

# CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD THIMBIRIGASYAYA

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The Annual General Meeting of the Church of the Good Shepherd Thimbirigasyaya will be held on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> June 2016 in the Parish Hall soon after the 8:00 am Holy Communion Service.

## **Agenda**

1. Opening Prayer
2. Welcome Address
3. Nomination of pro-tem Secretary
4. Adoption of minutes of the previous AGM Held on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2015
5. Matters Arising From Minutes
6. Tabling of Reports of Parish Organizations.
7. Matters Arising From Reports.
8. Vicars address
9. Tabling of Accounts
10. Nomination of Vicars Warden
11. Nomination of
  - a. Peoples Wardens
  - b. Representatives to the Diocesan Council
  - c. Representatives to the Transfer Board
  - d. Representatives to the Diocesan Missionary Council
  - e. Hony. Auditor
  - f. Sides Persons
12. Resolutions if any
13. Any other business
14. Vote of thanks
15. Closing Prayer.

**Fr. Suresh Dias Bandaranaike**  
**Vicar**

**5<sup>th</sup> June 2016**

# CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD THIMBIRIGASYAYA

## MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 28-JUNE-2015

The meeting commenced at 9:30am with Rev Suresh Dias Bandaranaike in the chair. Forty-four members of the parish were present:

Suresh Thavarajah	Nalinie Wanigasekera	Rhuani Rambukwelle
Sugandhi Daniel	Shyama Thangiah	Delani Jayasinghe
Daphne Dias Bandaranaike	Susheela Gunaratnam	Cindy Jacob
Kanu Josephine Ifeyinwa	Wijith DeChickera	Anaath Jacob
Kanu Precious Oluchi	Bihani Welikala	Ajit de Silva
Mallika Dedigama	Angela E Seneviratne	Barbara Wijesinghe
Kusum Wickremaratne	Rajeeva Samarasingha	Bhanu Fernando
Junita de Alwis	K Gunaratnam	Michelle Ponniah
Dorothy Phillips	Michael H Tissera	Thomas Ponniah
Charmaine Perera	Sunil C K de Alwis	Rochelle Hakei-Ranasinghe
Dharshani de Silva	Dyan Seneviratne	Nilani Seneviratne
Muriel de Silva	Vimala Ganeshanathan	Dilranjan Jacob
Flora E Daniel	Simone Botejue	Rev Suresh Dias Bandaranaike
Dhayamani Ashok	Upekha Wickramaratne	Rev S Balasubramaniam
S K Ashok	Viranga Wickramaratne	

Three notices of excuse were tabled from Lalith Dassenaik, Deepika Dassenaik, and Githanjali Algama.

The notice of the Annual General Meeting was read by Dilranjan Jacob, Vicar's Warden.

The proceedings commenced with an opening prayer followed by a welcome address by Rev Suresh Dias Bandaranaike.

### **Nomination of Pro Tem Secretary**

Rochelle Hakei-Ranasinghe was appointed pro tem secretary.

*Proposed by: Suresh Thavarajah*

*Seconded by: Dilranjan Jacob*

### **Adoption of Minutes of the Previous Annual General Meeting**

Minutes of the previous meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2014, which had been in circulation, were taken as read, and adopted.

*Proposed by: Rajeeva Samarasingha*

*Seconded by: Dorothy Phillips*

### **Matters arising from Minutes**

There were no matters for discussion.

### **Tabling of Reports of the Parish Organisations**

The following reports which had been in circulation were taken as read, and tabled accordingly:

1. Wardens Report
2. Sunday School Report
3. Youth Fellowship Report
4. Mothers Union Report
5. Choir Report
6. Elders Fellowship Report
7. Bible Study Group Report
8. Link Parish Report
9. Caring and Sharing Ministry Report

### Comments/Clarifications:

- Wijith DeChickera noted that while Daphne Charles had been mentioned in the appreciations in the Wardens and Choir Reports (pages 13 and 26, respectively), her contribution to the Christmas Carol Service –in terms of sourcing the music, shaping the programme, and training of the choir– should be specifically noted and appreciated.
- Dilranjan Jacob noted an omission in the Wardens Report with regard to the appreciation of those who were responsible for the weekly flower arrangements (page 14). He stated that Yvonne Weerasuriya’s name should be included in the list.
- The link parish of Morakottanchennai: It was noted that in the past year the focus had been on strengthening links with the parish in Hambantota, and no communication had taken place between Good Shepherd and the parish in Morakottanchennai. It was decided that Good Shepherd would continue to focus on Hambantota in the coming year. Ajith de Silva commented that as there had been no communication from their quarter either, that we did not need to pursue it. Nilani Seneviratne commented that the last communication had been during Rev Ranjith Jayaweera’s period, and that had been a request for assistance to repair the priest’s personal motorbike. She added that the cheque for Christmas gifts had only been encashed in February of the following year. Angela Seneviratne suggested that it would be good to speak with them and find out the current situation. It was agreed that any such communication should take place through the Archdeacon and not directly with the priest.

As Vicar’s Warden, Dilranjan Jacob thanked all the members of the various organizations and groups for their reports as well as for their passion and commitment.

### **Tabling of Accounts**

Accounts for the year under review were tabled and a summary presented by the Treasurer, Nilani Seneviratne. As the statement of accounts had been in circulation, Nilani highlighted the key features:

- i. Income had increased in comparison to the previous year, even though the income from investment interest had reduced by 20%.
- ii. The bulk of expenditure was on evangelism and community service initiatives.
- iii. Building project: this has been estimated at Rs 5.5 to 6 million. Approximately 50% of the required amount is to be raised from special fundraising activities, while the other 50% will be underwritten by existing funds. A separate building fund has been set up for the project.

### Comments/Clarifications:

- Dyan Seneviratne commented that through judicious saving, the parish had been able to contribute towards the diocese’s Samaritan’s Purse project.
- Viranga Wickramaratne raised the question of whether as a parish we were entitled to keep a sum as large as Rs 10.6 million in the bank. Nilani answered that this was possible. She also pointed out that if the deposits were to be reduced, the interest earned would be correspondingly lower.
- Wijith DeChickera commented that we should rejoice as a community because we have increased our disbursement of income – especially, that we have increased our disbursement on general outreach projects by 30%. He remarked that, on the other hand, the disbursement of outreach funds within the parish has decreased to 30% of what was disbursed in the previous year. Wijith noted that this may have been due to insufficient projects being brought to the wardens’ attention for action. He also pointed out that 97% of what we have spent on outreach (general) is on development, donations, and maintenance of relationships with other churches

and Christian institutions, and only 3% on mission and evangelism. He encouraged the parish to invest more in projects that focused on the spreading of the Word of God, and suggested that the wardens consider giving regularly to organizations such as the Anglican Inland Missionary Society (AIMS), Back To The Bible, and the Ceylon Bible Society.

- The statement of accounts was then adopted.  
*Proposed by: Nalinie Wanigasekera                      Seconded by: Barbara Wijesinghe*

**Vicar’s Address**

Fr Suresh spoke on the importance of keeping the spiritual life of the church as a priority: that the people of God should be spiritually rooted and that the church should be a house of prayer. In a day and age where there is a lack of family prayer, he urged that each family make it a priority to build up family prayer in their homes. He encouraged the parishioners to participate in regular Bible Study so that they would grow familiar with the Word of God. He noted his joy that in the past year the parish had organized a healing service, a parish mission, and outreach activities. He highlighted that there was a need to give invest more in terms of finances and resources towards evangelism. He suggested that families could consider donating Bibles, as a first step. He also spoke on the importance of continuing to develop unity in the midst of diversity. Fr Suresh thanked the lay leadership, Fr Bala and Fr Balasubramaniam, and Das and his family for all their assistance and support during the past year. He concluded by urging everyone to grow as spirit-filled, prayerful, humble, wise, and FAT (Faithful to God, Available, and Teachers of the Word of God) people.

