

Rev. Nirmala Vasanthakumar  
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ASST. PRESBYTER

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Anna Varughese  
Matilda Yorke – Convener

Send all Contributions to  
The Editorial Board  
Pulse Magazine  
St. John's Church  
Cleveland Town  
Bangalore 560 005

**Phone:**  
080-25513805, 25305212

**Email:**  
sjchurch@dataone.in  
sjchurchblr@gmail.com

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Saturday Prayer Cell  
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## Editorial Pulse

**R**ooted in Christ, Reaching Out in Service. This meaningful headline, sent to us by Shirin Samuel, describes the 150 years of St. John's Church. Congratulations, Shirin. A special thank you to each member of our church who participated in this competition for the best catchphrase.

St. John's Church has indeed come a long way, as you can see from the cover of this issue. The picture of the church was taken in 1900. The church has kept up with the changing times, growing in membership and projects. In this issue you can read about the special service that was held to commemorate the 150 years. There have been many programmes that have been organized, and among them has been a trip to the Holy Land.

From the last issue of Pulse in April till date there have been many happenings. St. John's welcomed Assistant Presbyter Rev. P. Jayanesan and his family, and bid farewell to Rev. Daniel Ravikumar and his family. The Annual General Body Meeting was held. Dr. David and Angela

Ball and their children (featured in Pulsonality) who have been members of St. John's for 14 years, returned to the UK.

In Pulse Impact, our members share experiences and books that have impacted their lives. You too can send us a review of a book that has had an impact on your Christian living. The Vacation Bible School was an uplifting experience not only for the children, but teachers who shared their experiences. The Pre-marital Counselling Session, the Young Married Couples Fellowship, the Teens Parents Fellowship, the Neighbourhood Bible Studies, the Golden Age Fellowship and all the Wings of the Church are projects to be proud to be associated with. A living testimony of a sharing community, of a church that has been for the last 150 years rooted in Christ, reaching out in service.

As one of the participants of the catchphrase competition, said: "Generations follow generations. Yet St. John's Church continues to glow as a light to our paths".

Regards,

Matilda Yorke

# Presbyter's Letter



Dear friends,

Greetings to you all in Christ's name. The period between May and November has been a very eventful one for members of St. John's Church. There have been many occasions to strengthen the friendship and fellowship with one another. These months have been a time of anxiety and pain as the violence against the Christians that has been simmering in Orissa since December 24, 2007, erupted suddenly in August 08. Sixteen districts, 311 villages were affected, 4300 houses were burnt, 268 churches and worshipping places and 65 colleges and schools belonging to Christians were destroyed, 50,000 people were displaced. 43 people were killed and 110 priests, evangelists and nuns were injured, 6,800 children and women were also injured. These statistics have been given by the NCCI who made a survey in the affected areas. Many are still living in the forests and refugee camps. Many were shocked when violence against Christians rocked Karnataka. It has been a very distressing time indeed.

I strongly believe and it has been my experience that out of

every bad experience some things good emerge. These violent attacks on the Christians brought together all the Christians and their leaders to counter these attacks and safeguard the lives of the people whose life is under threat. The leaders of the church in Orissa jointly appealed to the state government to protect the people who have been affected. They met the Chief Minister and the Law and Order Minister to present their demands. They also met police officials to demand for protection against the attacks. The Home Minister was also approached for his help. The Evangelical Fellowship of India sent their volunteers to help people to file affidavits. Various organisations helped to care for the victims and counsel them.

What can we do? Uphold the victims and their families in our prayers asking God to help them to stand firm in their faith and strength to face the situation. Pray for the perpetrators so that they realize that violence is not the answer or solution to any problem and every human being has the right to live. No religion encourages or approves violence. Pray for our leaders so that their

*(continued on page 6)*

# "God has been good to me" – Rev. P. Jayanesan

*"I will always remember how good God has been to me, especially in lifting me up to this position," said **Rev. P. Jayanesan** on entering the portals of St. John's Church, as Assistant Presbyter in May 2008. His wife Rev. Vedamary Jayanesan is Pastor at St. James Church and Bethlehem Church. Elder son Vicky Jebanesan (16 years) is studying First PUC at Cathedral College and Michael Devanesan (11 years) is in standard six at Cathedral School. Rev. Jayanesan speaks to **Matilda Yorke** about his spiritual journey*



*The Jayanesan family*

mines. He was a spiritual person. The family prayer that he led every night included a Bible reading. I used to go to Church every Sunday.

At 12 years, I became a VBS teacher, and at 14 years, was the Secretary of the free night school at KGF. There have been many who have helped me in my spiritual journey. Mr. Siga Arles and the Bible Study night prayer group have played a big role. It was a way of life to live and grow in the knowledge and strength of God.

## **Foundation for his faith**

My faith rests firmly on the strong foundation that I had as a child. I come from a simple family, born and brought up in KGF. My father was in the Army, and I was taken care of by my grandfather, who was a foreman in the gold

## **The spiritual journey as an adult**

At one of the youth retreats, on August 26, 1978, I accepted Jesus Christ as my Saviour and Lord. From then my thirst to study the word of God increased. In 1980, I committed my life to full-time ministry, while I was attending a school summer camp at SIBS Bangarpet. I was also involved in E.U meetings.

I accepted Christ as our Saviour because I realized that I am a sinner and that Christ died for me. I needed Christ and His forgiveness. This feeling lead me to accept Christ as my Lord and Saviour.

I met my wife Vedamary in my mother's church, St. Matthew's Church (Wesley Church). We were both involved in Sunday School, BCM and VBS ministries. I became a PC member in 1982. I was in Operation Mobilization for six months. We got married in 1984 and the following year both of us worked as staff at Campus Crusade. On November 1, the same year, I joined Karnataka Central Diocese as a ministerial candidate, and between 1986 - 1990, I did my theological studies at TTS Madurai. I was ordained Deacon in 1990, and started my pastoral ministry at David Memorial Church, Ramamurthy Nagar, Bangalore, and was also

given Karunalaya Church at Tin Factory to pastor.

Vedamary was ordained in 1992, and that year God blessed us with a son. He was born in answer to my prayer, that's why I named him Vicky Jebanesan. In 1997, God blessed us with son Michael, while we were serving God at St. Michael and All Angels Church at KGF. I completed my higher studies – Master of Theology in the New Testament – in 2002.

## **His mission**

I want to teach and preach the word of God. I am very happy to do it. I derive a lot of strength from the Bible. My favourite verses when I face crisis is Isaiah 41: 10 “So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.” Psalm 23:4 says “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.”

## **The Jayanesan family**

We enjoy watching television together. I love driving, cycling and riding my scooter. We don't actually plan for family time. It just happens, and we take it as it comes.

### **His strengths**

I am simple in mind, living and caring. Whatever I feel is right or wrong I say directly to the person. I do not harbour grudges against anybody. I like to be happy and cheerful. I am always learning, especially I would like to know in depth the meaning and word of God.

### **Concerns and needs of families**

It is getting tougher for families

with the fast paced hectic life, advanced technology, exposure to media and concentration to make money. Values have changed. Family prayer is absent. Parents and children don't see each other. Members don't have time to talk to one another. I feel that it is important for every member of the family to share their thoughts with one another. This will help to keep a family together.

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### **Presbyter's Letter** *(continued from page 3)*

s actions and responses to this situation of human right violation will strengthen the democracy and secular nature of our country.

Our prayers should lead us to act responsibly and constructively in providing medical assistance, helping in the rehabilitation and community building, in organising legal interventions like filing of the FIR's and collecting affidavits and facilitating Government compensations for the victims. Get involved in regional, national and international advocacy by networking with agencies. Use our contacts to lobby for the cause. Visit the affected areas in teams and start peace initiatives in our own neighbourhood. The KCD, along with other churches, is forming a forum which will jointly act in these threatening situations.

Why it is happening is another question that remains unanswered. Some say that it is the end of times and the predictions in the Bible are coming true. If this is so we must remember that we have been instructed by our Lord Jesus to be awake, alert and faithful in carrying out our responsibilities. Blessed is the person who is found at work when our Lord comes back. So let us be diligent in the work entrusted to us by God, firm in our faith, responsible in our actions and tolerant and patient in dealing with matters of faith, and sensitive to the feelings of people. Let us learn to respect others and strive to safeguard each other's dignity. God be with you all.

Shalom

Nirmala Vasanthakumar

# Farewell, Rev. Daniel Ravikumar

**W**orking hard but quietly he served the congregation at St. John's Church in many ways. That in a nutshell is Rev. Daniel Ravikumar, who was Assistant Presbyter, at St. John's Church from 2005-2008. He is currently Presbyter-in-charge at St. Mark's Cathedral.

