



The Official Monthly Newsletter of CSI Church, Toronto

Pilgrim

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OCTOBER 2017



2017 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 പ്രാർത്ഥനയാലും അപേക്ഷയാലും നിങ്ങളുടെ ആവശ്യങ്ങൾ സ്തോത്രത്തോടെ ദൈവത്തോടു അറിയിക്കുകയത്രേ വേണ്ടതു.

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HARVEST FESTIVAL & THANKSGIVING - October 15

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Editorial

Look! The Dazzling Cloud,,,,,

Do you use the cloud to store your important files? How secure is it? Technology has transported us from the realm of natural clouds to that of virtual clouds. While people put great trust in these man-made clouds, they also share mixed feelings about the natural clouds. Tagore, in his *Stray Birds*, talks about the positive impact of clouds in his life – “Clouds come floating into my life from other days, no longer to shed rain or usher storm, but to give color to my sunset sky.”

Clouds are a common phenomenon, and are generally transient. Some clouds stay longer, and some cast shadows on people’s lives. Though dark clouds are harbingers of rain, they are also compared to the multitude of problems in a person’s life. The golden glitter in the clouds shows the hope of a new dawn. Clouds are sometimes successful in blocking the light of the sun from us. But the clouds can also elevate our present condition because they herald the powerful presence of the almighty God.

By day the Lord went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night. Exodus 13:21

The pillar of cloud is not a mere symbol, but a real phenomenon. It is the spectacular display of the power of God, the scintillating fellowship of God that doesn’t forsake His children, the awesome provision of God with the heavenly manna and the wonderful protection against those who pester us. It’s a powerful testimony to everyone about God’s involvement in the daily affairs of His children. If we perceive this blessed reality of the pillar of cloud in our lives, it is highly appropriate that we give thanks for all the blessings in our lives. Then the light of the Son of God shall gleam through, and transform us to be the light of this world.

Happy Thanksgiving!

Samuel Anselm Samuel
Editor

Achen's Message



Dearly beloved in Christ,

Blessed be the name of the Triune God, who is the source of all our blessings!

Once again we are in the season of Harvest Festival & Thanksgiving. From an agrarian context, we know that good yield of crops could give us satisfaction and joy in our life. Surely the harvest has an influence in our life. God, who is in control of nature, is the source of all blessings in our life. This is a time to thank God for all blessings showered on us. Hence it is important that we respond to the grace of God by our giving. Christian giving is a discipline that we learn by unfolding our palms, which is of the size of our hearts. It is not for the surplus, but for the sufficiency of the Church and sharing for Missions that we learn to open our fists. God allows us to test Him in this regard (Malachi 3:8-12). If any of you who are earning are not into this practice, the Spirit of God is inviting you to practise the discipline of giving accordingly from what you earn each month. Let us all be humble to offer the real calculated tithe of what we earn each month during this Harvest Festival.

This October is very significant in the life of the Church, world-wide. We are observing the 500th Anniversary of the great Reformation brought about by Martin Luther. We commemorate Martin Luther's posting of his "95 Theses" to the door of a Wittenburg Church, disputing the practices of the Church then. Reformation on the foundation of the Word of God finds importance in the life of the Church, families and individuals. The courage to say an affirmative "yes" to the command of God from time to time can increase our fruitfulness in life. Let us continually be reformed in our lives according to what our Lord demands us through the Word.

The South Kerala Diocese of CSI lost one of its eminent leaders, Bishop The Rt. Rev. Dr. Samuel Amrutham. Bishop Amrutham served the Diocese from 1990 till 1997. Bishop was known as a theological scholar, a writer and a speaker. Heartfelt condolences on behalf of our Congregation to the family.

Mr. P J Skariah lost his sister-in-law Mrs. Mariamma George (w/o Rev. P. J. George) at Pathanamthitta. Heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family members.

Please remember the families who are mourning the loss of the dear ones.

Choir Sunday was observed meaningfully. Thanks and appreciation for all the services that the choir is offering for the Congregation. Sincere thanks to Mr. Daniel Thomas for the leadership and all members for their dedicated service.

Men's Fellowship Sunday was observed with enthusiasm. Thanks to all members for their dedication in the life of the Church. Sincere thanks to Mr. Santhosh Cherian for the leadership and all members for their commitment.

Along with the CSI community worldwide, our Congregation could also commemorate the 70th Anniversary on CSI Day with Holy Communion and the special liturgy developed by the Synod. Let us continue to run the race faithfully. Sincere thanks to all families who took time to attend the Service.

