father we all have!

*Poem recited by  
Jency (8 Std.) on AKCDC Sunday*

## Beyond cake, candle and creche.....



Goodwill, cheer and a great holiday spirit suffuses the season of Christmas. Our grand old Church takes on an aura of special loveliness. It is a season for worshipful services, excellent music, the pageantry of the Christmas story by Sunday School Children, the round of Carol singing and the bonhomie of the Campfire, not forgetting the generous visits to the less privileged people. The hustle and bustle in homes is very infectious. Greeting cards fly hither and thither, delicious cakes and eats turned out with unflagging zeal, decorations and bedecked Christmas trees, the hectic shopping and the sense of expectancy as loved ones come home for the holidays prevail over the season. Hearts grow mellow and kind.

In the midst of all this brouhaha can we tarry a while and ask ourselves whether this radiant glow of Christmas would fade quickly from our hearts? Can we keep close to our hearts the awesome happening in Bethlehem? A moment when human history is "split in two on the roof of a Bethlehem barn." A new era, a new life, for man has begun. God has entered human life -- the Babe has no silken, downy cradle in a glittering palace, but a crude stable among strangers.

To these ignorant, rough shepherds was made known this exceedingly special message, making clear the functions, the office and dignity of this Babe in the straw. Will these humble men be branded moon-mad and superstitious? They obeyed the Heavenly declaration, proceeded, knelt and worshipped the Babe. These shepherds were ready for the 'Good News'. Calvin Coolidge said that, 'Christmas is not a date but a state of mind'.

At this season of Advent we bring to mind the words of Simeon who spoke with special spiritual insight. He hails the Babe as Messiah but recognises that with Deliverance comes anguish, and the deadly price of sin is to be paid by this helpless Babe. Can we fathom the pain in his words to Mary that a sword would pierce her soul? There is sanctity and awe in the Birth of Jesus.



So let us travel down the road to Bethlehem with the shepherds. The shepherds and the wise men see only an obscure stable and a baby in the manger. There is nothing to justify their exaltation. But their hearts tell them that they had found the King -- the Messiah. Yes, there are many ways to announce Jesus the Messiah. The Baptist had one way, a woman once poured ointment on Jesus' feet and its fragrance wafted across the seven oceans, an anonymous widow dropped her mite and this moved men and women to donate millions. William Carey gave away his great possessions and opened India to Christ. Do we have a way to announce Christ?

*Usha George*

**Answers to Bible Quiz No. 39**

***Hearty Congratulations !***

**Right answers given by :**  
**Mrs. Indira Rajanayakam**  
**Mrs. Suguna Joseph**  
**Mrs. Victoria Basker**  
**Dr. Rachel Chacko**  
**Mrs. Minnie Devadoss**

Note : Give only 1 reference which best answers the question. Ref. Carries 1/2 mark.

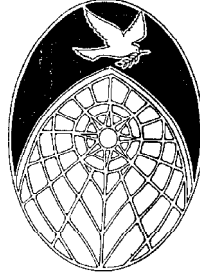
The answers are :

1. 'd' sent back home - 2 Chronicles 28 : 6-15
2. 'c' - 1 Samuel 29 : 6-10
3. 'd' or sons of Benjamin - Genesis 46 : 21
4. Nebuchadnezzar - Daniel 4 : 33
5. Psalms - Psalm 119 : 70
6. Fifty gold taches (Clasps) - Exodus 26 : 6
7. Ants, conies (badgers), locusts and spiders - Proverbs 30 : 24-28
8. 'The healing of the Nations' - Revelation 22 : 2
9. The Song of Solomon - 4 : 2
10. The Conversion of the Philippian Jailor - Acts 16 : 33

**Trivia !**

Answer - They raised Cain

*Usha George*



John's Corner

## BORN IN ME

(My prayer this Christmas)

"You Christians are a fraud", he said,  
My friend the other day;  
"You talk of upholding what's right,  
But "don't do as you say."

"You profess Jesus is the Life,  
The Truth, the Only Way,  
But how you live does not reflect  
That you the Lord obey."

"When someone is in need you say,  
'Don't worry! God is there',  
But seldom do you stretch your hand  
To show you truly care."

"When Christmas comes you speak of love,  
That Christ came joy to bring,  
But live the rest of the whole year  
Like it don't mean no thing."

I hung my head in shame and thought,  
Is he pointing at me?  
May Christmas change my life, I prayed,  
Dear Lord, be born in me.

