



January 2012

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Cover design by Abigail Benjamin

Editor : Mrs. R. Chandy

Word from the Pastor

The Psalmist in Psalm 119:105 said 'Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path'. One of the practices we have in our church is the 'Entrance of the Word' every Sunday which is a wonderful reminder to all of us of the significance we give to the Word as we commence our worship. Similarly as we commence each day particularly as we plunge into this New Year we need to begin the day by spending time with the **Word**, before we go into the **World**.

When I think and reflect during Bible study or Quiet times with God, this is what should happen.

1. Bible Study or Quiet times with God should cause us to **leave** our sinful attitudes, actions and ways.
2. Bible Study or Quiet times with God should cause us to **Weave** God's truth into the fabric of our being, so that what we weave becomes tangible in my actions, my attitudes I display and the ways I go about.
3. Bible Study or Quiet times with God should cause us to **Cleave** to God alone. We begin to bask in the Father's love. We keep on coming to the faithful High Priest, who liveth to intercede for us. We learn to depend on the Holy Spirit who teaches us all things.
4. Bible Study or Quiet times with God keeps us informed. We gather **Information**.
5. Bible Study or Quiet times with God should cause us to be transformed. We go through **Transformation**.
6. Bible Study or Quiet times with God causes us to be reformed. God is in the business of re-forming us. **Reformation**.

Let us take some time off from our busy, hectic schedules to have Quiet times with God and His Word.

God bless you as you do more so in the days ahead.

*Peter Francis
Pastor*



Rev Samuel Packianathan's history

Christian Missionary Society , London Missionary Society and SPG from the UK used to send missionaries to India. In a meeting Mr. Samuel Pakianathan volunteered to go as the first missionary. Just like little Samuel "speak Lord Thy servant heareth" this Samuel also went obeying God's calling.

Rev. S. Packianathan was sent in 1904 AD to Dornakal in Andhra Pradesh as a Missionary to work among the Lambardies, a tribal people with no education and full of superstition. It was a dense forest with tigers, wolves, cheetahs and snakes. He came alone and learnt to read and write telugu in two months

When Mr. Samuel arrived in Dornakal he knew nobody, so in the station [a very small one] he knelt at one end and prayed. The Station Master, an Anglo Indian came and asked him what he was doing there. He told him, no one would give him a place to live. He offered him, a part of the lumber room for a few weeks. Later he had to live in a tent under one of the trees. .The forest became his home and service to God became his breath. In 1905 he asked his brother Mr. Solomon Packianathan to join him there. They were ordained later.

One day the local Collector, an English man , on his way to hunting tigers saw these strangers living in a tent under the trees. He sent for them to find out what they were doing there. Mr. Solomon P had been an English Professor in a college in Sri Lanka, so he could explain to the Collector their vocation to convert the lambardies and to teach them about our Lord Jesus Christ and to start schools etc etc. So the Collector gave them many acres of land. A Cathedral, a Hospital, Schools and Hostels have been built there.

Then Rev Samuel P brought his wife and children. The lambardi women loved Mrs Samuel. She knew herbal medicines and used to be called out

for all sicknesses. Once there was a cholera epidemic and the local people built a big shed and left all the people with cholera there to die. That year both the Rev. and Mrs P Samuel went and lived among the sick people and nursed them by giving salt and sugar water and they saved many. People thought they were foolish and that they would be injected with Cholera and die. Neither of them got the infection. The couple told the people their GOD protected them. This was a good testimony and made the locals come in groups to find out about the Christian GOD who had saved the couple and those whom they had ministered to. Later more and more Missionaries were sent there to work among the local Christians [converts]

In 1912, the Rev. Samuel Azariah, Leader of the group who sent the missionaries to Dornakal-became the first Indian Bishop in Dornakal, and by 1935, there were 11 lakh 75 thousand Christians with 100 Pastors. Rev Samuel Packianathan (Thelma's great grandfather and my grand father) had five children, one girl and four boys, the second son was my father.

