

# **ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH**

**(CHURCH OF NORTH INDIA)**

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## **NEWSLETTER**

### **OCTOBER 2017**



(For Private Circulation Only)

## Almanac and Lectionary: October 2017

Date	Theme & Readings	Liturgical colour
<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</p> <p>Refer to <i>Readings for Sunday Worship</i> ~ page 176</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>
<p><b>Sunday, 8 October 2017</b> Holy Communion Services: 7 a.m., 9 a.m. &amp; 6 p.m.</p>	<p><b>Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost</b> <b>Theme: Though we have to face temptation, it is God's will that all should be saved.</b> O.T. : Deuteronomy 13:1-5 Psalm : Psalm 91:1-3,9-12 Epistle : I Corinthians 8 Gospel : Matthew 18:7-14</p> <p>Refer to <i>Readings for Sunday Worship</i> ~ page 179</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>
<p><b>Sunday, 15 October 2017</b> Holy Communion Services: 7 a.m., 9 a.m. &amp; 6 p.m.</p>	<p><b>Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost</b> <b>Theme: Those who refuse to forgive cannot be forgiven.</b> O.T. : Genesis 45:1-8,15 Psalm : Psalm 86:1-2,5-6,14,17 Epistle : II Corinthians 1:23-2:11 Gospel : Matthew 18:21-35</p> <p>Refer to <i>Readings for Sunday Worship</i> ~ page 182</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>
<p><b>Sunday, 22 October 2017</b> Holy Communion Services: 7 a.m., 9 a.m. &amp; 6 p.m.</p>	<p><b>Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost</b> <b>Theme: God gives us far more that we deserve.</b> O.T. : Deuteronomy 7:6-8 Psalm : Psalm 105:1-2,8-11 Epistle : Romans 5:6-11 Gospel : Matthew 20:1-16</p> <p>Refer to <i>Readings for Sunday Worship</i> ~ page 185</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>
<p><b>Sunday, 29 October 2017</b> Holy Communion Services: 7 a.m., 9 a.m. &amp; 6 p.m.</p> <p><b>Reformation Sunday</b></p>	<p><b>Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost</b> O.T. : II Kings 23:1-9 Psalm : Psalm 81:1-14 Epistle : Romans 11:1-6 Gospel : Luke 11:33-end</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>
<p><b>Sunday, 5 November 2017</b> Holy Communion Services: 7 a.m., 9 a.m. &amp; 6 p.m.</p>	<p><b>Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost</b> <b>Theme: Love sums up and fulfils every law.</b> O.T. : Deuteronomy 10:12-19 Psalm : Psalm 119:161-165,168 Epistle : Galatians 5:2-6,13-15 Gospel : Matthew 22:34-40</p> <p>Refer to <i>Readings for Sunday Worship</i> ~ page 191</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>

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

### **The Body of Christ**

In continuation with the discussion in two earlier issues on the images of the church, we would look at an image that is used in the New Testament only by Apostle Paul: the Body of Christ. It must be noted that Paul does not speak of the church as a body of Christians but rather as the body of Christ. Paul used the phrase 'the body of Christ' to refer to Christians of a local congregation (I Corinthians 12:27), to Christians belonging not necessarily to the same local congregation ('one body in Christ' – Romans 12:5), and to the universal church (I Corinthians 12:12-13). There are three terms used in relation to the phrase "the body of Christ", namely body, members, and head. Paul's usage of the phrase "the body of Christ" is not rigid. There is a variety of meaning in its usage.

Paul had to address the problem of sexual immorality in Corinthian church. In I Corinthians 6, he deals with that. He asked, "Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Should I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never!" (I Corinthians 6:15). Further he said, "... do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body" (I Corinthians 6:19-20). The body of each Christian is a member of Christ. How a believer uses his/her body tells about his/her relationship with Christ. Even though Paul does not use in this text the phrase "the body of Christ", and while he does not directly refer to the church, it is implied that being part of the body of Christ the Christians cannot do anything that is against the will of Christ.