As it is October, we are starting to pack our Shoe boxes. Each family is humbly requested to give one shoe box at least, for the children who are yet to taste the joy of Christmas and life with Christ. Please be encouraged to offer your part.

Let us continue our journey of life trusting God, cleansed by the blood of Jesus.

Yours in His Service,

Siby Achen.

CHOIR SUNDAY

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<p>October 1 Youth Sunday 17th Sunday after Pentecost</p>	Spirituality of the Youth in the Contemporary World		
	Old Testament	Genesis 41:37-43	English Service
	Psalm	111	Read by
	Epistle	Philippians 3:1-16	Youth Fellowship
	Gospel	Matthew 19:16-22	
<p>October 08 Asha Bhavan Sunday 18th Sunday after Pentecost</p>	Manifestation of God's Glory in the Empowerment of the Differently Able		
	Old Testament	Job 5:16-25	Malayalam Service
	Psalm	77	Read by
	Epistle	I Corinthians 12:6-10	Women's Fellowship
	Gospel	John 9:1-12	
<p>October 15 Harvest Festival 19th Sunday after Pentecost</p>	Thanksgiving for a Great Harvest		
	Old Testament	Deuteronomy 26:1-11	English Service
	Psalm	65	Read by
	Epistle	I Timothy 6:6-12	Executive Committee
	Gospel	Luke 21:1-4	
<p>October 22 Mission Sunday 20th Sunday after Pentecost</p>	Mission: Good News to All		
	Old Testament	Isaiah 55:1-6	Malayalam Service
	Psalm	146	Read by
	Epistle	Acts 10:34-43	MF, WF & YF
	Gospel	Matthew 4:17-25	
<p>October 29 Reformation Sunday 21st Sunday after Pentecost Matins</p>	Re-discovering and Re-living the Faith		
	Old Testament	II Chronicles 34:8-21	English Service
	Psalm	46	Read by
	Epistle	Revelation 2:1-7	Youth Fellowship
	Gospel	John 2:12-22	



BIRTHDAYS

Sajan Itty	Grace Ann Samuel
Joseph P. Mathews	Omana Saramma Eapen
Abraham K. Varghese	Joshua Shaji Moothedom
Siby Jacob	Meera Jacob
Fremita Fredrick	Grace Elza George
Christy Abraham	Aghil V. Aji
Samuel Anselm Samuel	Jane Zaira Toms
Kenneth Kuruvilla	Sarah George
Maya Jacob	Sarah Oommen
John Cheriyam Mathew	Susan Kurian
Isabel Johnson	Shini Samuel
Reshma George	Hannah Anna Abraham

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Varghese V. John & Liji Varghese John

Bishan Ghosh & Sheeba Levison Ghosh



Monthly Fasting Prayer

Our monthly fasting prayer for October will be held on October 7 from 10 am to 12pm . All are invited.

Youth Sunday

We will be observing October 1 as Youth Sunday. Our Youth Fellowship members will be leading the worship service. You are all invited.

Missions Sunday

We will be observing October 22 as Mission Sunday. You are all invited for the special service.

Intercessory Prayer Cell meeting

There will be Intercessory Prayer Cell prayer meetings on Wednesdays from 10.00 am to 12.00pm at the church. Those who are available, please attend.

Cottage Prayers

Cottage Prayer for **SHALOM Group** will be held on Saturday, October 7 at 6.30 pm at the residence of Mr. & Mrs. Abraham P. George. All Shalom group area members are invited.

Cottage Prayer for **JORDAN Group** will be held on Saturday, October 14 at 6.30 pm at the residence of Mr. & Mrs. Mathew Joseph. All Jordan Group members are invited. (*Please note their New Address: 6 Grendon Cres., Brampton, Ontario, L6X 5N4. Ph: 9054526453*)

Thanksgiving and Harvest Festival.

Our Church is celebrating the Thanksgiving and Harvest Festival on Sunday, October 15. We have many blessings to thank for. As a church we held a successful CSI Family and Youth Conference of North America in July. We have completed 31 years as a CSI Church worshipping God in this part of the world. We cannot count the blessings, because we have received countless, endless blessings from God.. It is time to express our thankfulness to our Lord for the bountiful blessings He has bestowed on us during the past year, despite our many shortcomings. We should express our thanks to God by giving Him our very best.

