



THE PILGRIM

A Church Publication since 2000

*A monthly Newsletter published for the
Church of South India, Toronto, Canada
15 Masters Green Crescent
Brampton, Ontario*

Parsonage Phone: 905-789-8238 - Pastor's Cell: 416-557-8238

Website: csitoronto.org

Editor

Ranjan Koshie

*56 Radwell Crescent
Scarborough. ON - M1V 2J5*

Motto for 2011

*"How great is the love the Father has lavished on us,
that we should be called children of God!" 1 John 3: 1*

കുറിവാക്യം-2011

കാണിൻ, നാം ദൈവമക്കൾ എന്നു
വിളിക്കപ്പെടുവാൻ പിതാവു നമുക്കു എത്ര വലിയ
സ്നേഹം നൽകിയിരിക്കുന്നു; 1 യോഹന്നാൻ 3:1



**President and Pastor
Rev. Raju Jacob**

Office Bearers 2011

Vice President:	Mr. George Samuel
Secretary:	Mr. Roy Abraham
Jt. Secretary:	Miss Gisha Oommen
Treasurer:	Mr. Joseph P. Mathew
Jt. Treasurer:	Mr. Sanju Cherian

Directors:

Choir:	Mr. Isaac Mathews
Sunday school:	Mrs. Susan Thomas
Social Activities:	Mr. John Cherian
Men's Fellowship:	Mr. Cherian Varghese
Women's Fellowship:	Mrs. Sajany Koshie
Youth Fellowship:	Mr. Ron Abraham
Auditor:	Mr. Philip Mathai
Trustees:	Mr. Koshy Oommen Mr. Benjamin Chacko

Editor

Ranjan Koshie

ranjankoshie@gmail.com ranjan.koshie@autoliv.com

Dear Parish members,

We get yearly appraisals from our employer based on our past performance. The Lenten season is a kind of self appraisal time. It is important to take the stock of our Christian Life and ensure that we keep the standard of God. Ask these questions;

1. How far we grew in likeness of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ?
2. Is there anyone whose forgiveness you need to seek?
3. Where is the clutter in my life?
4. Am I closer to God today than Lenten season 2010?
5. Have our lives reflected the reason why we are saved?
6. What have we done for our Lord in the recent past?
7. Would you rate your marriage a 10. If it's not a 10, what would it take in 2011 to make it a 10?
8. Have we shown the Fruit of the Spirit in our daily walk with the Lord?
9. Have we read the Bible daily with a desire to listen from the Lord?
10. Did we have a time with God daily?
11. Did we pray on a daily basis?

How will God rate us? As it is said in Daniel "You have been weighed in the balances, and found wanting" (Daniel 5:27).

We have moved in to a new sanctuary on 16th January 2011. Since then the Parish went through a very rough time because of various reasons.

A church is a building or a structure whose primary purpose is to facilitate the meeting of people. The people are the church not the building. The first century church met in Catacombs. The edict of Milan changed the scenario and the 'church' became a legal entity and started erecting its own structures for worship. People belong to the Lord. There are many questions that are flooding our minds regarding this new facility. One may doubt whether this facility is our own or not. Why we should spend our resources on maintaining a facility like this. How long we will be able continue the worship at this place? Well, down the lane we need to grapple with more questions like this. At the moment I am only looking at the immediate context and trying to put together the opportunities, possibilities and challenges this change brings to us as a congregation. In order to understand the topic for discussion first of all we need to understand the doctrine of the Church from the scripture. The word church is from the Greek word 'ekklesia' which means, called out people. Who are we? What are the purposes and core values of our congregation as the people of God? We should be a welcoming Christian community, worshipping God and serving one another and leading others to Christ. The St. Wilfrid Anglican Church was disestablished on April 11, 2010 after serving the community for 52 years. The Parish does not exist anymore and the property belongs to the Anglican Diocese of Toronto. Now as per the terms and conditions of the letter of understanding between the Madhya Kerala Diocese and the Diocese of Toronto the current user of the facility is CSI Church Toronto. Also we have signed a lease agreement to be the user of the facility like a prudent owner. However this new facility for worship comes to us with great opportunities, possibilities as well as challenges.

