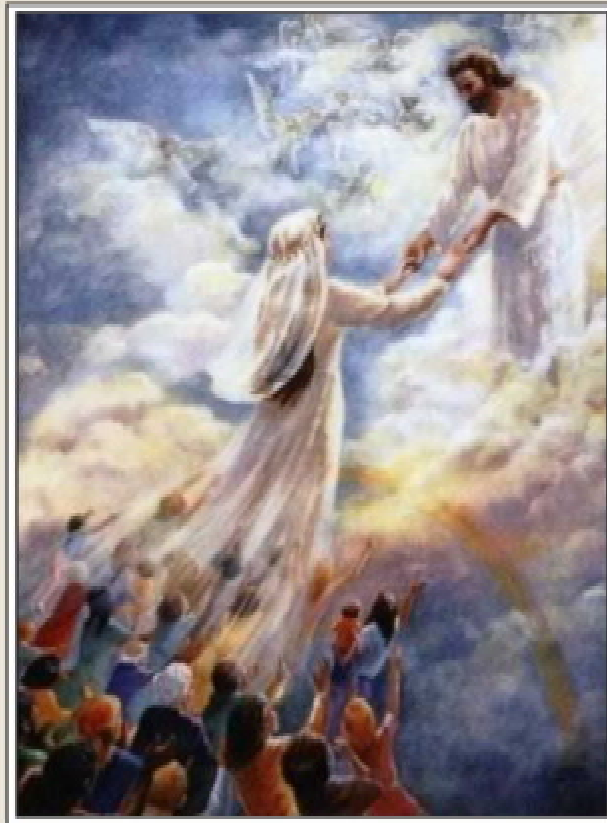




# *Kirkspire*



DECEMBER 2018

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*Editor : Mrs. R. Chandy*

## Word from the Pastor

### CELEBRATING WITH THE KING

For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done. (Matthew 16:27)

Christmas! We've come to that time of the year when there is so much talk about love, sharing, giving, peace, joy, hope etc. It is a festive season for many, good marketing season for some, travelling season for families and for some, it can even be a lonely season. Apart from the external feelings that come as part of the season, I would like to encourage the readers to think about one thing: 2nd Coming of Christ. Now, we are not talking about what we have, see or feel, we are talking about a greater reality than that. The Ultimate reality!!

A believer in the Lord Jesus Christ experiences three realities.

1. Reading and believing that Jesus came into the world over 2000 years back.
2. Receiving Jesus Christ as one's Lord and Saviour in their hearts – being born again.
3. Rejoicing as part of the Rapture experience.

An unbeliever experiences three realities.

1. Denying that Jesus came into the world over 2000 years back. Teachers of the law during Jesus' life on earth denied him as Messiah; the Muslims call him a prophet. Many others think that the entire Biblical narrative is a hoax.
2. Resisting the gracious call of God into their hearts and living in sin.
3. Left behind in the Rapture.

#### **Biblical Model of Celebration**

Celebrating the Christ of History

TO

Being a Disciple of Christ daily

TO

Prepared for Rapture and eternity

### **Worldly model of Celebration**

Using Christmas for selfish pleasures

TO

Resisting and rebelling against the word of God

TO

Lost for eternity in darkness

**If you are 'ready for Rapture', then you are 'ready for Christmas'.**

Celebrate the truth of Christ in the Bible

Celebrate the presence of Christ in your heart

Celebrate the promises of Christ in worship

Celebrate the hope in Christ in joyful anticipation

Happy Christmas to one and all

*Rev. Isaac Johnson*



Answers to Bible Quiz No. 94 – November 2018

#### **An Archer's Quiz (King James Version)**

1. Ishmael – Genesis 21:20
2. David killed Goliath with a sling – a simple version of bow and arrow. 1 Samuel 17: 49,50
3. Jonathan – 1 Samuel 20:20
4. Joab – 2 Samuel 18:14
5. Children – Psalm 127:5
6. Isaac – Genesis 27: 1-4
7. Hannah – 1 Samuel 2:4
8. The Benjaminites – 1 Chronicles 12: 1-2
9. Psalm 91:5
10. Paul – Ephesians 6:16

The winners are:

- 1. Mrs.Peace Rani Sudhakar**
- 2. Dr. (Mrs.) Sujatha Elizabeth Prasad**
- 3. Mrs.Minnie Devadoss**

Hearty congratulations!