It has been our practice to offer to the Almighty our **ONE-DAY'S INCOME**. Each earning member in the family is expected to offer his or her one-day's income to God as a token of our thankful hearts. God has showered upon each one of us His boundless blessings and what better time than this is there to thank Him.

After the Thanksgiving Service, we will be celebrating the Harvest festival. Please bring at least 3 suitable items for the Harvest festival. These items will be auctioned off.

Your whole hearted co-operation is requested to make this Thanksgiving Day a great blessing.

Matins Service

Our youth fellowship members will leading the Matins service on October 29, 2017. All are invited.

Youth Regional Retreat

There is a Regional One day Youth Retreat on October 28 in Detroit from 10 am to 6.00 pm where our youth fellowship members are also participating. We request all our members to support their fund raising project for their Regional Retreat and CSI North American Youth Conference to be held in July 2018.

Heartfelt Condolences

Mrs. Mariamma George 67 years old, wife (Kochamma) of Rev. P. J. George was called to her eternal home on September 18 in Kerala. Our Heartfelt condolence to Rev. P. J. George Achen and family. Mr. P.J. Skariah, Mrs. Annamma Skariah and all the bereaved family members. Kindly remember them in your prayers. May God Almighty comfort them at this difficult time.

WALKING WITH JESUS CHRIST IN THIS MODERN WORLD

Abraham K. Varghese (Anil)

Warm greetings to you all in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord!

The title brings a big question mark to our thoughts. In this modern world, it is really sad to know that the majority of believers, irrespective of their dominations, feel that walking with the Lord is all about going to church regularly, being very active in various church activities, exhibiting various gifts of the Holy Spirit etc. However, when we seriously look into the life of Christ, we come to understand the true meaning of walking with the Lord.

In John 4:1-42, we read about Jesus meeting a Samaritan woman by the well of Jacob. Over their amazing conversation, not only was she enlightened, but the entire village also came to know about Christ. As I meditated on this, my perspective of what it truly means to walk with the Lord changed, and my life started to experience a divine peace that surpassed all human understanding. I would like to share those four points that the Lord has put in my heart. I pray that our Father in heaven through His son and according to His perfect plan, will enable each person who reads this to have a life changing experience too.

LIFE LESSON 1 - GOD HAS A UNIQUE PATH FOR EVERY INDIVIDUAL

In John 4:3-4, we read Jesus wishes to travel from Judea to Galilee. The shortest route is to pass through the Samaritan villages. During Jesus' time, any Jewish person will try their level best not to cross any Samaritan village or even speak to any Samaritan because it was considered to be an unclean thing.

In the history of Israelites (2 Kings 17), due to their continuous disobedience, God made Assyria to attack and conquer them. They took the best and useful Israelites as slaves to their own land. The remaining people in Samaria and neighbouring regions stayed together with people who came in from Assyria. Over a period of time, a new class of people started as a result of culture mix between Assyrians and Israelites. The Samaritans developed their own ways of worship and separated themselves from the Jews. The Jews were not able to accept the Samaritans.

Jesus Christ though a Jew, was least concerned about the social taboo related to Samaritans. He took the path His Father in Heaven had uniquely plotted out for Him. He chose to cross through the Samaritan villages to reach Galilee. By not following the crowd, Jesus was able to bring glory to His Father in heaven.

Like Jesus, we should remember that each one of us is a unique creation in the sight of God. No one is an accident but we are carved in the palm of His hand. In Ephesians 1:3-5, we read, He chose us before the foundation of the world. When we look into our own lives, it may or may not be pleasant. There may be hardships, struggles, sickness, loss of lives and many other things. But in the midst of all this, we should never forget that all take place according to the perfect plan of God. We may never understand why these things happen in our life. As our unique life moves on, everything will perfectly fall in place. We should never be a 'crowd follower'. God's road for us is unique. We should maintain a patient and continuous communication with our Father in heaven, and He will show His perfect plan for our lives.

LIFE LESSON 2 - 'WATER POTS' IN THIS GOD GIFTED LIFE

Moving on, in John 4: 5-11, we see, Jesus comes and sits down near a well. Exhausted from His walking, He sees a Samaritan woman approaching the well to draw water. Jesus asks her for some water. She says “How is it that you being a Jew asks me, a Samaritan for water. Jews do not associate with us Samaritans.” Then Jesus says, “If you knew who it was asking you for water, you would have asked for living waters” The woman immediately looks and sees that Jesus does not have any water pot and tells that the well is too deep to draw water.

