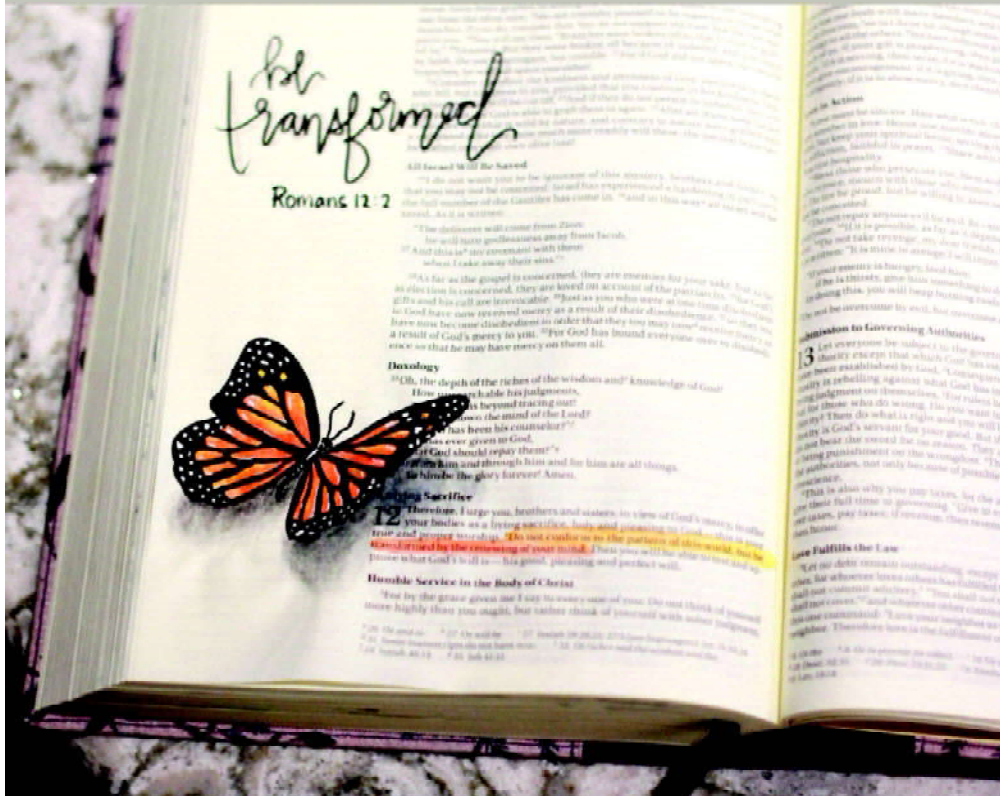


And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.
Romans 12:2



Kirkspire

The Monthly Magazine of St. Andrew's Church (The Kirk), Chennai
February 2024

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Editorial Board :

**Usha George
Chitra Bennett**

Word from the Pastor

RENEW LEST THE HEART BECOMES RUSTY

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. (Romans 12:2)

One of the definitions given to rust is that 'it will degenerate from inaction, lack of use, or passage of time'. What a picture of grave danger if we are not careful with what God has given us because the 'Rust' will not happen suddenly, it will not hurt immediately but the damage will be irreversible .

Through this month, we are studying on the topic 'Renewed Mind' which is not a one-time action but something that has to happen again and again and again. Here are a few examples of those who were blessed with a Renewed Mind and reaped the fruits thereof and one example of someone who took it too casually and suffered thereof.

a. Joshua 24:15 says 'And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.' This is a loaded verse filled with passion and focus for someone who was not willing to go along with the pattern of this world. Popularity comes with a cost and a lot of compromises or due to lot of strict values and principles. January 22, 1999 will forever be remembered for the death of a father and 2 young boys who did nothing but show love in action. I wonder how many times the family of Graham Stains would have been warned to leave the place but they stuck to their calling and paid a HUGE price. Keep dusting to avoid rusting.