*Usha George*



## CORNELIUS

*"He and all his family were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly". Acts 10:2*

The above verses from the book of Acts speak about a man named Cornelius, a centurion. He is neither a Jew nor an Israelite. He is a gentile who worked for the Italian regiment in Caesarea. The Bible records four distinctive qualities about this man. Firstly, he was a devout man. Secondly, He and all his family were God fearing. Thirdly, He gave generously to the poor and needy. Fourthly, He prayed regularly. He had a hunger and a passion for prayer.

It is because of these amazing virtues seen in Cornelius, the angel of the Lord appears to him and says these following words "Your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up as a memorial offering before God". His house became the first gentile household that the Holy Spirit was poured out. The Lord manifested his love for this family in a very unique way.

When you have a hunger and a passion for prayer, the Lord will exalt you and your family as he did to the house of Cornelius. Abraham was called a friend of God (Jas 2:23). Noah walked with God (Gen 6:9). Enoch being a family man walked intimately with God for 300 years. What is the common thread found in all these saints of God. It is a passion and a thirst to walk closely with God, an insatiable appetite for prayer and personal communion with God.

People who truly love the Lord would seek him early in the morning. They want to hear his voice first thing in the morning. They would love his word and read it diligently and regularly. "Remember your creator in the days of your youth" (Eccl 12:1). When you start seeking God from your Youth it will carry you when you are old.

Dear People of God, let us be inspired by the story of Cornelius. Each and every moment we spend in His " Presence" will never be futile. It will be a blessing to our family and our generations to come.

May the Lord Bless You !

*Antony Basil*



**Medical Corner**

## **Health Hazards of Water Pollution - Part-3**

**“Doctors treat but Jesus heals”**

Clean water is essential for human existence yet it is often cited that millions are deprived of clean drinking water due to contamination. There are various causes of Water Pollution—Global Warming, Sewage and Waste, Marine Dumping, Atmospheric deposition, Oil Spillage, etc. Also, Substances humankind throws away have polluted lakes, rivers and even the oceans. These substances are often toxic and are the major cause of Water Pollution.

Water Pollution has adverse effects on the surrounding ecosystems, wildlife in water as well as plant life. Polluted water with toxic chemicals causes serious water-borne diseases amongst humans and animals. Varied forms of pollutants affect health in various aspects:

### **1. Heavy Metals**

Industrial effluents such as Arsenic, Mercury, Cadmium, Lead etc. which kill aquatic -organisms and may reach human body through contaminated food (i.e. fishes etc.) and cause damage to the central nervous system.

### **2. Fluorides**

Fluorides in excessive amount cause yellowing of teeth and causes harm to the spinal cord. It also causes Fluorosis i.e. mottling of teeth and in some cases calcification of ligaments.

### **3. Pathogens**

Disease-causing organisms or ‘Pathogens’ include bacteria, viruses, and parasitic organisms that infect humans and cause illness. Some pathogens occur naturally, and others pollute water when human or animal waste washes into the water. Some of the common illnesses caused by pathogens in water include Typhoid, Cholera, Dysentery, Polio, and Hepatitis.

#### **4. Stagnant Water**

Polluted water is also a Breeding ground for mosquitoes and other parasitical organisms. Mosquito though is a menace to mankind as Malaria is transmitted with its bite.

#### **5. Petrochemicals**

Petrochemicals like benzene can cause cancer even at lower exposure levels.

#### **6. Pesticides**

The organophosphates and carbonates present in the pesticides can damage the nervous system and can also cause cancer. Some pesticides contain more than recommended level of carcinogens. They contain chlorides that cause reproductive and endocrinal damage.

