

Hermon Marthoma Church

MIDLANDS

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Something to ponder

"...My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.. "Luke 1:46-48

I always admired the faith and obedience of Mary as she accepted the will of God. Despite the fact that she knew that there would be problems, she happily accepted the role and mission that God gave her. Even though she knew that the mission would be very difficult for her, she considered it a great blessing. She was willing to offer her body as an offering to the Lord, knowing that God would use her for His Glory.

This is a challenge to all of us. During the Christmas season we are all concerned with getting gifts for family members and friends. How many of us even consider getting a gift for God to show our love for Him?

So what is it that the Lord wants from us????

Hosea 6:6 - For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.

The Lord wants us to have steadfast love toward Him and all the people and creatures around us. This love is not to be shown just on Christmas, but it has to be shown the entire year.

Without such love, our prayers, our songs, and our worship have no meaning. During the time of the prophet Amos, the people did not have a steadfast love for God or for the people around them. So God commanded Amos to say:



Amos 5:21 – 24 – I hate, I despise your festivals, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them; and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals I will not look upon. Take away from me the noise of your songs; I will not listen to the melody of your harps. But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

For our songs, prayers, and worship to have meaning we need to love! We need to have a steadfast love. This love has to be demonstrated. Jesus spent his entire ministry trying to bring justice and salvation into this world. He helped those who could not help themselves, and He also gave His body as a sacrifice to God. Jesus willingly sacrificed his body to do the will of God.

Like Jesus and Mary, let us love God and those around us. Let us be willing to sacrifice things, including our own bodies to do the will of God. Let us work to establish justice and bring salvation into this world.

I and my family would like to wish each and every one of you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. May the good Lord look with favor on you, as He looked with favor on Mary.

Shibi Achen

Next Service:

8th Dec 2007 (Malayalam)

22nd Dec 2007 – No communion service

It is the Christmas carol service on 22nd Dec 07 (3pm to 6pm)

At

St. James Hill Church
Mere Green Road
Four Oaks, West Midlands
B75 5DD

Highlights

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Reminder to all

Please attend the services especially the Christmas Carol Service.

God's Mysterious Ways

MY TESTIMONY

Our life on earth has many mountains and many valleys to pass. Many a times when we are up on the mountain we tend to lose sight of our God given goals and His Blessings. We live in the comfort zone- happy and content. But life is not always up on the mountain, we need to pass through valleys and be hurt by thorns which could come in the form of ill health, job stress, mental stress, children's career and future .Don't be surprised by these thorns of life because there's beauty, fragrance and grace; living in God's garden.

A few months back I developed blisters and ulcers in my mouth. I had difficulty eating, swallowing and even brushing my teeth. I consulted doctors but none could find the real cause of the problem. This went on for six months .During all this time the words of a song that kept ringing in my mind was- **Are you discouraged or are you blue, are clouds obscuring the sun from you, keep trusting Jesus though doubts assail, He knows his promise He'll never fail**I knew He would not let me down, there was light at the end of a dark tunnel-it came in the form of a biopsy which revealed the true problem.

I was informed that there was only **one specialist** in the whole of UK who could treat this problem. I was apprehensive- what if the doctor was in Bristol or Aberdeen or Blackpool- would I have to go there for treatment? No, it was in Sheffield- what a relief that was; I did not have to travel too far. When I met up with doctor for the first time my anxiety's where put to rest. She took me in her care with personal attention unlike all my previous hospital experiences. She was caring as if it was her own sister. I could see God's

tender care and blessing. As the Psalmist says in 86:15-**O Lord you are full of compassion, and gracious and abounding in mercy.**

We as a Christian family pray every day, but during these times, I realised the **power of prayer** and the **scriptures**. The Bible speaks wondrous words and gives me the assurance that **He is only a prayer away**. In James5:13, Mathew 7:7 we see this power of prayer.

My family back in India, our friends in all parts of the world started praying for me. **My family** in India and US were constantly consulting specialists seeking advice. I realised the value of their love, prayers and concern. Different **prayer groups in UK and friends** showed their concern by calling up and letting me know that they were praying for me. I realised that true friends are those who are there not only in times of joy but even in times of pain.

I could see God's mysterious ways working through **my mother's visit**. Her visit was planned last year, but she arrived when I most needed her, the timing could not have been any better.

Remember dear friends, all of our plans and ambition or desires may not be to God's plans but He has plans for us that our beyond our realm of understanding and comprehension. Come closer to Him, love Him, be faithful and sincere to Him is all that we need, His promises will never fail. Never be discouraged or disappointed when things don't go the way we want. Paul writes- **Be glad for all, God is planning for you. Be patient....andprayerful (Rom12:12)**

**By Reena Abraham
(Leicester)**



"Be glad for all God is planning for you"

Christmas One liners



- Q. What kind of bird can write?
A. A pen-guin
- Q. What do you get if you cross Santa with a detective?
A. Santa Clues!
- Q. What did Adam say on the day before Christmas?
A. It's Christmas, Eve.
- Q. Why does Santa Claus like to work in the garden?
A. Because he like to hoe, hoe, hoe!
- Q. How is the Christmas alphabet different from the ordinary alphabet?
A. The Christmas alphabet has NO EL.

- Q. What do the elves sing to Santa Claus on his birthday?
A. Freeze a jolly good fellow . . .
- Q. Why are Christmas trees such bad knitters?
A. They are always dropping their needles.
- Q. What did the bald man say when he got a comb for Christmas?
A. Thanks, I'll never part with it!
- Q. What did the big candle say to the little candle?
A. I'm going out tonight.
- Q. Why does Santa Claus go down the chimney on Christmas Eve?
A. Because it soots him.
- Q. What kind of ball doesn't bounce?
A. A snowball!
- Q. How does Santa take pictures?
A. With his North Pole-roid.