**Nomination of Vicar’s Warden**

Dilranjan Jacob was appointed Vicar’s Warden.

**Nominations and Elections**

The following were nominated and duly elected:

<b>Office</b>	<b>Name of Nominee</b>	<b>Proposed by</b>	<b>Seconded by</b>
<i>People’s Wardens (03)</i>	Sunil De Alwis	Dayan Seneviratne	Michael Tissera
	Suresh Thavarajah	Barbara Wijesinghe	Ajith de Silva
	Delani Jayasinghe	Susheela Gunaratnam	Charmaine Perera
<i>Representatives to Diocesan Council (02)</i>	Nalinie Wanigasekera	Rhuani Rambukwelle	Charmaine Perera
	Barbara Wijesinghe	Rhuani Rambukwelle	Charmaine Perera
<i>Representatives to the Transfers Board (02)</i>	Ajith de Silva	Wijith DeChickera	Bhanu Fernando
	Dyan Seneviratne	Wijith DeChickera	Bhanu Fernando
<i>Representatives to the Diocesan Missionary Council (02)</i>	Charmaine Perera	Nilani Seneviratne	Dharshini de Silva
	Dharshini de Silva	Nilani Seneviratne	Bhanu Fernando
<i>Hony. Auditor</i>	Ren Lan Mather	Suresh Thavarajah	Ajith de Silva
<i>Sidespersons (It was suggested that the same sidespersons continue in the coming year)</i>	Amala Cumaraswamy	Suresh Thavarajah	Junita De Alwis
	Michael Tissera		
	Dorothy Phillips		
	Nalinie Wanigasekera		
	Barbara Wijesinghe		
	Mallika Dedigama		
	Dharshini De Silva		
	Susheela Gunaratnam		
	Pamela Silva		
	Bihani Welikala		

### **Any Other Business**

#### ▪ **Youth and Teenagers:**

Rhuani Rambukwelle brought up the matter of the decreasing numbers of youth and teenagers in the church. She said that it was the parish's responsibility to nurture them and that it was important for everyone to 'open our hearts to what God wants, not what we want'. Ajith de Silva endorsed this. Angela Seneviratne pointed out that it was very important that the parish intentionally prays about this matter. She also suggested that the parish could organize a youth camp. Thomas Ponniah noted that this was a good suggestion and asked the question of who would undertake such a project.

Anaath Jacob expressed a strong preference for a praise-and-worship style of service over a traditional service. Vimala Ganeshanathan responded by explaining why a traditional style of service was preferred by the older members of the congregation, and noted that what was required was a balance between the different preferences of the various age groups. Rev Balasundaram explained the liturgical/theological differences between the two forms of services. Thomas Ponniah suggested that the ideas for changes in the service be brought to the Parish Worship Committee.

Wijith DeChickera pointed out that the debate was not about which service was suitable or about picking one form of service as being the 'right' one. He stated that neither form is God-approved – it is merely a matter of personal preference. He encouraged those who were keen about fostering a vibrant worship ethos in the parish to bring their ideas to the Parish Worship Committee, as suggested by Thomas Ponniah. He also remarked that we need to remember that the church is not a club run by some for some, but a family – and it needs to be open to the ideas and suggestions of all its members.

Viranga Wickramaratne pointed out that a pressing concern is that many of the parents of the teenagers either do not attend church at all or are going to other churches. He noted that in the attempt to resolve this matter of the decrease in the number of teens and youth, we need to ask the question of where their parents are.

### **Vote of thanks**

Dilranjan Jacob thanked Fr Suresh for his service to the parish.

There being no further business, the meeting was brought to a close with a prayer.

**Rochelle Hakel-Ranasinghe**  
*Pro Tem Secretary*

**Rev Suresh Dias Bandaranaike**  
*Chairperson*

*Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2015*

**CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD THIMBIRIGASYAYA  
WARDENS REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2015/2016**

**1. WARDENS MEETINGS**

Twelve Meetings were held during the Year under review.

**2. SPECIAL EVENTS**

- a. **Lay officers Retreat:** Following the initiative taken after the last appointment of Lay officers in 2014, this year the newly appointed Lay officers of both congregations spent a day of Prayer and study of God's word in understanding the deeper meaning of parish leadership and serving God through parish responsibility. The retreat began with an Inductive Bible Study lead by Wijith DeChikera on the foundations of the unity of the church from Ephesians 2:11-22 which was followed by Observation, Interpretation and Application. Our focus was to be reminded that:
  - i. Faith to be at the core of the choices we make within the parish organisations and the parish as a whole
  - ii. Decision making to be 'God' centric and united

- b. The Vision and Mission for the Church of the Good Shepherd was formulated during the year.  
**Vision:** A growing family of Spirit-filled followers of Jesus Christ, inspiring all Sri Lankans to find their life-purpose in God.  
**Mission:** To reach out to all Sri Lankans for Jesus, confirm their faith in the Trinity ,and nurture them to achieve Christ-like maturity.

The five pillar frame work for all parish activities too was formulated for all church activities. The pillars being Service, Fellowship, Worship, Discipleship and Evangelism. It is a matter of concern that there are only a few activities the church engages in under Discipleship and Evangelism.

- c. Renovation of the Church was completed during the year and a Thanks Giving Service was held on the 5<sup>th</sup> of December 2015 to thank and praise God for the Successful completion of the Renovation.
- d. A Fund Raiser "Musical Fiesta' was organized by the Fund Raising Committee of the Building Project with the Support of Mrs. Indrani Wijesundara's Friends in Harmony. The Fund Raising Committee raised Rs.2,428,174/- from the Musical Fiesta and Building Project Card.
- e. Mission Trip to our Link Parish Christ Church Hambanthota on the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> of November 2015. Parishioners homes in Ambalanthota and Hambanthota were visited. Interactive fellowship between both parishioners took place on the evening of the 22<sup>nd</sup>. to spend time in fellowship.
- f. The annual Thanksgiving Service was held on the 25<sup>th</sup> of October 2016 in the Parish Hall. Service in the Parish Hall as renovations were being Carried out in the Church.
- g. The Carol Service and Annual Parish Dinner took place on the 13<sup>th</sup> of December 2015. Participation was encouraging this year too.

### 3. CHURCH SERVICES AND PARISH WORSHIP

The regular services include a 6.30am, 8am and 5.30pm service on Sundays and a mid-week service on Wednesday at 7.00am. We express our gratitude and appreciation to the following for participating in different ways, officiating or sharing the Word of God on numerous occasions at our various services.

- The bishop of Colombo, Ven Dhiloraj Canagasabey, Blessing of our Church building,
- Arch Deacon Rev. Perry Brohier, Pentecost Sunday and Parish Visit
- Bisop Jeson Selvarajah, Bishop of Malaka, Malaysia,
- Rev. G Arulanandam,
- Rev A Koilpillai,
- Rev A J Phillip,
- Rev. Jubilee Ponniah,
- Rev J Charles,
- Rev Desmond Gunasekara,
- Rev. Balasundaram,
- Rev. J N Jeyachandran,
- Rev. Joshua Ratnam, Healing Service
- Rev E Nadeeb,
- Bro Rajiv Alexandar,
- Dayamani Ashok,
- Rashmi Rajamoni,
- Wijith DeChickera,
- Deepika Dassanaiké,
- Viranga Wickramaratna,
- Rhuani Rambukwella,
- Anaath Jacob,
- Chianna Botheju,
- Dilranjan Jacob

The combined service on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday continues every month. Special mention to members of the congregations for the breakfast and food items readily made available to all during fellowship after the service.

**Lenten Devotions** – this was held every Friday evening during lent, in addition to the Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday services.

**Pentecost Sunday** – was held on 15<sup>th</sup> May as a combined service with our Arch Deacon and past vicar Rev Perry Brohier making his official parish visit.