#### **7. Radioactive pollutants.**

Mining and refining of Uranium, Thorium, etc. release radioactive pollutants that enter humans through food and water and get accumulated in the blood, thyroid gland, liver, bones, and muscles.

#### **8. Salts**

Salts in excess make fresh water unusable for drinking and irrigation purposes.

#### **9. Algal Bloom**

Direct exposure to toxic algae can cause health problems like rashes, stomach or liver illness, respiratory problems and neurological effects even.

#### **10. Bio magnification**

Water pollutants on consumption by an animal get concentrated and bio magnified up the food chain.

The effects of water pollution strongly impact the balance of nature, which impacts all life forms including all humans. With proper care and consideration, many of the situations that cause water pollution can be stopped or decreased. There is a long way to go, but right now all we need is for everyone to do their share, from their end.

*Dr. Rajinikantha Narendranath*



## Purpose of life: Part 16.

### Counting the Cost

God's **timing** in the time line of events in planning for the sacrificial Lamb has lot of significance of it being "**before**" or "**after**" the creation of the world. **Part 3**

In our earlier Part 15, we dealt with the aspect of learning to unlearn our belief in the light of the timing of God planning to keep aside the Lamb to be sacrificed. In this part we will deal more on the same with illustrations to understand the significance and the importance of such later revelations in the scriptures.

### Illustration: Importance of the Timing.

During the torrential rains and flooding in Chennai during December 2015, we were forced to be indoors continuously for days together. Electrical supply and phone connectivity were erratic and intermittent.

High value equipment was installed at the ground floor of our Eye Centre at T Nagar, Chennai and we couldn't shift them up to higher floors due to their weight, firm fixing to the foundations and continuous rains.

One night at around 1:00 am, when it had rained heavily, I noticed a missed call from our Eye Centre security. I couldn't reach him as there was no tower connectivity at that hour to find out the reason. Fear gripped me as I imagined the worst case scenario. I started reasoning out as to why our security should try to reach me at that odd hour of the night unless otherwise there was an emergency like equipment getting damaged due to flood water entering the building. However after sometime I noticed that our security had tried to reach me around 8:00 pm the previous night and not the early hours of the day. I noticed it and realized that the message was delivered late due to intermittent net connectivity. Once I realized that it was not at midnight that our security had tried to reach us but at a normal time, I began to relax.



Thus, we shudder when we are called at midnight 12:00 am and not so if it is at 12:00 noon - **Both are 12:00, but one is "night"** and the other is **"day"**! We shudder if it is **"night"** but take it lightly if it is **"day"**. God setting apart the Lamb to be slain even before the creation of the world is equivalent to **"night"** and such revelation should make us **shudder with reverential fear** as without a reason God wouldn't have decided to sacrifice His son even before the creation of the world. But we take such revelation casually as we would treat a call during day time.

### **Count the Cost prior to Construction.**

Before we embark on a construction project we sit and calculate the cost prior to the commencement. We check and ensure that we have enough resources to complete the project. In fact even our Lord Jesus has advised us to do so in the scriptures.

*"Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.' Luke 14:28-30*

If God had advised mankind to count the cost before starting the construction, how much more He would have counted prior to commencement of His creation activities? As we know God would have known through His foreknowledge (Isaiah 46:10 and 1 Peter 1:18-20) that He would have to sacrifice His Son Jesus Christ as a sacrificial Lamb to redeem the mankind that would fall. Why should He then create mankind that would call for such a high cost? None of us would have ventured into such projects if it calls for sacrificing our own son. We would not have embarked on it in the first place and if we had come to know that it would cost the life of our son, we would either change it or abort it. God has gone ahead with creation in spite of knowing the high cost that He would have to pay.

If we realize the importance and significance of such revelation we would look into God's plan for mankind with much reverence and from a totally different angle and perspective.