In the year (2003), the Thirunelveli Diocese celebrated the Centenary of the Dornakal Diocese. There are many local Bishops, Doctors and educated people among the once tribal People. God has blessed all Rev SP's children and grand children (God's blessing on the generations). Two of his great grandchildren are Missionaries in that field. Our grand father lived to 94 yrs and lived in our house.

Kinkin S. Theodore

*This issue marks the 40th year of
the publication of KIRKSPIRE.
We give thanks to God for His
sustaining help.*



John's Corner

A New Year Prayer

Yet another year is dawning,
Lord, I pray most earnestly,
That I may be always grateful,
And depend on only Thee.

Though richly blessed, Lord, I at times,
In my trials fail to see
You beside me, ever near me,
And start grieving needlessly

May I see the crown of glory
At the summit of my cross,
Confident You'll there uplift me,
Helping me the tide to cross.

May I look to Jesus only,
And not doubt His power and love,
Pointing sinners as I journey,
To the Saviour up above.

John H. Bala Singh



“Ready, Set, Go....”

Yet another ‘New Year’ and I am sure we are all ready & set to get going in all the wonderful, new, God given opportunities. As we stand in the starting line again in our race of life don’t we dream of the finishing line and the victory stand? Who doesn’t dream of success-be it in sphere of studying, playing or working. Ability can take us to the top but only character can keep; at the top. How do we scale new heights in character building, the Lord’s way, this year? Let’s look into 3 important tips:

1) Hard work pays: One day a Grandpa told his Grandchildren about his life’s journey that took him from his home in Eastern Europe to a bustling city in the United States of America. Once he happened to go to a cafeteria and sat down at an empty table. He waited..... and waited.....Nobody ever came to take his order for food. Finally a woman with a tray full of food sat down opposite him and explained how a Cafeteria works. She said, “You start at the end” pointing toward a stack of trays and “then go along the food line and pick up what you want. At the other end they’ll tell you how much you will have to pay.”Grandpa recounted that he learnt that life was like a Cafeteria. You can get anything you want-even very great success-if you are willing to pay the price. But you’ll never get what you want, when you want it, if you just wait for someone else to bring it. The difference between where we are and where we want to be can be summed up in the word “Hard Work”. And I am sure ‘Hard Work’ always begins with a lot of home work. “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the lord as a reward”.Col3:23,24.

2) Team work counts: Few sights evoke as much attention and awe, as that of a large flock of Canadian geese winging their way in V formation to the north or south. They not only speak of the changing seasons, but also of the value of team work. It is well known that

when a goose gets sick, or perhaps wounded it never falls from the formation by itself. Two other geese also fall out of formation with it, and on the ground the healthy birds protect the wounded bird, even to the point of throwing themselves between the weakened bird and possible predators until it is able to fly again. They usually wait for another group of geese to fly overhead and join them, adding to the safety and efficiency. How is our team work with our family members, and friends? As we can see, it is pretty clear that team work needs a lot of ground work. "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up". Galatians 6:9.

3) The framework that fulfils and Rewards. The framework for every success story is clearly outlined in the 1st Chapter of Joshua. The Lord tells Joshua, "Moses my servant is dead, now then, you and all these people get ready to cross Jordan River into the land I am about to give.....And the Lord God instructs Joshua and each of us, "Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful".

Hard work pays - But the best part of achieving is believing.

- Believing the Lord.

Team work counts - But the best part of aspiring is caring

- Caring for one another in the Lord.

Frame work rewards - But the best part of fulfilling is obeying and

—being willing at any cost for the Lord.

This year let's get Ready, Set and Going, relying on the unchanging Word of God - "I can do everything through Him (CHRIST JESUS) who gives me strength".

Dr. Christina Ambrose.

The Road Less Travelled

Part 2 : But I have promises to keep...

