

But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. Hebrews 11:6



# **Kirkspire**

The Monthly Magazine of St. Andrew's Church (The Kirk), Chennai  
January 2023

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**Editor : Usha George**



## Word from the Pastor

### Walking with Confidence

*Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:16)*

God, only God has led all of us through 2022 and has given us life to see 2023. We look back at the year and see the footprints of God in our lives. There have been tears, trials, temptations and troubles. But we have also experienced joy, goodness, blessings and pleasant surprises. We have had to endure the passing away of loved ones, joyful blessings and it's been a mixture of many experiences.

Now here we are in January 2023 and we wonder how it's going to be. What is ahead of us and what can we expect? Life on earth is always filled with unexpected turn of events and no one can predict or prepare fully for all that will come our way BUT "God of 2022 is going to be our God of 2023".

Let me encourage everyone with these three important lessons

1. Love Jesus with all your heart daily
2. Lean on Jesus when you feel weak and worn
3. Learn to trust Him at all times

I personally realize that every new year is a beautiful reminder that God's word is more real and true today than ever before. Love is growing cold; sin is being widely accepted and applauded and holiness is mocked and modified for human convenience, both within the church (in general) and without.

However, God is calling every one of us to LOVE JESUS with all your heart. Fall in love with your Maker, Master and Messiah. The more we love Him, the less we love the world and its deceptive pleasures. The more we walk in His ways, the less we waver into the things of darkness. We are also called to LEAN ON JESUS. I cannot make it through this year on my own strength, wisdom or talents. I am not prepared for the unexpected but I learn to lean on Jesus for He will carry me under His wings. Finally, I LEARN TO TRUST in Jesus. Isaiah 54:10 says, 'For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but My kindness shall not depart from you, nor shall My covenant of peace be removed,' says the LORD, who has mercy on you.

Finally, as God's people, always encourage one another, pray for one another and lovingly admonish one another in faith so that all of us prepare for the GREAT SECOND COMING OF JESUS CHRIST.

***God bless each one of you. Have a fruitful,  
wonderful 2023.***

*Rev. Isaac Emmanuel Johnson*

"Help me, O God, this year to crown with beauty;  
within my thoughts to write thine own best will.  
To Thee anew I give myself for duty;  
Take me, dear Lord, and all my plans fulfil."



Medical Corner

## **ALLERGIES IN THE BODY – IV BRONCHITIS AND ASTHMA**

**“Doctors treat, but Jesus heals”**

Acute bronchitis often follows a common cold. Initially irritating dry cough with chest discomfort occurs. Later chest tightness, wheeze and breathlessness can occur. Sputum (phlegm) is initially white and scanty but after a day or two becomes thick, yellow and copious. If allergy is associated with infection then fever (38-39<sup>æ</sup>%C) can occur. Asthma is due to multiple genetic and environmental factors. Exposure to air allergens and cigarette smoke can cause an attack of wheeze and this could be responsible for childhood asthma. It has been known that asthma runs in families. First degree relatives are more prone.

House dust mites(microscopic insects) abound in carpets, soft furnishings and bedding.Frequent vacuum cleaning of house and carpets is advisable. Bed sheets should be changed frequently. Pets like cats and dogs can also produce allergens. Fungal spores and cockroach allergens are common in houses. Passive exposure to cigarette smoke immediately following birth increases the risk of developing asthma.In the outdoors, motor vehicle emissions (smoke) and fuel burning industries can liberate chemical gases which are harmful to the lungs. Pollens from grass, flowers and crops are also allergens. Some drugs, viral and bacterial infections and smoking can trigger symptoms. Severe anxiety or stress can exacerbate asthma and acute emotions may provoke an acute attack.

A detailed history is taken. Pulmonary (lung) function tests are done. A chest radiograph (X-ray) may give added information. Successful management of asthma begins with education of the

patient. Bronchodilators (reliever) and anti-inflammatory (preventer) medications are used. It is important to identify and avoid allergens. Short acting bronchodilators such as salbutamol or terbutaline are used by inhalation for the relief of occasional minor symptoms. In chronic cases, steroid inhalers (beclometasone etc.) are prescribed. In acute asthma attacks, oral steroids are also given besides oxygen. The initial treatment for each patient should be chosen individually depending upon severity of the disease. Proper method of use of inhalers must be taught to children, their parents and elderly patients. Spacers can also be used.