The greatest difference we will be experiencing is the change in time and space. Instead of afternoons, we are able to congregate in the usual Sunday morning time. Sunday morning service is a very unique experience in the life of a Christian as well as a congregation. This is a great **opportunity** for the congregation to go back in to the Sunday morning worship time. Psalm 63:1 "You, God, are my God, earnestly (early in the morning) I seek you" This will result in better quality of worship that will enhance spiritual ambience of the worship. Also we have more opportunities for activities other than Sunday worship. Beyond the Sunday celebration the new facility will enable our Parish organisations to meet and have fellowship and prayer together. There will be opportunities to meet for a mid week service, prayer and Bible study. Our organisations should be able to use the new facility for the spiritual development of the members. The space is really sufficient for example for a one day children's

Please visit our website: csitoronto.org for pictures of church events

camp. Also senior members can meet in the church for Biblical reflection, fellowship and prayer. Moreover the administrative operations can function from this new set up as there is enough space and resources for the same.

What are the **possibilities** this move can offer to us? We can reach out to the community around the new geographical location. Worship is the main vocation of the church. But as we worship God it should give us new responsibility of moving out of the walls of the church building. Jesus said 'you are the light of the world' and you are the salt of the earth', Matthew 5:14-16 "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." The communities around us should be served in the spirit of Christ. We should become light and salt to the people around. This means that the new facility should have access to others also. This is the mission of the church. There is a great possibility of serving the community through different programs which we can offer. New programs can be developed with the help of governmental and nongovernmental agencies for the community around. Also we should make use of the connection with the local diocese of Toronto. This offers us tremendous possibilities. The congregation should be both local and global. While maintaining our ties with our mother diocese we should make all the efforts to be part of the programs offered by the Toronto diocese. Our parish representatives will be attending the synod meetings. The youth can participate in exchange programs and short term missions to different countries. Last but not the least this facility may fetch us financial resources through renting the space for other organisations and churches. This covers a certain percentage of the cost incurred in maintaining the place.

There are **challenges** with these new opportunities and possibilities. The first challenge will be to find more resources to maintain our new place of worship in terms of finance and personnel. Quite sure that the coming months will be a time of more giving to the church and personal involvement. Most of the work may be outsourced but there are opportunities for congregation members to volunteer and give their time for the up keeping of the sanctuary. Apart from maintaining the sanctuary and preparing it for Sunday worship service, there are opportunities for gardening and ground maintenance in summer. Various volunteer teams can be formed and people need to sacrificially involve in such activities. There has always been the problem of faithful few everywhere so new members should be encouraged to take up responsibility of service. Our mindset should be changed regarding this. As the worship time changes we can expect more families to join us. This will again need more openness and willingness to accept and receive more members in to the congregation. Our prayer groups should be able to cater to the needs of these new comers as they face the hard realities of a new situation. The new families that are coming to us should be appropriately cared for and welcomed to the congregation. Ephesians 2 19-22. "Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, ²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. ²¹ In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. ²² And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit." Once the true vision and mission of the parish is received from Christ and the church is built by the Spirit of God, with the help of God the financial needs of running the day to day operations of the sanctuary will be taken care of by God. "God's work done in God's way will never lack supply"

God willing we will be going back to India May 11th. Bishop Thomas K. Oommen has transferred me to Christ Church Thiruvananthapuram.

May God continue to help us and guide us as a Parish.

With prayers and blessings
Achen

COTTAGE PRAYERS FOR APRIL 2011

PRAYER GROUP	DATE	PLACE	TIME
BETH-ZA-DA	Saturday April 2., 2011	Mr. & Mrs. George Samuel	6:30 pm
SILOHAM	Saturday April 9, 2011	To Be Announced	
JORDAN	Saturday, April 16, 2011	Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Thomas	6:30 pm
GILEAD	Saturday April 30, 2011	Mr. & Mrs. Benjamin Chacko	6:30 pm

MALAYALA LOKAM SUNDAY

Our first Malayala Lokam classes were held on Sunday April 03, 2005. Five years later our children have committed themselves to learn more about our culture and language. We will be celebrating Sunday April 3, 2011 as Malayala Lokam Sunday.

The service will be in Malayalam and our Malayala Lokam students will be taking an active part in the Worship service except for the sermon and the intercessory prayers. They will also render a special song.

Lunch will be provided at a minimal cost of \$2.00 per plate and the proceeds of the lunch will go to two schools in Kerala that have special needs. Like last year, tax receipts will be issued for donations of \$25.00 or more. Malayala Lokam would like to continue with this tradition.

As many of you are aware, the number of students committed to learning their mother tongue is steadily growing and we are in need of teachers. If you are interested in becoming part of this growth please contact Mrs. Mariamma Thomas.