A quiet, soft-spoken person, helpful and kind, Rev. Ravikumar was actively involved in the activities of the Church and its different sub-committees, especially the *Pulse* magazine. His spontaneous prayers at the church services and the homes he visited have been greatly appreciated. He was ever ready to visit members, even at a moment's notice. His wife Ellen was a member of the



*Rev. Nirmala Vasanthakumar bids farewell to Rev. Daniel & Ellen Ravikumar*

choir, and helped in other ways.

The Church bid them farewell during the 8.30 a.m. service on April 27, 2008. Among those who spoke on Pastor Ravikumar were Peter S.C. Pothan, Secretary, PC, and Rev. Nirmala Vasanthakumar, Presbyter-in-charge. L. D. Bonnell, Treasurer, PC, presented them with a gift on behalf of the church. Rev. Ravikumar was also presented a souvenir on May 4, at the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration.

***Lord, till I reach your blissful shore.***

***No privilege so dear shall be***

***As thus my inmost soul to pour in prayer to thee***

*Charlotte Elliott, 1789-1871*

# Annual General Body Meeting

**T**he Annual General Body Meeting of St. John's Church was held on June 15, 2008. Rev. P. Jayanesan, Assistant Presbyter, opened the meeting with prayer. This was followed by the reading of the reports by Secretary Peter S.C. Pothan and Treasurer L.D. Bonnell, who also presented the audited Balance Sheet and the Income and Expenditure Account.

Among the matters raised by the members were the upkeep of the Community Centre, the need for a suggestions / complaints book in the Church office, welcoming of new members at church services, support for other ministries and missionaries as was done earlier, contribution to the Good Samaritan Project of the CSI Hospital, the reading of the Ten Commandments during the services at least once a month, and the use of alternate prayers in the new prayer book. A PPT on the 150<sup>th</sup> Year Project – the Second Phase of the Community Centre – was shown and explained..

## **Excerpts from the Secretary's Report**

God has really blessed us and helped us to achieve many things this year

and it is due to the joint efforts of all the members involved. We therefore should start by giving glory to God for his gracious help to us as a congregation in the biennium of 2007-2009.

The activities of the Church can be divided under three heads - Ministries, Projects and Building.

## **MINISTRIES OF THE CHURCH**

**1. The 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary:** Our Church was dedicated on 12<sup>th</sup> April 1858 by the Rt. Rev. Thomas Dealtry, Third Bishop of Madras, and dedicated to St. John the Evangelist and so named as "St. John's Church". We celebrated the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2008 as it was St. John's Day. We had a special Service at 6 p.m. led by our Bishop, followed by a function in the Community Centre where a Special Cover was released by Mrs. Shanthi Nair the Chief Postmaster General for Karnataka. Our new Church website was inaugurated by the Bishop. We honoured the past Presbyters and the active members of the Church. This was followed by a dinner for all our congregation members.

- Special souvenirs were sold to raise money for our 150<sup>th</sup> project. We are grateful for the overwhelming support given by our congregation and for all who helped in the programme.
- 2. St. John's Day:** We have celebrated this during the last two years with a special liturgy based on the writings of St. John during the 8.30 a.m. service.
  - 3. Church Retreat:** We held a Church Retreat on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2008 on the theme 'Building Communities of Hope' with Mr. Prakash Yesudian as the resource person. It was well attended and many valuable suggestions were raised in the discussion.
  - 4. Neighbourhood Bible Studies:** We were able to start six new Neighbourhood Bible Study meetings during the Lenten season for study, fellowship and witness. Previously only one existed at R. T. Nagar. They began with specially written Bible Studies based on the Church Lenten theme and now they are doing a series on the "Church". The Church Bible Study on the second Wednesday evening is also continuing.
  - 5. Golden Age Fellowship:** This was restarted this biennium and three meetings were held for our senior citizens sponsored by the Men's Fellowship, the Women's Fellowship and the Youth Fellowship.
  - 6. Young Married Fellowship:** We have started this meeting for couples of up to ten years of married life. The meetings are held every third Sunday at 10.30 a.m. and a variety of topics are addressed and discussed.
  - 7. Church Website:** Fulfilling a long time dream and plan, we were able to launch the Church Website this year under the title of '[stjohnschurchbangalore.com](http://stjohnschurchbangalore.com)'. We are grateful to our member, Ajit Samuel, for his help in designing this.
  - 8. Trip to the Holy Land:** As part of our 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations we are arranging a trip to the Holy Land in September 2008. This will cover Egypt, Jordan and Israel.
  - 9. Harvest Festival:** We held a very successful Harvest Festival last year and were able to raise Rs. 5½ lakhs for the repair of the Church, the largest amount ever raised. We are grateful to all who participated and to Brig. Abraham as the Convener.
  - 10. Vacation Bible School:** Our VBS each year has grown from strength to strength. This year (2008) we had 269 children attending it. We are grateful to all the teachers, Music Team and volunteers and to Mr. Vinod David as the Convener.
  - 11. Special Services:** We have held special services for Mother's

Day, Father's Day, Teacher's Day, Senior Citizens Day and Remembrance Sunday. The Memorial Service in the Cemetery on All Saint's Day was held with a specially written liturgy and the number of people who attend this service has increased considerably.

**12. Wings of the Church:** The regular wings of the Church like Sunday School, Youth Fellowship, the Women's Fellowship and the Men's Fellowship continue to grow and contribute to the life of the church.

**13. Pulse:** This is published four times a year and we are grateful to Mrs. Matilda Yorke and the Editorial Committee for their hard work.

## PROJECTS OF THE CHURCH

**14. Stephen's Home for the Aged:** The home is running well with the active participation of the sub-committee lady members. We have installed a UPS for the power cuts and mended the entrance road. We are grateful to all who provide for the running expenses and help in other ways.

**15. Asha Nivas:** Our home for senior citizens is functioning well and several repairs have been carried out. A microwave oven and a new fridge has been purchased for the use of the residents.

**16. St. John's Hostel:** The Hostel is running well and we are glad to announce that all the boys have done well in their examinations and the two who did their ICSE have also passed with good marks. We are in the process of setting up a library for the boys and repairs carried out. We are grateful for the contribution of 12 wooden cots by Mrs. Cynthia Srinivas and to Mrs & Mr. Bonnell for the Acquaguard and Mrs & Dr. David Ball for the keyboard. We are grateful to all who provide for the running expenses and help in other ways. There is a need for volunteer tutors for the boys in certain subjects. There is a need for a solar water heater.

**17. Second Phase of the Community Centre:** This is our 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary project and we have started the preliminary work on this. We hope to start the building soon. It consists of an air-conditioned auditorium and rooms for the activities of the School and ministries of the Church. We look forward to your support for this project.

**18. New Life Centre for Girls:** A new project to support the work among the street girls in the New Life Centre for Girls has been approved. The Socio-Economic Committee is working out the details and we look forward to your participation and support.

## **BUILDINGS AND REPAIRS**

**19.Repairs to the Church:** We have carried out extensive repairs to the Church building and have built new gutters and tried to stop the leaking. The pigeon menace was curbed by the installation of netting on the windows. The Church was painted outside and the inside. The damage done to painting due to leakage will be painted soon.

**20.Repairs to the Organ:** Extensive repairs, renovation and cleaning of our Church Organ was carried out by Mr. Albert Davis and we appreciate his efforts and free service. We are trying to obtain new pipes to replace the damage ones, which will make our organ more melodious.

**21.Community Centre:** This will be repainted in July. Other repair that needs to be done will be taken up at this time.

**22.Church Flat:** The flat above the Widow's Quarters was renovated and rented to Mr. John Jacob. The compound around the building was re-cemented.

### **Excerpts from the Treasurer's Report**

1. The total income for the year ending 31/3/08 was Rs.12,034,463.04 and the

excess of income over expenditure was Rs. 89,340.96. Our income has increased by Rs. 1,084,068.09 from the last year and our expenses have been kept within that.

3. The Church Sunday and other offertory was Rs. 1,400,975.00 and subscription Rs. 2,124,640.00 This continued support by the church members contributes in no small measure to the financial health of the church and the caring and the charity efforts of the church.

4. Out of Rs. 5 ½ lakhs that was received towards church repairs during harvest, we have utilized a sum of Rs.4,89,300.00 for carrying out repairs to the church. The repainting of the rain water stained walls of the inside of the church will be resumed after the monsoon rains and this confirm that the repairs of the church have been effective.

5. No expenditure is shown for the construction of the Second Phase of the Community Centre during the year under review. We are currently planning to start the second phase.