b. Jeremiah 38:28 says 'Now Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison until the day that Jerusalem was taken. And he was there when Jerusalem was taken.' Jeremiah's life was full of life and light in the midst of one of the darkest and weakest moments of Israel's history. Jeremiah feared God and no one else. He spoke clearly, boldly and without any compromise. He heard the voice of God so clearly that he was not scared of the voice or threat of the king or of the other leaders. The verse mentioned here is a grim reminder of how Jeremiah 'remained' in Jerusalem when all other boastful, proud and stubborn people were taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar. Jeremiah kept dusting to avoid rusting.

c. Matthew 27:5 says 'Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and hanged himself.' Who could have predicted that Judas would end up in this fashion. The dust kept piling and Judas did not take it seriously. For those who think it will not happen to them don't realize that in most cases, it is already happening to them. Entertaining sin, enjoying secret sin are signs of rust forming very quickly and it should be cleansed very soon. Judas failed to dust until he became rusty.

Renewing of the mind can happen only when we offer our bodies as living sacrifice to God, holy and acceptable to Him, this is the kind of worship that pleases our God. The world does not understand this, the culture will not accept this and even our own minds will not be comfortable with this all the time. Spend time in His Presence, fill your mind and your lips with songs of worship, sow the word of God in your heart and desire for the Holy Spirit to fill you, nourish you, empower you to stand strong daily.

Have a blessed month

Rev. Isaac Emmanuel Johnson

John's Corner

TEMPTED?

Meditation for Lent

(Feb 14th is Ash Wednesday)

Read James 1:12, Heb 4:15,16, Heb 2:18

Temptations come to everyone,
All who endure the same,
A blessed crown of life obtain,
All who call on Christ's name.

So turn from sin and let Him in,
And with Him be at peace;
All pleasures of the world disdain,
Though now your heart they please.

Don't think it's now become too late,
Whatever sins you've done,
For Jesus died and lives for us,
And forgives everyone

John H. Bala Singh



Unlikely

*'The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning,
and bread and meat in the evening' I Kings, 17:6,*

Unlikely friendships are surprising and stimulating.
So are unanticipated gifts.
But more often 'unlikely' concocts negativity.
Especially when expectations are
dashed and dreams crumble.

But unlikely seems to be Your niche.
A born rebel with an
unconventional group of followers
You inhabited a manger, beach, desert,
and tomb while here.
(Now it's hospices, slums & even our hearts)

Then there are these incredible ways
in which You help-
though a raven, a child, the uneducated & the least.*

While I like Your inconceivable ways,
I often backslide when the tangible evidence
of Your promise is a far cry from what I had in mind.
Then I disregard Your work and
give way to despair.
Though I sing about surrender
deep down I relish control and
the false assurance it renders.
Forgive and cleanse me
from the tyranny of wanting
my own way.

Being in the center of Your will is not always easy.
In fact, at times it may even appear ruthless.
Mary would agree and so would Elijah.
Yet they did life with You in quiet hope.
Not bitter resignation.
Help me do the same.

When life becomes unpredictable & inconvenient
may I humbly believe that You are in control.
Overall.
And as I let go
of my preconceived ideas and plans
encountering Your genuine care
in the unlikeliest places
becomes an irresistible,
soul enriching adventure.
(Let it begin!)

"God's designs regarding you, and His methods of bringing about these
designs, are infinitely wise."

-Madame Guyon

*2 Kings 5:2-3, Acts 3:6, Luke 2:7

Dr. Susan Rajkumari

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

- Charles Swindoll

Answers to Bible Quiz No. 144 – January 2024

An Architect's Quiz

1. Zechariah 2:1
2. The house built upon the rock, and the house built upon the sand. Matthew 7:24-27
3. Babel. Genesis 11 / Shechem. Judges 9:46 / Penuel. Judges 8:13-17 / Siloam. Luke 13:4 [Minor Towers: Hananeel. Nehemiah 12:39 / Meah. Nehemiah 3:1]
4. Cain built the city of Enoch. Genesis 4:17
5. a. Ahab. 1 Kings 22:39b. Solomon. 1 Kings 10:18
6. Altar / Tabernacle / Temple / Synagogue (after the exile)
7. Solomon's / Zerubbabel's / Herod's
8. Solomon
9. Bezalel. Exodus 31
10. The Temple of Diana

The winners are:

1. **Mrs. Victoria Basker**
2. **Mrs. Suguna Joseph**
3. **Mrs. Indra Rajanayakam**
4. **Ms. Praiseye. K.**
5. **Ms. Patricia Patrick**
6. **Mrs. Sabrina Siga**
7. **Mrs. Peace Rani Sudhakar**
8. **Mrs. Leela Coilpillai**
9. **Dr. Mrs. Sujata Elizabeth Prasad**
10. **Mr. G. Jonathan Bhavyan**
11. **Mrs. Gladys Vedavimali**

Hearty Congratulations!