**Healing Services** – two services were held during the year, one which was arranged by the Parish and Fr Joshua Ratnam invited to lead this service and the other led by the Bible Study group and Wijith DeChickera sharing the word.

**Youth, Teens and Sunday School Family Service** – the opportunity has been provided to this group to lead in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday services through music and the word. We are grateful for the commitment these young people are making and impacting the life of our parish

**1<sup>st</sup> Friday Prayers** –for the Parish, the church and the extension of Gods kingdom at 6pm. A few committed members do come and contribute through prayer for the future of the parish and church.

**Hearing Gods Voice** – has been a series of learning sessions made at the request of the evening worship team. This was held over a period of 2 months, every Friday evening in the Parish Hall. A tremendous experience of being able to actually listen to the Lord speaking to each member present was witnessed

#### 4. REPAIRS/REPLACEMENTS/ADDITIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS

- Church Renovation Project
- Redoing of the Parish hall pantry.
- Purchase of 3 cupboards for Vestry.
- Painting of pantry cupboards in the vicarage.
- Purchase of new organ

#### 5. DONATIONS IN CASH

##### a. Cash Donations Received during the financial year 2014 / 2015

	Rs.
Church Repairs	17,000.00
Audio Visual Fund	624,500.00
Samaritan Pledge	22,550.00
Building Fund	2,665,674.71
Out Reach Work	41,000.00
Diocesan Fund	6,100.00
Sunday School	30,000.00
Christian School Fund	25,000.00
Parish Hall Building Fund	2,005,000.00

##### Monthly Cash Donations made during the financial year 2014 / 2015

	Rs.
Christ Church Hambantota	84,000.00
Retired Clergy Cash Assistance	165,000.00
Archdeaconry of Colombo - Board of Social Responsibility	30,000.00
Bishop of Colombo	120,000.00
Ceylon School for the Deaf and Blind	180,000.00
The Colombo Home for the Mentally Handicapped	60,000.00
Dev Siri Sevana	105,242.00

#### 6. UPDATING OF PARISH RECORDS

We have 197 members on the Electoral roll of the Parish.

#### 7. NEW APPOINTMENTS

- a. Building Committee – Headed by Michael Tissera was appointed to complete the Church renovation project. Other members of the Committee were Ashan Algama, Nilani Seneviratne, Delani Jayasinghe, Suresh Thavarajah, Sri Kanth, Ajith De Silva and Anandage.
- b. Fund Raising Committee – Headed by Nalinin Wanigasekara was formed with the task of raising funds for the Church Renovation Project. Other members of the committee were

Nilani Seneviratne, Susheela Gunaratnam, Minal Jayasinghe, Simone Boteju, Mallika Dedigama and Princy John.

We thank and praise God for the work done by the two committees to bring about the successful completion of the Church Renovation project.

- c. Preparation of Parish Newsletter – Rachele Hankel assisted by Suesheela Gunaratnam in preparing roster for Scripture readers , Offertory Bearers and Intercessors.
- d. Bihani Welikala was appointed by wardens as Treasurer and Minal Ranatunga as Assistant Treasurer.
- e. Dorothy Phillips was appointed to Chief Sidesperson.

## **8. OUTREACH PROGRAMMES**

Parish has carried our out-reach work through its organizations and groups. Comprehensive information of the work carried out is in the reports of each organization. Few of the initiatives are listed below.

The caring and Sharing Ministry has adopted the Dev Siri Sevana Elders Home. Elders look forward to the monthly visit by the member of the parish. During which time the elders enjoy games, crafts and sing alongs. The retired clergy at the Cathedral premises continue to receive financial assistance towards medical expenses, and are very grateful for same. Distribution of hampers during Christmas to the community in Thimbirigasyaya too is a yearly project undertaken by the parish.

The Mother's union continues with the Weekly Medical Clinic to serve the community in Thimbirigasyaya. They have noted that the number of people who patronize has been growing Steadily. The Mother's Union also Donated 50 Mattresses to the Dev Siri Sevana Elders Home. They also assisted the St. John's Girls Home in Moratuwa.

The Sunday School Shared the Spirit of Christmas as has been done each year, this time with the children of the 'Hope' home in mount lavinia. The Sunday School also visited the Dev Siri Sevana Elders Home in May of Last year and this year.

Church of the Good Shepherd has Continues to make monthly financial contributions to Back to the Bible, The Ceylon School for the Deaf and Blind, The Colombo Home for the Mentally Handicapped, The Board of Social Responsibility, The Samaritan Pledge and the Feed My Sheep project in Hambanthota.

## **9. BAPTISMS, CONFIRMATIONS AND WEDDINGS**

There were Three Baptisms during the Year. No weddings took place in this church during year but four parishioners Suanne Latiff, Ashan Algama, Samidas Sylvester and Daphne Charles got married during the year.

## **10. DEATHS**

It is with deep regret that we record the Passing away of Mr. Karunairajah Gunaratnam, Mrs. Doreen Weerasinghe, Mr. Neville Daniel, Mrs. Ira Unambuwe and Mrs. Grace Moses. We also record with regret the passing away of Rev. Emmanuel Gnanaprgasam who served in this parish.

## **11. SPECIAL GENERAL MEETINGS**

3 SGM's were held during the year, the first to discuss the renovation of the Church building and the other to discuss and obtain consensus and approval for renovation of the Parish Hall.

## **12. PARISH MISSION CONSULTATION**

This was held on the 25<sup>th</sup> of November to bring all principle stake holders involved in the Mission of the Parish together for a time of *sharing, learning, listening, education and making or being made aware*. The time of Reflection was led by Wijith DeChickera

## **13. APPRECIATIONS**

We thank and Praise God for all who have participated in the life and growth of the Parish. There have been many who have come forward to take on appointments, responsibilities, support from the sidelines and those who have quietly contributed with their Tithes, Finances and Talents. We pray that the Lord would guide and direct the life of this Church as we enter into another year.

### **Church Building & Fund Raising Committee**

We place on record our Deep appreciation for the work of the Church Building Committee and the Fund Raising Committee of the Church Renovation Project. Without their devoted work the work could not have been completed on time. The building committee was led by Michael Tissera, Other members of the Committee were Ashan Algama, Nilani Seneviratne, Delani Jayasinghe, Suresh Thavarajah, Sri Kanth, Ajith De Silva and Anandage. The fund raising committee was led by Nalaini Wanigasekera and Other members of the committee were Nilani Seneviratne, Susheela Gunaratnam, Minal Ranatunge, Simone Boteju, Mallika Dedigama and Princy John. We thank and praise God for the commitment of these men and women of God.

### **Sunday School**

We thank and praise God for the Faithfulness and dedication of the teachers of the Sunday school and the teen mentors in teaching the word of God to Children. Thank you to the Sunday School Superintendent Dayamani Ashok and her team of teachers Delani Jayasinghe, Angela Seneviratne, Nuala Thevathason. We are heartened by the roles teen take up now in parish life and grateful to the Mentors of the teen ministry and a special thank you to Rochelle Hakel-Ranasinghe, Deepika Dassenaik, Viranga Wickremaratne, Dilranjan Jacob and Githa Algama.

Our sincere appreciation goes out to the Principal of the Vidyatillake Vidyalaya who allowed the use of the School premises for conducting the Sunday School until completion of the Church Renovation project.

### **Mother's Union**

Our gratitude goes out to you the Members of the Mother's Union ably led by your president Mallika Dedigama. We appreciate your hard work each 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in organizing and serving breakfast. For your sustained commitment in serving the community in Thimbirigasyaya through the free medical clinic every Tuesday. A Special Thank you to the all the doctors who have assisted and who continue to assist and all the volunteers who assist in running the Free Medical Clinic.

### **Elders Fellowship**

Thank you to Susheela Gunaratnam for the leadership she has provided for the elders fellowship and role she plays in preparing the rosters for the Parish News Letter.