7. The Auditor in his final remarks has confirmed that the accounts are all maintained in order.

# St. John's Church Celebrates 150 Years of Caring and Sharing

By Peter S. C. Pothan

**A**pril 12 is a milestone for St John's Church. On this day 150 years ago, the Church was dedicated by the Bishop of Madras. So to celebrate God's blessings on the Church during the last 150 years of caring and sharing, a special Service and Get-together was held on May 4, 2008, which is St. John's Day.

The liturgy for the 8.30 a.m. service, was based on the writings of St. John. Assistant Presbyter, Rev. S. Jeyanesan, preached on the life and ministry of St. John.

The Thanksgiving Service in the evening was led by our Presbyter, Rev. Nirmala Vasanthakumar. The Bishop of KCD, the Rt. Rev. S. Vasanthakumar delivered an



inspiring sermon. Many past Presbyters and Assistant Presbyters participated in the service, which had a special liturgy. The Church was packed with our members.

This was followed by a joyful get-together at the Community Centre. Secretary, Peter S. C. Pothan, who was the MC, welcomed the gathering. Rev. Dr. Vinay Kumar Samuel, one of the longest serving Presbyters of this Church, said the opening prayer.

To commemorate the occasion a beautiful Special Day Cover on St. John's Church was released by Ms. Shanthi Nair, Chief Postmaster General for Karnataka. The envelope had a

picture of the stained glass window of St. John's on the front and three pictures of the church on the back and a short history of the church. A special stamp with a picture of the church defaced the postal stamp. A Memorial Album with the stamp was presented to both the Bishop and the Presbyter.

The history of the church, and the 150 years of caring and sharing with the community, was traced in a powerpoint presentation by Pothan. Past Presbyters and Assistant Presbyters of the Church, the Pastorate Committee members, the Conveners of the various

committees, the staff and many who had made a significant contribution to the church were honoured by the Presbyter with a memorial gift.

The Bishop also released the souvenirs - coffee mugs, T-shirts and caps - which were sold to raise funds for our 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary project — the second phase of the Community Centre. Following the vote of thanks by L. D. Bonnell, Treasurer, PC, and the closing prayer, the programme closed with a fellowship dinner. The enthusiasm of the congregation in supporting this celebration was overwhelming.

Jesus said, I am the door -

Whoever enters through me will be saved

Many of our church projects are the fruit of the efforts of our forefathers who founded the church. Now as a church congregation we can enjoy being involved in missions, through which we can serve the marginalized and the poor. Through the various projects and missions of our church we can reach out to others in the community, with the help and guidance of our church leaders and elders. The mission statement of our church which is celebrating 150 years should, I think, be based on what Jesus said, "I am the gate. Whoever enters through me, will come in and go out and find pasture".

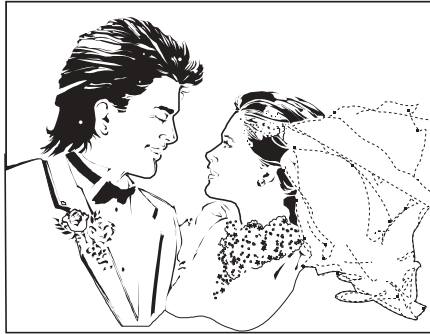
Nita Isaac

# Christian Marriage: A Holy Trinity

Experts of the message delivered by  
Miriam Rajkumar on July 20, 2008

*Scripture Readings: Gen. 2:18-25, I Cor. 13: 1-13, St. Mark 10:1-12*

**G**od has plenty to say on Marriage, as Scripture reveals. And if we want to discover what Christian marriage is, what matters is not what you and I think, but what Christ thinks. So what are God's thoughts on marriage.



## Marriage is God's idea

"In the beginning" marriage was *God's* idea. It's worth stressing this point, right up front, I think. Because we hear so much these days about how marriage is a human institution that is no longer relevant; or how it's a piece of a paper that can easily be torn up. No it's not. Not if you're Christian. Both the Old and New Testament tell us that marriage is,

in fact, *God's* idea. This means that it cannot be dismissed as no longer relevant. Neither is it just a matter of what the law says. Jesus seems to make this clear in his response to the Pharisees. It really is a matter of what God wants. When the Pharisees ask Jesus about what's *lawful*, Jesus, typically, is critical of their

hardness of heart, and then focuses on how God meant things to be.

## Not two, but one

God meant for the man to leave his father and mother and be joined to or cling to his wife. And the two, Jesus says, echoing the words from Genesis, "are no longer two, but one flesh." So, the husband no longer clings to his mother and father, but,

henceforth, to his wife. “Therefore what God has joined together let no one separate.” Jesus words indicate that marriage is a sacred union – a covenant — and not a matter of law, not even if Moses wrote it. It is about commitment, not convenience. At its core, as we shall see, beats the heart of God.

“They are no longer two but one” the Bible says; “one flesh,” which means that when one hurts, the other feels it, which means you wouldn’t abuse your spouse just like you wouldn’t abuse your own flesh. It means you cannot put down your spouse without putting yourself down. It means you cannot think about the well-being of your own life without thinking about the well-being of your spouse’s life. To love oneself is to love your spouse. To hurt your spouse is to hurt yourself. To accuse your spouse is to accuse yourself. .

It reminds me of what the Lord says in John’s Gospel, describing His relationship with God, His Father: “I and the Father are one.” Jesus tells His disciples. Maybe we can learn some lessons on holy matrimony from that holy relationship: It is a loving relationship with *one* status and *one* purpose. A relationship where

the One who submits is the One who is exalted. A relationship where the Holy Spirit is present in fellowship.

### **The concept of a helper**

If God were indifferent to Adam, He would not have been concerned that Adam was alone. He would not have gone to such lengths to make Adam a helper; a suitable helper, or a helper as a partner as some translations have it. It’s important to pause over this word, I think. If you imagine that “helper” suggests a lowly status, think again. Time and time again, Scripture tells us about how God *helps* us; about how our help comes from the Lord. Who here does know God as helper? When you want to think about what a helper does, well think no further than God our dependable, generous helper.

Genesis shows how intimately God was involved in that first marriage. He moulds the woman and brings her to the man. God’s hand is all over the *arrangement* of this marriage. God has miraculously brought to Adam’s side, this suitable helper.” And the two become one flesh.” It is interesting that Jesus doesn’t say and the two *are* one flesh, but *become* or will become one flesh, as

if He knows that that kind of unity will happen only in the course of time of the relationship, rather than instantly

### **An enduring marriage**

We know that things went wrong very quickly in the Garden of Eden. But what kind of enduring marriage did God have in mind in the beginning? It might help to look at God's pursuit of relationship with people because time and time again the Bible uses marriage to describe the kind of relationship God wants with His people; so much so that when God talks about Israel going after other gods, He calls it adultery. Listen to the words God uses when He talks about marriage:

In the book of Hosea, God seeks reconciliation with an adulterous Israel, saying, "On that day... I will take you for my wife forever; I will take you for my wife in *righteousness* and in *justice*, in *steadfast love*, and in *mercy*. I will take you for my wife in *faithfulness*." <sup>1</sup>He says. And in Isaiah 62, God promises good to an exiled, rebellious Israel that "You will be called, 'My Delight is in Her, and her land Married, for the Lord delights in you,'" He says, "and your land shall be married. For as a young man marries a

young woman, so shall your *builder* marry you, and as the bridegroom *rejoices* over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you."<sup>2</sup> And in Revelation 19, God gives a vision of righteous rejoicing to an imperfect, persecuted church, "Let us *rejoice*...for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready; to her it has been granted to be clothed with fine linen, bright and pure ...Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb."<sup>3</sup>

### **Marriage is an intimate relationship**

Scriptures tells us this marriage is an intimate, relationship that begins with a God who loves us so much, He comes to us with a proposal...hoping that we will say "yes" to being *His*, and He will be our God. In and through Jesus Christ, we are offered this life-giving, life-transforming love that pursues us no matter how far we wander; and that calls us to redemption no matter how low we have fallen. Jesus' love for us is a love that is willing to die for us...while we are *still* unlovable sinners. All of these point to the source of the perfect love that Paul talks about in our reading from Corinthians 13.

We cannot manufacture God's love within ourselves, we can only gratefully receive His overflowing, unmerited love and grace in Jesus Christ, and then let it flow through us from the source: God Himself. Our part lies in making sure we don't block its outward flow. In fact, when we follow Christ, we *must* ensure that we don't block the flow of His love.

The personality of Christ's love is worth repeating: "Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things. Love never ends.

Let's face it, the truth is there is no perfect man or woman. But, there is a perfect Lord who loves with a perfect love.

His love is self-sacrificial. *Christian* marriage, by definition, *must* have Christ in it; and if it has Christ in it, it *must* reflect His love. It is not built on the law. It is built on Jesus Christ. Just like God made that first marriage possible,

so God-in-Christ makes Christian marriage possible, through His perfect love; His enabling power.