To continue,

*MM Narendranath*

## To Prepare Him Room

Through the centuries people thought of God as a severe Judge enthroned on high. As we study the kings, prophets and priests of the Old Testament, we sense in them a longing for prophecies to be fulfilled. This fallen world was gradually being prepared to receive the Messiah. The perfect Revelation was given by the coming of Jesus - Prophet, Priest and King, so strong yet so full of love and compassion.

It was a moment of time when God stepped into Creation and reached out to man's sinful predicament. The Second Person of the Trinity was born without a show of pomp and power. The Babe was born of a simple woman, laid in a manger as there was no place elsewhere. It happened in an obscure village, in a small country under the domination of the Roman Empire.

The birth of the Babe disturbed many. Herod and all Jerusalem were troubled and uneasy. This little Babe would one day change water into wine, walk on water, heal the sick and give life to the dead. He would teach as no Rabbi before Him or after Him. It was a force which created a new earth and not many could accept this – not even those who had waited anxiously for the Messiah.

The Gospel prophet Isaiah long long ago sang "Unto us a Child is born". He said that His name would be called "Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace" Is. 9:6. Veiling his power and glory He came to earth to be part of the human family "taking the form of a servant" Phil. 2:6,7.

Jesus' birth, death and resurrection completed His mission of salvation. Surely our hearts belong to Him by Creation and Redemption.

In the midst of decorating our trees, preparing our baked pastries and sweets and gifts, may we not miss the purpose of His wondrous birth. In God's supreme Gift to man, He shows us how precious we are to Him. May this message warm our hearts and bring joy to all who hear it. A poet of yore expressed this thought –

Though Christ a thousand times  
In Bethlehem be born,  
If He's not born in thee  
Thy soul is still forlorn.

*Usha George*



Bible Quiz No. 95 – December 2018

**CHRISTMAS QUIZ based on Matthew 1 and 2, Luke 1 and 2  
(King James Version)**

**True or False**

1. The innkeeper told Joseph there was no room in the inn.
2. Jesus was born on the same night Joseph and Mary arrived in Bethlehem.
3. Mary gave birth to her first-born son, wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger.
4. Straw filled the manger where Jesus lay.
5. Jesus was born on a cold winter's night.
6. Animals stood next to the manger.
7. The shepherds were terrified when an angel of the Lord appeared to them announcing Christ's birth.
8. The magi were from the East.
9. The shepherds with the magi saw His star.
10. The magi came to a house where the Child and his mother were.

Kindly send your answers to the church office by 16<sup>th</sup> December 2018.

*Usha George*

## The Peace of God



*Be careful for nothing: but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

— *Philippians 4:6,7*

When our TV ministry first began in the former USSR, we needed low-hanging, directional lights for our studio. Our staff was inexperienced, but they were all we had, so I sent them out to search for lights we could use to illuminate the studio where we were going to be filming our TV programs. With great delight, they returned with 40 big lights that they were sure would work to light up the studio. For a week, the staff members carefully hung the lights in place and tested them. After being satisfied that the lights were exactly what we needed, they said, “OK, now we can begin to film new TV programs!”

I was excited that the studio was so well lit and that the low-hanging lights looked so professional. But our studio had no air-conditioning, which made the room very hot. To stay cool, I wore a dress shirt, tie, and suit jacket from the waist up — and from the waist down, I wore shorts and put each leg into a big bucket of cool water in an effort to cool down while we were filming. Even with my legs submerged in that water, sweat would pour from my brow, and I would have to wipe my forehead the whole time we filmed. However, on this particular day, it felt especially hot — much hotter than usual.

After two hours of non-stop filming under those 40 lights, I felt very hot, so I took my legs out of the buckets, untied my tie, unbuttoned my top shirt, and went outside to get some fresh air. When I walked into the edit suite where the producers were working, they were trying to adjust the colors on the camera, because my skin looked so red on

the monitors. They twisted this knob and that knob, trying to get the color to look right. They were so focused on what they were looking at on the monitors that they never actually looked at me! Eventually I heard them say, "We think we've got it fixed. So, Rick, why don't you head back into the studio, and let's film more programs."