Bible Quiz No. 145–February 2024



A Dressmaker's Quiz

Please give a Bible reference, where applicable.

1. Is the proverb '*a stitch in time saves nine*' a Bible Proverb ?
2. What two men, one in the Old Testament and one in the New Testament, are said to have worn '**a leather girdle**' ?
3. Who used a huge '**pin**' in a story of betrayal ?
4. What article in the tabernacle had '**hooks**' of gold ?
5. In which book of the Bible are these words :
'There is a time to rend, and a time to sew' ?
6. Whose mother sat at her window waiting in vain for her warrior son to bring home '*spoils of fine needle work and rich coloured embroidery*' ?
7. Zechariah, prophesying the re-building of Jerusalem said he saw a man with a '*_____ in his hand*'.
8. Which Old Testament prophet denounced the women of Israel saying, that '*instead of a stomacher, they would have a girding of sackcloth*' ?
9. What action did Christ tell His followers to take if someone should take their coat ?
10. The ancient Mosaic law forbade the Israelites to wear clothing woven of *l_____ and w_____ together*.

Kindly send your answers to the church office or email admin@thekirk.in by 21st February 2024.

Usha George

St Andrew's Church Camp – A Report

The St. Andrew's Kirk annual camp was held at Joe's Resort on the ECR on the 15th and 16th of January 2024. It was a stimulating experience for families to come together to learn and study the Word of God. It was exciting for the children to have their own sessions while the adults had an inspiring and illuminating time with our Guest speakers and our Pastors.

The two main speakers at the camp were Rev. David Singh and Rev. C. Benjamin. They are no strangers to us as we have been motivated by their sermons through the years. Our Pastors, Rev. Isaac Johnson and Rev. Paul Anbarasu, were also present and were part of the panel during the Question-and-Answer sessions.

There were six sessions in the two days at the camp, three led by Rev. David Singh and three by Rev. Benjamin.

Session One revealed the scope of God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit, God in His entirety. The church was encouraged to be a creative community, dependent on God for His provision every day.

Session Two was a study of Chapter One of the Book of Acts. The church needs to witness. The role of the church is to speak of the Kingdom of God with boldness and conviction. The church is not a programme but a power. Courage, conviction, and authority come from the Holy Spirit. We must have a passion for the Lord and the church should cross boundaries and break down barriers. We must believe in the power of prayer and ask for strength and direction and rely on God's leading.

Session Three dwelt on the power of transformation through encounters with Jesus. The experiences of men and women with God, recorded in the Bible, bear witness to the working of God in the lives of men. The focus of the Gospels is a radical change in the here and now, wrought by salvation. The transformation of the lives of men and women who lived in sin – the tax collector, the woman who anointed Jesus' feet with perfume, the woman caught in adultery and the thief on the cross – was a result of their encounter with Jesus. How does our church view 'sinners'? Is it a welcoming place for everyone, regardless of wealth, status and sin? Are we at the Kirk, a redemptive community? We need to help restore those whose lives are messed up.

In Session Four, we studied the second chapter of the Book of Acts. When we come together as a church, we have a common purpose in spite of our individual differences. We have to be of one accord. The church belongs to the Lord and the language of the Holy Spirit is heart language. The Holy Spirit works in marvellous ways. God will use us to say what He wants to say. And we are accountable when we do not use the opportunity to share. As a congregation, we should choose to be like a bag of grapes, where each becomes a part of all and eventually, all become sweet wine.