*John H. Bala Singh*



**Medical Corner**

## **ULCERS IN THE BODY - VII**

### **ULCERS OF THE COLON**

**“Doctors treat, but Jesus heals”.**

Ulcerative colitis is due to chronic inflammation of the large bowel (COLON). It most commonly starts in young adults or in the seventh decade of life. Both genetic and environmental factors are responsible for the cause of the disease.

A diarrhoea lasting for more than 10 days in spite of treatment could be a ulcerative colitis. The first attack is usually the most severe and there after the disease is followed by relapses and remissions. Anaemia results from bleeding from the bowels, or malabsorption of iron, folic acid and vitamin B12. Because of protein loss, blood (serum) protein levels may also decrease.

Emotional stress, infection, antibiotics or anti inflammatory medications may provoke a relapse. Patients with extensive active colitis of more than eight years duration may have greater chances of developing “colon cancer”.

Stool examination and culture, sigmoidoscopy and rectal biopsy can confirm the diagnosis. Barium enema, plain abdominal X-rays and MRI scan can give added information.

In Crohn's disease, instead of the large bowels, the small intestines (small bowels) are inflamed. Endoscopy can confirm the diagnosis.

Best treatment depends upon a team approach involving physicians, surgeons, radiologists, and dieticians. Both ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease may be lifelong conditions and have psychosocial implications. Counsellors and patient support groups have important roles in educating reassuring and helping patients cope.

*Dr. (Mrs) Rajini Kantha*



## Christmas

The evergreen story of the birth of Christ will be read out to us on December 25th, as it will be in millions of churches all over the world. It is a mesmerising tale combining as it does, the miraculous and the mundane. The miraculous aspects are angels bringing messages from God to human beings - Angel Gabriel telling Mary that she would be the mother of the Son of God, then instructing Joseph to marry her, and much later announcing to the shepherds on the hills of Bethlehem that a Saviour was born to them in the very same town. The star leading the 3 astrologer Kings is again an other worldly phenomenon. The mundane feature is the birth of baby Jesus, in a cattle shed, his parents being too poor to afford a decent hotel. The inherent contrasts provide wonderful resources to story writers, song writers, film makers etc, and we have the Christmas story embellished by many details down the past 2000 years.

The Christmas story is beautiful, but the danger is that we can be so charmed with it as to become sentimental. It does not ask that we do something about it; it does not demand any vital change in our ways of thinking and living. So back in our daily routine if anyone asks us how we had enjoyed our Christmas, we are likely to say, 'Oh! it was wonderful, I met so many relatives whom I had not seen for donkeys' years. And we attended a Carol service, the music was heavenly! then of course, there was much feasting and entertainment.' This means we had celebrations at Christmas but did we celebrate the Christ who was born on Christmas Day? It is only because the baby whom we adored on Christmas Day, grew up into a person whose life, death and resurrection have personally impacted us that we celebrate His Birthday.

Jesus was brought up by devout Jewish parents in a village called Nazareth. At the age of 30, He left home to become an itinerant preacher. His teachings and healing works were so amazing that people believed that He was from God. Jesus Himself said that His teachings were from God. This roused the ire of the religious leaders who got Him crucified. But the third day He rose from the dead proving His claim that He was the Son of God.

The wonder of Christmas is that God so humbled Himself as to be born as a human baby. He grew up as a man who was a brother to all men. He was the "Emmanuel" 'God present with us' at all times. He became our Saviour to give us eternal life. What love is this? What is this redeeming grace? As people realised the results of the Incarnation, they began to praise God in songs. The Carols best express the joys of His Advent.

"Joy to the World" expresses the state of the people of the whole world, as those "Who sit in darkness and despair as far as the curse is found." It rejoices that Jesus Christ brings blessings to them. "Silent night, Holy night" salutes the night of Jesus' birth as the dawn of redeeming grace because Christ the Saviour was born and how the baby born on that day initiated the process of salvation for all mankind. Exactly the same wonderful hope is present in the carol, "Hark the herald angels sing" when it speaks of the Child, born that man no more may die, born to give them second birth.

So let us all sing "O come all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant, O come, ye O come ye to Bethlehem, Come and behold Him born the King of angels, " come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord." So if this spirit of thankfulness is present in all our celebrations, then we would have experienced the wonder of Christmas.

*Mrs. R. Chandy*



**Quiz No. 40 - Dec. 2013**  
**Based on King James Version**

(Note : Give only 1 ref. which best answers the question.  
Ref. carries 1/2 mark.)