The purpose of the sub-title of Part 2 is to encourage readers to become involved in the needs of others. Often we are aware of the needs and pains others bear. But too often, other than the awareness, few get involved to take up the challenge to do something for society. 'So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you' (Math. 7:12). It was this that enabled the founders of NEAHRD at Tura, to establish the Academy for Vocational Training to meet a specific need in society, especially among the youth.

Can each person, young or old, have a dream, cherish a vision, that challenges one to step out of the comfort zones and throw oneself into the adventure of serving God through others and not confine ourselves to self and family?

Like most frontiers, the Northeast has been isolated geographically, difficult to travel and hence slow to develop. Much has been done and much more remains to be done, especially in the three areas that bedevil many parts of our land: infrastructure (roads), education (formal and vocational) and health (drinking water, primary health services etc).

Centuries ago, the Romans showed the need for good road communications and we should take this lesson as relevant even today. The National Highways pass muster as do the State Roadways. But the condition of the PWD roads leading to most villages is pathetic at best.

Education is available theoretically, but the standard and consistency of delivery is abysmally low. Schools do not even have good buildings and qualified teachers seek greener pastures in bigger towns and cities. The rate of drop out is quite high (above 50%) especially among girls at the Higher Secondary level onwards. Many girls sacrifice further studies despite being good students so that brothers can continue studies.

I was surprised to find even among tribal communities the mindset to sacrifice the welfare of the girl child in preference to that of the boys. The rural economy puts further burden on boys as well as girls to work in the fields rather than attend classes and girls have the added burden of attending to house work and looking after siblings.

Health is a mixed picture in these places. Naturally they are sturdy and healthy hill folk. Among the poor I found the average household size to be between 9 to 12 persons (6 to 8 children, 2 parents and

often 1 or 2 grandparents). Each family generally owns some land and stays in its own house. They tend to stay together, with very little income from agriculture, since owing to bad communication, they grow only for their own consumption.

My observations during visits to various homes revealed that in large families it is common to come across congenital deformities, deafness, cleft palate, afflictions of polio, skin ailments, dental maladies etc. This further adds to the burden on the family since if a child is crippled, someone has to tend the child full time. Vaccination drives are now picking up in many communities.

My informal talks with PHC (Public Health Centre) in-charge revealed that many (women especially) succumb to pulmonary and respiratory complaints after their youth. Many PHCs are woefully short of medicines and so are regular visits by qualified doctors. Unless compelled to make visits, doctors would prefer the comforts and security of the bigger towns than the rural areas. This again is a phenomenon in other parts of India too.

It was my turn to look into the sad and tragic face of HIV, AIDS, Alcoholism and drug abuse. The spread of HIV is alarming and it is NOT as much owing to sexual promiscuity as transmission through infected needles of intravenous drug users. With porous borders adjoining Myanmar, Bangladesh and China drug trafficking is a real menace and unless the youth are guarded against this they will continue to fall prey.

Among the young people I interacted with there was always a fear of the future, a sense of uncertainty. Some could afford to go anywhere else and educate themselves for a better future. But the burden is on the majority of young people who see no career path, no future, who experience the corruption in society, the negative effects of underground rebellion and the frustration that is a result of no progress, economically and socially. A repeated refrain was 'please pray for my future'.

There are many avenues of service open to anyone, in any walk of life, young or old. Even for short periods of time Churches, hospitals, NGOs need people with a Vision. The challenges are great but so are the intangible rewards. Youth groups, through Churches can visit villages, set up projects, or help to complete projects. It will be an ideal opportunity for the young of the city to experience life 'on the edge' so to say. It can be a satisfying yet sobering experience emotionally and a toughening experience physically. The experience can be similar to outward bound expeditions of adventure.

by S. Gabriel



Medical Corner

Mental and Emotional Health - XII

Addiction - III

Smoking is the leading cause of preventable illness. Quitting smoking is the single best thing smokers can do for their health. The long-term health benefits one gains by quitting are innumerable. Most smokers know that tobacco is bad for their health and they want to quit.