*Dr. Rajinikantha Narendranath*



#### **John's Corner**

### **NOT UNKNOWN**

(Read Joshua 1:9, Ps 32:8, Ps 91:4, Prov 3:6)

Wishing you a blessed New Year

Dear Lord, the future is unknown,  
Yea, I completely do not know,  
But You said when I trust in You,  
The way that's right to me You'll show.

So teach me, Lord, to trust in You,  
And never yield to doubts and fear,  
But each step take with You as guide,  
For I am safe when You are near.

This my true joy, Lord, may I share  
With one and everyone I see,  
That they learn underneath Your wings,  
The world a better place will be.

*John H. Bala Singh*



## Carols '22

The Kirk Youth Fellowship embarked on the Carol Rounds after two years of a pandemic-inflicted pause. Filled with new energy and Christmas spirit, the youth drove their van of carollers, first to our Pastor, Rev. Isaac Johnson's house. This was followed by a night filled with music, bonding, carols, admiring decorations, and of course, a whole lot of food!

Carol rounds isn't just a Christmas tradition, but a time that the youth get, to take the Christmas spirit across the city, to the homes and hearts of people. This time of the year holds a special significance as the youth of Kirk get to sing carols merrily all night long, after an entire year (this time two, because of the pandemic). Whilst building and strengthening friendships, for some it meant rediscovering the meaning of the season and for others, the joy derived from the smiles and happiness of families.

Families from across the city joyously and excitedly opened their doors inviting the youth, and their joyful music into their homes. The journey began from the heart of the city at 7:00PM, moved to its extremities and came right back to the sanctuary, post light breakfast at Doctors Praise and Christina's house. The Chellaiahs opened their house and hosted the youth with wholesome dinner. This gave the carollers the much-needed energy to sing their hearts out at the homes that followed.

As dawn broke, the day ended for the carollers. Their Christmas spirit blazed bright, as they held close to their hearts, Christ's love that they witnessed at the 18 houses they visited over 17th and 18th of December. They donned their Christmas hats and headed home for a nap before getting right back to church the same evening to conduct a fulfilling Christmas bonfire for the congregation after two years.

Through the two days, God's grace came through during every miniscule obstacle and every tricky situation. The joy of Christmas lies in the sharing of the good news of the birth of Jesus Christ, while keeping our eyes fixed on the good news of His coming again. The season makes it easy for us to get lost in the festivities. Regardless of that, the Kirk Youth Fellowship strives to keep Christ at the centre, hopes to and continues to shine His love at every God-led opportunity with people of all ages alike.

With new and old friends in Christ by their side, Carols 2022 came to an end for the Kirk

Youth Fellowship with God's grace, protection and guidance that kept them merry and safe through the night.

*Annette Beryl Elizabeth - KYF*

The self-righteous never apologize.

*Leonard Ravenhill*

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You don't drown by falling in the water: you drown by staying there.

*Edwin Louis Cole*



Children's Corner

## Joy to the World by Ruana - 2nd Standard



## Count

*"My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience." James, 1:2-3, .....*

Counting is cold  
Factual, objective;  
Not biased or subject to feelings.  
Numbers cannot be manipulated and  
The laws of mathematics require concentration, discipline, time-  
Hardly a joyful exercise.

However, Father, you urge me to  
"Count it all joy" and  
'All' encompasses everything-  
My joy, sorrow, frustration, pain...  
As troubles of various kinds  
Seem to be a certainty.

To count the cost of discipleship  
is also highly recommended  
For narrow roads and difficult ways  
lead to life.  
No wonder, few ever find it.  
But then,  
Your grace outnumbered our failures  
Your mercy, our wanderings.  
Following You is infinitely  
More profitable than  
Listening to the Enemy  
Whose empty assurances are like bitcoins-  
Promising high returns but  
Ultimately leading to a colossal loss.

Lord, I prefer subjective perception -  
rather than objective gratefulness.

How I feel about a situation is  
Usually pretty deceptive.  
After all the human mind is more prone  
To diagnose the negative and  
Overlook the positive.