1. What did Achan steal from Jericho?
2. "He that delicately bringeth up his servant from a child shall have him become his\_\_\_\_\_.
3. "The destruction of the poor" is their  
(a) slothfulness (b) ignorance (c) rudeness (d) poverty
4. Whose name comes to mind when you read of "the meal in the pot"?
5. "Thou shalt make\_\_\_\_\_ of gold upon the hem of the robe".
6. "Awake up my glory, awake\_\_\_\_\_ and\_\_\_\_\_.
7. Is this still popular philosophy from Psalms, Proverbs or Ecclesiastes? "Man is like to vanity: his days are as a shadow that passeth away".
8. Did Jesus say: 'Blessed are the poor'?"
9. Whose philosophy was this:  
"Man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth"?
10. What did David say about "the law of the Lord"?

**Trivia**

Why was the woman in the Bible turned into a pillar of salt?

*Send the answers with Bible references to the Church office before 25th December 2013.*

*Names of the members who answer correctly will be published in the next issue of Kirkspire.*

**True story**

## **Staying the Course....**

George was excited on his new job as Senior Engineer with an oil Company in Saudi Arabia. He promised his wife and two kids that he would take them there during the next academic year.

At Riyadh airport, he was thoroughly frisked by the immigration/customs officials. One bearded officer was too zealous. He fished out a Bible from George's baggage. He spat on the Bible, stamped, lifted with a long pair of tweezers and put it on a huge paper shredder. Hurling abuses at George the officer seemed to be victorious "Don't you know that it is a crime to carry a Bible in Saudi Arabia? And worshipping your God is banned here. And it is blasphemy ". His name-tag was clearly visible on his uniform- Sulaiman.

During his stay in Saudi Arabia. George came across a secret Christian Group, having family church on Fridays (Holiday in Saudi Arabia) and other holidays in a small apartment in the suburb. They even avoided singing hymns, lest the officials would notice. They used smuggled Bibles as well as Bible Apps downloaded in Mobile phones and tablets.

But this did not last long. Some one spied on them and the group was arrested. Presuming George was the leader, he was imprisoned and within a month the verdict of his serious crime was announced- death by beheading.

George was so dejected he became aged overnight with his black hair turning white; still he prayed.

His family, friends and those small groups kept on praying without a break.

After two years of solitary confinement, miraculously the King pardoned him. (Rumour is that the King had a dream). And he was to be deported, with a 'no-return' stamp on his passport.

At the Riyadh airport, accompanied by armed guards, George was about to board the flight back to Chennai. Suddenly a clean shaven officer approached and whispered in his ears "I am sorry; but I too am a secret Christian now". His name tag was clearly visible- Sulaiman

Now George and family are witnessing all over.



## Kirk News

Once more the time draws near the Birth of Jesus. Our grand old Church will be a veritable dream on that day. May we as one great church family of Christ pay our homage to the Babe in the manger through our worshipful services recognising God's greatest gift to man, through the beautiful carols and music, through our generous response to the Church appeal and through our heartfelt involvement in the ministries to the less-fortunate ones.

It is also a time when gentler thoughts banish bitterness and strife. It is a time to bring our thanks and praise to the One who has preserved us through this passing year. Let us wonder at the angel's message, worship with the wise men and like the shepherds, glorify God for all they had heard and seen. This is the true spirit of Christmas.

### **GUEST SPEAKERS**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> November 6pm Healing service  | Dr. Bennett, our Elder, spoke on 'Divine Healing' as explained in James 5:13-18.                      |
| 10 <sup>th</sup> November 6pm Worship service | Mr. Gabriel Sathianathan, our Elder, spoke on Remembrances' from 1 Chron.16:8-17.                     |
| 17 <sup>th</sup> November 9am Worship service | Dr. Sam Kamaleson, the co-founder of FMPB, shared from 1Cor.1:26-31 on the topic 'People of destiny'. |



6pm Worship service Dr. Alan Weaver, a leadership trainer for pastors and church leaders, spoke on 'Forgive, Rebuild, Move Forward' from Matthew 18:21-35 (Did Jesus really mean what He said?)

24<sup>th</sup> November 6pm Koinonia service Mr. Joshua Madan spoke at the Youth & Koinonia service on 'The 4 C's of life' from 1 Sam. 30:1-31.

**AKCDC Sunday** on 10<sup>th</sup> November was observed with enthusiasm by the children, teachers and staff. The children presented a special programme on the occasion and Pastor Peter Francis spoke on 'Divine Humility' (Phil. 2:1-12). The song 'All to Jesus I surrender' set the tone for the service, as the congregation gave thanks to God for the work done under the project.