### **Choir**

Our sincere appreciation goes out to the organists Githanjali Algama, Daphne Charles, Erine and Indrani Wijesundara and all members of the choir. Our appreciation to the choir Coordinator for her untiring efforts towards impactful singing in Church.

We also extend our thanks for the special events and programs the choir was involved in, the Carol Service which Daphne Charles took much effort in sourcing the music, train the members in helping bring out the story of the Birth of Christ through carols and the Good Friday and Easter program led by Githa Algama. Our thanks also go out to Mrs Indrani Wijesundara who accompanied the organ on all these programs.

A special Thank you to Indrani and her Friend's In Harmony for the inspiring music during the Thanks Giving Service & the LG Singers at the blessing of the completed Church Renovation project.

### **Bible Study**

We express our deep appreciation to Wijith De Chikera for the conducting the weekly Bible Studies. We thank God for Wijith's passion to teach students to study the scripture on their own and become teachers themselves.

### **Link Parish**

Thank you to the link parish coordinators, Ajit De Silva and Dilranjan Jacob for their continued commitment to nurture the relationship between the two parishes.

### **Caring and Sharing Ministry**

Our heartfelt gratitude to the coordinators of the Caring and Sharing Ministry Nalinie Wanigasekera, Nilani Seneviratne, Suresh Thavarajah, Shironmani Selvarajah, Princy John and Augustine Ratnam for all the work carried out on behalf of the parish by them. Nilani Seneviratne who was a coordinator of this ministry from its inception stepped down due to personal reasons. We place on record our appreciation for the work done by her as coordinator from its beginning.

### **Sides Persons Guild**

Our sincere gratitude to the Sides Persons Guild led by Dorothy and the team of Sides persons Amala, Dharshani, Mallika, Michael, Susheela, Jennifer, Shyama, Cindy, Ajit, Nalini, Barbara and Pam for Making worshipers feel welcome, assisting with the seating, guiding parishioners during communion, assisting with the collection and counting. Special thank you for the unobtrusive and pleasant manner in which the sides persons carry out their work

### **Floral Arrangements**

Our sincere appreciation to Susheela Gunaratnam, Junita De Alwis, Nuala Thevathason, Angela Seneviratne and Aruldas for their labor of love in the flower arrangements each Sunday.

### **Chalice Bearers**

Thank you to the Barbara Wijesinghe, Chamaine Perera, Kusum Wickramaratne, Deepika Dassanaikie, A Joseph, Nalinie Wanigasekera and Arul Dhas for their continued faithful assistance at the altar with the chalice.

### **Parish Newsletter**

Thank you to Rochelle, Susheela, Dorothy and Delani for the timely publication of the News-letter every month. Our sincere appreciation also goes out to all readers, intercessors and offertory bearers for their participation in Sunday Worship.

## **Parish Worship**

Thank you to all members of the Parish Worship Committee who have shared their ideas to make worship more meaningful. Thank you to all parishioners who have opened their homes for the monthly cottage prayer meetings. We also recognize the efforts of the 5.30pm evening worship team for bringing about a personal preference option to worship. This indeed is an important part of parish life.

## **Other Areas**

We record our deep gratitude to our former Treasurer Nilani Seneviratne for her commitment and hard work in handling finances during her tenure. We also place on record our appreciation for the work she did as coordinator of the parish newsletter and Caring and sharing ministry, and as a member of the Fund Raising Committee of the Church Renovation Project.

Our Sincere appreciation to Bihani for accepting the role of Hon. Treasurer of the Parish. We do appreciate the fact that she has taken on this role at a very young age despite work pressure.

Thank you to Arul Dhas and his family for their faithful service to the Church.

Our sincere appreciation goes out to all anonymous donors of cash and kind to the parish. We are grateful for the continued provision for the maintenance of the church garden by an anonymous Parishioner.

Thank you to all Parishioners who live overseas, but continue to support the parish in numerous ways.

Thank you to Fr. Balakrishanan and Fr. Balasundaram for their continued assistance in Church Services. Thank you to the members of the Tamil Congregation, the Tamil Youth Fellowship and Lay officers for their support and participation in parish activities, especially the visit to the link parish, carol service and caroling.

Thank you to the Diocesan Council Members Nalini Wanigasekera and Barbara Wijesinghe for representing our parish at the Diocesan Council Sessions last year, and reporting back to the parish on the work done at the council sessions.

Thank you to our Vicar Rev. Suresh Dias Bandaranaike, our gentle shepherd since 2014. We thank and praise God for his work and ministry in this Church. We are grateful for his pastoral work in visiting parishioners, especially the sick and home bound and parishioners going through difficult times.. We also thank Daphne for her participation and encouragement for all parish activities.

The secretary to the Board of Wardens has an important part to play in help coordinate all matters pertaining to the smooth running of the parish. This responsibility has numerous aspects and we are extremely grateful to Thomas Ponniah for the effort he makes calmly and with a smile to make our work easy.

Finally we place on record our gratitude to all parishioners for your talents, your advice, your guidance, your encouragement, engagement and most of all your prayers to enable us to truly work towards fulfilling the purpose of why we exist as a church.

Signed Board of Wardens: Dilranjan Jacob (Vicars Warden)  
Delani Jayasinghe  
Suresh Thavarajah  
Sunil De Alwis

## **REPORTS OF PARISH ORGANISATIONS – 2015/2016**

### **THE CARING AND SHARING MINISTRY**

“Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in Heaven” has indeed been the driving force in the Ministry of Caring and Sharing for the year under review.

The Caring and Sharing Ministry has worked hard at building strong and caring relationships with all people through ministry and acts of caring and sharing, to support and participate in social issues and human problems.

A brief review on the on-going Projects of the Caring and Sharing Ministry

1. **The Dev Siri Sevana Elders Home:** The Coordinators take this opportunity to thank all our Church Ministries for their active participation and support extended to this Elders Home. Monthly visits are made by these Ministries where they interact with the Elders by engaging them in games, craft mornings, sing a longs and time spent talking to them. During these visits dry rations are gifted to the Home. The much looked forward to Christmas Party was held in December, where this year, the Nativity Play was presented entirely by the Elders. The participants made an excellent presentation while the audience thoroughly enjoyed it! Games were played, gifts were distributed and refreshments served. The Aluth Avuruda was also celebrated with a party and the distribution of gifts. Elders are presented with gifts on their birthdays which make them feel much cared for. We take this opportunity to thank Michael Tissera, who continues to provide transport whenever requested.
2. **Ladies Cottage Meeting:** We wish to thank Simone Botegue, Delani Jayasinghe, Minal Ranatunga and Cindy Jacob for coordinating these Cottage Meetings , which continue to be held on the first Wednesday of the month from 10 am to 12 noon in a Parishioner’s home or out in the community. We have had a few guest speakers but there has been an increase in the number of our Ladies conducting the Bible study, which reflects our growing confidence in spreading the word of God
3. **Assistance to Retired Clergy:** The Retired Clergy living on the Cathedral premises has requested us to convey their thanks to our Parish for the continued assistance granted to them for their medical expenses. They are also gifted with food hampers at Christmas which they appreciate very much.
4. **Home Visits:** Visits are made to house- bound Parishioners by the Coordinators. We request those who would like to have us visit them to please contact the C & S Ministry or the Parish Priest as this would assist us to keep a track on who needs to be visited.
5. **Prayer Focus:** The Prayer Focus in the Monthly Parish News-letter was initiated by the Caring and Sharing Ministry and has continued to strengthen the prayer life of all Parishioners who include the prayer for the current month in their daily prayers.
6. **Supem Nivasa:** The Parish continues to support this Home, which is for Children with special needs. A donation of Rs. 5,000/- is made monthly, towards the cost of meals.

All the ground work was put in place to open a Children’s Library, to cater especially for the needy Children in the community. Unfortunately the Coordinator who was to operate the Library was unable to do so, due to personal reasons. We are still in the process of trying to find one or two volunteers to operate the Library on a weekly basis.

