



The Official Monthly Newsletter of CSI Church, Toronto

# Pilgrim

Volume 16 Issue 2

FEBRUARY 2016



*Season of Lent*  
February 10 - March 24

### 2016 Motto

**'Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.'**

*Philippians 4:6*

ഒന്നിനെക്കുറിച്ചും വിചാരപ്പെടരുത്; എല്ലാറ്റിലും പ്രാർഥനയാലും അപേക്ഷയാലും നിങ്ങളുടെ ആവശ്യങ്ങൾ സ്നേഹത്തോടെ ദൈവത്തോടു അറിയിക്കുകയത്രേ വേണ്ടൂ.

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*Ash Wednesday Service*  
*February 10, 7:30 pm*

*Annual General Body*  
*February 28*

# Pilgrim

**FEBRUARY 2016**

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*Editorial .....*

*The Art of Thanksgiving....*

“Thank you, I really appreciate it!” Is a cliché that is heard in abundance. It is a kind of default mechanism showered on others, unawares, in return for anything received, be it favour or disfavour. How often do we use this pleasantry? Does it really emerge from the bottom of our hearts? It even relies heavily on demographics. If we care to thank others for everything good or bad, how much more should we thank our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

*Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise;  
give thanks to him and praise his name.*

*For the Lord is good and his love endures forever;*

*his faithfulness continues through all generations. (Psalm 100: 4, 5)*

As we are the undeserving recipients of infinite mercy, it is only natural that we praise and thank Him for the copious display of love. We can give thanks as He has always been a good God, has clothed us with His unfailing love, and has remained Immanuel. We give thanks to God for all that He has done for us. We praise God for what He is. When thanksgiving emanates from our experiencing Him, praise wells up as a direct response to our faith in Him.

In our fervent strife towards achieving varied goals in life, it is very important for us “to taste and see that the Lord is good.” It not only improves our personality and outlook, but it promises an eternal bliss in the active presence of this compassionate God. Let us learn to be thankful every moment, and become a source of blessing to many.

Samuel Anselm Samuel

Editor

## Achen's Message



Dearly beloved in Christ,

Greetings to all of you in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

This year on February 10<sup>th</sup>, we enter the Lenten Season with 'Ash Wednesday'. Ash Wednesday is particular to the Western Christianity. It signifies repentance about our shortcomings and sins in dust and ashes. It also reminds us of the nature of human life – dust and ashes. So it is pertinent that we observe the day with understanding.

Lent is a good time to draw near to our Lord in faith. It is a time in which we ponder upon the relevance of Cross. It is only apt that we say good bye to our shortcomings; no matter how much glamour or excuse we put to our own fallible practices that we drag along in our life. Take a decision that we will abstain from the craving desires of our hearts, whatever it might be. It could be a habit, a character, a practice, a gadget, over use of anything, anything for which we have admiration or which keeps us busy away from God.

Life edification is the purpose behind the lent observation. Let us all take this time of the Church calendar very seriously, and I encourage every member to participate in the Lenten Services that will be held on every Wednesday from Ash Wednesday till the Wednesday prior to the Maundy Thursday.

The Retreat for Women's Fellowship members went on well. I thank the Director, Mrs. Susan Joseph for coordinating the event and all members who have sincerely participated in the Retreat.

The Retreat for the family and members of the Choir also went very well. I express gratitude to Mr. Daniel Thomas, the Choir Director for making this happen and also all the families who have participated in the Retreat.

The Church expresses its deepest condolences and carries in prayer Mrs. Mary Alexander and Mrs. Ani Chacko who have lost their mothers and Mrs. Reeni Philip who has lost her brother. May the peace that surpasses all understanding and love that transcends all knowledge keep the dear ones and their families in the Lord.

From the bottom of our hearts we express gratitude to all who have carried Kochamma in your valuable prayers before, during and after her surgery. We are obliged to all who have cared for us by various means; indebted to all who have conversed their love, support and prayer for us at our time of need by their kind visits or by phone, and thankful to all who shared our load by taking responsibilities by various means.

May the Almighty continue to bless us and keep us as we move in faith with our Lord this year.

Blessings and Peace,  
Siby Achen.