Just like God was very intimately involved in that first marriage, so Christ is involved in Christian marriage. We've considered the mystery of Christian marriage as a holy trinity, a mystical, physical union with man, woman and Christ and yet unhappy marriages abound; emotionally and physically abusive relationships are common; loneliness within a marriage is frequent, and divorce, tragically, is a growing reality, even in our country.

### **God standards for marriage don't change**

Still, that doesn't change *God's* standards for the marriage relationship: loving in the *agape* sense, committed, faithful, giving, forgiving, helpful and united. The good news is that even when we mess up, *in Christ* we have a chance to start over.. God sent His Son to *this* world, to restore it *in Christ* to His glorious vision. And, so, if the vision of God for marriage seems impossible, remember that for God nothing is impossible. Take heart *in Jesus Christ*. Jesus Christ has the ability and the desire to remake us in His image, and to make all things new.

<sup>1</sup> Hosea 2:19,20.

<sup>2</sup> Isaiah 62: 4,5.

<sup>3</sup> Revelation 19:7-9

# Till We Meet Again –

David, Angela, Timothy and Jonathan Ball

By Panchasheila Qadri

**E**very Sunday, at the 830 am service, one family is conspicuous by their absence from the pew in front of the middle aisle on the left. For 14 years, the Balls -- David and Angela and sons Timothy and Jonathan - donned the Indian avatar, and endeared themselves to all at St. John's Church.



*David and Angela Ball with sons Timothy and Jonathan*

The Balls arrived in India with four-month old Timothy in January '94, to work with TAFTEE, and settled at St John's. Jonathan was born in Bangalore on March 1, '96.

What appealed to the Balls was the way that the St John's family accepted them and, over time, made them part of the family. Says Angela: "As the years went by we even forgot that we were foreigners, and no longer felt that we were sticking out like sore thumbs"! The Balls felt so privileged that in the second half of their time in Bangalore, they were really able to get involved in the life and activities of the church. Being part of the worship team

was a great joy for Angela as music was her life (besides Dave and the boys, of course!) and they both thoroughly enjoyed doing Bible Studies with the Youth and Teens and participating in Sunday School activities. Both of them had worked with young people in all the churches they'd been part of in UK before coming to India, so it was great to be able to carry on doing so in St John's.

David fondly recalls how the ever helpful Peter Pothan offered to take David on the back of his scooter to the airport to release their luggage. A ride of his life, David says, as he had never ridden pillion hanging on for dear life and wondering how Peter was able to

wind his way at neck-breaking speed.... And live to tell this tale!!!!

Very few of us know the Balls. David was born in Kenya on January 15, 1966. His parents were missionaries for many years, and he lived there till he was 12, and then returned to UK to attend boarding school. He is the youngest of three siblings - an older sister and brother. He then acquired a degree in Biblical Studies at Sheffield University, and met his wife!

Angela was born in England on April 3, 1966. From the age of eight to 16, her family lived in East Africa, mainly Sudan. Angie, as she is lovingly called, is the eldest child in her family, with a younger sister and brother. She did home schooling up to O' level in the African countries. The family returned to UK so that Angie could do her A' levels, and then went on to Sheffield University, and acquired a dual degree in Biblical Studies and Linguistics. And also met David.

David did a year with Operation Mobilisation in Israel. I often wondered why everybody would say that David had a long standing association with OM. Only now I know how. He returned to Sheffield to do his Ph.D., while Angie did her final year undergrad, and then moved to London to do her postgraduate certificate in education.

David and Angela were married, after an engagement lasting 16 months, on August 4, 1990, and lived first in Cambridge, and then in Bury St Edmunds. Dave continued to study for his Ph.D., while Angie worked with Christian organisations at first, and then as a religious education teacher at a high school for two years, until the arrival of their first child, Timothy on September 16, 1993.

The Balls will definitely miss Bangalore. Says Angie: "The Gulmohar trees in bloom, the friendly and helpful staff at Thoms Bakery; not having to get out of the car to fill petrol, the scent of rain, St John's Parish Evening at Christmas; dosa at Komala; the flower arrangements in church every Sunday; the climate from July to February; being able to catch an auto anytime, anywhere; mangoes and water melon; Crossword Bookshop (where we often went after church on Sunday) not forgetting watching out for the erratic driver who shot across from anywhere between Kothanur and St. John's and the blaring of the horns"!

Dave, we miss your mighty yawn during service as well as your little cricket anecdotes. Angie, we miss your knowing smile every time a wrong note is played! God bless you both and the boys as you begin life all over again in England.

# In His Time, God Makes All Things Beautiful

By Freeda David

**A**s the clock moved slowly towards 4:30 p.m., our training at Trivandrum had come to a close. It was time to get back home to namma Bengaluru. The programme was



very good; we had a new batch of trainees ready to work for our company. Feeling very happy and smiling to myself, I thanked God for another successful induction!

I said goodbye to my trainees, wished them luck, and took an auto-rickshaw to the Trivandrum airport. My flight to Bangalore was at 7:30 p.m. I had to reach at least by 6:30. The auto-driver told me it would take 45 minutes to an hour to the airport with the heavy traffic. As the auto started and headed for the airport, I wondered, “Here I am on a beautiful sunny Saturday evening, going back to Bangalore without visiting any of the lovely beaches

of Trivandrum.” I thought about my colleague who told me that he was leaving the next day and took off to the famous “Kovalam beach”. I sat back with a heavy heart and thought how unlucky I was to have come to the lovely capital of “God’s Own Country” and go back home without visiting any beach in Trivandrum or witnessing a sunset at the beach.

As we passed the roads lined with lush green coconut-tree I got a nice feeling ... the cool breeze in my face. Another 10-minute drive and the scenery changed as the auto zipped through small lanes, which had tile-roofed

houses on both sides – a very bumpy road. I looked at my watch, it was 5:30 — another half hour to go. All of a sudden, the auto took a sharp turn, and I swayed and held on to my handbag and luggage tightly. Then my heart skipped a beat. I nearly froze. In front of me was a very long stretch of beach which had appeared out of nowhere! I could not believe my eyes ... and there was this huge ball of fire going down in the Arabian Sea. I shouted with joy and told the auto-driver to stop. I asked him to wait for 15 minutes, took my mobile camera out of my bag and ran towards the beach ... there it was ... what I so much longed for

... the lovely golden sunset along the endless stretch of sand and fishermen boats ... I watched this wonder with my mouth open. God had shown me exactly what I wanted to see – and in his own style and time. It was breathtakingly beautiful. Time stood still. I watched until the sea had turned golden orange with the sun's rays.

I walked slowly back to the auto – after taking pictures of the beautiful sunset, my face glowing, like the sun, in happiness. I still had 10 minutes to reach the airport which I did on time. I had witnessed the most beautiful sunset of my life!

## What Matters is Eternal Life in Christ, Not Worldly Goods

By Priscilla Anthony

**I**t has been a week since Hurricane Ike landed and is well on its way. It hit land around two in the early hours of September 12, Nelson's birthday, I am sure Nelson will never forget his first birthday in America.

The devastation caused by Ike was unbelievable. The aftermath of this ferocious angry storm left whole islands wiped off the map,

homes blown across several miles and other people's property, furniture, boats, etc landing up in someone else's back yard, literary. The scenes were unimaginable and heart breaking. Some lost everything except their lives and the clothes on their back. Millions were without water and electricity. Fallen debris and huge trees uprooted was a sight to

behold. Houston, boasting of tall rise buildings, had roads with splinters of glass from broken windows and glass doors. Everything shut down and it seemed like a large part of Texas died. No grocery shops, no gas stations, no banks, no schools, no offices were open. Until everything was set back on its feet, it was a dead zone.

I stayed at home a whole week. I could not believe we were untouched. We did not experience power cut or water cut; no trees fell on our property and our cars were not damaged. So many cars were floating in rivers of waters as the height of the hurricane was well over twenty feet! We had food in our fridge that did not go out due to a power shortage, and we were able to watch TV and see all the havoc and destruction. Only our phone did not work.

As I watched the TV, I heard one woman answer the news reporter who had asked her why she was helping.' She answered: "Because I have electricity in my home and food in my fridge and gas in my car. And this is what my Jesus wants me to do." This simple testimony of God's goodness made me realise that God has been good to me every time; that I too want to do what Jesus wants me to do.

I thanked God I was able to volunteer and to be a channel of God's blessings to those in need. This was an opportunity to do what God wanted me to do 'Help One Another'.

Nelson and I went out to volunteer. We stood in a line, helping to distribute bags of ice, bottled water, discount coupons for medication, and food. These points of distribution were set up all over the areas with many volunteers, yet the streams of cars that stopped to collect and drive on went on from 8 am until 6 pm for several days. People lined up and walked in to collect the stuff.

