

# PARISH NEWSLETTER



# DECEMBER 2024

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### *Our Vision*

**A growing family of Spirit-filled followers of Jesus Christ,  
inspiring all Sri Lankans to find their life-purpose in God.**

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### **WORSHIP SERVICES ENGLISH**

8:15 am Holy Eucharist with Sermon (Every 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 5th Sunday)  
5:30 pm Holy Eucharist with Sermon (Except 4th Sunday)

### **TAMIL**

9:45 am Holy Eucharist with Sermon (Every 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 5th Sunday)

### **ENGLISH and TAMIL (COMBINED SERVICE)**

8:15 am Holy Eucharist with Sermon (Every 4th Sunday)

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### *Our Mission*

**To reach out to all Sri Lankans for Jesus,  
confirm their faith in the Trinity,  
and nurture them to achieve Christ-like maturity.**

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## **FROM THE DESK OF REV NIHAL FERNANDO**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we enter the season of Advent, a time of anticipation and preparation, it is important for us to reflect on the profound meaning of this sacred period. Advent is more than just a countdown to Christmas; it is a time for us to prepare our hearts and minds to receive the greatest gift ever given—the birth of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

The word Advent comes from the Latin *adventus*, meaning "coming" or "arrival." It reminds us to look back with gratitude on Christ's first coming in Bethlehem, to look forward with hope to His second coming, and to live in the present with joyful expectation. Advent calls us to renew our faith, deepen our prayer life, and extend acts of love and kindness to others.

The Incarnation of Christ, the Word made flesh, lies at the heart of this holy season. God, in His infinite love, chose to enter our world in the most humble and vulnerable way—as a baby born in a manger. This act of love and humility reveals to us the true nature of God: a God who is not distant but deeply involved in our lives, sharing in our joys, struggles and sufferings.

The Incarnation is vital to us because it is through Jesus, fully God and fully human, that we are reconciled with God. His birth signifies the breaking of darkness with light, the beginning of a new covenant and the promise of salvation for all humanity. It assures us that God understands our human experience and walks with us in every moment of our lives.

During this season of goodwill, let us embrace the spirit of Advent by preparing our hearts for Christ's arrival. Let us take time to pray, reflect, and celebrate the love of God made visible in Jesus. Let us also share this love with others, especially those in need, so that the joy of Christ's birth may be known and felt by all.

May this Advent season be a time of renewal, hope and transformation for each of us. Together, let us welcome the birth of Christ with open hearts, rejoicing in the gift of Emmanuel—God with us.

With every blessing in Christ

***Fr. Nihal Fernando***

VICAR

### **Special Days in December 2024**

8<sup>th</sup> Bible Sunday

10<sup>th</sup> Human Rights Day

17<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> Advent 'O' Antiphons of Christ

25<sup>th</sup> Christmas Day – The Nativity of the Lord

26<sup>th</sup> Tsunami Disaster Remembrance Day, 2004

Vicar

**REV NIHAL FERNANDO** 0112 585 889; 077 7461196  
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Visiting Priest

**REV S BALASUNDARAM** 0712262030

Vicar's Warden

**MRS NILANI SENEVIRATNE**  
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People's Wardens

**MR GRAEME TISSERA**  
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**MR ANIL JAYASINGHE**

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Hony. Treasurer

**MRS TAMANI DIAS**  
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Secretary to the Board of  
Wardens

**MRS AMALA  
CUMARASWAMY**  
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Parish Coordinator and  
Assistant Treasurer

**MRS SIMONE BOTEJUE**  
[simonebotejue3@gmail.com](mailto:simonebotejue3@gmail.com)

0779368095

### Special Church Events in December 2024

Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday School Nativity Play
Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup>	Carol Service and Parish Dinner - 6 p.m.
Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday School Christmas Party
Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup>	Christmas Eve Midnight Service – 11.15 p.m.
Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup>	Christmas Day Service – 8.15 a.m.
Tuesday 31 <sup>st</sup>	New Year's Eve Midnight Service – 11.15 p.m.
Wednesday 1 <sup>st</sup> January	New Year Service – 8.15 a.m.