Once I resumed filming, I didn't stop again until I had filmed a total of eight hours of TV programs that day. It was a personal record for the most TV programs I had ever filmed in a single day.

But this time when I walked out of the studio, the producers looked at me to congratulate me for completing such a successful day. When they saw me, they gasped. It was at that moment they realized the 40 lights they were so proud of — that I had been sitting in front of for eight hours — were sunlamps! My face was severely burned and red beyond imagination. Try to imagine what you would look like if you sat in front of 40 sunlamps for eight hours! To make matters worse, I had been sitting in shorts with my legs in two buckets of water, and the radiation from those lamps literally scorched my legs. But the worst of all was what happened to my eyes — I could hardly see because my eyes were so burned. And every time I blinked, it felt like shredded pieces of glass were being dragged across my eyes.

At that time, pharmaceutical products were scarce in the former Soviet Union, so there were no medications or ointments to put on my burnt body. Instead, a local doctor recommended that I be covered in sour cream and that I then be tightly wrapped in plastic, like Saran Wrap, to keep the moisture trapped around my body! So I lay on the couch as Denise and her helpers literally doused me from head to toe in sour cream, and then had me roll over and over so the plastic would tightly stretch around me. My arms were trapped under the plastic; my legs were bound; I was immovable. I remember telling Denise that I felt like a huge enchilada!

Hour by hour, the pain increased all over my face and legs — every place that had been exposed to the 40 sunlamps. I cried because of the horrible pain in my eyes every time I blinked. We called a doctor in the United States who warned that it was possible I would wake up blind the next morning because I had spent eight straight hours looking directly into 40 sunlamps. Fear tried to grip my heart. Denise lovingly stayed right at my side the entire night to comfort me because of the pain that wracked my body. The pain in my eyes was especially horrific. Denise comforted me and reassured me that I would be able to see

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The effects of water pollution strongly impact the balance of nature, which impacts all life forms including all humans. With proper care and consideration, many of the situations that cause water pollution can be stopped or decreased. There is a long way to go, but right now all we need is for everyone to do their share, from their end.

*Dr. Rajinikantha Narendranath*

verse 7, I rested and allowed tranquility to come over me, and that tranquility ministered "peace" to my soul when I desperately needed it.

As I experienced this peace of God, it spoke to me far louder than the pain. Inwardly I knew that the battle for my eyes was over and that they were going to be all right. And just as verse 7 promises, "the peace that passeth understanding" began to "keep" my heart and mind.

The word "passeth" is a form of the word *huperecho*, which denotes something that is superior or surpassing. Because nothing compares to it, it is in a category of its very own. Furthermore, because this Greek word is a participle, we know that the peace of God expresses itself in us continuously. Thus, when I claimed peace in my situation, it began to continuously work in my heart and soul.

The word "understanding" is a translation of the Greek phrase *panta noun*, which literally means all understanding. It encompasses everything connected to the mind or reason. God's peace surpasses all reasoning, all understanding, and all thoughts that enter and work through the mind. This means that even though my mind screamed pain, God's peace surpassed its vehement voice and enabled me to hear His healing words.

Paul concludes verse 7 by saying "...The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." The word "keep" is the Greek word *phroureo*, which means to guard. However, it specifically referred to soldiers whose mission was to stand guard at the gate of a city to decide who was permitted inside. They had the power to decide who entered and who was restricted from entering the city. The word "heart" is *kardia*, which describes the center of a person from which thoughts and affections flow, and "mind" is *noema*, the Greek word for thoughts.

When you take this entire picture conveyed in verse 7 into consideration, we see that the peace of God stands like a guard at the entrance to our hearts, affections, and thoughts. If we allow peace to work, it will say "yes" to healthy, positive thoughts that want to enter those "gates" to our lives. But if something negative, detrimental, or destructive wants to enter our hearts, affections, and thoughts, the peace of God acts as a guard to block it from gaining access inside us. Thus, the peace of God acts as a sentinel of our hearts and minds.

