



St. Andrew's Church Newsletter



Eternal God, you make this holy night to shine with the radiance of Christ and to resound with the angels' song; Grant that we, who by faith behold your glory in the face of a child, may eternally rejoice in the vision of your heavenly splendor; through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and ever. Amen. .

DECEMBER
2015



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Alex Collinson

Letter from the presbyter

The King is Coming!

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness and put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which your Son Jesus Christ came to dwell with us in great humility; so that at the last day, when he is revealed in his glorious majesty as judge of the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and ever. Amen

Advent is a time when we celebrate the two comings of our Lord, one in great humility and the other in glory as judge of the living and the dead.

Jesus came once, born in that humble stable, living in that carpenter's home, going about preaching the good news of the kingdom of God, healing the lame, blind, the leprous, and teaching us to forgive one another, love one another, store our treasures in heaven, made a new covenant with his blood and died like a thief.

But the Bible says that he is going to come again, but not like the humble Saviour. He is going to come in the glory of the Father, with his angels and is going to judge us.

Jesus told us that these would be the signs of his coming again. Look at these of Jesus and compare it with the situation of the world today (*Mark 13*) There would be wars and rumours of war, nation would rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom. There would be earthquakes and famines in various places, a great persecution of the

Church. The gospel would be preached to all the nations. There would be a coming of lawlessness, a total breakdown in moral standards, the presence of the anti-Christ, a relentless pursuit of wealth, pleasure and a rejection of all restraints (*Rev 2:20, 17:5*)

The King is coming!

The collect for advent reads, *"give us grace to cast away the works of darkness and put on the armour of light"*. There is an urgent need to be in a spirit of expectation of his coming. We must be praying, and be in a spirit of warfare against the enemy. We must confess all our sins, receive his holiness and spend time with him in praise, adoration, thanksgiving and supplication for saints all over the world. The harvest is plentiful but the labourers are few. We must pray that God will send more and more labourers to the harvest. We must be obeying the Great Commission to go out of the church and make disciples of all nations. Since our treasure and home will be with Jesus, we must store all our riches with him. This means paying our tithes and offerings and being generous to all God's people. We are warned in this way.

Stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning, and be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from the wedding feast, so that they may open the door to him at once when he comes and knocks. (Luke 12:35,36).

Nita Das
(1.10.1934 -
28.11.2015)
of CNI
Wesleyan
Church
(formerly
known as Sud-



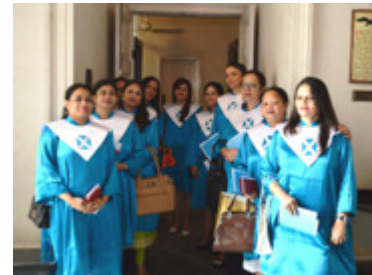
der Street Church) was an era and a great soldier for the Lord. She was an ardent fund-raiser for the Bible Society, looked after the YWCA, was the secretary of the Diocesan Women's Fellowship and was the secretary of the Mulvaney Home for old ladies. She warmly invited one and all to worship with her in the Sudder Street Church. She was a generous lady and always encouraged the youth to take up responsibilities in the church. She will be remembered for her warm smile and love for everyone of us.

The visit of Alex Collinson

Mr. Alex Collinson (*pic on p.2*) of London, U.K. visited our church looking for records of his ancestors. His great grand mother was baptized in our church in 1857. He expressed satisfaction that our records were well bound and kept. He works in the administration department of the Royal Albert Hall, Kensington. The presbyter also found that although he was a trained, accomplished musician he had not played the piano for 11 years. With cheering he played and produced the best music our church organ and piano every produced.

The 200th anniversary closing thanksgiving Holy Communion service of St. Andrew's Church

took place on 29.11.15. His Grace, the Rt Rev Ashoke Biswas, Bishop of Calcutta preached the sermon and celebrated the Lord's Supper. In his sermon, he stressed on the importance of the prayer and the power of the Holy Spirit. He preached from Acts 2:1-4. There was a person he said, who, on hearing a message by Rev P. Adhikari, on the Holy Spirit gave his life to the Lord and his family have ever been Christians for two generations. Our bishop also mentioned the importance of the verse, *"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest. Tame my yoke upon you and learn for me, ..."*(Matthew 11:28,29). We were also blessed to have the Rev Paritosh Canning, Vice-President of the Diocese and the Rev Swarup Bar who is in India on a break from his doctoral studies in Edinburgh. We render a big thanks to the Welland Gouldsmith School for decorating the church for the occasion, doing the background work and singing the Bicentenary special song.



Mr. George Sudeep Pande, organist and choir-master of St. Paul's Cathedral has come to Kolkata for his winter holidays. We have grabbed him to play for us for our Christmas eucharist service. Here he is pictured with our organist, Mrs. Beulah Caleb at the cathedral.