It is not enough to fully believe that our life path is unique. We should pray earnestly, and our Father in heaven will reveal His purpose for our lives. He will clearly show us the way we have to take in our unique lives. Unfortunately, we don't fully trust our heavenly Father. We have our own calculations and ambitions. We see our Father's plan and find that there is nothing we want in this beautiful life. We say, “But my Father, you don't have this or that. I need this and not what you have given me”. We compare our unique lives with other people's lives. The Samaritan woman looked to see if Jesus had a water-pot to draw water. She doubted and could not understand how Jesus will get her this living water.

We don't see the desired things in the hands of our Father. So instead of fully trusting Him, we fill our lives with many 'water pots' — water pots of DOUBT, FEAR, UNBELIEF, FRUSTRATION, ANGER etc. In times of difficulty, in times of pain or sorrow, it is not easy to forgo these emotions. We really need to press on trusting God our Father in heaven.

Let us fight to have that innocent child-like faith in our Father — the same type of trust and faith we had in our parents when we were little children. We had blind faith in them and always believed that they will give us the best.

LIFE LESSON 3 - OUR FATHER KNOWS US BETTER

Reading further, in John 4: 12 – 28, Jesus tells the woman, about the water of life. We see Jesus telling that this water (Referring to the Holy Spirit) will become a fountain in us and flow out as living waters. When the woman says she wants this living water, Jesus tells her to go and call her husband. She says I don't have a husband. Jesus tells her, “Yes that is true, you don't have a husband, you had five husbands before and the one whom you are staying with now is not your husband.” When the bare truth of her life was exposed, she immediately changed the topic, she went on to talk on a religious topic. She started asking which place was the correct worship.

We also behave in the same way and completely overlook the fact that our Father in heaven knows each one of us far better than we know ourselves. Our living God sees right through us, He looks inside our heart and minds. He can see our deepest thoughts! He can clearly see our inner-most ambitions and desires! We always put on a mask and in futility of our mind, think that God will not know what is inside. For majority of people, the mask consists of all sorts of religious observances. We think that our external appearance and actions will be pleasing to the living God. We are totally mistaken!!

Remember, we have a living God who sees us not only when in church or in a prayer meeting or in a convention, but also when we are walking on the road, driving, in the office, alone at home and even in the wash room. Let us fight to make our hearts right in the sight of our living Father first and along with this keep our religious responsibilities. We will then be able to present ourselves blameless and spot-

less in the sight of God. In Romans 12:1-2, we read Paul saying "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

If our hearts are not clear in the sight of God, we cannot see Him. In verse 26, when Jesus tells her that He is the Christ, the messiah, she immediately drops the water pot (verse 28). When our heart is pure in the sight of God, we will see the true Jesus in our lives. Then our 'water pots' of doubt, unbelief, fear, anxiety envy, pride, lust, anger etc. will just drop off and our hearts will be fully cleansed and we will totally trust our living Father in heaven. This will help us lead a victorious life. In Mathew 5:8, Jesus says "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God"

LIFE LESSON 4 - OUR OWN TESTIMONY

In John 4:29 / 39 – 42, as soon as the Samaritan woman realized that Jesus was the Christ, she ran to tell all the people of her village. She ran to testify about seeing Christ in her life. All the people came to see Jesus, they asked Him to stay and He stayed there for two days. Later the people told the woman, (verse 42). "Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the savior of the world"

We will see our living Father in heaven when our hearts and minds are pure in the sight of God our Father. From that point, we will not be able to sit quietly, but like the Samaritan woman, we will also run to testify the greatness of Christ in our lives. Our testimony will be not only through words but also through our actions, the way we speak, behave etc., we will become a living testimony to others. Let us strive for this and not live on the testimonies of others. The testimonies of others are for them, but you are unique and you will have your unique testimony.

To conclude, my dear brothers and sisters in Christ, be fully assured that you are a unique child of your Father in heaven. Our Father in heaven knows us far better than we know ourselves, and therefore we should put a sincere effort to keep our hearts and minds pure in His sight. He is always watching over us. In the eyes of our living Father, our hearts and minds should be totally pure and free from all anxiety, doubt, fear, envy, jealousy etc. Through the Holy Spirit, He will reveal himself to us and our lives will always have a great testimony for His glory. A unique testimony for a unique life which God has so graciously gifted each one of us.

Amen

May our living Lord bless you all abundantly.

Pilgrim

MEN'S SUNDAY

Men's Sunday



The Executive Committee Members of the CSI Church, Toronto

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