# PARISH ACTIVITIES

***A Time of Church-Family Fellowship: After the 8:15am service.*** A cup of tea is served in the Parish Hall, every Sunday. You may buy your own breakfast. Even if you aren't hungry for a meal, come and savour the taste of fellowship.



***A Listening Ear: 9:45 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.***

Some parishioners have volunteered their time to lend an ear and to pray with those who are facing challenges in life. While you may contact them to set up a mutually convenient time and place to talk/meet, they will also be available on Sundays in the Parish Hall (Meeting Room), from 9:45 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. Please contact Angela Seneviratne, Mobile 077 2516272 for more details.



***Sunday School: 10:15 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.***

Our children are taught God's Word and ways—in a fun, meaningful, and innovative manner—by a group of dedicated teachers. Their parents are, also, most welcome to worship with the rest of our church-family and become more involved in parish activities!



***Fellowship Evening: 7:00 p.m.***

A fellowship evening is held *every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after the 5:30 pm* worship service. All are welcome!



## WEDNESDAYS

***The Young At Heart Group: Commencing at 9:30 a.m.***

The Young At Heart Group meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of every month at 9.30 a.m. in the Parish Hall for fun filled activities and fellowship. All over 60's are welcome; bring along a friend (non-parishioner) to join in the fun too!!



## WEDNESDAYS

***Young Adults at 8:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. via Zoom***

Keep in touch with Viranga on 0773891951



## THURSDAYS

### ***Bible Studies***

Bible studies will be held every Thursday at 6:30 p.m. in the parish hall as well as via Zoom.

All are welcome and remember to bring a friend.

More details will be shared in the Church WhatsApp group.



## SATURDAYS

### ***Mothers' Union: Commencing at 10:00 a.m.***

Meetings of our very active Mothers' Union (MU) are held once a month—every 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday. Keep in touch with a member of the MU for updates on their plans and programs, and join them in their many projects!



## SATURDAYS

### ***Youth Ministry: Every Saturday 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m***

The youth (16+ years) of the parish meet regularly for worship, study, and a whole host of other fun-filled activities geared towards spiritual growth and maturity. We ask for your prayers as church leaders who guide and mentor these young people in our parish heed God's voice over this next generation of ours.

Keep in touch with Shakyna 0777158847 or Nikhil on 0721806971



**A Very Warm Welcome and a Heartfelt Greeting,  
in the Glorious Name of Jesus, to all our Visitors!**

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO JOIN OUR PARISH FAMILY, please fill in a *Family Card* and hand it over to any of our Parish Stewards on duty (look out for the 'PARISH STEWARD' badge), one of our Wardens (just ask for Nilani, Anil, Graeme or Angela), or our Vicar, the Rev. Nihal Fernando. Family Cards are available with our Sexton,  
Tony Curtis.