"Good Friday is the mirror held up by Jesus so that we can see ourselves in all our stark reality, and then it turns us to that cross and to his eyes and we hear these words, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." That's us! And so we know beyond a shadow of a doubt that if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves. We see in that cross a love so amazing so divine that it loves us even when we turn away from it, or spurn it, or crucify it. There is no faith in Jesus without understanding that on the cross we see into the heart of God and find it filled with mercy for the sinner whoever he or she may be."

Robert G. Trache

Please visit our website: csitoronto.org for pictures of church events

Birthdays

3	Vineet John George
4	Kuruville Mathew Modayil
4	Susan Jacob
6	Nigel Cheriyan
7	Seena David
11	Miriam Chacko
12	Regi Koshy
12	Leah Puthiampadavil
14	Cherian Varghese
15	Mary Alexander
15	Diani Mathai
16	Selin Sera Cheriyan
16	Ruth Mary Philips
16	Aden Kondoor
17	Jacob Cherian
17	Prashanth George John
17	Brinda Jose Cheriyl
21	Mini George
21	Sugu Cheriyan
21	Nisha Thomas
22	Abraham Chacko
22	Lovena Mathew
28	Reena Roy
30	Jason Jacob Chacko

Anniversaries

14	Jose Varghese & Brinda Jose
15	Koshy Oommen & Shaly
28	Abraham P. John & Asha

BIBLE READINGS FOR APRIL 2011

**April 3rd. – New Community in Christ -
MALAYALA LOKAM SUNDAY (Mal)**

1 st . Lesson:	Judges 4: 4-10
Psalm:	89: 1-16
2 nd . Lesson:	Galatians 3: 19-29
Gospel:	Matthew 9: 9-17
Read by:	Malayala Lokam Students

**April 10. – PASSION SUNDAY – Cross and
Suffering Humanity-(Mal)**

1 st . Lesson:	Jeremiah 8: 18-22
Psalm	73
2 nd . Lesson:	2 Cor. 4: 7-12
Gospel:	Mark 10: 35-52
Read by:	Mr. & Mrs. Philip Abraham & family

**April 17th. - PALM SUNDAY – Christ's Entry
into Jerusalem
(Eng)**

1 st . Lesson:	Zech. 9: 9 -12
Psalm:	24
2 nd Lesson:	Eph. 1: 15-23
Gospel:	Mark 11: 1-11
Read by:	Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Thomas & family

**April 21st. MAUNDY THURSDAY – Eucharist –
In Remembrance - (Eng)**

1 st . Lesson:	Hosea 6: 1-6
Psalm:	116
2 nd lesson:	1 Cor. 11: 23-26
Gospel:	Luke 22: 7-20
Read by:	Mr. & Mrs. Wincy John & family

**April 22nd. - GOOD FRIDAY – Revelation of
God's Love – (Mal)**

1 st . Lesson:	Isaiah 52: 13 – 53: 6
Psalm:	22
2 nd . Lesson	1 Peter 3: 13-22
Gospel:	Mark 15: 22-41
Read by:	To Be Announced

**April 24th. EASTER SUNDAY – Christ's
Resurrection; Celebration of Life (Eng)**

1 st . Lesson	2 Kings 4: 26-37
Psalm:	118: 1-4, 14-17
2 nd . Lesson	1 Cor. 15: 42-58
Gospel:	John 20: 1-18
Read by	Mr. & Mrs. Reji Koshy & family

NEW OFFICE BEARERS FOR 2011

The following are the new Office Bearers for 2011:

PRESIDENT:	REV. RAJU JACOB
VICE PRESIDENT:	MR. SAMUEL GEORGE
SECRETARY:	MR. ROY ABRAHAM
JT. SECRETARY:	MISS. GISHA OOMMEN
TREASURER:	MR. JOSEPH P. MATHEW
JT. TREASURER:	MR. SANJU CHERIAN
AUDITOR:	MR. PHILIP MATHAI
TRUSTEES:	MR. KOSHY OOMMEN (CONTINUING) MR. BENJAMIN CHACKO

DIRECTORS

SUNDAY SCHOOL:	MRS. SUSAN THOMAS
CHOIR:	MR. ISAAC MATHEWS
WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP	MRS. SAJANY KOSHIE
MEN'S FELLOWSHIP	MR. CHERIAN VARGHESE
YOUTH FELLOWSHIP	MR. RON ABRAHAM
SOCIAL ACTIVITIES:	MR. JOHN CHERIAN

SUB-COMMITTEE FOR SOCIAL ACTIVITIES:

- 1. MRS. JOYCE ABRAHAM**
- 2. MRS. JOSSY CHERIAN**
- 3. MRS. SHALY OOMMEN**
- 4. MRS. ELIZABETH MATHAI**
- 5. MR. RAJAN JAMES**
- 6. MR. PHILIP ABRAHAM**

Please visit our website: csitoronto.org for pictures of church events

I Asked God

Contributed by Meljo Varghese

I asked God for Peace...
and I was given broken hearts to console.

