

# **ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH**

**(CHURCH OF NORTH INDIA)**

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## **NEWSLETTER**

**JULY 2017**



(For Private Circulation Only)

## Almanac and Lectionary: July 2017

Date	Theme & Readings	Liturgical colour
<p><b>Sunday, 2 July 2017</b> Holy Communion Services: 7 a.m., 9 a.m. &amp; 6 p.m.</p>	<p><b>Fourth Sunday after Pentecost</b> <b>Theme: The source of truth and purity is in the heart.</b> O.T. : Genesis 6:5-8 Psalm : Psalm 34:8-9,11-14 Epistle : Ephesians 4:17-25 Gospel : Matthew 5:27-30,33-37  Refer to <i>Readings for Sunday Worship</i> ~ page 140</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>
<p><b>Sunday, 9 July 2017</b> Holy Communion Services: 7 a.m., 9 a.m. &amp; 6 p.m.</p>	<p><b>Fifth Sunday after Pentecost</b> <b>Theme: Our love for others should be without any limit, like the love of God.</b> O.T. : Genesis 50:15-21 Psalm : Psalm 119:91-96 Epistle : Romans 13:8-10 Gospel : Matthew 5:38-48  Refer to <i>Readings for Sunday Worship</i> ~ page 143</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>
<p><b>Sunday, 16 July 2017</b> Holy Communion Services: 7 a.m., 9 a.m. &amp; 6 p.m.</p>	<p><b>Sixth Sunday after Pentecost</b> <b>Theme: Be doers, not merely hearers, of the Word.</b> O.T. : Jeremiah 7:1-7 Psalm : Psalm 119:9-13,16 Epistle : James 1:22-27 Gospel : Matthew 7:21-29  Refer to <i>Readings for Sunday Worship</i> ~ page 145</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>
<p><b>Sunday, 23 July 2017</b> Holy Communion Services: 7 a.m., 9 a.m. &amp; 6 p.m.</p>	<p><b>Seventh Sunday after Pentecost</b> <b>Theme: It is God who commissions those who are to do his work.</b> O.T. : Numbers 27:15-23 Psalm : Psalm 99:1,5-9 Epistle : I Corinthians 9:13-23 Gospel : Matthew 9:35-10:10,16  Refer to <i>Readings for Sunday Worship</i> ~ page 147</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>
<p><b>Sunday, 30 July 2017</b> Holy Communion Services: 7 a.m., 9 a.m. &amp; 6 p.m.</p>	<p><b>Eighth Sunday after Pentecost</b> <b>Theme: Jesus teaches us to be bold in God's service.</b> O.T. : Isaiah 41:8-13 Psalm : Psalm 56:1-3,9-13 Epistle : Philippians 1:27-30 Gospel : Matthew 10:24-33  Refer to <i>Readings for Sunday Worship</i> ~ page 151</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>
<p><b>Sunday, 6 August 2017</b> Holy Communion Services: 7 a.m., 9 a.m. &amp; 6 p.m.</p>	<p><b>Ninth Sunday after Pentecost</b> <b>Theme: The messengers of God are often unheeded.</b> O.T. : Exodus 32:1-8 Psalm : Psalm 106:7-14 Epistle : Romans 10:13-21 Gospel : Matthew 11:16-24  Refer to <i>Readings for Sunday Worship</i> ~ page 153</p>	<p><b>White</b></p>

## **FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK**

### **Christian Living in a Materialistic Society**

Jesus told his disciples, "Truly I tell you, it will be hard for a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God" (Matthew 19:23-24). Are being a Christian and being rich mutually exclusive? What should be the attitude of a Christian to wealth and material things?

As he responded to the practice of unbiblical asceticism that arose out of a wrong philosophy that the material world is evil, Paul laid down a good principle in I Timothy 4:4-5 ~ "For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected, provided it is received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by God's word and by prayer." So, material things are good and are to be enjoyed. However, instead of having an attitude of positive enjoyment and thankfulness to things, it is possible that we may develop a wrong attitude which may eventually lead us to breaking the commandment 'Do not steal'.

It is a matter of priority. Jesus says in the Sermon on the Mount: "No one can serve two masters... You cannot serve God and wealth" (Matthew 6:24). Later, in the same chapter, he said, "But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things (i.e. the basic necessities of life) will be given to you as well" (Matthew 6:33). The balance tilts towards greed when material things become more important to us than God himself, the source of all riches. This leads to constant anxiety for the material things have to be always protected and insured against theft and guarded from the attack of moth and rust. Therefore, Jesus urged his disciples not to store up treasures on earth but in heaven (Matthew 5:19-20).

Scripture warns against the snare of riches and exhorts us to be content and generous with what God has blessed us. Apostle Paul says: "As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not to be haughty, or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but rather on God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share, thus storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life that really is life" (I Timothy 6:17-19). Earlier he wrote: "Of course, there is great gain in godliness combined with contentment; for we brought nothing into the world, so that we can take nothing out of it; but if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these. But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains" (I Timothy 6:6-10).