But You did not call me to assess life  
Based on how I feel because  
Subjective perception  
derails and discourages.

So teach me to count  
The joys of today-  
The evidence of Your presence.  
Open my eyes  
To Your detailed handiwork  
Hidden among the wildflowers and the  
Landscapes of my life.

May I learn to count sincerely,  
Record your blessings faithfully and  
Document your goodness tirelessly.  
Then my life will become  
A beautiful Alleluia  
(like the birds outside my window)  
That turns every gaze back to You-  
My greatest blessing.

*Dr. Susan Rajkumari*

Money can buy the good life, but not eternal life.

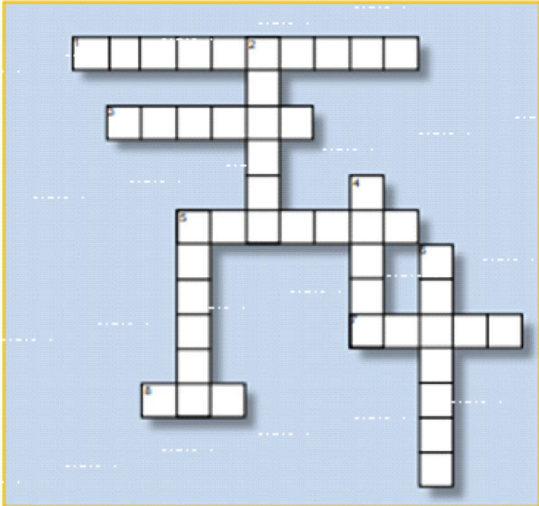
*Charles Swindoll*



Elderly Christmas Get-Together

Crossword Puzzle for Primary and Junior Sunday School Students

**God Led His People  
Crossword Puzzle**



**ACROSS**

1. Land with no towns or cities
3. God made the waters \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Ancient ruler of Egypt
7. A long stick used for walking
8. Not wet

**DOWN**

2. Moses and the Israelites went to this body of water.
4. Leader the Israelites
5. \_\_\_\_\_ of cloud and \_\_\_\_\_ of fire
6. The Egyptians rode in this vehicle pulled by a horse.

*Dolly Shanthakumar*

## **Answers to Bible Quiz No. 132 – December 2022**

**20/20 Vision**

### **Bible Numbers**

1. A
2. D
3. H
4. E
5. G
6. I. She was ninety or ninety-one years old.
7. B: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea
8. F: Philip, Bartholomew, Levi, Thomas, Simon Peter, John, Andrew, James, Thaddeus, Thomas, Simon the Zealot, Judas Iscariot
9. J
10. C

### **The winners are:**

1. **Mrs. Aruna Asir**
2. **Mrs. Angelin Alwin**
3. **Mrs. Suguna Joseph**
4. **Mrs. Indira Rajanayakam**
5. **Mrs. Victoria Basker**
6. **Dr. Mrs. Sujatha Elizabeth Prasad**
7. **Mrs. Gladys Vedavimali**
8. **Mrs. Peace Rani Sudhakar**
9. **Mrs. Leela Coilpillai**
10. **Mrs. Patricia Patrick**

***Hearty Congratulations!***

## Marching Through Immanuel's Ground

*I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Philippians 3:14*

With the passing of every year, we pray that our walk will grow increasingly closer with our unchanging God, Whole Heaven to come down to save wretched sinners like us.

A New Year is a landmark. We do not just turn our calendar, but are keenly aware that yet another year has dropped into Eternity. We tend to be careful in our stewardship of money. Are we as mindful of our time, which is immeasurably more valuable than any jewel in the crown?

Let us not fritter away our time filling our minds with glowing daydreams of building worldly castles, tantalized by the false gods of fame, position, wealth and our way of living. Happiness that rests on these things is always brittle and can crumble. The pleasures of the world are fleeting.

True, we go through seasons of distress, disease, destructive and meaningless wars, uncertainty, pain of bereavement and the chill of loneliness. However, we do not march through life alone. Our Commander-in-Chief is Jesus – the Model of a Perfect Life.