In I Corinthians 12-14, Paul talks about the diversities of ministries in one body. Quite clearly there was disunity in the Corinthian church due to the many spiritual gifts that were employed and due to the claim of pre-eminence of one gift over another. He emphasised the unity in the body of Christ. "For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body..." (I Corinthians 12:12-13a). Further, in verse 27, he said, "Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it." This is the first occasion when Paul portrayed the church (you) as the body of Christ. The Christians being part of the body of Christ must be united. They must think of the common good. They should be united in suffering as well.

Christ being the head and the church being the body means that there cannot be any division in the church. There must be unity and mutuality. Besides unity, the image of the body of Christ also imply interdependence. The members of the body are interdependent for the growth and effective functioning of the body.

**In His Grace,  
Thomas Jacob**

## **NEWS & NOTES**

“The fundamental fact of existence is that this trust in God, this faith, is the firm foundation under everything that makes life worth living.  
It’s our handle on what we can’t see.”  
Hebrews 11:1 (The Message)

**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.

**Bible quiz:** Eleven members attended the Trans World Radio-India (TWR) Bible quiz held on 24 September in the PHCC.

**Stewardship Sunday:** 24 September was observed as Stewardship Sunday and the offertory received collection through the special envelope will be given to the Stewardship Committee of Mumbai Diocese towards its initiatives.

**UBS Touring Choir:** A part of the Union Biblical Seminary Touring Choir ministered during the 9 a.m. service on 24 September. Rev.Dr.Praveen Paul gave the sermon.

**WFCS:** The WFCS members had a fellowship get-together on Saturday 23 September in the PHCC.

**Membership:** Ms.Ayesha Massey Porwal and Ms,Venus Massey have transferred their membership to the All Saints CSI Church, Bengaluru. We wish them God’s blessings.

**Presbyter’s Travel:** Rev.Thomas Jacob will be away from 28 September to 5 October to attend the 16<sup>th</sup> CNI Synod in Delhi. Members may contact the church office for Pastoral care needs.

**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, Nancy Razdan and Thankam Venkataraman that God’s merciful hands be upon them to heal and strengthen them.

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

## HEARD FROM THE PULPIT

3 September 2017 ~ Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

**Theme: 'No sacrifice is too great for those who seek the kingdom of God.'**

The Parable of the Hidden Treasure (Matthew 13:44) and the Parable of the Pearl of Great Value (Matthew 13:45,46) illustrate the necessity of counting the cost in following Jesus Christ. In the first parable, the man found something so valuable that he sold everything he had to get it. He was so excited about finding the treasure that he was willing to do whatever he had to do in order to obtain it. The merchant in the second parable acted in a similar way. He also sold everything he had in order to be able to buy the pearl of great value. The only difference is that the man in the first parable discovered the treasure by accident, while the merchant was looking for fine pearls.

The point is, when a person encounters Christ, and discovers the will and purpose of God whether suddenly and unexpectedly, or at the end of a long and conscious search, he/she must be willing to give up everything he/she has. How much do we value the kingdom of God? How much do we value Christ in our lives? The man who discovered the hidden treasure and the merchant who found the pearl of great value sold everything they had to obtain the one thing of great value. Similarly, would we value the privilege of knowing Christ and obtaining eternal life more than all that we have? There are several men and women who literally surrender the pleasures of this life to excel in sports, or business, or arts. Are we willing to make sacrifices for the sake of the kingdom of God?

10 September 2017 ~ Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

**Theme: 'God provides food for the hungry.'**

Why is there hunger in the world? Contrary to what some might believe, population growth is not the reason. There is sufficient food production to take care of the over six billion people on the earth. The real reason is the food distribution problems, natural disasters, government policies, civil unrest, unfair trade policies and sheer greed.

Does God, as the theme for the day says, provide food for the hungry? Does God care for the poor? Is there something that God would expect us to do in the face of hunger and poverty that stares at us as we live and move around in our city and our country? Bible describes God as having a special concern for the poor and needy. Deuteronomy 15:18 reads, "He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the alien, giving him food and clothing." The next verse is a command to us to reflect the same attitude: "And you are to love those who are aliens..."