Session Five was based on chapter three of the Book of Acts. Here, God demonstrates His power to heal and reveal who He is. God is Sovereign, He is Almighty, He is powerful. And when we, like Peter, exalt Him, He will give us the confidence, courage and conviction to heal both physical and spiritual infirmities.

In Session Six, we meditated on the Person of the Holy Spirit which is equally God as is the Father and the Son. The Bible was inspired by the Holy Spirit and it was the Holy Spirit that guided the men in the Bible. God speaks to us through the Holy Spirit. The Spirit moves the word, and the Bible becomes God's voice. The Holy Spirit takes the power of God and accomplishes what God says. When the Holy Spirit moves, it creates order and beauty out of chaos. The church as a community, should go where the Holy Spirit takes us. God gives us a new voice through the Holy Spirit. It is through prophecy that God has spoken through the ages. The danger facing the church today, is that the Bible has substituted the Holy Spirit and preaching has substituted prophecy. Learn to listen to God – do not turn a deaf ear to the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

These sessions were uplifting, educative and motivating. Most of us came away from them with a new and exciting stirring of the heart and mind.

All the sessions began with Praise and Worship, led by various groups in the church – the Men's Fellowship, the Youth, SALT, Sunday School and a team led by Pastor Paul. The final session was presented by the children who sang brightly and joyfully and displayed charts they had prepared in their sessions on the Prophets.

District 8 which was in charge of organising the camp, made sure that our stay was comfortable and that the food was scrumptious.