It was a loss to the Caring and Sharing Ministry when Nilani Seneviratne a Coordinator who was with the Ministry from its very beginning, resigned last year due to personal reasons. We extend a special Thank you to Nilani for her active participation and commitment to this Ministry.

I take this opportunity to thank the Coordinators for their commitment and support to spread the Love of God in our Parish as well as in the wider community.

On behalf of the Coordinators I wish to say "Thank you" to Fr. Suresh and Daphne for their encouragement, support and active participation in all the activities of the C & S Ministry. Thank you to our Board of Wardens for their support and cooperation in all our Projects

Finally we wish to thank our Church Family for their continued generosity and assistance, for caring and sharing within the Parish and in the wider community.

To conclude this Report I wish to share these words from Galatians 6:2 " Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

**Nalinie Wanigasekara**

**For and on behalf of the Coordinators of the Caring and Sharing Ministry**

**Suresh Thavarajah; Shironomani Selvarajah; Princy John and Augustine Ratnam**

## THE ELDERS FELLOWSHIP

We are a dedicated group of Elders and are young at heart. Most of us lead retired lives but we do help our families and the Church whenever possible.

✚ We continue to enjoy our bi-monthly meetings at which we worship and pray together, discuss subjects of mutual interest, play games, share our joys and sorrows and partake of simple refreshments.

Christmas was celebrated a morning of fun, games and carol singing, followed by a delicious lunch which was greatly appreciated by all.

Our Easter and Avurudhu celebration lunch was also an enjoyable occasion and was held at the home of one of our members.

This year our main outreach project was to visit St. Lukes Home for Elders at Nawala just before Christmas. Not only did we present the ladies with Christmas goodies. but we prayed, sang and chatted with them. It was a happy occasion for us to see the joy on the faces of the ladies in the Home.

As usual we also visited Dorothy Amarasinghe, one of our members who is housebound on her birthday and gave her a gift, prayed, sang and talked to her. Despite being elderly, some of our elders visit the sick and housebound whenever possible.

We are very sorry to record the death of our oldest member, Doreen Weerasinghe in November 2015 . May her soul rest in peace.

Even though we are an elderly group, we enjoy our time of fellowship and relaxation during our meetings.

We thank God for the love, wisdom and guidance and pray that He will bless us with Good health, joy and peace.

Susheela Gunaratnam

## MOTHERS' UNION -

At the AGM held on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2015, Mallika Dedigama was elected Branch Leader, Nilani Seneviratne as Deputy Branch Leader, Barbara Wijesinghe as Treasurer and Simone Botejue as Secretary. The committee consisted of Dharshani De Silva, Nalini Wanigasekera and Junita De Alwis. Subsequently after the resignation of Nilani Seneviratne, Dharshani De Silva was appointed Deputy Branch Leader and Sugandhi Daniel was appointed a member of the Committee.

The MU currently has 30 members. We were sorry to lose one of our longstanding members who passed away during the period under review. May the soul of Doreen rest in eternal peace.

Monthly meetings are held on the second Saturday of every month at 4.30 pm in the Parish Hall. The meetings commence with bible readings, a prayer, singing of hymns and songs of praises. The Aims and Objectives of the Mothers Union are read out and all meetings end with a post meeting activity and fellowship.

In keeping with the aims and objectives of the Mothers Union and the purpose of our mission, we strive to help families and children and the less fortunate so that they will be able to experience God's love and goodness through our work.

We conduct an on-going project and run a free medical clinic once a week for the benefit of the community in and around the church area. A doctor examines the patients weekly, all records of the patients are kept and required medicine is dispensed to them by members of the Mothers' Union who help at the clinic on a voluntary basis. This project is a great success and we take pleasure in noting that the number of patients who patronize the clinic and benefit thereby are growing steadily.

We contributed cash towards Fr. Godwyn Weerasuriya's grand-daughters operation which was carried out in the USA. We felt that since Fr. Godwyn has been an ex Vicar of our Parish, this was a worthy cause and we are thankful for the opportunity to have been able to contribute and rejoice in the healing and recovery of Shanella.

In keeping with our aim to support the elderly, we donated 50 mattress covers to the inmates of the Dev Siri Sevana Home in Welisara which was well received by them.

The St. John's Home in Moratuwa is a home run by the sisters of St. Margret's Convent. The home provides residence to orphaned, abused or neglected girls. We had earlier made a decision that helping this home should be an ongoing activity so that we can see the progress as well as build a relationship with these lonely girls who have gone through several challenges in life at a very young age. Also in keeping with our theme of helping families and children and with the idea of spreading some Christmas cheer among these children, we gifted them with school bags to be used in the new school term of 2016.

On Ash Wednesday, we cooked a meal in the parish hall for ten less fortunate ladies in and around the area presented each of them with material and a hamper that contained various dry rations, fruits, and other personal items for which they were very grateful.

We distributed two hampers at Christmas time to worthy recipients and in keeping with our continuous support for Church activities, we contributed towards the purchase of essential dry ration packs to be distributed to the less fortunate families in the neighborhood. Members of the MU got together and made palm crosses prior to Palm Sunday Service.

After each of our monthly meetings we usually have a post meeting activity followed by fellowship. It is unfortunate though that we have not been able to carry out these post meeting activities after every meeting sometimes due to the poor attendance. However, whenever possible we have re-arranged the activity to suit the number of participants and gone ahead with it. In keeping with the spiritual aspect and to encourage our members' faith, we invited Fr. Bala to talk to the membership after our first meeting. He enlightened us on the History of the Anglican Church and the symbol of the Triangle in the Anglican Church which depicts Scripture, Tradition and Reason which he said should be the base for us to do God's work on this earth. Apart

from this, we have had an activity based on questions from the bible somewhat depicting a bible quiz and during lent, our activity was based on 'Stations of the cross' and Lenten prayers. Due to the renovations to the church building and non-availability of the parish hall on most occasions we were unable to invite other guest speakers or invite the Tamil Congregation Mothers' Union for joint fellowship activities which we have been doing in the past.

We invited Mrs. Winitha De Silva to be the Speaker at our 8 a.m. worship service on Mothering Sunday and she shared Gods word with the congregation.

On a lighter note, we had a masquerade parade at the last meeting of the term where members were asked to come wearing a home-made mask which was judged by two impartial judges who were invited to the occasion on the creativity and originality of same. Members paraded while dancing to a 'papare' tune and the best dancers prize was also awarded. This was followed by a time of entertainment with some old time favourites played on the piano while the members sang along to the nostalgic tunes.

Our annual picnic took us to Randiya Hotel Korawella, Moratuwa where the members spent a very enjoyable day playing games, singing songs, enjoying fellowship and partaking of a tasty lunch and afternoon tea. Our Christmas lunch was very well organized and laid out with all the Christmas fare. Members sang carols and played games with a Christmas theme for which prizes were awarded to the winners. Each member was requested to bring a gift and drop it into a lucky dip at the entrance to the hall and walk away later by picking up a gift at random.

We held two jumble sales during the period, One in late November before Christmas where we made Rs. 103,800/- and the other in early April before Avurudu where we made Rs. 40,000/=. These sales enable us to raise funds to carry out our outreach projects for the year.

The MU organizes and serves the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday breakfast in collaboration with the Tamil Congregation Mothers' Union. We wish to thank all the members who continue to help out by contributing and making a dish when called upon to do so.

Apart from the above, we ran the Drinks Stall at the CCMU Annual Sale where we made Rs. 23,500/- on our sales which contributed towards CCMU funds. We also made a donation to the CCMU at Christmas time. The Branch Leader and some members attended all the important CCMU activities throughout the year.