Bible portrays concern for the poor as an accurate measure of our faithfulness (e.g. Luke 3:8-11; James 1:27; Proverbs 19:17). God cares for the poor and provides food for the hungry. But he does that through us. He wants us to fear him and live in accordance with the teachings given in the Scripture. He wants us to reflect in practical ways God's concern for the poor. He wants us to have policies and programmes that would address the needs of the poor and the hungry.

17 September 2017 ~ Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

**Theme: 'In the storms of life the Lord is near at hand to save us.'**

"Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed" (1 Pet.4:12-13).

James says something similar: "My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance; and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing" (James 1:2-4).

**Trials are common for Christians to encounter.** That is why Peter says, "Do not be surprised..."

**Trials put our faith to test.** It is easy to believe in the sovereignty of God when everything is going well. But, it is when things don't go the way we expect, that our faith in God is really tested. Positively, trials can also strengthen our confidence in God.

**Trials enable us to be mature and complete.** They can draw us closer to God. What we need to do is to remember that God is faithful. And we must do the right things even in the face of severe trials and lean on to God. We must not resist trials, rather we must endure them.

24 September 2017 ~ Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

**Theme: 'The reward of persevering in faith.'**

We cannot please God without faith in him (Hebrews 11). Faith is not acknowledging intellectually the existence of God. Faith is human being's response to God's revelation. It is obeying God's word in order to win the approval of God. Faith is not just agreeing to what the scripture says but responding to it in obedience.

Hebrews 11:1 ~ "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen". **Faith anticipates the future.** The trust is not placed in what is visible in the present. The heroes of faith listed later in the chapter did not live for the passing moment. They recognised that there was more to life than the present. For them, faith was the assurance of things hoped for.

Secondly, **faith evaluates the present.** Christians are expected to live in the present while looking ahead to the future. Often, Christians are accused of being so heavenly-minded that they are useless for the earth. Christians must reflect the present in the light of the anticipated future. Without the perspective of the future, the present would not make sense. And they recognise how God is at work in the present and co-operate with him. Faith is trusting in the God of creation and provision, trusting what he has said, and living our lives according to his words. And there sure is a reward for persevering in faith.

## SENIOR CITIZENS' CORNER

### Building the Bridge

(Will Allen Dromgoole)

An old man, going a lone highway,  
Came, at evening, cold and Grey,  
To a chasm, vast, and deep, and wide,  
Thru which was flowing a sullen tide.

The old man crossed in the twilight dim:  
The sullen stream had no fears to him;  
But he turned, when safe on the other side,  
And built a bridge to span the tide.

"Old man," said a fellow pilgrim, near,  
"You are wasting strength with building here;  
Your journey will end with the ending day;  
you never again must pass this way;

You have crossed the chasm, deep and wide -  
Why build you the bridge at the eventide?"  
The builder lifted his old grey head:  
"Good friend, in the path I have come" he said,

"There followeth after me today,  
A youth, whose feet must pass this way.  
This chasm, that has been naught to me,  
To that fair-haired youth may a pitfall be.

He, too, must cross in the twilight dim;  
Good friend, I am building the bridge for him."

## GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE

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

YEAR	NAME
	CORKE RICHARD
1922	WELLES WILLIAM
1923	FRY AMY
1928	MENESSE ELIZEBETH JANE
1949	CHRISTIE SARAH
1950	LORD HENRY
1972	CHAINANI CHRISTABEL
1975	VENKATARAMAN SUNDER
1976	CAPTAIN QUEENIE
1978	FANTHOME GEORGE
1992	KANGA GODREJ
1998	PUSHONG DESMOND
1998	MERCHANT SUNDAR AZIZ
2002	SHUKLA A.K.
2004	PATRICIA HURST
2007	MERCY GODAY
2014	ROBERT MARSHALL
2015	JOHNSON ADAMS
2016	MIRA ROY
2016	KOSHI P ABRAHAM

## 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.

Activity	Venue	Day & Time	Contact Person	Phone No.
Pastorate Committee Meeting	Parsonage	15 October 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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