Jesus walked this way through the dust and grime of human life. He did not merely preach. He acted. He loved humanity with all its faults. He interacted with the Samaritan and the Gentiles, with the healthy and the leper, the blind and the lame, with the rough and ignorant and with the wise scribes. When He says, 'Let not your hearts be troubled', let us believe it and drink it.

The life of Jesus, the death of Jesus, the resurrection of Jesus, the ascension of Jesus all point to say that the earth is not our destination

and we are moving forward to a place far more glorious than human minds can ever grasp.

As we march through this year gifted to us, let us not forget that we are chosen to herald the Good News that this fallen world has a Redeemer, who can pick us up from the lowest dregs of life, and lift us up to a pinnacle of glory. We are humble clay pots, but carry within us His light. We pray that we are not a Judas to His cause.

In our march we stumble, walk and fall over life's potholes. We pray for grace to rise up and fix our eyes on 'the Author, and Finisher of *our* faith' (Hebrews 12:2).

We will then stand glorified and cleansed to hail the Eternal Dawn in Immanuel's Land.

***Wish you a blessed New Year 2023!***

*Usha George*

There are far, far better things ahead than any we leave behind.

*C. S. Lewis*

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It costs to follow Jesus Christ, but it costs even more not to.

*Unknown*





**Bible Quiz No. 133–January 2023**

## **A Herbalist's Quiz**

1. The leaves from what tree are said to be *'for the healing of the nations'*?
2. Finish this proverb :  
*'Better is a dinner of herbs where love is,  
Than .....'*
3. On what occasion were the Hebrews told to use **'bitter herbs'** with their meat ?
4. Which of the following are herbs : frankincense, myrrh, rue, nettles ?
5. Which was the tallest of all Biblical herbaceous plants ?
6. Which herbs were said by Jesus (sarcastically) to have been scrupulously tithed by the Pharisees ?
7. What herb, mingled with wine (or vinegar), was offered to Jesus on the cross ?
8. From what tree comes a leaf much used in flavouring stews ?
9. In what story was a poison plant put in a stew instead of herbs ?
10. Which herb's seed did manna look like ?

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 21<sup>st</sup> January 2023.

*Usha George*



## Kirk News

*Bright eyes gladden the heart;  
Good news puts fat on the bones.  
Proverbs 15:30*

### Finishing Strong with Hope

*You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed  
on You, Because he trusts You. Isaiah 26:3*

The world around us is becoming increasingly chaotic. Yet, the church stands in contrast because of her Head, Jesus Christ. The light shines brighter as the darkness grows deeper. The church, in the midst of the darkness, is called to be a city on a hill, shining brightly, pointing to the source of our peace.

The Advent season culminating in Christmas is a wonderful reminder of how the Prince of Peace, Jesus Himself is the One who keeps us in His *shalom*. It is CHRISTmas! With our minds fixed on the Seed of the woman who crushed the serpent's head we end the year celebrating Him with gratefulness. With exceeding joy, we usher in 2023, for our trust is in the Blessed Hope.

#### **Sunday, 4<sup>th</sup> December 2022**

The Second Advent Sunday was truly special since, after the service was the Christmas Sharing Sale! The church was packed and overflowing as we listened to Rev. Isaac Johnson share on the "Power of Peace". Having been fed with spiritual manna, the congregation partook of the sale enthusiastically. An array of goodies from biryani and all kinds of delectable eats were available. A variety of items

from handmade crafts to plants were also on sale. The proceeds of the sale were distributed to various charities.

The spirit of the day continued into the evening with a special Christmas programme titled "A Saviour is Born" by the Sunday School beginners and primary children. Dressed as angels, kings, shepherds, and adorning other nativity roles, they captivated the hearts of the congregation as the parents watched with delight. The message titled "The Gift of Christmas," was shared by Rev. Paul Anbarasu on this special day.

#### **Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> December 2022**

On the 8th of December the Friendship Club, comprising of the lovely elders of the church, met at 3 pm for a time of fellowship.

#### **Friday, 9<sup>th</sup> December 2022**

A Christmas get-together for the seniors of the church took place at 10 am. It was a time of joyous fellowship.

#### **Sunday, 11<sup>th</sup> December 2022**

Being the third Advent Sunday, Christmas gifts were distributed to the afflicted poor at our church gate.