Chat through a media

God: Hello. Did you call me?
Me: Called you? No... Who is this?
God: This is GOD. I heard your prayers. So I thought I will chat.
Me: I do pray. Just makes me feel good. I am actually busy now. I am in the midst of something.
God: What are you busy at? Ants are busy too.
Me: Don't know. But I can't find free time. Life has become hectic. It's rush hour all the time.
God: Sure. Activity gets you busy. But productivity gets you results. Activity consumes time. Productivity frees it.
Me: I understand. But I still can't figure out. By the way, I was not expecting YOU to buzz me on instant messaging chat.
God: Well I wanted to resolve your "Fight for time", by giving you some clarity. In this net era, I wanted to reach you through the medium you are comfortable with.

Me: Tell me, why has life become complicated now?
God: Stop analyzing life. Just live it. Analysis is what makes it complicated.
Me: why are we then constantly unhappy?
God: Your today is the tomorrow that you worried about yesterday. You are worrying because you are analyzing. Worrying has become your habit. That's why you are not happy.
Me: But how can we not worry when there is so much uncertainty?
God: Uncertainty is inevitable, but worrying is optional.
Me: But then, there is so much pain due to uncertainty. .
God: Pain is inevitable able, but suffering is optional.
Me: If suffering is optional, why do good people always suffer?
God: Diamond cannot be polished without friction.
Gold cannot be purified without fire. Good people go through trials, but don't suffer. With that experience their life become better not bitter.
Me: You mean to say such experience is useful?
God: Yes. In every term, Experience is a hard teacher. She gives the test first and the lessons afterwards.
Me: But still, why should we go through such tests? Why can't we be free from problems?

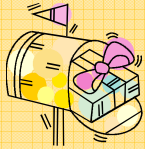
God: Problems are Purposeful Roadblocks Offering Beneficial Lessons (to) Enhance Mental Strength. Inner strength comes from struggle and endurance, not when you are free from problems.
Me: Frankly in the midst of so many problems, we don't know where we are heading...
God: If you look outside you will not know where you are heading. Look inside. Looking outside, you dream.
Looking inside, you awaken. Eyes provide sight. Heart provides insight.
Me: Sometimes not succeeding fast seems to hurt more than moving in the right direction. What should I do?
God: Success is a measure as decided by others. Satisfaction is a measure as decided by you. Knowing the road ahead is more satisfying than knowing you rode ahead. You work with the compass. Let others work with the clock.
Me: In tough times, how do you stay motivated?
God: Always look at how far you have come rather than how far you have to go. Always count your blessing, not what you are missing.
Me: What surprises you about people?
God: when they suffer they ask, "why me?" When they prosper, they never ask "Why me" Everyone wishes to have truth on their side, but few want to be on the side of the truth.
Me: Sometimes I ask, who am I, why am I here. I can't get the answer.
God: Seek not to find who you are, but to determine who you want to be. Stop looking for a purpose as to why you are here. Create it. Life is not a process of discovery but a process of creation.
Me: How can I get the best out of life?
God: Face your past without regret. Handle your present with confidence. Prepare for the future without fear.
Me: One last question. Sometimes I feel my prayers are not answered.
God: There are no unanswered prayers. At times the answer is NO.
Me: Thank you for this wonderful chat.
God: Well. Keep the faith and drop the fear. Don't believe your doubts and doubt your beliefs. Life is a mystery to solve not a problem to resolve. Trust me.
Life is wonderful if you know how to live. "Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take but by the moments that took our breath away!"



God hears our prayers always but sometimes the answer is "No"

Little Jimmy

Little Jimmy was one of the best students in his Sunday school Class. One day the teacher asked her students to draw and colour a picture of something about the baby Jesus. Jimmy worked and worked and came up with a picture of a modern jet airplane with four people inside. The teacher couldn't figure it out. She thought perhaps it had something to do with how Christianity relates to modern times. So she asked him: "Jimmy, that's a nice picture, but what is it?"
"Why that's Joseph, Mary, and baby Jesus on the flight into Egypt," Jimmy answered.
"Oh!.... but Jimmy, there are four people in there. Who is the fourth one?"
"Why, that's Pontius, the pilot!"



Useful contacts

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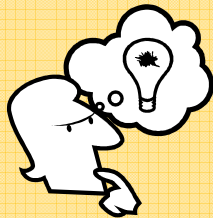
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Susan Abraham
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Special Greetings this month

Birthday greetings to

Abraham Renji John, Alfin Alex Jo, Isabel Mathew, Annu Mathew, Sivini Viji George, Annie Alex

Congratulations on the Wedding Anniversaries of

Abraham Renji John & Monisha Susan Kurian, V.V.Abraham & Susan Abraham, Suraj Issac & Indu Issac

Sunday school

**At 3:30pm every 2nd and 4th Saturdays at the Church.
No Sunday school on the 22nd Dec07**



Christmas Carols

One night Freda went carol singing. She knocked on the door of a house and began to sing. A man with a violin in his hand came to the door

Within half a minute tears were streaming down his face! Freda went on singing for half an hour, every carol she knew - and some she didn't. As last she stopped.

'I understand,' she said softly. 'You are remembering your happy childhood Christmas days. You're a sentimentalist!'

'No,' he snivelled. 'I'm a musician!'

Other announcements

Christmas Carol service

Hermon Marthoma Church's first Christmas Carol service will be held on the 22nd Dec07 at the St James Hill church. We have invited other congregations. There will be a special appearance of Santa Claus. Attendance is important.



Happy Birthday to you
Happy Birthday to you
Happy Birthday dear Jesus
Happy Birthday to you

Merry Christmas