As I recovered from my 8-hour encounter with 40 sunlamps, scary, fear-filled thoughts tried to enter my heart and mind. But when I claimed Philippians 4:6 and 7, the peace of God stood at the door to my heart and mind and refused to allow negativity and fear to enter my heart, The peace of God — the guard to my heart and mind — threw open the gates for a positive, healing influence. As a result, I recovered completely.

If you find yourself in a difficult position, and fearful thoughts try to enter your mind and emotions to create havoc, be quick to apply Philippians 4:6,7 to your situation. Very simply, do the three requirements laid out in verse 6:

1. Refuse to worry.
2. Let your requests be made known unto God by prayer and supplication.
3. Express thanksgiving — because heartfelt thankfulness is a powerful force to lift you up!

As you fulfill these conditions, God will go to work to perform His promise in verse 7.

1. The peace of God will go to work for you, producing supernatural tranquility and rest for your soul.
2. That peace will surpass any other thoughts that are trying to make you fearful.
3. That peace will act as a guard to prevent wrong thoughts from entering your heart, mind, and emotions — and it will throw open the door for positive, faith-filled thoughts to find entrance to your mind as well!

Philippians 4:6,7 is a very powerful passage of Scripture. If you'll fulfill the conditions of verse 6, God will be faithful to fulfill His promise to you in verse 7. So if you need a measure of peace in your life, you can assuredly know that God is anxiously waiting to fulfill His promises to you and to all those whose lives you touch. Just allow the grace of God to touch you today, and watch how He strengthens you as you shake off the chains of anxious, negative thinking!

#### **MY PRAYER FOR TODAY**

Father, I thank You for Philippians 4:6,7. Starting today, I ask You to help me fulfill the conditions in verse 6. And as I do, I expect You by



faith to start performing the promise in verse 7 on my behalf. I thank You that Your peace will bring tranquility and rest to my soul and serve as a sentinel to prohibit detrimental, damaging, and negative thoughts from entering my heart. Jesus fought the battle for me; the war is won; and now it's time for peace to express its full power in me!

I pray this in Jesus' name!

#### **MY CONFESSION FOR TODAY**

I boldly confess that I refuse to worry as I let my requests be made known unto God. I give God thanks for working in my life. As a result, I will experience the peace of God, and it will work for me to produce supernatural tranquility and rest for my soul. That peace will surpass any thoughts, which are trying to make me fearful. That peace will act as a guard to keep wrong thoughts from entering my heart — and it will throw open the door for positive, faith-filled thoughts to find entrance instead.

I declare this by faith in Jesus' name!

#### **QUESTIONS FOR YOU TO CONSIDER**

1. Can you remember a moment in your life when fearful thoughts assailed your heart and mind, but after prayer, the peace of God brought tranquility and rest to your soul?
2. Do you know any individuals who are struggling and need the encouragement found in this Sparkling Gem? If you really care about them, why not share it with them and let it strengthen them for the fight they are in?
3. Does peace or anxiety rule you? If you tend to be tossed about by anxiety, I want to tell you emphatically that the peace of God is the best medication for the Ask God today to let His peace that passes understanding go to work in your heart, mind, and emotions!

*A devotional by Rick Renner who pastors the  
Moscow Good News Church.*

## Kirk News



### Guest Speakers

**18<sup>th</sup> Nov 7am**

Mr. Robin Rajasekaran, our member, spoke on "4 things God expects from us" from John 15:1-16.

**9am**

Mr. Robin Rajasekaran spoke on "7 things that God requires from us" from Deuteronomy 10:1-13.

**25<sup>th</sup> Nov 7 & 9am**

Pastor Malcolm Macqueen spoke on "Realizing your full potential in God" from Joshua 4:15-24.