More than three-fourths of the current smokers have tried to quit at least once. Quitting smoking is tough. It takes time, planning, patience, effort and energy and a strong motivation. To start with, life may feel a bit empty, without the comforts and rituals of smoking.

There are very many ways and options to quit - counselling, smoking cessation programmes, nicotine replacement therapy and prescription medications. If one has a markedly strong will, quitting cold turkey without the help of other modes is possible. A well planned, ideal and customized combination of options greatly reduces the pain and discomfort of quitting that may prove intense during the initial few days or weeks.

The following guidelines are born out of deep concern, extended to unknown and unseen 'smoking' friends. For a smoke-free life, you have to face a tough foe, the craving for nicotine. If you falter and slip in your great effort, do not give up. Get right back on track and fight, to ultimately become a successful quitter. Do not let nicotine seduce you again.

Avoid smoking in your home. Declare your home a smoke-free zone. Throw away your ash trays. Save yourself and your family from the toxic effects of second-hand smoke. Your family and friends can play a valuable role in your new life as a non-smoker. Encouragement from loved ones is

extremely helpful. They form your biggest cheerleaders. You are taking a momentous step towards good health. Anytime is perfect to snuff out your habit. Be serious and firm in your resolve. Stay motivated and focus all your attention on quitting, giving it the highest priority. Be busy both physically and mentally all the time. Exercise more. Indulge in outdoor activities, enjoying fresh air. Every smoke-free day is a good day. As a non-smoker, declare victory over addiction and start celebrating your new life. Remember, I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" Philipians 4:13(NKJV).

Dr. (Mrs) Rajini Kantha

Answers for Bible Quiz No. 19
Right answers given by :

Mrs. Indira Rajanayakam
Mrs. Victoria Basker

Congratulations !

The answers are :

1. I saw 3 ships
2. Micah
3. John Milton
4. C.S. Lewis
5. The star of Bethlehem that led the wise men to the baby Jesus.
6. Sir Henry Cole in 1843
7. Pope Julius I
8. For unto us a child is born
9. Australia
10. Bethlehem

Aruna Asir

Our Part of the Circle

(Women's Fellowship)

In our Church's Christmas Countdown Calendar, right from the lighting of the first Advent candle there has been a rush of events. Our church reaches out to various communities where we minister, to share the Christmas spirit with love and joy. It is a season when one gives with enthusiasm, and a special readiness.

On December 10th 2011 the ladies of the Women's Fellowship met to celebrate the marvel and the mystery of the birth of the Christ-Child. We came together to participate in an experience which was an expression of our mutual faith.

So at this special gathering we sang the traditional carols, heard Chitra Bennett's meaningful Christmas message, played fun-filled games, exchanged gifts and heartily enjoyed a good Christmas lunch. It was a time where we women were by ourselves, no hurry, no pressure of time - nothing to limit or divert us from this fellowship.

We are proud to be the women God has made us – undertaking chores and tasks, bringing freshness and new meaning into life's ordinary duties. Sometimes as an observer, I have experienced that when the Women's Fellowship meets, there is created a sacred space, as here they do not ask to be in the limelight, seek acknowledgement or acclaim. The work is done quietly and efficiently – all for the glory of God.

"From thenceforth, Mary had cried out in the Magnificat," all generations shall call me blessed". Her song was the first expression of the unity of Mankind. That is the role we women should play in our own small and humble way – to strive and work against injustice, greed and disharmony.

The story of the first Christmas is the most lovely story in the world, relevant not just for the month of December but all through the year. It is one in which the world experienced love and wonder. For on that wondrous night the first Vision of Perfection shone over the world. The world still remains imperfect but the Vision remains perfect.

Just at through the years human voices have been raised in exaltation, exultation and exhortation, we women too sang carols heralding the birth of a Baby – the Messiah, born in radiant beauty and power on a starlit night long, long ago.

'O come all ye faithful.



The Practice of Christian Living

"Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind (Romans 12:1-2)."