**BIRTHDAYS**

02	Shaji Levison Moothedom	18	Rohan Raj
02	Rex P. R	19	Mariamamma Cherian
03	Santhosh Cherian	19	Mariamamma Thomas
03	P.J.Skariah	20	Abraham P. John
05	Suvin Oommen Alexander	20	Rishvi Narayan
06	Pranoy Narayan	20	Philip Z. Mathai
07	Sudeep Oommen	23	Jiby Jacob
10	Ryan John Varghese	23	Savannah Thomas
12	Aaron Fredrick Simon	24	Rinu John Mathew
15	Rahul John Oommen	25	Jinu Mary Jacob
16	Thomas C . Joseph	25	Joy Chemmanoor
16	Binu Sajan	26	Christine E. Joseph
18	Thomas Mathai	26	Asha Abraham

**ANNIVERSARIES**

- 02 Sajan Itty & Binu Sajan
- 09 Vinu Jacob & Simi K. Sunny



		Lent: A time of Redemption	
<b>February 07</b> 7 <sup>th</sup> Sunday before Easter	Old Testament	Isaiah 58: 1 - 14	English Service
	Psalm	6	Read by
	Epistle	Romans 2: 1 - 13	
	Gospel	John.5: 1 - 9	
		Cross: A Call to Vicarious Suffering	
<b>February 10</b> Wednesday Ash Wednesday	Old Testament	1 Kings 17: 12 - 24	Malayalam Service
	Psalm	102	Read by
	Epistle	Philippians 2: 1 - 11	
	Gospel	Mark 8: 31 - 38	
		Healing in Sickness : Healing Ministry Sunday	
<b>February 14</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday in Lent 6 <sup>th</sup> Sunday before Easter	Old Testament	Exodus 4: 10 - 17	Malayalam Service
	Psalm	103: 1 - 10	Read by
	Epistle	2 Corinthians 12: 1 - 10	
	Gospel	John 9: 1 - 7	
		Releasing from the Burden of Sin	
<b>February 21</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Lent 5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday before Easter	Old Testament	2 Samuel 12: 1 - 14	English Service
	Psalm	32	Read by
	Epistle	Acts 8: 9 - 25	
	Gospel	Mark 2: 1 - 12	
		Acknowledging Faith beyond Boundaries	
<b>February 28</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Lent 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday before Easter	Old Testament	Isaiah 44: 28 - 45: 8	Malayalam Service
	Psalm	125	Read by
	Epistle	Acts 10: 24 - 33	
	Gospel	Matthew 15: 21 - 28	

## New Parsonage at Koothattukulam





### **Fasting Prayer**

Our Monthly Fasting prayer will be held at 10.00 AM on Saturday, February 6. All are invited.

### **Ash Wednesday on 10th**

Wednesday, February 10 will be observed as ASH WEDNESDAY. There will be a Holy Communion service at 7.30 PM at the Church. All are invited for this special service

### **Lenten Prayer Service**

Lenten evening Prayer Service will be held on all Wednesdays during the Lent season. The prayer service will be on February 17, 24, March 2 ,9 and 16 at 7.30 PM at the Church. All are invited

### **Cottage Prayer**

Cottage Prayer meeting for Shalom group will be held at 6.30 PM on Saturday, February 13 at Mr. & Mrs. Sajan Itty's residence. All area members are invited.

Cottage prayer meeting for Gilead Group will be held on February 20, Saturday at Mr. & Mrs. Aaron Frederick Simon's residence at 6.30. PM. All area members are invited.

### **Annual General Body meeting**

Our Church Annual General body meeting will be held on February 28, Sunday after the service.

All members are invited for the General body.

### **Obituary**

It is with deep sorrow we inform the sad demise of Mrs. Grace Abraham, mother of Mrs. Ani Chacko. She was called to her eternal home on February 18, 2016. Funeral service was held in India. Please remember Ani, Abby, Sam, Miriam and Abe and all the family members in your prayers. May God comfort and console all the dear ones.

It is with deep sorrow we inform the sad demise of Mr. Roy George Jacob brother of Mrs. Reeni Philip. He was called to his eternal home on February 18 ,2016. Funeral service was held in Markham. Please remember Reeni, Mohan, Vivek, George and all the family members in your prayers. May God comfort and console all the dear ones.

## Choir & Family Get-together 2016



### Choir Retreat - My Experience

*Biby Abraham*

To highlight the purpose of our Church Choir, a retreat was held at our church on January 16, of which I had the opportunity to attend as the parent of a chorister. The main focus of the retreat was to have a spiritual awakening and to revitalize our calling into the Choir ministry. The event consisted of four sessions, two sermons, a group discussion and the last being a group activity.

Our Achen gave two thought provoking and interactive sermons. They included extensive topics like the role of a cross bearer, the role of a chorister, the significance of the choir robes and the order of service. What do they signify to the chorister and to the members of congregation? It was an enlightening and eye opening experience. As a parent I always taught my daughter that the purpose of choir is to lead the people to worship God. But after listening to the sermon I felt that it also includes a great opportunity to encourage each other with the talents that the Holy Spirit has empowered them with.

The next session was the group activity in which everyone who attended the retreat was divided into four groups representing various colours and seasons of the church calendar. The four groups were The Adventists (purple), The Epiphany (Gold/Off-white), The Ordinary (green) and The Pentecost's (Red). Each Group was asked to pick a topic and they had to enact it as a play. The topics included discrimination in a choir, the worst choir, problems with the minister and the choir members and starting a new choir. Each group came up with great ideas to depict each topic and gave magnificent performances. I have to say not only do our choristers have God given talent for singing they do have great talent in acting as well.