Mrs Kumud Raj



Camp Session



Teaching Session by Rev. Christian Benjamin



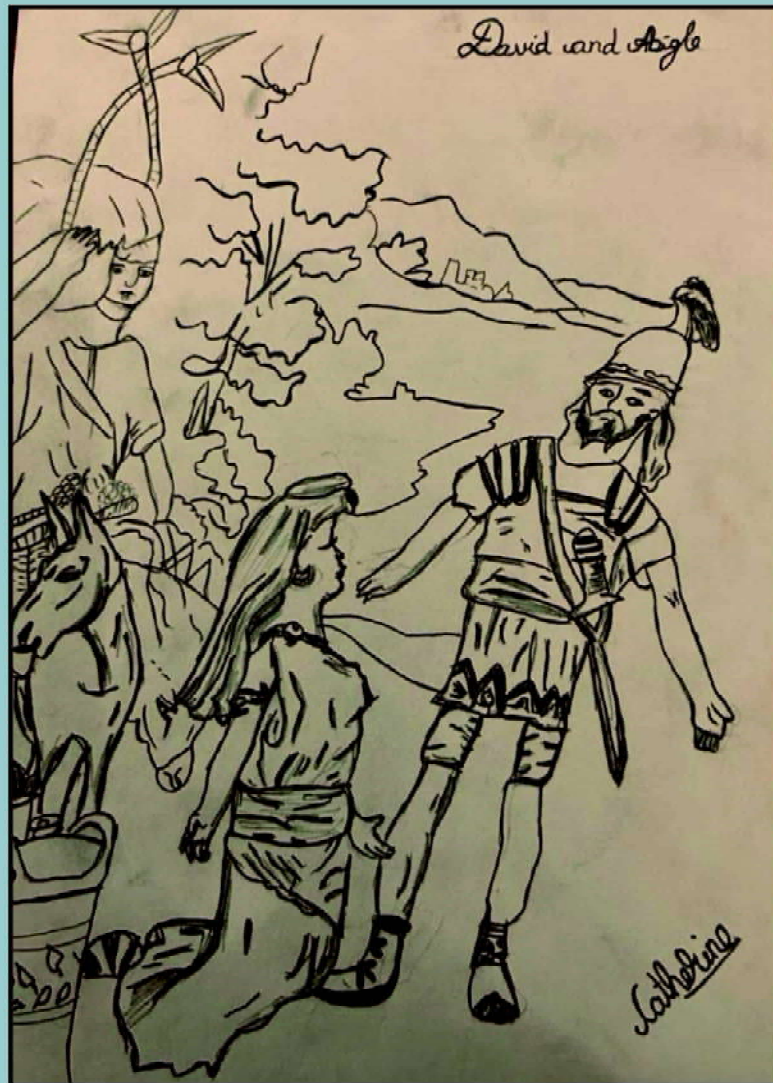
Teaching session by Rev. David Singh

AKCDC Program



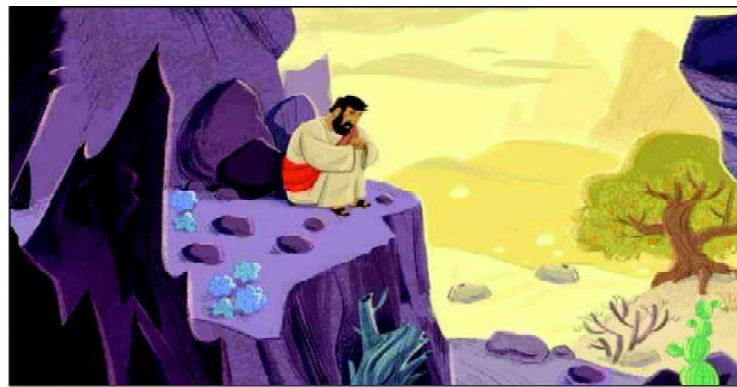
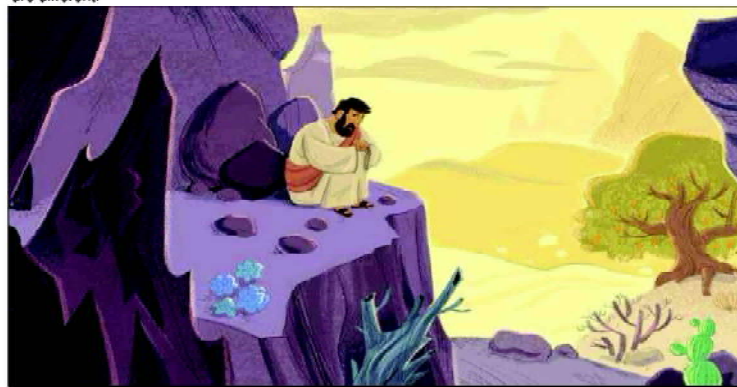
Children's Corner

David and Abigail – A Drawing by Catherine - 6th Std, Kirk Sunday School



Jesus' Temptation - Spot the Differences

During his last days on earth, Jesus faced many challenges. In Mathew 4, we find Jesus in the wilderness alone and hungry. Satan used this opportunity to tempt Jesus. Despite the challenges and temptations, Jesus remained sinless. Jesus faced challenges like us, yet He was victorious, and when we believe in Him we can be victorious too. *Compare the picture on the top with the picture below. Circle the 12 things that are different.*



Source: <https://www.illustrations.com>

Dolly Shanthakumar



Small Steps Forward Count

...Walk in the steps of the faith... Romans 4:12

A famous proverb states that, "a journey of a thousand miles begins in a single step." Here one cannot but recall the inimitable parable of the mustard seed. The tiny seed grows slowly but surely into a strong and firm tree, unyielding to opposing forces.

Let us start with the simple happenings at home, such as making the bed in the morning, cooking a good breakfast, keeping a clean house and taking care of one's health and family. More essential than these basic requirements is strengthening our spiritual life and our daily communion with our Father. It is essential to feed and grow on our Daily Bread.

Our Master, The Messiah, The Saviour, The Life Changer and our Joy-Giver came into the world not just to perform some remarkable deeds, not to express some profound truths but to change men's lives from evil to good. A wonderful and unique affinity existed between Him and the needy people. He was so available! No big dogs or huge gates guarded Him. He concentrated on sinners, prodigals, lost sheep, men and women beaten and broken on life's road. He taught them in synagogues, open fields, on mountain tops, on the beaches and from the Cross. It is His tender compassion for the needy, then and now, that bind Him to us.

There is no denying that the followers of Jesus through the ages had taken small but sure steps in all sectors of social activities – education, justice, human dignity, health care – all due to the revolutionary impact of Christ in a frigid and legalistic world. Following our Master's example opens out to us a whole wide world where we can humbly serve our brothers and sisters in the Name of our Lord.