Someone once said, "Life is what you make it. It's not what happens but how you take it." Everything about the practice of Christian living is within our control. We don't have to behave like everyone else. We can be transformed and it begins with choosing to behave differently.

"Each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. "In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you (Ephes 4:25-32)."

I believe Paul was in effect, the first behavioral psychologist. He taught that while we can't always control the circumstances of our life we can control our response to them. We have such a glorious future awaiting us that we don't have to worry about gaining the approval of others by acting the way they do. Our primary goal is pleasing the Lord.

"Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. (Luke 6:37-38)"

Choosing to become more tolerant, forgiving and generous will have such a remarkable effect on our life that others will want to know what has happened to transform us. Instead of stuttering and stammering through an embarrassing attempt to "witness" to friends and neighbors we'll find that our very life has become a witness to what God can do, and people will be drawn to us.

This is because the practice of Christian living is not all don't do this or don't do that, at least not in the negative sense. Remember Jesus said that He came so we might have life and have it more abundantly (John 10:10).

To that end the Bible says we shouldn't worry about how we're going to get by, letting the Lord take care of that for us (Matt. 6:25-34). We shouldn't let what Paul called the light and momentary troubles of this world get us down. We should no longer fix our eyes on the temporary things we can see, but focus on the eternal things we can't see instead (2 Cor. 4:17-18). This is even more true for us than it was for the people of Corinth 2000 years ago because very soon we're going to step out of this world and into the next one where the eternal things we've only been able to dream about will suddenly become our new reality.

In the mean time, do you hate your job because of a boss who's hard to please? Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. (Colossians 3:23-24)

Are your neighbors or associates hard to put up with? Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. (Romans 12:17-18)

We who've been given everything don't have to worry about anything.

*Taken from How shall we live?
(<http://gracethrufaith.com/selah/how-shallwelive/>)*

Quiz No. 20



1. Which place God made as His dwelling place for His Name?
2. Whose nest is set in a rock?
3. Who was considered as the beloved of the Lord?
4. Who were swifter than eagles?
5. Which city had the walls up to the sky?
6. Whose faces looked like the faces of lions?
7. Whose wound is as deep as the sea?
8. Who was asked to live as a widow in her father's house?
9. Whose gold and silver are corroded?
10. Who asked whom to prepare a guest room for himself?

Send the answers with Bible references to the Church office before 25th January 2012.

Names of the members who give right answers for all the questions will be published in the next issue of Kirkspire.

Aruna Asir

KIRKSPIRE wishes all its readers "A Happy New Year"

Kirk News

*"But those who wait on the LORD
Shall renew their strength;
They shall mount up with wings like eagles,
They shall run and not be weary,
They shall walk and not faint.." (Isaiah 40:31)*

December is a time to look back at the year's past and also look forward to the coming year. It is a time in the Christian calendar when the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ is celebrated all over the world with fervor and gaiety.

On 19th December, the death was announced of Kim Jong-il, who had been the "supreme leader" of North Korea (DPRK) from 1994. In 2004, a Human Rights Watch report had named Kim as "among the world's most repressive government leaders". It is hoped that life will improve for the North Koreans under the new regime.

December saw the release of Worldwide Corruption Perceptions ranking of countries

published by Transparency International. Out of the 185 countries ranked, India is placed as #95. While there is uncertainty about the Lok Pal Bill being passed under the present government due to disunity among political parties, the citizens hope that the mindset of every person of the country changes so that, though it may appear utopian at present, corruption will again become a "dirty" word and India can rank among the top-ten corrupt-free countries of the world in the span of a generation.

Cyclone Thane swept through Tamil Nadu between 29th and 30th December 2011 and resulted in at least 47 deaths. While causing the evacuation of tens of thousands of people from low-lying villages and widespread crop and property damage, some aid agencies fear the damage to property and infrastructure could be worse by Thane than the Indian Ocean tsunami which hit the same coastline in 1994, as there was more destruction inland. It is to be hoped that both government and non-government organizations provide the necessary succor to the affected people.

