

# **ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH**

**(CHURCH OF NORTH INDIA)**

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## **NEWSLETTER**

### **SEPTEMBER 2017**



(For Private Circulation Only)

## Almanac and Lectionary: September 2017

Date	Theme & Readings	Liturgical colour
<p><b>Sunday, 3 September 2017</b> Holy Communion Services: 7 a.m., 9 a.m. &amp; 6 p.m.</p>	<p><b>Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost</b> <b>Theme: No sacrifice is too great for those who seek the kingdom of God.</b> O.T. : Genesis 12:1-7 Psalm : Psalm 119:65-68,71-72 Epistle : Philippians 3:4b-11 Gospel : Matthew 13:44-52  Refer to <i>Readings for Sunday Worship</i> ~ page 165</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>
<p><b>Sunday, 10 September 2017</b> Holy Communion Service: 9 a.m.</p>	<p><b>Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost</b> <b>Theme: God provides food for the hungry.</b> O.T. : Genesis 41:49,53-57 Psalm : Psalm 145:8-9,15-17,19 Epistle : Acts 14:8-18 Gospel : Matthew 14:13-21  Refer to <i>Readings for Sunday Worship</i> ~ page 168</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>
<p><b>Sunday, 17 September 2017</b> Holy Communion Service: 9 a.m.</p>	<p><b>Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost</b> <b>Theme: In the storms of life the Lord is near at hand to save.</b> O.T. : I Kings 19:1-13a Psalm : Psalm 107:23-30 Epistle : James 1:2-8 Gospel : Matthew 14:22-33  Refer to <i>Readings for Sunday Worship</i> ~ page 170</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>
<p><b>Sunday, 24 September 2017</b> Holy Communion Services: 7 a.m., 9 a.m. &amp; 6 p.m.</p>	<p><b>Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost</b> <b>Theme: The reward of persevering in faith.</b> O.T. : Genesis 32:22-30 Psalm : Psalm 34:3-4,6-9 Epistle : Hebrews 11:1-6 Gospel : Matthew 15:21-28  Refer to <i>Readings for Sunday Worship</i> ~ page 174</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>
<p><b>Sunday, 1 October 2017</b> Holy Communion Services: 7 a.m., 9 a.m. &amp; 6 p.m.</p>	<p><b>Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost</b> <b>Theme: The Way of the Cross.</b> O.T. : Isaiah 53:1-4,10-11 Psalm : Psalm 88:13-18 Epistle : II Corinthians 4:7-14 Gospel : Matthew 16:13-24  Refer to <i>Readings for Sunday Worship</i> ~ page 176</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>

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

### **Civic Responsibility of the Christian**

Mumbai city is slowly returning to normalcy after the last week's torrential rain. Besides the tragic loss of lives, many people suffered material losses due to the flooding of their residential and commercial buildings. In the midst of all the chaos due to the deluge, it was heart-warming to see Mumbaikars going out of their way to help people who were stranded. Churches, Gurudwaras, Temples, Mosques, other institutions, individuals and families provided food and shelter to the distressed. It's interesting how during a disaster people completely forget about their different religious and linguistic backgrounds, which is otherwise highlighted by our politicians for their selfish electoral gains. How wonderful it would be if all of us, at all times, see ourselves primarily as human beings rather than be divided because of different caste, creed, language and food habits!

As usual, the blame game started immediately after the disaster struck. While the municipality authorities may have to take a large part of the blame for their unpreparedness and the lack of accountability, haven't we also failed in our civic responsibilities? Aren't we guilty of throwing food wrappers, disposable water/juice bottles, plastic carry bags... out of the trains, buses and even cars which results in the clogging of the drainage? Shouldn't we use cloth bags rather than asking the vegetable/fruit vendor to give plastic bags? Shouldn't we segregate wet and dry waste? It is time that we take up the responsibility and duties as citizens.

What does Bible say about a Christian's civic responsibilities?

Apostle Paul wrote to young Timothy, "I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people - for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior" (I Timothy 2:1-3).

"Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's" (Matthew 22:21).

"Let every person be subject to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God" (Romans 13:1).

"Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor" (I Peter 2:17).

So, how are we to involve in civic matters as Christians? Broadly, there are three things that we must do: (1) Pray, (2) Be informed about civic issues, (3) Engage. Being responsible citizens of the land where God has placed us is an essential part of our Christian commitment.