A young man approached Charles H. Spurgeon and said that he felt that he was called to the ministry. The great evangelist asked the young man if he could preach. The young man modestly replied,

"Well I suppose I wouldn't set the Thames on fire." Spurgeon replied, "I suppose not. But if I threw you in would you make it fizz?"

Can we ask ourselves if our Maker throws us into any activity, be it at home, church, workplace or an Outreach Community Service Centre, will we make at least a "fizz"?

We pray that we will be kept away from the paralysis of inaction when required. As Christians we are not to sit and stare as the world goes by. We have been instructed to go and fish and feed the hungry. We may not be a Paul or even a Timothy but we have been chosen by the sheer grace of our Saviour to share the 'unsearchable riches of our God' with our fellowmen. Ephesians 3:8.

Let us not turn a deaf ear to the marvellous meaning of the sublime command given to Peter, 'Feed My sheep, Peter!' (John 21: 17).

This is a command given to each of us who love Jesus. We are called to nurture others, care of the church, feed the lost with His precious words and go in search of those lost and blinded by the lights of this world.

"Out in the highway, and in the byway,
Out in the dark paths of sin,
Go forth, go forth, with a loving heart,
And gather the wanderers in!"

Usha George

No sacrifice can be too great to make for Him who
gave His life for me.

- C. T. Studd



Know Your Hymn

Blessed Assurance

"It is not enough to have a song on your lips. You must also have a song in your heart." - Fanny Crosby

One of the most prolific Hymn writers Fanny Crosby wrote 8000 Gospel songs and hymns in her lifetime. It was New York, 1820, when Frances Jane Crosby was born. She was only two months old when she suffered from an eye infection and a poorly trained doctor applied a mustard plaster poultice to her eyes. Because of this, Fanny was left mostly blind for the rest of her life, only able to sense light and dark. With her father passing away when she was a baby, her mother was left to work as a maid while her grandmother raised her. She read the Bible to Fanny who memorized the scriptures 5 chapters a week from age 10. This courageous girl when only 8 years old wrote:



"O what a happy soul am I ,
Although I cannot see
I am resolved that in this world
Contented I will be .
How many blessings I enjoy
That other people don't
To weep and sigh because I am blind I cannot
and I won't."

Fanny Crosby (1820-1915)

Once a preacher sympathetically remarked, "I think it is a great pity that the Master did not give you sight when He showered so many other gifts upon you." She replied quickly, "Do you know that if at birth I had been able to make one petition, it would have been that I should be born blind?" "Why?" asked the surprised minister.

"Because when I get to heaven, the first face that shall ever gladden my sight will be that of my Savior!"

Crosby was visiting her friend Phoebe Knapp as the Knapp home was having a large pipe organ installed. The organ was incomplete, so Mrs. Knapp, using the piano, played a new melody she had just composed. When Knapp asked Crosby, "What do you think the tune says?", after kneeling in prayer for a few moments, she rose and declared, "Blessed assurance; Jesus is mine" and proceeded to recite the entire first stanza of the now famous hymn. Knapp was one of several tune writers that worked with Fanny Crosby.

The popular song reflects Crosby's walk of faith, as expressed by the apostle Paul in Philippians 1:2 "For me to live is Christ, to die is gain". Because of Crosby's lyrics, the tune is now called "Blessed Assurance".

"Blessed Assurance" was published in 1873 in the New York monthly magazine edited by Joseph and Phoebe Knapp and later in other books. It appeared in Gospel Songs, No. 5 (1887) by Ira Sankey and was sung extensively in the Moody and Sankey revivals in Great Britain and the United States. It is still one of the favourite hymns sung all over the world.

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.

Refrain:

This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long;
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long.

Perfect submission, perfect delight,
Visions of rapture now burst on my sight;
Angels, descending, bring from above
Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.

Perfect submission, all is at rest,
I in my Savior am happy and blest,
Watching and waiting, looking above,
Filled with His goodness, lost in His love.