As I stood there, handing out the things I had the opportunity to say to every person in the cars 'God Bless You.' I thanked God I did not need anything as God had taken care of me and my family. I cooked food and shared with our neighbors who had no power or water and could not go out to buy food as everything was shut down.

This was a time to realise that 'all my worldly goods are nothing and can be lost in one fleeting moment.' May we reach out for something more lasting 'Eternal Life in Christ Jesus.'

# The Chronicles of Narnia

*Narnia points readers to the forgiveness of sin and the saving work of Christ* – says Dr. Eva Bell

**W**hen C. S. Lewis wrote the Chronicles of Narnia in 1950 for his goddaughter, he was already a well known writer. An Oxford don, a scholar in English literature, a teacher, and influential Christian apologist, Lewis was often referred to as “Professor for Christ.”

Yet this great man forsook the faith of his childhood, and passed through a phase of atheism. He even said that if ever there was a Christian God, he was a sadist.

But while in Oxford, he was profoundly influenced by Christian scholars and writers like

J.R. Tolkien. This led him to investigate in depth, the truths of Christianity. These friends challenged his atheistic theories,

until over a period of time Lewis was drawn back into the faith.

Of those days he wrote, “You must picture me alone in my room at Magdalen (College)...

feeling the steady, unrelenting approach of Him whom I earnestly desired not to meet. In 1929, I gave in and admitted that God was God, and knelt and prayed; perhaps the most reluctant convert in all England.”

For Lewis, there was no turning back. Instead, he

quickly rose in stature to become a powerful defender of Christianity. His best known apologetic works are “Mere Christianity,” “The problem of Pain,” and the “Abolition of



***Tell us about a book you read or an experience you had, and the impact it on you. Word limit: 300 words***

man.” His love of literature and his awesome imagination flowed into his books in his Trilogy of Science Fiction, his classical satire “The Screw tape Letters,” and his children’s books.

***The Chronicles of Narnia*** (seven in number) are still very popular among both children and adults. They conjure up a fairy tale world of imaginative beauty, of colours, of adventure; of a Lion, a Witch and a Wardrobe, and even a faun carrying an umbrella in a snowy wood. Lewis used fiction first to entertain, and then to open their hearts to the analogues of Christianity. His fiction mirrors the fight between good and evil. Narnia points readers to the forgiveness of sin and the saving work of Christ.

The books are

1. *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe: A Story for Children*
2. *Prince Caspian: The Return to Narnia*
3. *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*
4. *The Silver Chair*
5. *The Horse and His Boy*
6. *The Magician’s Nephew*
7. *The Last Battle: A Story for Children.*

The story is about four siblings who are evacuated from London during the war, and sent to the country to live with Professor Kirke. Through an old wardrobe

in his house, they make their way into the Kingdom of Narnia, which is always snow-bound because of the spell of the evil White Witch. Here it is always winter but never any Christmas.

The children are hidden from the harmful witch by friendly beavers. But Edmund falls in love with the witch and follows her, after she tempts him with the promise of power and an endless supply of Turkish Delight.

Then Aslan the Lion, who was the Lord of the Woods, arrives to liberate Narnia. He also helps rescue Edmund from the witch. But she finds him, brands him a traitor, and gets ready to execute him. Aslan immediately offers to die in Edmund’s place. He is jeered at and killed by the witch’s henchmen. Edmund sorely repents for his wickedness.

Aslan later comes back to life and leads the war against the witch. The children became kings and queens for a while. But they finally return to the real world via the wardrobe. They realize that they had been gone just for a few minutes.

The parallels drawn between Aslan and Christ are easy to understand. Just like Aslan is the son of the Emperor of the Sea, Jesus is the Son of God. He sacrifices his life as a substitute for Edmund, but is resurrected for

the final battle against the evil witch. Edmund is not a bad person to start with, but he is easily deceived by the witch.

In their sojourn through Narnia, the children come across “watchful dragons”. These can be compared to people who are not open to the beliefs of Christianity

In the final book of the series, Aslan tells the children that though they are returning to the real world, they would find him there too. “There, I have another name. You must learn to know me by that name. That is why you were brought to Narnia.” The love for Aslan could be transferred to Jesus Christ.

Lewis has so effortlessly introduced codes of ethical behaviour in his fairy tales. Christian elements are woven in so unobtrusively that no one can take offence. The “deep magic” which he refers to is the moral law that is within every human being. Breaking of that law leads to sin and punishment. Hence the need for salvation.

Lewis died in 1963 at the age of 65. The recurring theme in his writing is that people are destined for eternal life either in heaven or in hell, and this life is a preparation for one or the other.

The question that stares us in the face is: “Where will you spend Eternity/”

## Saturday Prayer Cell

### *Turning to God in Prayer*

Prayer is defined as a believer’s communication with God. It is God who makes it possible for us to pray. His most significant role is that He receives our prayers. The psalmist wrote – *‘Hear my prayer, O God; listen to the words of my mouth (Ps.54:2)*. We talk to God and He listens. It is as simple as that.

**The St. John’s Prayer Cell meets every Saturday morning — 6.30 a.m. to 7.30 – a.m. in the Church** for a time of fruitful prayer. We use this opportunity to express our gratitude to God and give thanks to Him. We also focus our attention on the many needs of the Church and the congregation members.

You are invited to join the prayer cell to renew your vigour in regular communion with God. Church members are also encouraged to write their prayer requests and drop them in the box provided in the church.

Thomas Swaroop

# VBS 2008

## Children Look Unto Jesus

**E**very year, it is an uplifting experience, as we stand at the entrance of the church, to see the special interest of the parents and family members as they bring their children to VBS.

This year, the theme of VBS (April 14-26) was "Looking unto Jesus" (Heb 12: 12a). As we get caught up with the ways of the world, do we prioritize our time for Jesus?

The theme helped our children focus on Jesus.

The day at VBS began at 8.00 a.m. with the teacher's devotion, which gave the teachers a time of personal preparation and meditation for the day ahead of them. The devotions were led by our church members who are involved in ministry.

As usual, the first few days at VBS were busy with registrations, allocation of classes, sale of song books, badges etc. and all this was ably taken care of by Peter S.C. Pothan, Mel Patterson and Renuka Varughese.

At 8:30 a.m. the most eagerly awaited session starts. The music team comprising VBS alumni start off with vibrant singing, with Samuel Samson on the piano and Harsha Joseph on the drums. It is great joy to watch and listen as our children sing and do the action songs.

At around 9.10 a.m., the children go their classes, while our energetic volunteers take attendance, distribute books and help the teachers when required. After the first session it is time for the refreshments. Rani Samson assisted by Lalitha Verghis and Sylvia Gaïneous and the group of enthusiastic volunteers distribute the eats during snack time, which is followed by the second session and devotions. The children learn a bible event and a missionary story everyday. It was encouraging to see Uncle John and Benson Raj help out with these sessions.

On the Day of Cleanliness and Beauty, the children decked up their classes with flowers, charts

and decorations. Thereby we got to see the talent of each child; be it painting, drawing, flower arrangement etc. The judges were in awe of the beautified classes. On Witness Day the children were taught to propagate what they learnt at VBS to their family and friends. Inspection Day saw the children answer questions posed by the judges based on the lessons. The children were prompt in answering and reciting the memory verses.

On the Love Feast Day children shared their lunch with friends and had a good time of fun and fellowship. Mr. Jonathan Darshan, winner of KBC came and conducted a G.K. and Bible quiz. The children had a great time of learning from the quiz master.

The Final day was held on Sunday the April 27 at the Community Centre. Each class put in a lot of effort over such a short period of time to come up with memory verse recitation, skits, songs and choreography. They put up a great show and were applauded for their efforts. Rev. Nirmala Vasanthakumar gave away special prizes to the children for all their efforts. The teachers sang a special song on the occasion.

The children were taken for a picnic to Sambaram Roost on the 28<sup>th</sup> of April and they had a wonderful time playing, making friends and splashing in the pool.

We give our thanks to God Almighty for His leading, guidance and strength. Thanks to our pastors Rev. Nirmala Vasanthakumar and Rev. Daniel Ravikumar for their guidance, support and encouragement. Special thanks to our team of dedicated and committed teachers, talented music team and our cheerful volunteers. Special thanks to Principal Rani Rajkumar, the parents and donors for their contribution towards daily bread. As parents and elders we should take special interest in imparting God's word and spending quality time with our children.