**In His Grace,  
Thomas Jacob**

## **NEWS & NOTES**

“Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning”  
Luke 12:35

**Service Timing:** There will be only one service at 9 a.m. on 10 & 17 September owing to Bandra Fair.

**AGM 2017:** The Annual General Meeting of our church was held on 6 August 2017.

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

**Teens Meet:** The teens and college students met in the Parsonage on 13 & 27 August at 10.45 a.m. with Rev.Thomas Jacob for a time of fellowship. These “Emerging Youth” will lead the evening worship service on 5 November.

**WFCS:** The WFCS members visited a few homebound members during the month of August. They had the monthly meeting on 27 August.

**QCCCS:** A general medical camp was conducted for the children of the Day Care Centre on 22 August.

**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, Lizzy Kurian, Padmini Abraham, Judith Rallia Ram, Anitaa Thakur, Pushpa John, Sumitra Figueredo, Nancy Razdan and Thankam Venkatraman that God’s merciful hands be upon them to heal and strengthen them.

“It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching  
when he comes”  
Luke 12:37

**Isaac Cladio**  
**Hon. Secretary**

## HEARD FROM THE PULPIT

6 August 2017 ~ Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

**Theme: 'The messengers of God are often unheeded.'**

The importance of God's word is reiterated throughout the pages of the Bible and no more powerfully than in Romans 10:17.

**The word of God must be heard** > "So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ" (Romans 10:17. Also see Proverbs 29:18). The word of God must be heard so that people can receive salvation by putting their faith in Jesus Christ. The word of God also enables the faith to grow (II Timothy 3:16-17).

**The word of God must be believed and received** > A person can read the Bible every day of his/her life and still go through life unaffected by its pages and unchanged by its power unless he/she is willing to believe it and receive it.

**The Word of God must be shared** > Romans 10:14-15 ~ "But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent?" (Also see Mark 16:15-16).

**The word of God must be lived** > The value of the Bible is not in knowing it, but obeying it. Knowing the Bible is of little benefit unless you practice it. "But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves" (James 1:22).

13 August 2017 ~ Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

**Theme: 'God cares for those who are heavily burdened.'**

In Matthew 11:25-30, Jesus gives three simple instructions that will help the heavily burdened find rest.

**Come to Jesus** > Jesus says, "If you need rest, come to me." He is our rest. Jesus is calling us to a life of true discipleship. He does not merely say, "Come to me..." He also says, "Take my yoke upon you..."

**Take his yoke** > Jesus invites us to be yoked with ... himself! Christian discipleship is being in relationship with Jesus. We come to him, and we allow ourselves to be bound to him. Jesus will lead us gently as we bind our lives to him.

**Learn from Jesus** > The way of discipleship is to follow the Master, to become his apprentice. Someone said, "As complicated as life may become, discipleship at heart simply means walking with Jesus in the real world and having him teach us moment by moment how to live life his way."

In order find life and rest, we must bring our lives, plans and goals, dreams and aspirations under the yoke of Christ.

20 August 2017 ~ Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

**Theme: 'We are judged by our words which show what is in our hearts.'**

Jesus says in Matthew 12:36-37, "But I tell you that everyone will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned."

Speaking about taming the tongue in chapter 3 of his letter, James gives three vivid illustrations of things that are small but strong: (1) the small bit controls the great power of the horse, verse 3; (2) the small rudder controls the direction of the ship; and (3) the small fire can destroy the great forest.

Like the bit for the horse, the rudder for the ship and the small fire, the tongue is small in relation to the body yet has a great potential to achieve enormous results, both good and bad. It can make or break life. It can stir up violence or promote peace. It can crush the spirit or soothe the discouraged. It can spread rumours or it can teach truth. It can change the direction of a life or even human history.

Proverbs 26:20 ~ "... where there is no whisperer, quarrelling ceases."

Proverbs 18:21 ~ "The tongue has the power of life and death."

Ephesians 4:29 ~ "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen."

27 August 2017 ~ Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

**Theme: 'The fruitfulness of the gospel depends on how it is received.'**

In the Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:1-9,18-23), Jesus speaks of four kinds of soil; four kinds of hearers.

**The hard-hearted hearer** (v.19). The hard-hearted listener is one who has hardened the heart so that he/she would not receive the word. They shut their minds to the word of God. They choose not to receive the word of God. As someone said, "There are none so blind as those who deliberately will not see."

**The shallow-hearted hearer** (Verses 20-21). The shallow-hearted hearer lacks staying power. They do not have the endurance that is required to follow Christ. They are enthusiastic and get excited about the word of God. But when the going gets tough, they give up. They like the privileges of being a disciple of Christ, but do not like the responsibilities that go with it.