A short play, "Wise Men Say", written and directed by Shekinah Jacob, was performed by Jeremy Francis and Jacob Mathew at 6 pm. The contemporary look at the age-old story in no way bypassed the rich prophecies of the birth of the Messiah - humorous and informative!

After the play, the SALT members met for a time of fellowship and dinner.

#### **Thursday, 15<sup>th</sup> December 2022**

Starting at 9:30 am, the carol rounds began with visiting the seniors first.

#### **Friday, 16<sup>th</sup> December 2022**

The RMDCC Christmas celebration included well over 50 children, joined by a few more from St. Mark's School and the Balaramapuram centre. The parents of the children, patrons and well-wishers came to witness the children enact the nativity play. "What is Real Christmas?" was the title of the word shared by Rev. Isaac Johnson. The day was made a little extra special as students from Christwood came bearing gifts of stationery and the like.

### **Saturday, 17<sup>th</sup>December 2022**

The Asha Christmas celebration is always very special to many in the church. Starting at 11 am, there was joyful singing and dancing by the children of Asha, their enthusiastic parents and teachers. Pastor Isaac Johnson shared the word of God.

At 3 pm, along with the S.M. Nagar congregants, AKCDC children joyfully celebrated Christmas.

The Kirk Youth Fellowship started the carol rounds at Rev. Isaac Johnson's parsonage at 7 pm. Around 40 members of the youth participated enthusiastically sharing the joy of Christmas by carolling at the houses of 18 members across Chennai.

### **Sunday, 18<sup>th</sup>December 2022**

The Sunday School Christmas get-together started at 9 am with about 5 young volunteers leading praise and worship, following which there was a time of devotion and storytelling. The guest speaker for the occasion was Mr. Samip Baruah. There was then a time of games concluding with snacks and each receiving a coffee mug imprinted with Bible verses.

The Men's Fellowship had their Christmas celebration from 11 am to 1 pm. It was a time of fun, fellowship, prayer, and a hearty lunch. The testimonies shared were powerful and edifying.

The Women's Fellowship Christmas celebration also started at 11 am with a time of praise and worship, and was an impactful time with people sharing testimonies of God's goodness. The message was shared by Mrs. Purnima Raj, after which there were various games including puzzles and crosswords. They wrapped it up with dancing, gift giving and a scrumptious lunch.

**'The Festival of 9 Lessons and Carols'** at 6 pm: Singing carols is a part of Christmas and the old inspiring hymns are the grandest and the best of all. The church looked beautiful in the warm glow of lights and the gay decorations. The air of Christmas all around was unmistakable. The choir sang special Christmas anthems and a few appropriate numbers. The nine lessons covering the fall of humanity, the promise of the Messiah, and the birth of Jesus were heard in hushed and reverential silence. In closing, the church glowed with candle lights as the words of Silent Night, Holy Night filled the sanctuary. Thus, we welcomed the Christ Child into this world with "Sleep in heavenly peace..."

**The Christmas Campfire:** Following the carol service, the congregation gathered around a brightly burning campfire as the yule log merrily crackled in the winds. The Kirk Youth led the singing of Christmas carols with the rest joining in. The evening included various activities of fun, games and fellowship followed by a hearty Christmas dinner. Alongside the piping hot mutton biryani, the FIFA World Cup final was screened in the SACCE hall - the participants missed out on no good thing that day!

### **Obituary**

Mrs. Prabha Rao, our member, passed on, on the 10th of December 2022 aged 86. The funeral was held on Sunday, 11th December. We convey our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family.

Somehow not only  
For Christmas  
But all the year long  
Through,  
The joy that you give to others  
Is the joy that comes back to you.  
And the more you spend in blessing  
The poor and lonely and sad,  
The more of your heart's  
Possessing  
Returns to make you glad.

*John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-92)*

We wish you all a very Happy New Year! Let us greet 2023 with the sure hope of His continued presence with us.

*Angela Susan Bryner*

The whole point of the letter to the Philippians is:  
I rejoice, now you do the same!

*J. A. Bengel*

Christmas Carols with Elderly





**Women's Fellowship Christmas**



**Men's Fellowship Christmas**