By Vinod David  
*Director, VBS*

***“When we store more grudges than happy memories, we lose sight of our right to be joyful” A Cherokee feast of days***

Sent in by  
Edna Mathew

## Teachers' Experiences

This year at the Vacation Bible School at St. John's Church, 250 children, from beginners to standard tenth, studied the character of the God we serve and the different things that He means to us. We learnt that we could trust in our God and look unto Him as our Redeemer, Fortress, Refuge, Friend, Strength. Everyday we looked at a different aspects of God and the lessons for the day were on those aspects. Our focus was on how this God can be "my God". How can He be my Personal God? To have a personal relation with Him, to make Him my all, to give first priority to Him in my life were some of the things we learnt in VBS.

The children enjoyed the morning session and were quizzed on the previous day's lesson and memory verse, along with the theme for each day. After their classes they had a closing session which was taken by Benson Raj and Uncle John, which they thoroughly enjoyed. The snacks were just delicious and filling. Many thanks to the people who helped organise the

snacks and the people who gave generously for it. The teachers' devotions, conducted by speakers who came early each day, were greatly appreciated.

At the end of the VBS, the closing programme to let the parents know what their children learnt in those two weeks, was an uplifting experience. Each class put up a skit or a dance that was related to the theme of "Looking unto Jesus". To put the icing on the cake, we went for a picnic to Sambram Roost, where we spent the entire day just lazing around, with games and lots and lots of fun and very good food. The children had a blast.

A lot of effort and hard work went into making the VBS a success. Vinod David who organised the competitions, games, classes, activities, devotions for the teachers, the opening and the closing sessions for the children and the picnic. The teachers for their hard work and love for the children, for their preparations every day for their classes. The children for their whole-hearted participation. The volunteers, the parents, all who worked real

hard those two weeks to let their children be educated in the Word of God which supersedes any other education. We must teach our children the word of God so that they may be equipped for every good work.

*By Sharon Bangara*

Looking unto Jesus, was the theme of our VBS 2008 which was indeed a reality and as we looked forward to a challenging new session, new kids with new expressions and innovations, we as Inters did experience a very charismatic VBS. The children had very inspiring and thought provoking theme with which we had a reviving encounter with our Lord. Kids came out with their personal experiences. They enjoyed knowing more about Christ as our Saviour, Redeemer, Good Shepherd, Light of the world, the vine and as our All in All. They shared their love and peace with each other and took part in presenting good charts, models etc. on all the special days.

'Love Feast' was their favourite day which they always looked forward to and enjoyed in their own time, energy and above all

their spiritual gifts which God had entrusted to them. Songs and devotions added spice and encouraged and helped us to participate fully.

Our Pastors and our Director Vinod David were highly resourceful and readily available for all our needs which indeed made our VBS 2008 a great success and triumph over Satan's warfare with us.

I immensely thank my Almighty God and Saviour for making me a "choice", rather being here by chance, to be His steward for at least few days. Praise the Lord!

By Grace Vani  
*Intermediate class*

The VBS 2008 was indeed a great learning experience not only for the students but also for the teachers as well. A Character from the Old testament was covered each day taking care to see it was practically applied in the students' young lives, followed by the customs and traditions of the Jews observed even today. A few lessons covered by the Juniors were, the Saul's incomplete obedience (complete obedience was

emphasized here), Jonathan honours God with his speech (the students we taught to speak what is good), David honours God with his talents and abilities (that they have their skills and talents to glorify God), Solomon's wise choice (to honour God in every choice that they make). Elisha trusts God to do the impossible (that they put their trust in God to do the impossible) etc. The history behind the Woman who lost her silver coin in Luke 15: 8-10 (given to the bride by the groom as a wedding gift) aptly justified the reason for her to become so emotional over a small piece of

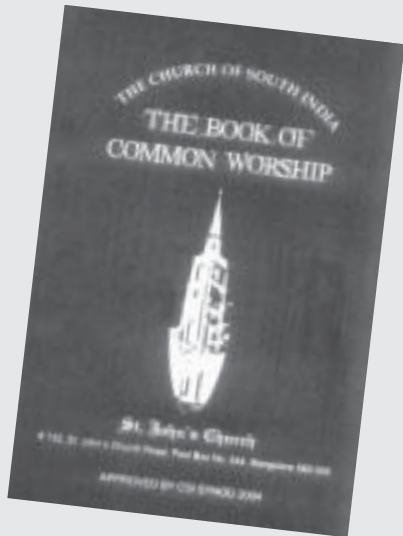
silver coin. We also learnt the valuable lesson to shed tears (and not to be ashamed) in God's presence because they were collected in tear bottles and accounted for by our Lord (Ps.56:8)

Thus we are grateful to the VBS ministry for helping us learn valuable lessons and facts from the Bible the fun-way. We also hope the seeds sown in the young minds would bear fruit and take the word of our Lord to the uttermost parts of the world.

F elicia Sunil  
*Juniors*

## New Book of Common Prayer Released

"The new edition of the Book of Common Prayer was released by Presbyter Rev. Nirmala Vasanthakumar during the 8.30 am service on Palm Sunday, March 16, 2008. The book was possible because of the largesse of Juliet and Edison Thomas, who sponsored the printing. The church also appreciated the proof-reading done by Anna Varughese and Dr, Eva Bell, who along with the Thomas' were presented the book.



## Enrichment Seminar for Engaged Couples

Couples, whose banns are being announced in the following month or are using the Community Centre for their weddings, can now enrich their relationship by attending the Pre-Martial Counselling Session. The one-day programmes, between 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., have been organized by the Nurture & Pastoral Care Committee from April this year, and is usually held on the last Saturday of the month.

The couples are counselled on topics like the Biblical basis of marriage, relationships between couple and communication. The feedback from the couples has been encouraging. "Interesting and enlightening" is how they describe it.

The sessions are conducted by Peter S.C. Pothan, Karuna Baskar, Mary Paul, Juliet Thomas and Dr. Julian Sundersingh.

## Young Married Couples Fellowship

On the fourth Sunday of each month, after the 8.30 a.m. service, young married couples, which includes parents with children up to 10 years old, meet to discuss various issues. The sessions are led by resource persons, from within and outside the church. Members have shared how these meetings have helped to strengthen their marriages and their relationships with their children.

*The Young Couples Meet is a great*

*step towards opening of a new fellowship bringing in an open forum to discuss the day to day issues we face in our daily lives. In relationships, we are sure that everybody has some problem or the other but how we joyfully live together with ease and peace makes the key difference in our lives as we walk with Christ. Pastor Vasu was very dynamic in touching upon areas which were very practical. We had a lovely sharing experience where in we got to learn from the seniors in the meet, who spoke on*

*solving issues easily with children and grandchildren as they grow up, only by spending time at our Lord's feet. All the points raised encouraged us to have a closer walk with the Lord.*

*Anita Beniston & Beniston K T*

## Parents of Teenagers Get Together

**P**arents of teenagers NPC has a programme to help tackle many issues that parents feel helpless about. You can discuss with other parents, and learn from resource person. Keep free the **fifth Sunday after the 830 a.m. service.**

## Neighbourhood Fellowships – Rejuvenating Life at St. John's

*'Where 2 or 3 are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them'.*

**T**he neighbourhood fellowships are a welcome addition to the community life of St John's Church. I attend the Cox Town Fellowship which meets in the home of Mary and Manuel Paul at Jeevanahalli.

Ours is a small band of about a dozen people who live in and around Cox Town. Our meetings are lively and highly interactive. After coffee and snacks thoughtfully provided by Mary, over which we share some of the

highlights of the week gone by, we start off with singing. An opening prayer by one of the members, is followed by the Bible portion and meditation for the day. The session is made meaningful by the members sharing their experiences and anecdotes from their spiritual journey.

Personally, the fellowship meetings have rejuvenated my



spiritual life. This is the kind of Christian fellowship that the Bible talks about – sharing each other’s sorrows and joys, upholding one another in prayer, praising God together and praying for the Church and the community. One very encouraging aspect of our fellowship is that many of our prayers have been answered and we have been able to gain deeper spiritual insights through our discussions.

Recently, we have started another initiative — once a month we visit homebound / ailing parishioners. We sing, share and pray with them.

The fellowship meets Friday evenings at 6.30 pm. The fact that it has become an essential and eagerly-looked-forward-to part of our lives came home when most of us gathered for the fellowship as usual on the day that the bombs went off in Bangalore.

Shirin Samuel

## A Jolly Time at the Golden Age Fellowship

**T**he Golden Age Fellowship, which was revived after a gap of two years, is meeting regularly



bimonthly. It is enthusiastically attended by the senior citizens of our Church.

The Youth Fellowship led the singing, presented a skit and

games, and hosted the meeting on May 24. Following the refreshments, there was a jolly time of singing together old favourites enthusiastically led by Col. Thomas John on the keyboard

Peter S.C. Pothan  
*Secretary, PC*

## Men's Fellowship

### Interesting Topics Discussed

The Fellowship held its 18<sup>th</sup> Annual General Body Meeting on May 18, 2008, which was enthusiastically attended by the members. The Secretary's report of the activities of the last year, the Treasurer's Report and the Accounts were presented and accepted. The Budget for 2008-2009 was also passed. The members appreciated the efforts of the committee.