In the phrase "O what a foretaste of glory divine!" Crosby captured the essence of Christian perfection; The entire hymn is focused on heaven. The earthly existence is one of "watching and waiting, looking above". As we submit ourselves to Christ and are "filled with his goodness" and "lost in his love" we are made anew in Christ's image and are moving toward being the person bearing His name. The hymn speaks of "visions of rapture ", "echoes of mercy, whispers of love" which fills us with such comfort as we sing praises to our "Savior all the day long". May we try to memorize this wonderful song and keep praising Our Lord just like these hymn writers.

"Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever." Psalm 145:2

Dr. Anita Chelliah

We have no power from God unless we live in the persuasion that we have none of our own.

- John Owen



GLANDS IN THE BODY – V THE THYROID GLAND – III HYPERTHYROIDISM

“Doctors treat, but Jesus heals”

Isaiah 53:4-5 says, “Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows: yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgression, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed” (NKJV). We should never forget that doctors treat, but Jesus heals.

Excess of thyroid hormone causes hyperthyroidism. This imbalance of thyroid hormone can affect the heart, lungs, food canal, muscles, skin, eyes, and the reproductive system. There are many, different causes of hyperthyroidism. It is necessary to diagnose the exact cause for correct treatment.

Patient could have a diffuse or nodular swelling of the thyroid gland (Goitre). Weight loss, with a normal or increased appetite, diarrhoea and vomiting can be present. Increased pulse rate (heart rate), chest pain, palpitations and breathlessness can occur.

Nervousness, irritability, tremors of the hands, muscle weakness can occur. Increased sweating, loss of hair, pigmentation are skin manifestations. Prominent, bulging eyes, grittiness, swelling, and redness are common signs in the eyes. Other symptoms could be heat fatigue, apathy, thirst and osteoporosis.

Blood tests for thyroid hormones can confirm the diagnosis. First line of treatment is with anti-thyroid medications (e.g., Carbimazole). For recurrent hyperthyroidism, part of the thyroid gland is removed by surgery. Radio-iodine treatment is advised in certain category of patients.

Dr. (Mrs.) Rajini Kantha Narendranath



Kirk News

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

His Embrace

We were created to desire eternal things. Let us not settle for less. Our desires can truly be satiated in the person of Jesus, our Lord. When He is our desire, all other things just fall in place. Hear Him whispering these words to you:

Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love;

Therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you. – Jeremiah 31:3

In His embrace, we remember we are loved unconditionally. In His embrace, we are assured that we are not our mistakes or failures, but we are righteous and blameless in His eyes. In His embrace, we can let go of the broken pieces in our lives and allow Him to make all things new. In His embrace, we find the hope and confidence we need to embark on all that awaits us in 2024.

Guest Speakers

Rev. David Singh – 'A Life of Generosity' - 14.01.2024 – 9am Service

Mr. Moses Daniel – 'Lessons from the Life of Joseph'- 07.01.2024 – 6 pm Healing Service

Kirk Annual Church Camp

Joe Beach Resorts on ECR was chosen as the venue to host this year's Annual Church Camp on 15th and 16th January. It was a time of spiritual and physical rejuvenation with the guest speakers Rev. David Singh and Rev. Christian Benjamin powerfully ministering God's word. It was time of praise and worship, teaching sessions, prayer, Q&As, food, games, camp fire and a lot more. The children had a

memorable time with the various fun activities that had been arranged for them.

Kirk Sunday School

On January 14th, the Kirk Sunday School reopened at the SACCE and the Manse, 9am onwards.

Kirk Men's Fellowship

The Kirk Men's Fellowship along with the Urban Ministries ended the New Year's Eve morning service with a prayer walk.

The Kirk Men's Fellowship and Women's Fellowship came together at the DCC Hall on 21st January at 1:00 pm, to celebrate the life and testimony of Mr. John Richard Ebenezer.

Rev. Isaac Johnson led this time of reflection through the topic, 'Remembering Richard Ebenezer: Life Lessons from a Warrior.'

St. Andrew's Church Annual General Assembly

Communicant members of the church were requested to stay back after the service on 28.01.2024 to truly understand how God has been working in and through our church.