I asked God for Strength...
and I was given difficulties to make me strong.

I asked God for Harmony...
and I was given enemies to reconcile.

I asked God for Wisdom...
and I was given problems to solve.

I asked God for prosperity...
and I was given a brain and brawn to work.

I asked God for Health...
and I was given ruined faces to lift.

I asked God for Courage.....
And I was given obstacles to overcome.

I asked God for Love...
and I was given troubled people to help.

I asked God for Favors...
And I was given Opportunities.

**"I received nothing I wanted...
But I received everything I needed."**

The Escalating Stages of Church Conflict

"Serious Conflict is the Number One Predictor of Congregational Decline"

Hartford Institute for Religion Research

1. (Sometimes) An Uncomfortable Feeling

Something doesn't feel right. You can't quite put your finger on it. Nothing explicit has been mentioned. The conflict is still latent. That is, the conflict potentially exists but needs the right conditions for it to appear and explode. It

is like a cancer cell waiting for the right environment to spread and destroy the body. Logic and sanity have been pushed aside. The unfortunate truth is that Satan has taken charge of the church while God stands outside knocking at the door that no one answers the door. We are engrossed with our conflict insomuch that our ears have turned deaf to His knocks.

2. A Problem Emerges

An identifiable problem has emerged and dealing with it is the focus. The participants are civil and respectful to one another as they each share their perspective. Solutions are proposed and, in most instances, issues are resolved in a calm and collaborative fashion to everyone's satisfaction.

3. A Person To Differ With

The focus of conversation changes from what should be done and what is the best solution, to a debate of who is right and who is wrong. Frustration sets in because the attempt to achieve one's goals is undermined by another. Parties may become more cautious in dealing with each other. The dispute can still be constructive if the parties make a greater effort to see the other person's point of view. On the other hand, if the matter is not resolved, the situation can easily deteriorate into destructive conflict.

4. A Dispute To Win

Collaboration wanes. Other problematic issues often appear confusing matters. Disputing parties communicate less to each other and more about each other with those who take their respective side, increasing polarization in the congregation. And while there may not be an intent to hurt one's opponent, it often results. Because the overriding goal is for one's needs to be met or interests to prevail, there appears to be less concern about how that affects others, further exacerbating the conflict. One side comes to believe that the other cares little about them. As one side seeks to achieve its goals, the other side feels like their interests are being all-too-readily dismissed or sacrificed. Action then

begets counteraction.

5. A Person To Verbally Attack

A power struggle emerges. Parties now see themselves as adversaries and "antagonists" (a Greek word that means "to struggle against" as in Hebrews 12:4). When people begin to struggle against each other, watch out! An invisible line is crossed that does not bode well for that relationship or for the church. If the parties in conflict could have resolved the matter without help, they would have.

Original issues and context now become secondary. At this stage, the problem is identified as a person. "You are / he is / she is / they are / the problem." An "us against them" mentality sets in. Emotions adversely affect objective thinking. Selective perception confirms and fuels negative stereotyping. Once stereotyped, the other side can be "written-off" as _____ (fill in the blank). Parties avoid each other and assume the worst of the other. In the absence of direct communication, each faction views the other through an increasingly distorted filter of suspicion, false assumptions, exaggeration, misinformation, and misperceptions.

Each side justifies its own hostile behavior as reactions to its opponent and to external circumstances. By contrast, the actions of one's adversaries are attributed to internal deficiencies, such as their character, competency, or spirituality. Public admission of having exercised poor judgment or of having made a mistake becomes increasingly unlikely. In this negatively charged environment, such an acknowledgment would likely open oneself to embarrassment, further criticism, and reprisal. The disputing parties protect themselves, their vulnerabilities and insecurities, by attacking. Pastors and administrators should be transparent in their dealings and communications to their congregation members. Tact is very important. We lose control of our tongue and language when our guilty conscience hits us. Can we overcome our emotions?