**SCRIPTURE READERS FOR DECEMBER 2024**

DATE	READING	SCRIPTURE PASSAGE	READER
DECEMBER 1 <sup>ST</sup> ADVENT SUNDAY	Psalm	Psalm 25: 1 - 10	
	OT Lesson	Jeremiah 33: 14 - 16	Amala Cumaraswamy
	NT Lesson	1 Thessalonians 3: 9 - 13	Nalinie Wanigasekera
	Gospel	Luke 21: 25 - 36	Githa Algama
DECEMBER 8 <sup>TH</sup> 2 <sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT	Psalm		
	OT Lesson	Malachi 3: 1 - 4	Delani Jayasinghe
	NT Lesson	Philippians 1: 3 - 11	Avanthi Seneviratne
	Gospel	Luke 3: 1 - 6	Shevaan Jayasinghe
DECEMBER 15 <sup>TH</sup> 3 <sup>RD</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT	Psalm		
	OT Lesson	Zephaniah 3: 14 - 20	Dhayamani Ashok
	NT Lesson	Philippians 4: 4 - 7	Chintha Fernando
	Gospel	Luke 3: 7 - 18	Simone Botejue
DECEMBER 22 <sup>ND</sup> 4 <sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT	Psalm		
	OT Lesson [T]	Micah 5: 2 - 5	Nalini Jeyaraj
	NT Lesson [S]	Hebrews 10: 5 - 10	Michelle Ponniah
	Gospel [E]	Luke 1: 39 - 45	Thomas Ponniah
DECEMBER 24 <sup>TH</sup> CHRISTMAS EVE	Psalm	Psalm 96	
	OT Lesson	Isaiah 9: 2 - 7	Lalith Dassenaik
	NT Lesson	Titus 2: 11 - 14	Minal Ranatunga
	Gospel	Luke 2: 1 - 14	Dyan Seneviratne
DECEMBER 25 <sup>TH</sup> CHRISTMAS DAY	Psalm	Psalm 98	
	OT Lesson	Isaiah 52: 7 - 10	Chanies Ratnayake
	NT Lesson	Titus 2: 11 - 14	Hemal Pieris
	Gospel	John 1: 1 - 14	Sunil De Alwis
DECEMBER 29 <sup>TH</sup> 1 <sup>ST</sup> SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS	Psalm	Psalm 148	
	OT Lesson	1 Samuel 2: 18 - 20, 26	Michael Tissera
	NT Lesson	Colossians 3: 12 - 17	Alan Chapman
	Gospel	Luke 2: 41 - 52	Amar Gunatilleke

DATE	READING	SCRIPTURE PASSAGE	READER
DECEMBER 31 <sup>ST</sup> NEW YEAR'S EVE	Psalm	Psalm 8	
	OT Lesson	Ecclesiastes 3: 1 - 13	Thomas Ponniah
	NT Lesson	Revelation 21: 1 - 6	Michael Tissera
	Gospel	Matthew 25: 31 - 46	Anil Jayasinghe
JANUARY 1 <sup>ST</sup> NEW YEAR 2025	Psalm	Psalm 90	
	OT Lesson	Deuteronomy 8: 1 - 20	Nalinie Wanigasekera
	NT Lesson	Revelation 21: 1 - 6	Varunika De Silva
	Gospel	Luke 12: 13 - 21	Shelley Tissera

#### INTERCESSORS & OFFERTORY BEARERS FOR DECEMBER 2024

DATE	INTERCESSOR	OFFERTORY BEARERS
DECEMBER 1 <sup>ST</sup>	Mahasiri Dias	Githa Algama Janaki Fernando
DECEMBER 8 <sup>TH</sup>	Anil Jayasinghe	Romayne Benedict Tatiana Armstrong
DECEMBER 15 <sup>TH</sup>	Angela Seneviratne	Nalinie Wanigasekera Nilani Seneviratne
DECEMBER 22 <sup>ND</sup>	Fleminia Srikanth [E] Manuja Jeyaraj [T]	Janet & Tabitha Curtis
DECEMBER 24 <sup>TH</sup> CHRISTMAS EVE	Deepika Dassenaik	Delani & Anil Jayasinghe
DECEMBER 25 <sup>TH</sup> CHRISTMAS DAY	Nalinie Wanigasekera	Upekha & Viranga Wickramaratne
DECEMBER 29 <sup>TH</sup>	Hemal Pieris	Angela Seneviratne Chintha Fernando
DECEMBER 31 <sup>ST</sup> NEW YEAR'S EVE	Delani Jayasinghe	Nilani & Dyan Seneviratne
JANUARY 1 <sup>ST</sup> NEW YEAR 2025	Graeme Tissera	Shelley & Greame Tissera