**The clutter-hearted hearer** (v.22). The clutter-hearted hearer clutters up life with the things of this world. There is an enthusiastic initial response. They retain some kind of Christian identity. But as time goes on, Christ becomes less and less significant to them. Materialism and worldliness edge out from their lives the initial hopes of spirituality.

**The good-hearted hearer** (v.23). The good-hearted hearer hears the word, understands it, and bears fruit.

## **QCCCS NEWS**

The QCCCS reopened after the summer vacation on 1 June. At present, there are 47 children in the Day Care Centre and 53 children in the Study Centre.

The Annual General Meeting of the Queenie Captain Community Centre Society (QCCCS) was held on 30 July. The following office bearers were elected in the Managing Committee meeting held after the AGM:

Rev. Thomas Jacob	- President
Sumitra Figueredo	- Vice President
Kumary Koshy	- Hon. Secretary
Lygia Soans	- Hon. Treasurer
Gitanjalia Nevatia	- Hon. Jt. Treasurer

Six students had appeared for the SSC Examination - Three from the English medium, two from the Marathi medium and one from the Hindi medium. All have passed and got admission in junior colleges.

An additional teacher for the English medium students has been appointed from June, and there has also been a replacement for the computer education teacher.

A youngster from the Church sponsored an outing for the Study Centre students. The students, along with the teachers and volunteers, enjoyed a movie at a local cinema.

Spoken English classes were organised for the students of the Study Centre. A young professional was invited, and the students enjoyed the sessions with her.

Independence Day was celebrated with solemnity. Rev. Thomas Jacob hoisted the national flag in the presence of a small gathering. This was followed by a short performance by the students of the Study Centre. There were speeches, a patriotic song and a dance by the students. The function came to an end with the serving of snacks.

Dr. Usha Ubale conducted a health camp for the students of the Day Care Centre on 22 August. Their mothers were also called. After examining each child, Dr. Ubale spoke to their respective mothers on various issues regarding the health and well-being of their children. The mothers benefitted from her talk.

**Kumary Koshy**  
**Hon. Secretary, QCCCS**

## GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE

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

YEAR	NAME
1906	PIKU BRIAN BEVIS
1906	BRUDERVE SUSETTE
1908	GUSTREING DAVID EBENZER
1910	HAWES CHARLES WILLIAM
1911	BULLOCK WILLIAM
1917	RICE DOREEN BURNETT
1925	SPURGEEN MARGARET GOLDEN
1938	MICHAEL LEWIS WILLIAM
1938	ORE PHILIP ALFRED
1945	PALMER GILLIAN
1947	TRAVERS KENNETH
1954	DILLEN NARAIN SWAMI STEPHEN
1980	DEV DOSS JOEL VICTOR
1985	MILLICANS DAVID
1988	ALBERT SINHA
1990	KURUVILLA PETER
1991	LEWIS STELLA
1996	LUTHER VERA GLADYS
1998	DOW DOROTHY EMILY
2000	SOANS DENNIS
2002	GEORGE (SUNNY) THOMAS
2004	RAWSON DAVID A.
2016	DARA AJIT

## IMPORTANT DATES

CONFIRMATION SERVICE	19 NOVEMBER
HARVEST FESTIVAL	26 NOVEMBER
CAROL SERVICE	17 DECEMBER

## REGULAR ACTIVITIES

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

**\*There will be only one service at 9 a.m. on 10 & 17 September**

Activity	Venue	Day & Time	Contact Person	Phone No.
Pastorate Committee Meeting	Parsonage	24 September 10.45 a.m.	Isaac Cladio	9869513872
Sunday School	PHCC	Sundays 9 a.m.	Beulah Tellis	9820432056
Bible Study	PHCC	Thursdays 7.30 p.m.	Rev.Thomas Jacob	9820736359
QCCCS: Day Care Centre & Study Centre	PHCC	Monday to Friday 9 a.m.to 4 p.m.  4 p.m. to 7 p.m.	Kumary Koshy	9820217524

<b>Church Office: Saguna Doshi</b> (Monday to Saturday: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.)	26423955
<b>Rev. Thomas Jacob</b> , Presbyterian-in-charge	9820736359 / 26428803 presbyter@stephenschurch-bandra.com
<b>Isaac Cladio</b> , Hon. Secretary	9869513872
<b>K.P.George</b> , Hon. Treasurer	9821074653
<b>Sushill Augustine</b> , Hon. Jt. Secretary	9820657433
<b>Sabina Solomon</b> , Hon. Jt. Treasurer	9820080456

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