In the last few months, we had a series of interesting meetings on a variety of topics. John Jacob spoke to us on "God's World or Ours?" on May 1, to commemorate World Environment Day. He also showed us slides of animals and birds he has photographed around the country. To celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Church, Arthur Selvaraj gave us a short history of the Church on May 15. Dr. Chris Gnanakayan give a talk on "Fathers and Fatherhood" on June 19, to celebrate Father's Day. We welcomed our new Assistant Presbyter Rev. P.

Jayanesan, on June 5, when he spoke to us on "The Mission of the Disciples" and shared his testimony. We bid farewell to Rev. Daniel Ravikumar on April 3. We also held special services for Lent and Easter in which all the members took part in the special liturgy. Our Bible Study on "Basics of the Christian Faith" is held on the first and third Sunday after the 8.30 a.m. service. We have welcomed several new members to our Fellowship this year.

During our bi-monthly meetings we greet members who are celebrating their birthdays or wedding anniversaries with a specially designed card signed by all members as well as pray and sing for them. These members also respond by hosting the refreshments for the meeting.

We welcome all the men of the Church to join us for fellowship, learning and fun together.

Peter S. C. Pothan  
*President*

## St. John's High School

Down Memory Lane

*Thoughts are sometimes deep and pure  
Thoughts are something which one  
can't cure.*

*Thoughts are always in my mind  
Struggling to get past and a new place  
to find*

*Happy thoughts are like balloons in the  
air*

*To do what they like 'cause thoughts  
one can't tear*

St. John's High School has always been my second home. My earliest thoughts of school life are centered in my heart. Memories of school life are incomplete without the mention of what St. John's Church has been to me.

Morning assemblies have always been special at St. John's. Wednesdays were very dear to us, students as the Senior assembly was held in the church and we had

the        Presbyter-in-charge conducting this special assembly. Vivid are my memories of Uncle John's Scripture Union Week in the church. Another unforgettable assembly was the one on the day our results were announced.

As a primary class student, the steps at the entrance of the church were the place where the girls played "step, garden, river, forest, sea". As we grew up we would pair up in two's and three's and walk around the church during our long lunch breaks.

We would love to imitate a very important person of St. John's Church; guess who – "Velanganni, the gardener". He would drive us away when we would try to destroy his well nurtured plants around the church.



The spiral steps, the clock, bell and the steeple were a fancy for everyone who walked into the campus.

Beautiful pictures of the church were drawn by the Tibetan boys' the inmates of the school hostel.

Oh! how time has flown. To be back at my alma mater was my long cherished dream. New buildings have sprung up in the campus but one outstanding structure remains the same and that is ST. JOHN'S CHURCH. The school now hosts various programmes in the church. The Scripture Union meets every Thursday in the church. The teachers meet on Mondays for a time of singing, meditation and prayer.

The most solemn occasion of the school, is the Graduation Day's Thanksgiving service conducted in the church. I'm sure every student who graduates reminisces and cherishes memories of this programme for years. The teaching staff of St. John's is a privileged lot to begin and conclude their academic sessions in a very thoughtful way with meaningful services conducted by the Presbyterian of the church.

We, the family of St. John's High School are grateful to God for giving us HIS SANCTUARY, where we could always look unto HIM.

Vanaja Rajathi

## Sunday School

Reaching and Caring

The Sunday School year closed with the Final Day programme held on March 9, 2008. The children enthusiastically sang their favourite songs in church and received prizes for studying scripture. We closed for summer after a special children's service on Good Friday.

During the summer break, the children (and adults!) looked

forward to a special story by Uncle John each Sunday during the 8:30 service. This continues on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays when children join their families in church.

The Sunday School teachers prepared for the new year of Sunday School with two workshops. The first, conducted by Angela and David Ball, emphasized how we can make worship meaningful for the children. In the second workshop

we thought about the purpose of teaching SS – Reaching, Teaching, Winning and Caring. We spent time discussing the importance of preparation, different methods of teaching and also made plans for the year ahead.

We are making every effort to make Sunday School attractive and Bible centred. This year we plan to have periodic Bible quizzes, and the children studied the book of Mark for the first quiz, which was held in August.

We currently have 22 teachers in Sunday school but we would be glad to have more volunteers and teachers. You do not need to have any teaching experience – if you

want to share your faith, like being with children, and are willing to give a regular commitment of your time, do join us. Even if you have never taught before, you could share a class with another teacher. So do contact one of the teachers or the pastors if you would like to help in Sunday School.

We're all in this together. We request your support through prayer, suggestions and involvement. To paraphrase the old African proverb: "It takes a congregation to raise a child". Children are our greatest resource in the church – let's partner together in nurturing them.

K aruna B askar  
*Superintendent*

## Women's Fellowship

Fellowship Grow Stronger  
**L**enten devotions were held from February 12 - March 11.

After these devotions, we had a talk by the Karnataka Evangelical association who explained to us their ministry among less privileged children and poor women.

In of April we arranged a farewell party for our Assistant Pastor, his wife, and Dr. David

Ball's family. We had a special programme for them with high tea. Angela Ball had always helped in the singing on special occasions, and also during our Annual Sale, giving us nice cakes. We are thankful to her.

On April 5, we all went for a picnic to Sunny Holiday Village, Gottigere, Banerakata Road. We enjoyed the whole day with games, singing, Quiz programme,

acting and dancing. We enjoyed our food and the environment and we returned home refreshed in body and mind. Then we closed for summer and re-opened in June 2008. This term is rather a busy term for us as we have many

interesting programmes and activities.

We like to invite the ladies from our congregation to join in our Women's Fellowship and enjoy the learning and fun.

Rani Samson, *Vice President*

## Stephen's Home for the Aged

'... Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for Me.'

**T**he Stephen's Home continues to function smoothly.

We've had the joy of taking in two new residents, Shantha Moses and Arokiamary who have been settling in happily. It is the Committee's plan and hope to try and take in two more suitable candidates - but this can materialise only after some requisite physical arrangements can be made in the Home, so that then the added accommodation will be possible. This is being pursued.

Contributions, to meet the grocery and other such day-to-day requirements of Home, continue to be received in generous and ready response to the 'Chart of requirements' that is displayed at

the Church every quarter. For this continuing faithfulness on the part of Church members, the Home owes deep appreciation.

Also to Mrs. Alva and Mrs. Luther who continue their visits to the residents, at regular times, to lead them in a time of devotions and understanding of scriptural messages.

Members who might like to visit and share their time and resources in helping the residents in some way, could get in touch with the Presbyters or the Committee.

We look forward to the continuing support so essential for the life and well-being of this Home. Join in, and share, the blessings of Giving - and Receiving!

The Stephen's  
Home Committee

# Milestones

## NEW MEMBERS



Anil Das from Ganganagar

R. Moses, Nirmala, and children Roshini & Sujith from Chinappa Garden

Geoffrey Marshall, Jennina and son Scott from Vivekananda Nagar

Lily Jayapalan from G.M. Palya

Allen Benjamin from Banaswadi

Finney George, Renuka and children Davina & Joanna from HSR Layout

Max Benedict, Annie and children Jeevan & Abijith from OMBR Layout

Mervyn Solomon, Meena and children Melvin & Alvyn from Maruthi Layout

Sang Sik Woo, Kim Jung and children Woo Ha Eun, Woo Sung Eun and Woo Go Eun from Kammanahalli.