The session also consisted of jeopardy game in which we had the chance to play as well as to learn a lot of new things about the history of music. The last session was a group discussion. A questionnaire was provided for discussion on what things we should improve in our choir ministry.

Not to miss the point, I must say that in addition to all these sessions a sumptuous meal was arranged for us during breakfast, lunch and dinner with all the families of the choristers chipping in. It was a great and heart warming experience for all who attended. A special word of thanks to our choir director, Mr. Daniel Thomas, for organizing this wonderful event.

All in all, this gathering helped us in forging new relationships, renewing the existing ones, rejuvenating and having a great spiritual revival. I believe that the Choir retreat 2016 was a great day where we created memories to cherish in the choir ministry which God has entrusted us with. May our Loving God bless each chorister with their God given talents to Praise, Pray, Proclaim, Encourage, Inspire and Empower the whole congregation and all the people whom they meet in their daily lives. Always, be a blessing to others!!!

### Choir & Family get-together

*Grace Ann Samuel*

It was great experience to come together as a family to praise God and to learn new things about the choir. It is very clear that everyone plays a part in the success of the choir, not just the choir members but also our families that are a great support. As a choir member, the retreat was an amazing experience that educated me on the value and meaning of things like the choir robe, the cross, the elements and various parts of the service. Singing in the choir is not only to lead the service but to witness for Him or to stand

as a testimony of the gifts that God has given to us. The sessions also focused on the relevance of songs in the Bible. Both the angels in heaven and also people on earth worship God by singing His praise. Our God is an awesome God. With the talents that He has given us, when we sing in choir, we become a family, and maintain fellowship with one another. The sessions led by Achen focused on the importance of having a choir, duties of a choir and also the significance of each and every part of the service. Achen also taught us about the choirs in the Bible.

All the games and the activities that we did were very informative. One of the activities that I enjoyed was the skit based on a topic given by Achen. The topics were worst choir, problems Achen faces from the choir, how to form a choir, and gender discrimination in a choir. These topics were well played by 4 choir teams. These plays showed some interesting problems good and bad that happen often in a choir. One of the most difficult activities that we did was playing jeopardy. It was hard, as it had questions about music, liturgy and history of C.S.I church. It was very informative, and we learned a lot of new things.

Overall the retreat was an exceptional experience with a lot to learn, and it was an occasion to grow closer to the choir, their family members and to our God.



## Anglican Youth Retreat

### ReCharge Winter Retreat 2016, Diocese of Toronto

*Sanju Cherian*

The Youth was blessed with the opportunity to attend the Anglican Youth Retreat which was held at the Muskoka Bible Center (MBC), a beautiful facility located at the snowclad hills at Muskoka, approximately two and a half hours North of our Church, from Friday January 29, evening 8:30 pm to Sunday January 31, afternoon at 1:30 pm.

It was a blessed weekend for all the eleven of us. The retreat was filled with worship, praise, singing, games, fun such as snow tubing and lots of food.

There were more than 150 youth from across 15 parishes of the Anglican Diocese of Toronto. Rev: Jonathan Massimi led the spiritual sessions based on the theme "God is a Foodie". He took examples from the Bible and taught us how Food is an integral part of God's teachings starting with the Apple in the Garden of Eden.

CSI is a well known name now among the Anglican Diocese, and a large part of it is because of our songs and the disciplined training that our Youth have received which they put to practice during these occasions. Our Youth did an amazing job leading and teaching a praise and worship song on Saturday. They also had the privilege of leading the Communion song during Sunday's Holy Eucharist, which was blessed by the presence of Archbishop Colin Johnson.

We should all thank the Lord Almighty for the various opportunities He has given us. Our Youth made CSI proud!

Thanks to each one of the 10 youth- Grace, Anna, Jinu, Rini, Rapti, Joshua, Chris, Jovin, Daniel and Jefin - for taking their valuable time and being part of this Winter retreat. It sure was a good experience for all of us.

Thanks to their parents and the entire Church and Executive committee for their support and prayers.

We had a great weekend and we returned safely by Sunday evening.

Let's hope for more participation in the future retreats.

God Bless



Youth with Archbishop Colin Johnson



Muskoka



**The Executive Committee Members of the CSI Church, Toronto**

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Vice-President / Rector's Warden	Mr. Abraham P. George	Women's Fellowship Director	Mrs. Susan Joseph
Secretary / People's Warden	Mr. Christy Abraham	Youth Fellowship Director	Mr. Sanju Cherian
Joint Secretary	Mr. Varghese V. John	Choir Director	Mr. Daniel Thomas
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