## WARDENS & SIDESPERSONS DUTY ROSTER FOR DECEMBER 2024

DATE	WARDEN	PARISH STEWARDS
1 <sup>ST</sup> SUNDAY DECEMBER 1 <sup>ST</sup>	Graeme Tissera (AM) Nilani Seneviratne (PM)	Amala Cumaraswamy (AM) Shelley Tissera (AM) Renuka Amarasekera (PM) Minal Ranatunga (PM)
2 <sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY DECEMBER 8 <sup>TH</sup>	Anil Jayasinghe (AM) Graeme Tissera (PM)	Delani Jayasinghe (AM) Michelle Ponniah (AM) Diruni Chanmugam (PM) Renuka Amarasekera (PM)
3 <sup>RD</sup> SUNDAY DECEMBER 15 <sup>TH</sup>	Nilani Seneviratne (AM) Anil Jayasinghe (PM)	Amala Cumaraswamy (AM) Aidan Tissera (AM) Debika Pathirana (PM) Minal Ranatunga (PM)
4 <sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY DECEMBER 22 <sup>ND</sup>	Angela Seneviratne (AM)	Dhayamani Ashok (AM) Lalith Dassenaik (AM)
CHRISTMAS EVE DECEMBER 24 <sup>TH</sup>	Anil Jayasinghe (PM)	Delani Jayasinghe (PM) Lalith Dassenaik (PM) Minal Ranatunga (PM)
CHRISTMAS DAY DECEMBER 25 <sup>TH</sup>	Graeme Tissera (AM)	Shelley Tissera (AM) Sunil De Alwis (AM)
5 <sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY DECEMBER 29 <sup>TH</sup>	Anil Jayasinghe (AM)	Dhayamani Ashok (AM) Michelle Ponniah (AM)
NEW YEAR'S EVE DECEMBER 31 <sup>ST</sup>	Nilani Seneviratne (PM)	Michelle Ponniah (PM) Delani Jayasinghe (PM)
NEW YEAR 2025 JANUARY 1 <sup>ST</sup>	Graeme Tissera (AM)	Aidan Tissera (AM) Sunil De Alwis (AM)

"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth"

**JOHN 1: 14**



**BIRTHDAYS & WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES – DECEMBER 2024**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Birthdays</b>	<b>Anniversaries</b>
<b>1</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Dec	Chandar Kantha Ashok	
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Dec	Ajith Hapugoda	
	3 <sup>rd</sup> Dec	Gehan Dedigama	
	4 <sup>th</sup> Dec		Romany and Nilane De Mel
	5 <sup>th</sup> Dec		Simone and Varuna Botejue
	6 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Anoushka Tissera Tivanka de Silva	
<b>2</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Donovan Sebastian	
	11 <sup>th</sup> Dec		Tania and Allen Direckze
<b>3</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Ranil Algama	
	21 <sup>st</sup> Dec	Nikiel Daniel	Charnies and Gishantha Ratnayake Shelley and Graeme Tissera Manique and Susantha Ratnayake
<b>4</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> Dec	Prashan de Silva	
	23 <sup>rd</sup> Dec	Surinder Kumar Ashok	
	26 <sup>th</sup> Dec		Dalrene and Suresh Thavarajah Manori and Chanaka Perera
	28 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Elizabeth Devikaranee Chinnakone	
	29 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Marjorie Joseph	Davyn & Karunya Mather

**Wishing you the gift of faith,  
the blessing of hope  
and the peace of His love  
at Christmas and always....**

## A Christmas Prayer

Loving Father,  
Help us remember the birth of Jesus,  
that we may share in the song of the angels,  
the gladness of the shepherds,  
and worship of the wise men.

Close the door of hate  
and open the door of love all over the world.  
Let kindness come with every gift  
and good desires with every greeting.  
Deliver us from evil by the blessing  
which Christ brings,  
and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.

Let the love that shaped earth and heaven  
    dwell within us this Christmas.  
Let the love that created humanity  
    dwell within us this Christmas.  
Let the love that overcomes suffering and hatred  
    dwell within us this Christmas.  
Let the love that causes us to rejoice with loved ones  
    dwell within us this Christmas.

Let the love that forgives and renews  
    dwell within us this Christmas.  
Let the love that brings reconciliation after separation  
    dwell within us this Christmas.  
Let the love that brings the blessing of peace  
    dwell within us this Christmas.  
And may we share that peace with all people near and far... Amen!!