Gibin M.V., Jancy and children Chrisalen, Keith & Kiesha from Babusapalya

P. Samuel Prabhu, Sandria and children Elden & Eden from Banaswadi  
Jyothi Prakash Sahu from Marathalli

Lazarus Rajkumar, Bina and daughter Arpita from Hennur Main Road

Lawrence John, Sunita and children Joel & Judith from Kammanahalli

Andrews K.J., Grace and children Sudeep & Prashanth from St. Thomas Town

George Fernandes, Jyothi and children George & Joshua from Benson Town

Kenneth Joseph, Sobharani and children Samuel & Joshua from Benson Town

Rev. Jerom Brand, Linda and daughter Evelyn from Cox Town

Rev. Dr. K. James Carl and Premaleela from Bharathinagar

Claudia Pracula from Thomas Town Extn

Evelyn Sajesh and children Melissa & Eric from Hennur

Sarah and children Allan, Gabriel, Aaron from HBR Layout

Sqn. Ldr. Roy Michael Rodgers, Susan and son Aaron from Yelahanka

Samson Sunder Raj, Rhoda and children Chris & Mark from  
Lingarajapuram

Denzil Norman White, Sharon and daughter Beverly from Fraser Town

Sundararaj Thangam, Leela and son Lordwin from NGEF Layout

Vijay Alphonse, Daisy and daughter Rochelle from Vijayanagar

Rajneesh Dennis, Nisha, and daughter Juana and mother Molly Dennis

Manjul Patlia and Wife Parul & daughter Pratiti from R T Nagar

Christopher Froude, Shashi and son Sanjay from Kalyan Nagar

Sharon Gupta from Frazer Town

Priya Reddy from Cox Town

Melvin Nelson, Parvathi and children Rithika & Roshan from Kalyan  
Nagar

Joseph Christopher, Arun and Premila Christopher from Dodda  
Banaswadi

## BAPTISM



JANE, daughter of Manju & Samuel Ajith

SITARA HABIGAIL KETURAH, daughter of Urmila  
& Samuel Devadason

JADEN ADAM, son of Muna & Michael Beatty

JOEL ABHISHEK, son of Vinita & Raja Prabhu

AKRETHI, daughter of Premi & Vikram Chittaranjan

NAIARA, daughter of Suchitra & Harsha Joseph

ROCHELLE AVRIL, daughter of Daisy & Vijay Alphonse

RIANNA RUTH, daughter of Niranjana & Sunil Chandrashekar

ETHAN ZACHEUS, son of Niranjana & Sunil Chandrashekar

## WEDDINGS



GLORY ESTHER & AMEET KUMAR

NITHYA RUTH ABRAHAM & CHRIS J SANANDAM

PARINEETA ROUT & JYOTI PRAKASH SAHU

PRISCILLA ARCHANA ADAMS & GARY DOMINIC DASS

ANGELINE GRACE RATHNA REUBEN & EBENEZER KANARAJ

ROSHINI BEATRICE KARKAD & ARUN SANDEEP WILSON

## IN MEMORIAM

**Mrs. Yvette Parashar  
(59 years), April 2, 2008**

We miss thee  
from our home,  
dear mother

Was requested  
to write a  
paragraph...  
words just failed



to somehow say how much mum  
meant to me, how to  
substantiate the relationship a  
daughter shares with her  
mother, where to begin? How to  
put my feelings down on  
paper... Do not really  
remember when was the first  
time she held me in her arms  
after all I was just a new born...  
but am sure I must have been  
aware of the fact that she loved  
me right from the beginning...  
and I just cannot remember  
when I fell in love with her...  
may be just about the same  
time... the perfect relationship,  
isn't that true for most of us.

A few words for our Mum, she  
was our "Parents", our mum and  
dad rolled into one, was around  
for us through the thick and  
thin, we faced in our lives... the  
one stop shop to share  
everything we faced... She was  
our world. In her memory would  
like to share one of my favourite

write up about  
Mothers... author:  
anonymous



### **When God created Mothers....**

When the good Lord was  
creating mothers, he was into  
his sixth day of overtime, when  
an angel appeared and said,  
"You're doing a lot of fiddling  
around on this one."

And the Lord said, "Have you  
read the spec on this one? She  
has to be completely washable,  
but not plastic; have 180  
moveable parts, all replaceable;  
run on black coffee and  
leftovers; have a lap that  
disappears when she stands up,  
a kiss that can cure anything  
from a broken leg to a  
disappointed love affair, and six  
pair of hands." The angel shook  
her head slowly and said, "Six  
pairs of hands...no way."

"It's not the hands that are  
causing me problems," said the  
Lord. "It's the three pairs of eyes  
that mothers have to have."  
"That's on the standard model?"  
asked the angel.

The Lord nodded. "One pair  
that sees through closed doors  
when she asks, "What are you  
kids doing in there?" when she  
already knows." Another here,  
in the back of her head that sees

what she shouldn't, but what she has to know, and of course the ones here in front that can look at a child when he goofs up, and say, "I understand and I love you," without so much as uttering a word."

"Lord," said the angel, touching his sleeve gently, "Rest for now. Tomorrow..." "I can't," said the Lord. "I'm so close to creating something close to myself. Already I have one who heals herself when she is sick, can feed a family of six on one pound of hamburger and can get a nine year old to stand under a shower."

The angel circled the model of the mother very slowly. "She's too soft," she sighed. "But tough!" said the Lord excitedly. "You cannot imagine what the mother can do or endure."

"Can she think?" "Not only think, but she can reason and compromise," said the Creator.

Finally the angel bent over and ran her finger across the cheek. "There's a leak," she pronounced. "I told you, you were trying to put too much into this model." "It's not a leak," said the Lord. "It's a tear."

"What's it for?" "It's for joy, sadness, disappointment, pain, loneliness and pride."

"You're a genius," said the angel. The Lord looked somber, "I didn't put it there."

Thank you, Lord, for giving us a part of you – our mama. They say God takes the best and our mama was the best for us.

Will always love you mama...  
Missing you.... Your daughters

*Pamela, Shirley and Michelle*

**Mrs Teresa Maria Smith  
(88 years), October 4, 2008**

Mrs Teresa was our loving mother and also a friend to all, she was loved by all and is still in our lives. We



miss her a lot. She worked as a Nursery Teacher in Cathedral High School for more than 30 years. She loved children, she would gather the poor little children in Lingarajapuram on Sunday in the compound of Mrs. Edwards and there she would teach them some memory verses, read them the Bible stories and teach them small chorus. She was a member of St. John's from the time Rev. Holder was there.

Mother was 88 years. Though she could not move around much but she would not worry any one. When asked how are

you? She would always reply I am O K. Thank you. She was a very cheerful person and also loved to sing . She had six children, four sons-in-law, one daughter-in-law, 12 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren.

It was on Saturday, October 4 around 8.15 am that it pleased the Lord and her saviour to call her home to be with Him for ever and ever. We praise God for letting us have our Mother for so long.

We will remember her with love and she will always stay in our hearts for ever.

*Beryl D'Costa and family*

**Cheryl Ann Robson  
(44 years), May 7, 2008**



*Mother, Wife and Friend  
Caring content cheerful  
Honest Humble Homely  
Ever Ready to lend a helping hand  
Religious  
Young and with Jesus  
Lots of love and laughter  
An angel lives in our home.*

The Robson Family

**Miss Sylvia David  
(93 years), October 7, 2008**

My aunt Sylvia David was a very god-fearing lady. She knew her Bible



backwards and forwards and could quote from it at any time.

Sylvie Auntie worked as a teacher in Trichy and lived in a Working Women's Hostel there. She was always quick to share her faith in Jesus and minister to others. Her strong faith helped her survive a bout with breast cancer and she underwent surgery and recovered.

When she grew too old for the Working Women's Hostel to take care of her needs, she came to live in Bangalore with her only surviving sibling, her youngest brother Mr. Johnson David and sister-in-law Dr. Kitty David (my father and mother). Even after my father died in 2001, she continued to live with my mother and spent about eight years in their home at 104 Spencer Road.

She had the habit of reading the Bible regularly and had a list of people to pray for. She was a

member of St. John's Church and initially she attended church services, too. Later she grew too weak to come to church and the pastor would come home to give her Holy Communion once a month. That was always the high point of the month for her!

As my mother turned 82 and moved out of Spencer Road, the last two years of Sylvie Aunty's life were spent in an old age home where she continued to minister the Word and share the story of Jesus with the nurses who attended on her, many of whom were non-Christians.

She looked forward with anticipation to her "home call" as she had implicit belief in the promise of Revelation that she would be walking "the streets of gold" in the presence of Jesus.

What I remember most about her was that she was always singing God's praises. Even a few days before she died, when we visited her for her 93rd birthday, she was able to sing a whole worship song in Tamil - a simple affirmation of her faith.

We know she is in a beautiful place where there is no sorrow or pain, walking the streets of gold in the presence of our Lord and that she is happy there. May her soul rest in peace.

by T rixie A sirvatham  
*Niece of Miss Sylvia David*

**Dr. Surendra Nawgiri  
(85 years),  
September 30, 2008**

Dr. Surendra Nawgiri passed away on September 30, 2008. He graduated from the King George Medical College at Lucknow and later worked for some time at the Christian Medical College, Vellore. He was an ophthalmologist. Around 1956, Dr. Nawgiri joined the American Mission Hospital in Kuwait. When the hospital closed down he and his wife Lily were given a license to start private practice. They came away to Bangalore in 1990 and were regular members of St. John's Church. Lily passed away a few years ago.

Dr. Nawgiri was a widely respected doctor, a loving husband, a caring father and a god-fearing person. He will be sorely missed by all who knew him. We specially remember his children - Ranjana, Avinash and Vinay.

Dr. George Cherian  
*A family friend*