As we live in a society that is becoming increasingly materialistic, let us seek first God and his righteousness. We must be thankful and content with what God has already blessed us with, and be generous towards those who are less privileged.

**In His Grace,  
Thomas Jacob**

## **NEWS & NOTES**

**Confirmation classes:** The classes have started from 28 May.

**Weekly Bible Study:** Members meet in the PHCC every Thursday from 7.30 p.m. to 8.30 p.m. for a time of fellowship, singing and interactive Bible study.

**Sunday School:** The Sunday school has resumed since 18 June with great excitement. The dynamic team has brought in innovative audio visual aids and colourful displays of theme based programme, which will inspire the children.

**Teens Meet:** Teens and college students will volunteer in the Free Medical Camp to be organized by the Mumbai Diocesan Missionary Movement in one of the mission fields on 15 August.

**QCCCS:** The Day Care Centre and Study Centre have resumed since 1 June. All the students of the Study Centre who appeared for Std.10 board exam have passed: 2 (English medium), 2 (Marathi medium), 1 (Hindi medium). We appreciate the hard work of students, teachers and volunteers for this achievement.

**Membership:** We are happy to welcome and introduce our new member:

Mr. Anupam Ghosh, Mrs. Jyotika Ghosh and boy child (Associate Membership)

**Baptism:** Aayush Ghosh, the boy child of Anupam and Jyotika Ghosh, was baptised on 18 June during 9 a.m. worship service.

**Obituary:** We are sad to announce the demise of Mrs. Rani Biswas (82 years) on 24 June. May our Lord console the bereaved family.

**Senior Citizens:** We pray for all the senior citizens of our Church that our merciful God will give them good health and strength.

**Sick & Homebound:** We continue to pray for the sick and house bound members of our Church: David C. Matthew, Prakash Naik, Olga Nazareth, Loolu Thomas, Lizy Kurian, Padmini Abraham, Judith Rallia Ram, Anitaa Thakur, Pushpa John, Sumitra Figueredo and Nancy Razdan that God's merciful hands be upon them to heal and strengthen them.

**Isaac Cladio**

**Hon. Secretary**

## HEARD FROM THE PULPIT

4 June 2017 ~ Pentecost

**Theme: 'The gift of the Holy Spirit.'**

The promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit was given to the disciples by Jesus in John 20:21-23. That promise was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2). What does the Holy Spirit do?

1. The Holy Spirit convicts individuals of their sins (John 16:8). The result of this conviction is the Spirit's work of regeneration, the new birth. So, it is the work of the Holy Spirit that initiates persons into Christian life. This, however, is only the beginning. The Holy Spirit continues to work even after a person becomes a believer.
2. The Holy Spirit empowers those who seek to honour God in their lives. Personal inadequacies should not discourage us.
3. The Holy Spirit teaches the believer (John 14:26). The Holy Spirit also gives understanding of the Word of God, and guides us into God's will for us.
4. The Holy Spirit intercedes for us (Romans 8:26-27).
5. The Holy Spirit sanctifies the believer. He enables us to grow more into Christlikeness.
6. The Holy Spirit also gives special gifts to believers within the body of Christ for the common good.

11 June 2017 ~ Sunday after Pentecost

**Theme: 'God the Holy Trinity.'**

The Bible presents God as three distinguishable persons, Father, Son and Spirit. Though the word 'Trinity' itself does not appear in the Bible, the biblical teaching on it can be clearly seen there. There are three types of evidences for the biblical understanding of trinity:

### **1. The Oneness of God.**

The fundamental unity of God is central to the faith of the Hebrews. "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength" (Deuteronomy 6:4-5).

### **2. The Deity of Three.**

The deity of the Father is rarely disputed. But there are those who have denied the deity of Christ. Yet the Scripture identifies him as God. A key reference to the deity of Christ Jesus is found in Philippians 2:5-11.

### **3. Three-in-oneness.**

There are several occasions when God refers to himself in plural terms. In Genesis 1:26, he said, "Let us make humankind in our image..." When Isaiah was called, he heard the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" (Isaiah 6:8).

In several places in the Bible, the three persons are linked together in unity and apparent equality. An example is the baptismal formula as given in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20): baptizing in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

18 June 2017 ~ Second Sunday after Pentecost

**Theme: 'Jesus tells us who are truly blessed, happy.'**

Each beatitude begins with the word 'blessed'. The more fully we adopt these attitudes, the more blessed we would be. The height we would reach in our Christian faith and life would depend largely on the attitudes that we would adopt.