In conclusion, our heartfelt thanks to Fr. Suresh and the Board of Wardens for their support and encouragement at all times. We also thank Arulldhas and family for providing assistance to the Mothers' Union whenever needed. We thank the Tamil Congregation Mothers' Union for their continued support in making our joint events a success. We extend a special note of appreciation to all our members for the help and assistance given during the year and their active participation in all MU activities and projects. Without each members support, we would not have been able to complete a successful year. We wish to thank our parishioners who never fail to respond to our various appeals.

We thank God for his goodness and guidance to us during the last year and we know that with God's grace, mercy and guidance, we can continue to touch many lives and bring glory unto HIM in the years ahead too.

Thank you

Mallika Dedigama  
Branch Leader

Simone Botejue  
Secretary

## THE CHOIR

### 8AM SERVICE

Our choir continues to sing regularly at the Sunday 8.00 a.m. service. We are able to spread our wings to reach the congregation in a more impactful manner when regular practices take place for services such as Christmas, Good Friday, Easter Sunday and other special days.

We have been encouraged by the congregation with the positives responses & valuable critique, and thank God for being gracious to us for providing the opportunity to use our gifts & talents for worship.

Our choir reached out to two housebound parishioners during Christmas last year spending time at 2 homes singing, praying & sharing God's message of encouragement. Our intention is to continue this programme twice an year at least.

We unconditionally accept any member who has a good voice who wishes to join the choir. We look forward to a continual growth of friendships and fellowship within the choir to help produce singers/musicians who encourage and nurture each other's gifts and talents.

ORGANIST/ CHOIR LEADER	CHOIR PARTICIPANTS – LADIES 2015/2016	CHOIR PARTICIPANTS - GENTS 2015/2016
GITHANJALI ALGAMA (ORGANIST – LEADER 2015/2016)	ANGELA SENEVIRATHNE	WIJITH DE CHIKERA
DAPHNEY CHARLES – (ORGANIST – LEADER 2015)	AMALA KUMARASWAMY	THOMAS PONNIAH
ERINE - 2015 (ORGANIST – 2015)	BHANU FERNANDO	DILRANJAN JACOB
INDRANI WIJESUNDERA (ORGANIST – 2016 & ACCOMPANIST)	DAYAMANI ASHOK DANIEL	VIRANGA WICKRAMARATHNE
BRITTO DANIEL (ORGANIST – 2016 COMBINED SERVICE)	MIARA ALGAMA	ASHAN ALGAMA
	DOROTHY PHILIPS	SUNIL DE ALWIS
	CINDY JACOB	DALLAS SINGH
	DELANI JAYASINGHE (CHOIR COORDINATOR)	

*We have few non-regular members in the list above who participate for special days of the Christian Calendar only.*

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS –

2015 Thanksgiving Service – LG Singers @ the completion of the church renovation project

2015 Christmas Carol Service – Leader – Daphne Charles

Accompanist – Indrani Wijesundera

2015/2016 Combine Services – Organists – Erine de Silva , Britto Daniel

2016 Good Friday & Easter Sunday Service – Leader – Githanjali Algama

Accompanist – Indrani Wijesundera ( Easter)

A special thank you to Erine de Silva for her valuable contribution as an organist in our church for several years. We wish her God's continued blessings and favour, since her relocation to Athul Kotte. We welcome Britto Daniel who has agreed to support us at the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday combined service.

We also thank Daphne Charles for her tireless commitment to train the choir in preparation of the Carol Service. She left us from Dec 2015, after being with us since Rev. Charles serviced as our parish priest. We wish her God's continued blessings in her future endeavors.

Viranga Wickramaratne has agreed to step on board and train the choir for 2016 Christmas Carol Service, with the hope of bringing in members from the teen ministry as well.

Finally a very special thank you to Githa for her support as an organist throughout the year and for the tireless preparation for a "sung Service" this Easter, which was a gracious come back after many years.

God bless,

Delani Jayasinghe  
Choir Coordinator

## LINK PARISH

Our link parish, Christ Church Hambanthota' has been our center of focus with continued support towards their parish mission and also is a source of receiving spiritual nourishment for us at CGST. We thank their vicar, Rev Mayurawathi who is very cordial and supportive, making our link parish a mutually benefitting experience.

### **Mission trip to Hambanthota**

21-22 November, 2015

Our Purpose when we make this annual trip is to be available as God's servants and be open to HIS calling and command. 22 members joined us on this mission trip. We continued on the work we had commenced on our last trip by visiting the parishioners in their respective homes, spend time and share in fellowship. We visited homes in the Ambalanthota and Hambanthota areas.

The communities we visited live in a world isolated from society due to poverty, adversity, negligence or their own shortcomings. Rev. Mayurawathi briefed us that our mere presence and time spent with them would bring happiness to their homes, and she was right. We were for the first time opened to the opportunity of witnessing to our fellow brothers and sisters, some of us witnessed for the very first time about how the Lord had affected our own personal lives and what mission we were involved in to reach out to the unreached.

After the mission that evening, we had a time of discussion and shared our thoughts and experiences and what lessons were learned.

The following day we attended the morning service, greeted by smiling faces of our friends who were happy to see us again.

This year something different also was experienced, the parishioners insisted that they provide us with all 3 meals, our Dinner, Breakfast and Lunch. It was an amazing witness to the manner in which members willingly came forward and took care of our needs. We were truly touched by this unexpected gesture.

Ajit De Silva  
Dilranjan Jacob  
*Link Parish Coordinators*

## SUNDAY SCHOOL

**We give all the praises, honor, and glory to our heavenly Father, Jesus Christ our Savior and the Holy Spirit who empowers us and blessed us for spiritual growth of this Sunday School. I also want to thank & praise God for the privilege to lead and serve the COGST Sunday School . It is with most gratitude that I present below the Annual Mission Report of our Sunday School for the year 2015/16.**

### ❖ CLASSES

Group	Number of Children	Approx. Age Group	Teachers/Mentors
Kindergarten	12	2½ – 5	Mrs. Dhayamani Ashok
Elementary	11	6 – 8	Mrs. Delani Jayasinghe
Primary	9	9 – 10	Mrs. Angela Seneviratne
Juniors	8	11 – 12	Ms. Nuala Thevathasan
Teen Ministry (from Oct 14)	12	13 - 18	1 <sup>st</sup> Sun - Ms. Rochelle Hackel Ranasinghe 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sun - Mrs. Deepika Dassanaikie 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sun - Mr. Viranga Wickremaratne 4 <sup>th</sup> Sun - Mr. Dilranjan Jacob Substitute : Mrs. Githa Algama
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>		<b>9 Teachers</b>
Relief Teachers = 04	Mrs. Varunica De Silva, Mrs. Michelle Ponniah, Ms. Radika Selvanayagam, Mrs Githa Algama		
Support & Admin = 01	Mrs. Sevanji Dedigama		

- ❖ **CLASS TIMES:** 1<sup>st</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays : 9.45 A.M. to 11.15 A.M.  
2<sup>nd</sup> Sundays : 10.00 A.M. to 10.30 A.M.

### TEACHING & SPIRITUAL AWARENESS

#### ❖ SYLLABUS FOR THE YEAR 2015 -16

- Trinity Term - 10<sup>th</sup> May to 2<sup>nd</sup> Aug '15 - GOD'S VINEYARD (Trees & plants in the bible)  
Michaelmas Term - 6<sup>th</sup> Sep to 13<sup>th</sup> Dec '15 - MISSION UNSTOPPABLE (based on book of Acts)  
Lent Term - 10<sup>th</sup> Jan to 3<sup>rd</sup> Apr '16 - THE LORD'S PRAYER

- ❖ **SS TEACHERS' RETREAT & CURRICULUM PREPARATION** - SS Teachers gathered on 27.10.2015, at Mrs. Delani Jayasinghe's residence in preparation of Curriculum for the Year 2016. The detailed curriculum was constructed prayerfully by the SS teachers.