**Monday Bible Study** The study of Ezekiel continued, led by Rev. Isaac Johnson.

**Friendship Club** met on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> Nov for worship and fellowship.

**Evangelism and Missions Movement's Fasting and Prayer** met on Thursdays with prayers for the church, evangelists, outreach areas and national issues. Please join us between 10.30am and 1.30pm on Thursdays as we petition the Lord with the day-to-day needs of the church, the nation and the world.

**Friday Prayer** Rev. Isaac continued leading the prayer group with study of Proverbs.

**House Church** was held in the homes of Mr. & Mrs. Anil Oommen, Mr. D.S. Dennis & Mrs. Kala Dennis, Mr. & Mrs. V. Abraham Mani, Dr. & Mrs. D. Bennett and Ms. K.V. Saramma.

**District Meetings** District 5 met on 4<sup>th</sup> Nov; Districts 1 & 6 met on 11<sup>th</sup> Nov.

We thank the members who opened their homes in Christian love and fellowship.

**Sunday school** was held after the 9am services. The Sunday School Christmas Programme was held at the 6pm service on 25<sup>th</sup> Nov. The service was conducted by the children and included special songs, choreos and skits highlighting the gospel and Christmas, all by the children.

**Kirk Youth Fellowship** Prayer and fellowship on 4<sup>th</sup> Nov; conducting the Outreach Youth Service in Tirupalaivanam on 11<sup>th</sup> Nov; Bible Study continued on the book of 1 Thessalonians on 18<sup>th</sup> Nov; Catalyst youth worship service on the 25<sup>th</sup> morning when Mr. P.C.R. Suresh, Church Elder, spoke on "CAREER COUNSELLING", followed by Outreach Youth Service at Gypsy Colony in the evening.

**Kirk Women's Fellowship** met on 11<sup>th</sup> Nov to plan for the Christmas sharing sale.

**Monthly Night Prayer** was held on Friday 30 Nov focussing on deliverance for those in trouble (Psalm 34:17).

**Welcome to the Christmas Sharing Sale!**

**Fellowship, Sharing and Joy of Christmas focussing on the Lord Jesus!**



**John's Corner**

## **HAPPY CHRISTMAS! EVERY DAY**

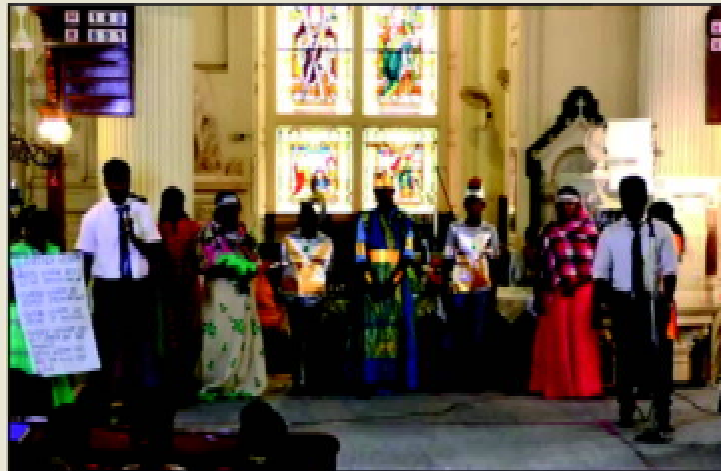
(Read Matt. 1:23, 28:20)

Christmas is coming; with gladness we sing,  
'O come Emmanuel! Jesus is here'.  
Alas! I wondered with sorrow and shame,  
Where is our Saviour the rest of the year?

We celebrate Christmas and rightly too,  
And make it a point each Sunday to pray;  
But our behaviour, the life that we lead,  
Makes one doubt whether we walk the Lord's way.

May Jesus be born in us every day,  
Our life be a carol sung through the year,  
Telling the world that Christ came at Christmas,  
And is with us always to guide and cheer.

*John H. Bala Singh*



**AKCDC Sunday 11th November**



**Sunday school Christmas programme 25th November**