**"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:3).**

The poor in spirit are those who would be humble enough to recognise and acknowledge their spiritual poverty. A classic example of the 'poor in spirit' is the Tax Collector who went to pray (Luke 18). In total contrast to the Pharisee, who bragged on and on about himself before God, the Tax Collector would not even look up, but cried, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner!" And it was the Tax Collector who went away justified. King David recognised the importance of acknowledging the spiritual inadequacy in order to receive the mercy of God, when he said, "The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise" (Psalm 51:17). Those who consider themselves self-sufficient are proud. And this is not limited to spiritual pride. Even those who think they are materially self-sufficient tend to think that they do not need God. That is why Jesus told his disciples in Matthew 19:23-24 ~ "Truly I tell you, it will be hard for a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God." The paraphrased translation *The Message*, puts the first beatitude beautifully: "You're blessed when you're at the end of your rope. With less of you there is more of God and his rule."

25 June 2017 ~ Third Sunday after Pentecost

**Theme: 'Our hearts must be kept free from anger and hatred.'**

The scribes and the Pharisees restricted the application of the sixth commandment – "Do not murder" – to homicide. If they did not commit an act of murder literally, they considered that they kept the commandment. But Jesus widened the scope of the application of the commandment. He included thoughts and words as well as deeds; anger and insult as well as murder.

Now, angry thoughts and insulting words may not necessarily lead to the act of murder. Yet, in God's sight, they are as good as murdering. John wrote later in I John 3:15, "All who hate a brother or sister are murderers, and you know that murderers do not have eternal life abiding in them." When we feel angry towards someone and when we use insulting words, it exposes a desire within us to get rid of that person who is standing in our way. When we have such thoughts and wishes, we are breaking the sixth commandment. In a human court of law, a person would not be charged and convicted for anger. But we will have to give an account for anger and hatred to God, the Supreme Judge, before whom we all would one day stand. Therefore, we must seek reconciliation. Jesus said, "So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift" (Matthew 5:23-24).

## SENIOR CITIZENS' CORNER

### Casting My Care

Lord, I continually set before you,  
My requests and all my needs  
With thanksgiving I come unto you,  
My concerns unburdened to thee

I wait for your intervention, Lord,  
In quietness of soul and mind  
And worship at your footstool,  
Leaving my cares behind

And Lord, I express my thanks for you,  
For all you are to me,  
I thank you, Lord, that I matter to you,  
Though at times, I cannot see

Because of the circumstances in life,  
The things that I go through,  
I find my eyes are on the storm,  
When they should be looking to you

So help me, Lord, each precious day,  
No matter what life brings me,  
To carry on with hope and faith  
And to rest in you with peace.

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## GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE

We thank God for the lives and faithful service of all those who passed away in month of July of earlier years.

YEAR	NAME
1890	RUPERT ASQUITH STANLEY
1892	MACKENZIE A.
1892	MACKENZIE JANE
1899	GREGORY GEORGE
1899	GREGORY AGNUS SOPHIA
1916	CORKE ELIZEBETH
1917	POWER DENNIS
1919	HINDMAN GEORGIA WINIFRED
1920	TURLON ROBERT GEORGE
1923	KANGA SHIRLEY MAVIS
1944	KEES HUGH
1948	PAUL WELLINGTON
1952	DEY ELSIE
1953	CHINNERY GRACE JOSEPHINE
1957	CHRISTIE JESSIVE KESHAN
1999	JOHN ARCHIBALD
2002	DONGRE RAGUEL
2003	ABRAHAM MARIAM
2006	JAGDHANE DINKAR ISAAC
2007	CALEB BENJAMIN
2008	NAINAN RACHEL
2015	SAM ANCHAN
2016	SATYAJIT ROY

## REGULAR ACTIVITIES

**Worship Services on Sundays: Holy Communion (Said): 7 a.m. & 6 p.m.  
Holy Communion (Sung): 9 a.m.**

Activity	Venue	Day & Time	Contact Person	Phone No.
<b>Pastorate Committee Meeting</b>	Parsonage	16 July 10.45 a.m.	Isaac Cladio	<b>9869513872</b>
<b>Sunday School</b>	PHCC	Sundays 9 a.m.	Beulah Tellis	<b>9820432056</b>
<b>Bible Study</b>	PHCC	Thursdays 7.30 p.m.	Rev.Thomas Jacob	<b>9820736359</b>
<b>QCCCS: Day Care Centre &amp; Study Centre</b>	PHCC	Monday to Friday 9 a.m.to 4 p.m.  4 p.m. to 7 p.m.	Sumitra Figueredo	<b>26050229</b>

<b>Church Office: Saguna Doshi (Monday to Saturday: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.)</b>	<b>26423955</b>
<b>Rev. Thomas Jacob, Presbyter-in-charge</b>	<b>9820736359 / 26428803 presbyter@stephenschurch- bandra.com</b>
<b>Isaac Cladio, Hon. Secretary</b>	<b>9869513872</b>
<b>Sabina Solomon, Hon. Treasurer</b>	<b>9820080456</b>
<b>K.P. George, Hon. Jt. Secretary</b>	<b>9821074653</b>
<b>Vimla Philips, Hon. Jt. Treasurer</b>	<b>9892624886</b>

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