- ❖ **SS TEACHERS' NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2016** - organized by the Church of Ceylon Board of Christian Education with the aim of empowering each Teacher to fulfill his/her role as a Shepherd in Christ followed by the vision of our Rt. Revd. Diloraj Canagasabey, to invest faith in the hearts of children while they are still young. The Seminar was held at the Cathedral of Living Savior for 3 days from 15<sup>th</sup> January. The workshop organized with a very comprehensive and educative programme. The sessions covered valid topics of teaching the children in the modern world. There were about 900 Teachers from Parishes all over the Island and the conference was concluded with a beautiful Service of Dedication for teachers which was held in the Cathedral on Sun 17<sup>th</sup> Jan.

- ❖ **BIBLE QUIZ – ON 14.05.2016** .This year, COGST had two 3-member teams participating in the Colombo Central Zone of the 52nd All Island Bible Quiz held at Methodist College, Colombo 3. Junior team - under 12 years - Sahana Emmanuel (Captain), Shevon Ponniah and Levonne Krith. Senior Team - under 16 years - Trevor Francke (Captain), Seanan Ponniah & Redhesh Praveeshan. COGST Senior team won the first and second rounds and entered the quarter finals. The Junior team (first timers) were beaten only by 2 points (10 against 8). Well done, teams! Ms Nuala Thevathasan and Mrs. Dhayamani Ashok were the trainers. It

was encouraging to spend time teaching as the children showed such enthusiasm in learning God's word despite the bad weather and obstacles. We sincerely thank Ms. Nuala Thevathasan, her initiative & her tireless effort in preparing COGST children for this programme. We thank the parents and our parish priest and members for their strong support and prayers. All praise & honour to our Good Shepherd who gives our kids many opportunities; may their commitment reap an abundant harvest.

#### DESCIPLESHIP

- ❖ **TEEN MINISTRY** - Preparing to become the disciples of the future.
  - Our Teens & Youth conduct the worship singing on every 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday for Family Services.
  - Young Anaath Jacob from the Teen Ministry preached in one of family services, which was inspiring and his first ever preaching experience.
  
- ❖ **FAMILY SERVICE** : Our Sunday Family Service is an opportunity for all our church SS children & families to come together to part take in worship as one family. Scheduled every 2<sup>nd</sup> Sundays of the month morning at 8.00
  
- ❖ **MOTHERING SUNDAY** was held on 6th March 2016 – Children presented beautiful T-shirts with their hand prints to their parents on Mothering Sunday Service. SS Teachers gifted flowers to all mothers and key tags to fathers.
  
- ❖ **TREE PLANTING** - 10.05.2015 the To mark the Trinity Term theme "God's Vineyards - His creation of plants & trees", Children planted seeds & grew vegetables in pots.
  
- ❖ **ART COMPETITION FOR CCMU CALENDAR 2016:**  
 The Church of Ceylon Mothers Union organized the art competition for the children of all Parish, for their Calendar 2016, which held on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2015 and three children Sahana Emmanuel, Levonne Krith and Anustina Emmanuel from our church SS participated in the competition under 7-11 years.
  
- ❖ **THANKS GIVING SERVICE** - 25.10.2015 - Children offered little notes on Thanks Giving day which they made in SS class describing for what they are thankful to God
  
- ❖ **CHRISTMAS NATIVITY PLAY** (by Kim Hackworth): "A New Home for Christmas", a story of the orphaned & abandoned children at the Christmas Eve. This was enacted by the SS children on 06.12.2015 and the Teens & Youth sang for the play. This was directed by Mrs. Romany Parakrama and we are ever grateful to her for her willingness and dedication towards God's ministry.
  
- ❖ **PALM SUNDAY** on 20.03.2016 & **EASTER SUNDAY** on 27.03.2016 - SS children participated in the service with their parents. They offered eggs on Easter Sunday.

#### OUTREACH MINISTRY

- ❖ **SS CHRISTMAS PARTY & PRIZE GIVING** held on 10.12.2015. SS children shared the spirit of Christmas blessings with the displaced Children (5 - 14 years) from Hope Home, Mt. Lavinia.
  
- ❖ **DEVSIRI ELDERS' HOME WELISARA** visit on 23.05.2015 & 29.05.2016 by the SS children along with some of the teachers & parents. Spent a delightful time of singing, dancing & playing games with the home inmates. .

#### FUN & FELLOWSHIP

- ❖ **CHRISTMAS PARTY OF DMC CLUSTER (COLOMBO)** - Christmas party for Colombo Cluster Church Sunday Schools was organized by the Diocese of Colombo Cluster on 05.12.2015 (3.30 - 5.00 pm) at the Church of St Paul's, Milagiriya. At this event, our SS children sung two worship songs which was a great

performance. DMC presented the gifts to all SS children which was very much appreciated. DMC thanked everyone for their participation and making this event a success. At the end of the programme, refreshments were served to everyone for which a few of our parents contributed food items & drinks.

- ❖ **TEENS' DAY OUT TO EXEL WORLD** on 21.12.2015. SS young group had an awesome fun and we thank Mr. Viranga Wickremeratne for organizing this outing and all parents who gave immense support and encouragement to make this day a memorable one for them.
- ❖ **PARENTS' DAY** was held on 03.04.2016. Our guest speaker was Mr Ruwan Fernando. Parents were briefed with SS curriculum & activities schedule for the year 2016 Lessons followed by fellowship & games.

I would like to acknowledge the passion and commitment of our SS Teachers & Teen Mentors who lead all SS activities respectively. Our Appreciation & thanks to Cindy & Anaath for dedicating in preparing the worship singing team on Family Services. Thanks to our substitute teachers for covering the classes during the absence of the class teacher; and thanks to Mrs. Sevanji Dedigama for her efficient service in the administration. Also we are most grateful to Mrs. Minal Ranatunga, Mrs. Simone Botejue, Mrs. Michelle Ponniah, Mrs. Ranjini Edwards & Mrs. Veronica Fernando for co-ordinating with our food arrangements for all events of the SS. We also thank all parents for contributing delicious food items & drinks to make every SS events a memorable one. Also we appreciate SS Teachers/Mentors and Teens who were committed to preach God's word on Family Sundays.

We wish to express our profound appreciation & thanks to Anil & Delani Jayasinghe for letting their home for five SS Teachers from our link parish Hambantota to stay for 2 nights during the National SS Teachers' conference and arranging all facilities for their stay.

We would like to thank the Parish Worship Committee & Parish Mission Consultation team for encouraging Sunday School affairs and for their follow up on our ministry which help us to learn, educate to serve efficiently & meaningfully to bring glory to God. Our appreciation to our church Board of Wardens who have given great support in developing SS. On behalf of SS, a special thanks to Mrs. Delani Jayasinghe, our Teacher & Warden for SS who liaises with Board of Wardens for the facilitation and smooth function of the SS.

On behalf of our Sunday School, I would like to thank Rev. Suresh Dias Bandaranaike, Fr. S Balasundaram and their family for their prayers & guidance in all our endeavors. We are also thankful to Dhass for his support on all our SS activities. Moreover, I thank God, for parents, youth volunteers and all our well wishers for their encouragement, prayers and support towards this wonderful ministry.

May the Lord richly bless and encourage you all as we seek to do the work that He has called us to through Christ Jesus our Lord. May your family be blessed with God's love and care. Above all, I thank God for all His blessings and mercies on this ministry and pray that His abounding mercies may continue in the years to come on all who are helping to build SS ministry.

**Dhayamani Ashok (Mrs.)**  
Sunday School Superintendent  
15.06.2016

## **YOUTH & TEEN FELLOWSHIP**

Most of our Youth have either left the country or busy with the responsibilities entrusted upon them by society and we have had difficulties in getting together the youth.

Thankfully, as time moves on, there is a younger group that grows into becoming youth and we have been able to add on a team of teenagers to join into this Fellowship which will now be termed as the Youth and Teen Fellowship.