**Sunday school Children's Sunday** service at 9am on the 24<sup>th</sup> was a special treat for the whole church, and especially the parents of Sunday school children. The children conducted the service with carefully choreographed plays and songs. Pastor Isaac Johnson gave the exhortation on 'Roots n Fruits'

**MONDAY BIBLE STUDY** We completed the study of James. It was a lively study, generating discussion on mainly two things viz., (i) how to apply James' frank teaching and (ii) how **not** to be misled by what comes easily to all of us, but to do what pleases God.

**PRAYER CELL** continues the study of Psalms, while praying for the needs of the church as well as individual and national concerns, with thanksgiving to God for His abundant mercies.

**HOUSE CHURCH** was conducted on the consecutive Fridays in the homes of: Mr. & Mrs. S.B. Benjamin, Mr. & Dr. (Mrs.) P.C.R. Suresh, Mr. & Mrs. Joshua Paulraj, Mr. & Mrs. Dilip Chacko John and Dr. & Mrs. Moses P. Manohar, respectively.

**DISTRICT FELLOWSHIP MEETS** District 1, 3 & 5 met on the 17<sup>th</sup> as follows:

**District 1** – in the home of David & Abha Appasamy.

**District 3** – in the home of Grace and Prem Aruliah.

**District 5** – in the home of Mr. & Mrs. Adolf Asir.

**Districts 7 & 8** shared the Word of God and their walk with the Lord in the home of Mr. & Mrs. V. Abraham Mani on the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**District 9** had a time of fellowship and sharing in the home of Dr. V. Prasanna Rao & Mrs. Premanjali Rao on the 10<sup>th</sup>.

We warmly appreciate the brothers & sisters who showed us hospitality and enabled us to fellowship with our Lord and our brethren in a more intimate way.

**KIRK WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP** had their monthly meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> November after the 9am service.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL** Classes 2-12 met for play practice on the 3<sup>rd</sup>. Regular classes were held on the following 2 Sundays (the 10<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>). 9am Worship on Sunday school Children's Sunday on the 24<sup>th</sup> was led by the children themselves. The worship was on the theme "Instruments of Worship – 'Singing a New Song to the Lord' ". The songs, plays and choreos by the Beginners, Primary, Juniors & Seniors captivated the parents and the whole congregation. We thank the Lord for the teachers, children and the Sunday school superintendent for this service where almost everyone gets to participate in one way or another!

#### **KIRK YOUTH FELLOWSHIP (KYF)**

KYF youth-led Bible study was conducted on 10<sup>th</sup> on the topic 'The cost of following Jesus'. Mr. Charles Chella Kumar, our missionary and member, gave the message at Catalyst on the 17<sup>th</sup>. It was on the topic 'Greatest of all is Love'. KYF assisted the Sunday school children on the 24<sup>th</sup> at the 9am Children's Service.

**EVANGELISM & MISSIONS MOVEMENT (E&MM)** The prayers during the month focussed on upholding our Evangelists, Missionaries and their ministry, for our Outreach Churches, Projects and Mission fields, for our Christmas Programmes in December in our Outreach areas to be more Gospel outreach oriented, for our Christmas Sharing Sale on Dec. 1, for our Annual Church Camp in Jan. 2014, for our Church and many crucial issues concerning our Nation. We have seen God answering prayers in wonderful ways and we will continue to uphold these issues and sow the seed by knocking on the Lord's door for His grace and wisdom.

**CONGRATULATIONS!** Mr.S.K.Charles & Mrs.A.Vijay Anandhi, our members, were blessed with a baby girl on 5th November.

**OTHER NEWS**

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

We look forward to the Christmas and New Year programmes in the Church and outreach areas, which started last week and will continue until the first week of January. This is a time of thanksgiving to the Lord for all that He has graciously given us. Thanks be to the Lord for helping us to commemorate His birth each year! And thanks be to Him for making us His own!

Kindly continue to pray for the special Christmas programmes during December and in the New Year, including the upcoming Church Camp on January 14 & 15, 2014. We especially pray that the Lord will show favour on the Kirk, the congregation and the outreach churches and enable us to draw closer to Him in worship and witness through these programmes and our lives.

We look forward to your articles, drawings, poems & feedback. We look forward to contributions from youth and children. Please hand them to the Editor, Mrs.R.Chandy or in the Church office.

We wish you all a very happy Christmas and New Year blessed by the Lord.

*Mahendra Kumar*



AKCDC - a joyful celebration



A move forward - Chess at AKCDC