Researchers have found that at this stage, direct head-to-head discussions are counter-productive.

"Direct negotiations have a limited

usefulness once the level of conflict has escalated in intensity."

"Once in a fight, each side finds it difficult to accept the ideas of the enemy."

"A proposal that is unacceptable coming from you [an adversary] may be acceptable if it comes from a third party."

"[Direct, two-party] negotiations are hard to sustain and frequently break down."

Resistance intensifies against an adversary's ideas often because it is one's adversary who proposed them. Discussions and negotiations break down because they seem futile. Unilateral acts become the next logical step which inevitably leads to an escalation of the conflict.

6. My "Face" To Save

The term "face" refers to how a person is viewed by others. As long as someone is viewed as a respectable member of the community, all is well. But when one's public image is seriously challenged, expect the intensity of the conflict to escalate even further.

To have one's public image challenged is to be attacked on a very personal level. It is to be charged with maintaining a false facade. The attacker seeks to "unmask" the other person's true and despicable identity. To the extent that this "insight" is believed, the prior course of the conflict is reinterpreted. With these new lenses, words or actions that may have been originally perceived in a positive light are now viewed as part of a larger, deceitful strategy. False motives are attributed throughout. The conflict is no longer understood in terms of shades of gray. It is perceived in terms of black and white and an ideological battle between the forces of good versus evil.

To "save face" against such an attack on one's identity, people will respond with an equally ferocious assault of their own. Disputants will unleash a torrent of negative descriptions against those who have attacked and maligned them, attempting in turn, to undercut and discredit them. They will label those on the other side as unreasonable, immoral, untrustworthy, mentally unbalanced, and/or sub-human. This conclusion justifies

almost any action against the other side, exacerbating the cycle of conflict to dangerous levels.

7. A Person To Expel, Withdraw From, or Ruin

The parties are locked in an all-or-nothing battle. The church is no longer big enough for everyone. The solution is either to drive out the problem person or people or leave. Or, the conflict may be so personalized, intractable, or irrational that the adversaries would rather suffer private loss or the church's ruin to see their opponent defeated. "Together into the abyss" they go, as one individual soberly described it.

7. The Aftermath

When and if the dust settles, the worship, fellowship, and the work of the church, as well as individual lives, are adversely affected and sometimes destroyed, often for years to come. Worship will not be the same. It will be the next generation's enormous task to clean up the mess left by their predecessors. For some, winning the battle or driving a person from the church is still not enough. The ruination of a person's reputation may continue long after the battle is over. Another faction will express shame and bewilderment for what they have said or done. They may lose confidence in themselves for having lost control of themselves. Others will deny the depth or severity of their actions. Still others, acknowledging their embarrassing actions, will blame those who led them. The spiritual well-being and growth or the future growth has been placed on the sacrificial altar resulting in the ultimate death of a congregation.

Pastor Joe McKeever, referring to his church that had split five ways in the two years prior to his accepting the call to pastor that congregation, said, "I was especially careful during my first four or five years here. We spent a lot of time addressing the issues of guilt and disappointment. Many felt guilty for their actions. The rest were disappointed - in their friends, their pastors, themselves, even God."

SUMMARY

The more intense the conflict, the more irrational it becomes. Two intensifying processes take place throughout: (1) an increasing frustration / anger over the unresolved issue(s), and (2) an increasing negative perception of the character of the other

side.

**Someone needs to say,
"Stop! Enough already!"**

**Let's go outside this cycle of conflict,
bring in a peacemaker,
gracefully address our differences, and
let the healing finally begin!"**

© Copyright 2011 Newberger &
Associates LLC. All Rights Reserved

In a lighter Vein

LETTERS TO THE PASTOR

Dear Pastor, I know God loves everybody but He never met my sister.

Yours sincerely, Arnold. Age 8, Nashville.

Dear Pastor, My father should be a minister. Every day he gives us a sermon about something.

Robert, Age 11, Anderson.

Dear Pastor, I'm sorry I can't leave more money in the plate, but my father didn't give me a raise in my allowance. Could you have a sermon about a raise in my allowance?

Love, Patty. Age 10, New Haven

Dear Pastor, My mother is very religious. She goes to play bingo at church every week even if she has a cold. Yours truly,

Annette. Age 9, Albany

Dear Pastor, I think a lot more people would come to your church if you moved it to Disneyland.

Loreen. Age 9. Tacoma