Over the year, we had 2 programs to begin the process of getting the teams together, We obtained the help of the Church Of Ceylon Youth Movement (CCYM) to help us in sharing their resources to enable positive activity.

The main focus was to learn on the real meaning of the impact the young people have towards the church, the community and the entire land at large.

During the Carol Service, allocation was made for a member of the fellowship to read one of the lessons.

On January we celebrated Youth Sunday, Fr Balasundaram was able to share with all the importance of dedicating a Sunday for the youth of our church. There was a flag day to commemorate this event and collect funds for the diocesan work towards Youth.

We were invited to many events organized by other parishes in the neighborhood, including a Coffee morning with the Bishop of Colombo that was scheduled to be held in our Parish Hall. Unfortunately, participation from our side was not possible due to the difficulty of finding time.

As plans for the future, the CCYM has recommended that we formulate a committee within the fellowship so that responsibilities can be taken and the team can work towards something more substantial. This meeting is planned for the 18<sup>th</sup> of June, 2016 with the joining of a few CCYM members coming forward to help the group establish themselves.

Dilranjan Jacob, Youth Coordinator

## PARISH WITNESS & TESTIMONY

### BIBLE STUDY GROUP

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The Bible Study Group (BSG) of The Church of the Good Shepherd (CGST) is not a parish organisation. It is however a vital part of the parish family. A forum for students of scripture to meet and read God's Word together. Also the crucible in which the thought-life of our family's leaders is shaped by the Spirit. So this statement is not so much a report, as a witness and testimony to the person and work of The Word Himself – Jesus Christ: our Master, Saviour, Lord – in our midst.

#### Review

The curriculum of CGST BSG has been since 2009/10 intended not only to make the word of God come alive in our hearts ("to feel") and our minds ("to know"), but also suggest – sometimes, strongly recommend – applications for our lives ("to do") as disciples. With this in mind, we engaged with the following topics, themes, Bible books, study methods, and biblical activities.

APRIL-DECEMBER 2015 – *The Acts of The Apostles*: Also known as 'The Acts of The Holy Spirit', our nine-month "big study of the year" was pregnant with meaning for our parishioners and others who joined us. We had been thinking in previous studies what it would be like to be a biblical model of church. In #Acts we found answers that challenged our thinking and are still stimulating us to Spirit-driven action – and we are encouraged by some of the directions in which the LORD has led us to act or grow... e.g. in December 2015, we conducted a 'healing evening' as part of our witness to the healing power of the Risen Christ the Great Physician, to which several non-church members came... as we prayed over them, by God's grace many of our own as well as "outsiders" (who are the Church's true 'target audience'!) testified to being touched by the Comforter-God we now know... for the Father's healing for all nations was felt that day by us.

Other important learning we received from our study of #Acts are as follows:

- a. The Church is God's commissioned agency on earth to transform the 'nations' – all those in whose midst we dwell who don't know or acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord of all.
- b. People are more important in God's scheme of things to save the world than Policies.
- c. God has a Plan, a Project, a Programme – that has been in place since the cosmos was created; and through the Body of Christ (all believers, everywhere) He is reaching out to the rest of the world to grow His family from every segment of the fallen human race.
- d. Holy Spirit-driven church growth is a movement we are all called to be a part of.
- e. A five-pillar analysis of the witness and testimony of the Early Church as recorded in #Acts (see esp. 2:43-47; also many others) helps us to discover where we fit in to this Plan... and whether our Projects are properly in alignment with God's Programme:

<b>Worship:</b>	Prayer. Praise and thanksgiving. Regular liturgical services.
<b>Discipleship:</b>	Teaching. Spiritual formation. Study of the scriptures.
<b>Fellowship:</b>	Meeting regularly. Mutual encouragement to walk in faith.
<b>Evangelism/Mission:</b>	Outreach to share the good news with others on a personal basis.
<b>Service/Ministry:</b>	Outreach to care for and serve those here and as the need arises.

CGST BSG has many biblical activities lined up according to this teaching (e.g. culturally sensitive apologetics-oriented talks, per Acts 17, to draw in people from other faiths and philosophies to the Christian family). We sincerely hope that those presently not a part of systematic study in our parish will catch and match the *passion of God for mission*. The *vision* that was recently formulated by our church's leaders is a good starting-point for all church-family members to enter into the spirit (no pun intended) of the true purpose of the Church!

JANUARY 2016 – *God’s Mission in Jonah*: We had previously studied this insightful and fascinating little book – twice! – from ‘discipleship/obedience’ and ‘witness/evangelism’ angles. But even third time around, the forty tightly constructed verses over four chapters did not disappoint us in revealing God’s greater mission – to the people of God themselves as much as to ‘pagans’! Pity many opted not to attend – again – because they underestimated the inexhaustible riches of God’s word...

FEBRUARY-MARCH 2016 – *God’s Mission in Genesis*: Again, this was a book we had looked at before. Once more, a deeper reading of what we thought was a straightforward text gave us significant insights into how Christians can use the cultural accoutrements of the society they live in – through polemics, aetiologies, theophanies – to teach non-believers about the character of God and the nature of the world He created.

APRIL-MAY 2016 – *God’s Mission in Amos*: I taught this first in 2009... It has been on my heart for seven years! Now amidst a nation engulfed by tide and flood waters, as well as man-made disasters caused by building ammunition dumps in residential areas, the prophetic sermons of the preacher from the south of God’s own country are ever so relevant. More poetic especially as servants of the people seek self-indulgent luxury in exorbitant supplementary estimates while their flooded out electorates literally go to hell without a lifeline. Trust and hope that our little church on the hill will learn the lessons of self-sacrificial compassion for the poor, oppressed, marginalized peoples of our land... forgetting our pomp and glory, power, perks, and privileges. As an erstwhile Bishop of Colombo once said: “Live simply so that others may simply live...”

### **Ongoing Objectives**

CGST BSG is not designed to simply spoon-feed participants with messages for a day, but to teach them how to study the scriptures in a way that will sustain them for a lifetime. One other objective has been to train Bible students with potential to learn to become Bible teachers with a passion to lead in their own right. We are grateful to and gratified by the contribution and efforts to this end of Delani Jayasinghe, Dilranjan Jacob, Angela Seneviratne, Dhayamani Daniel, and Viranga and Upekha Wickremaratne – all of whom in the year under review led study sessions into the person and work of the Holy Spirit vis-à-vis the Early Church as seen in #Acts. We pray they would continue to commit to regular attendance and that many more of our Bible students will take up the mantle of breaking the bread of God’s words for the feeding of their family. CGST BSG is an adult-teaching ministry whose aims and goals come under the broad canvas of these spheres of engagement with ‘God’s Word for God’s World through God’s Workers’:

- VISION:  
“A growing local community of faith that increasingly reads, critically engages with, comes to know, understands, and applies biblical principles and values in such a meaningful and significant manner to be pleasing to God and profitable to the people of God and others around us”
- MISSION:  
“To collectively, systematically, and regularly meet; To read, study, and reflect on God’s word as an agent of salvation and sanctification; To use inductive Bible-study methods, and other tools and techniques as may be appropriate, to foster active and instrumental learning; To discover, discern, and determine to do God’s will as contained, seen, and realized in the Bible; To teach others in turn to become Christ-followers”
- PASSION:  
“Discover what the word of God says.”  
“Discern what the word of God means.”  
“Determine to do what the word of God teaches.”

In the rest of the year, we will dedicate ourselves to 2016’s “big word study” – the profound and deeply moving #Romans. In the year ahead (2016/2017), we hope that God would grow our church’s BSG in terms of numbers attending study regularly, as well as depth of fidelity to the word of God. We ask for your prayers and your presence in order to meet these objectives, as well your sacrificial participation so that our teachers can move out to other churches in Colombo and all over Sri Lanka to teach The Word. May all glory in our doings be to God alone!

**Wijith DeChickera**

*Lead-Teacher – CGST BSG*