Our Church had many activities scheduled for December, one of which was the Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols Service held on the 18th evening. Apart from many other activities, the Christmas Campfire, carol rounds, Sunday School Christmas play and the annual visits by our church members to the Government TB Hospital and the Institute of Mental Health were held.

Guest Speakers

4 th December	6 pm	Message	Mr. Dulipsingh Thangasamy
18 th December	7 am	Message	Mr. P.C. Verghese
	9 am	Message	Mr. P.C. Verghese

We thank them for delivering the Word of God.

Monday Bible Study, Friday Manse Prayer and House Church programs were not conducted during the month of December because of various Christmas Programs. These will be resumed after Church Camp 2012 and the dates will be announced later.

District Meetings

We gratefully acknowledge District Meetings organized by Districts 5, 2, 7 & 8 and 1 in the homes/clinic/SACCE building of Dr.& Mrs. D. Bennett, Mr.M.M.Narendranath and Dr.(Mrs).Rajinikantha Narendranath and Mr. & Mrs. Vivek and Sangeeta Harinarain.

Kirk Sunday School

The Kirk Sunday School met on Sundays – the 4th, 11th and 18th December in the SACCE and/or DCC Halls at 9 am.

Kirk Youth Fellowship

The Kirk Youth Fellowship met at the SACCE Hall on Sundays the 11th and 18th December at 11/ 11. 30 am.

Christmas Sharing Sale 2011 was held on 4th December after the 9.00 am Holy Communion Service. Special Offering covers towards Sharing Sale 2011 were placed at the pews. The entire proceeds went to Christian organizations that uphold missionaries or care for the poorest of the poor and the physically and mentally challenged.

Congratulations

Dr. Anoop & Sagarika Devasahayam have been blessed with a son named Dhruv Daniel Devasahayam on 3rd December 2011. Grand son to Mr. Rajendran & Mrs. Veinu Gnanaolivu.

Jeffrey Bonns & Trimna have been blessed with a baby girl on 6th December 2011. Grand daughter to Late Mr. Bonns Chelliah & Mrs. Revathy Bonns.

Vijay Rao & Tanya were blessed with a baby girl on 22nd December 2011. Granddaughter to Mr. R. E. Silas & Mrs. Hema Silas and Dr. V. Prasanna Rao & Mrs. Premanjali Rao.

Obituary

We regret to inform the passing away of Mr. Alan Stewart (former treasurer of our church) on 5th December 2011. We convey our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family.

We regret to inform the passing away of Rev. H.S.Dhanraj on 7th December 2011, father of Rev. Devaputhiran former Presbyter of our church. We convey our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family.

Thanksgiving Service for the Life of Mr. Alan Stewart our former Treasurer was held on Monday the 26th of December at 5: 30 pm at Doveton Corrie Matriculation Higher Secondary School Vepery.

Upcoming

CHURCH CAMP 2012: Please mark in your appointment calendar these two important dates in the life of our Church, Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th of January 2012 (Pongal Holidays) to spend time in learning about the 3rd person of the Holy Trinity. Topic: "Christian Life – Controlled and Empowered by Holy Spirit" at the historical site- St. Thomas Mount-International Guesthouse-Hilltop by two eminent scholars and teachers of His word, Mr. Rajkumar Ramachandran and Rev. Dr. Brian.C.Wintle. Special program for Children is arranged during this time. Registrations after service.

Conclusion

Kirkspire invites articles from its congregants, which can be handed over to our Editor, Mrs. R. Chandy or the Kirkspire Committee members or the Church office. A closer involvement of the congregants (the youth are specially requested to contribute) in **Kirkspire** by way of feedback, articles, encouragement and suggestions is especially welcome.

Kalpana Chittaranjan



Rev. Murdoch Mackenzie, Dr. Anne Mackenzie and our pastor Rev. Peter Francis at the Christmas celebration of our Day Care Centre.



Church members at the Mental hospital to celebrate Christmas