AKCDC

The 7 am and 9 am services on 21.01.24 were celebrated as AKCDC Project Sunday. It was a time when the church was blessed with the opportunity to see the students of AKCDC stand as witnesses to God's goodness through the year. AKCDC warmed the hearts of the congregants with their songs, dances, and testimonies.

Obituary

Ms. Rachael Rajanayakam, b. 17.10.1971, went home to be with the Lord on the 26th of January. The funeral service took place on the 27th at St. Andrew's Church. We keep her parents Mr. and Mrs. John Rajanayakam, brother Paul, husband Ranga and son Ajay in our prayers.

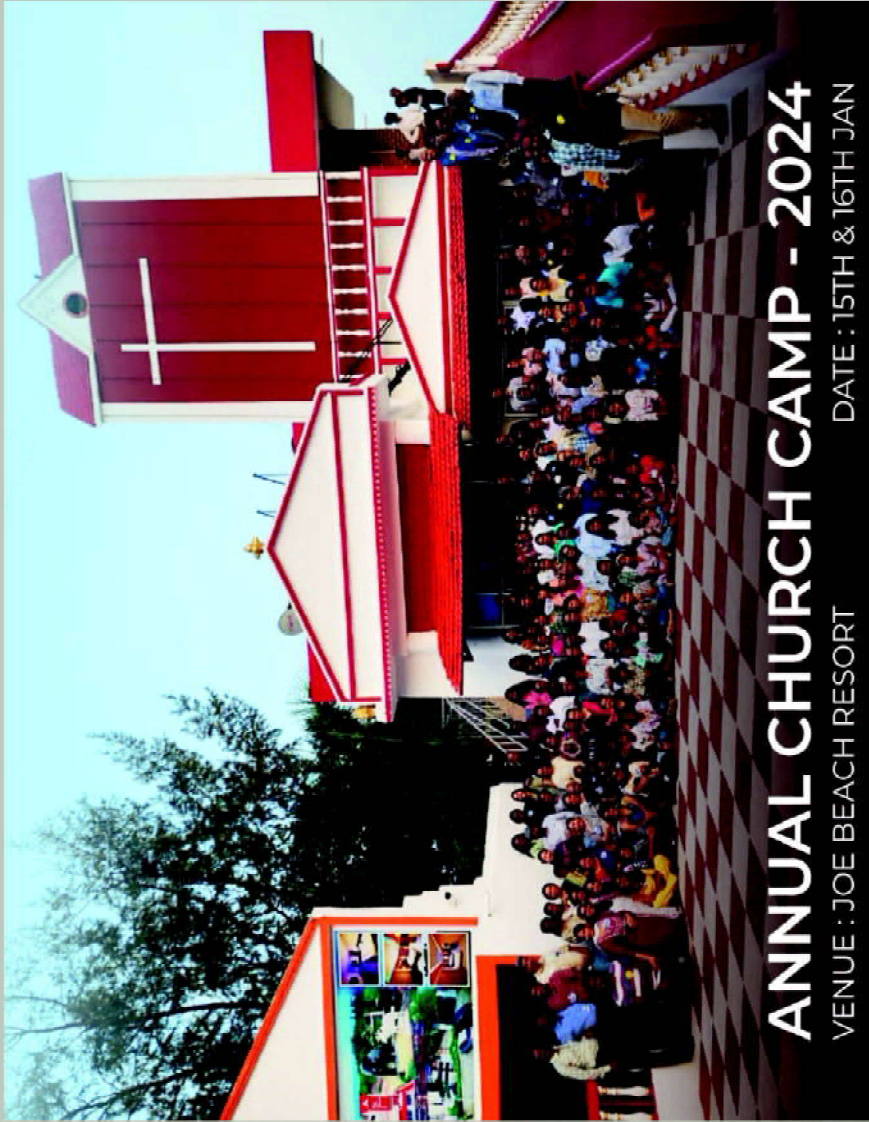
Our heartfelt condolences to her dear family.

Forever with the Lord!

Angela Susan Bryner



Camp Children Program



ANNUAL CHURCH CAMP - 2024

VENUE : JOE BEACH RESORT

DATE : 15TH & 16TH JAN

53 : 02

February 2024