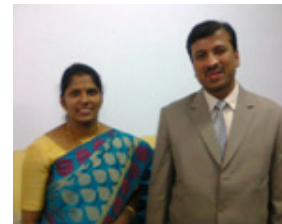
The Annual Canon Subir Biswas Memorial Lecture

was held in St. Paul's Cathedral on 17.11.15. The Rt Rev Ashoke Biswas, bishop of Calcutta inaugurated the address. In his welcome speech he told the 200 odd gathering that in its bicentenary year it is only fitting for the diocese to remember an exemplary priest, a prophetic vicar who took the risk of initiating the church to work for the poorest of the poor. The Rt Rev Michael Westall, former principal of Bishop's College and bishop of SW Tanganyika, Tanzania, then delivered the memorial discourse entitled "*the power of weakness*". In his hour long lecture he explored the relation of strength and weakness which he said lied close to the heart of Subir's life and ministry. Using a multitude of examples from the Old and New Testaments, church history, modern life and the life of Canon Subir Biswas, Bishop Westall drove home his point with these words from Father Subir, "*I was doing great things for the kingdom of God, for justice, for truth, for the church, for the poor. I had built a whole world around me which depended on me. And then came sudden illness and the cessation of all activity.*" He concluded, "*And in that state of weakness he rediscovered the power of God visible in the weakness of the crucified Christ*"



We thank the Rev Nigel Pope, vicar of St. Paul's Cathedral and the Cathedral Committee for organizing this great event, and for compiling a book containing the whole speech of Bishop Westall, along with messages from Bishop Ashoke Biswas, Rev Dr. Canon Kenyon Wright, late Rev Bilas Das, Anita Milne, Vimla Subaiya, Rev Sukhendu Biswas and others. Rev Dr Philip Peacock of Bishop's College chaired the meeting skillfully. And we went away glorifying God for his gift of Canon Subir Biswas to us and with the feeling that God's power is made perfect in weakness (2 Cor 12:9)

Mr. John Stephen was inducted as the Vice-Principal of the La Martiniere for Boys School on 7.12.15 by the Rev Paritosh Canning, Vice-President of the Diocese Calcutta. Born in 1971 in Tamil Nadu near Chennai, Mr. Stephen studied B.Sc. Chemistry after his school and his Masters in Chemistry from Loyola College, Chennai. He has taught in St. Xavier's School, Pakyong, Sikkim and in St. Paul's School, Darjeeling. He joins the La Martiniere with Mrs. Stephen and his two sons. We wish Mr. Stephen and his family a very happy stay in Kolkata and every blessing in his school career.



The Welland Gouldsmith Schools 145th Homes Birthday Service

took place on 22.11.15 in their Patuli school. A spotlessly clean, shining in newly painted yellow and gold school with smart staff welcomed us warmly on that beautiful morning. We were taken to the 5th floor to the Dr. Gillian Hart Auditorium where we had a service of thanksgiving. The speaker was Mr. Francis Gomes, President of the All India Association of Heads of Anglo Indian Schools and Principal of the Park English School. Mr. Gomes did full justice to the theme of "Gratitude", the theme of the thanksgiving service. He not only finished in 7 minutes but told us of the touching story of a whale which had been caught in the nets just offshore a town in Alaska. Divers and cutters went to the task of freeing the big mammal. When she was finally let loose what did she do? The whale circled around the divers and cutters twice before it left for the deep. Mr. M.J.Pook and Rev A.Simick represented our church and we ended with a sumptuous tea in the airy hall.



The 1965 Batch of the La Martinier for Boys School came together and celebrated their 50th reunion on 4.12.15 in the Round chapel. There was the laying on of the wreath to the founder, a song, prayers, a sermon given by Rev A. Simick, refreshments and a tour.

Songs of the Season 2016

This year was held at the Assembly of God Church from the 4-6 December. This time they did a play entitled, "*under a starry sky*". It was about a young mother whose world collapses when her husband loses his job just before Christmas. With two growing children and huge expenses, and utterly frustrated, she goes out in the streets and suddenly finds herself in Bethlehem when Jesus is being born. It is one of the shepherds who teaches her that when you have found Jesus in your heart, you do not care for your own needs. She bows before the Lord Jesus and finds a new world of love and joy. The show ended with everyone lighting a lamp and being a light of this world with the love of Jesus in our hearts. The best part was when Archbishop Thomas Desouza of the Archdiocese of Calcutta prays with the AG pastor and all of us with a lighted candle pictured above.



Indian churches cancel Christmas to help flood victims

Chennai: Catholic churches in southern India have abandoned their Christmas celebrations in order to help flood victims in Chennai. Churches in the state of Tamil Nadu will use the money they would have spent on Christmas to help victims of flooding instead. The worst flooding in more than 100 years is being put down to climate change.

Thousands have been left homeless and scores of people have been killed in India's fifth most populous city.

The Tablet has reported that the region has experienced the heaviest November rainfall for more than 20 years.

India's Environment Minister, Prakash Javadekar, said: "What is happening in Chennai is the result of what has happened for 150 years in the developed world, reported premier.org.uk.

"That is what has caused 0.8 degrees Celsius temperature rise. And therefore they must now take action more vigorously."

The Catholic church in India has now called for churches across the country to halt their Christmas planning and instead help with the relief effort.

Cardinal Basileos mar Cleemis, President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India said that: "The need of the hour calls us to express solidarity with the flood affected suffering families and communities and to contribute our might for their relief and rehabilitation."

Fr S J Antonysamy, vicar general of Madras Mylapore archdiocese told The Tablet that: "Many of our churches are also under[water].

"Normally, this is the time for carols. But this year, all our parishes are busy with relief work.

"The suffering of the people is immense."

Reported by mattersindia.com, 10.12.15



The Dr Graham's Homes Service of Thanksgiving was held on 20.12.15 in our church. This was attended by Gen John R. Mukherjee, President and Chairman of the Homes and the Homes

family along with the Old Boys and Girls. Rev Henry Simon, the chaplain of the Homes spoke on the great work of Dr. John Anderson Graham. Dr. John Abraham the new CEO read the intercession. Mrs. Abraham was also present. The children sang exceptionally well under Mr. Raja, the new music master. As usual we all went upstairs and enjoyed a lovely tea. But this year we missed Mrs. Joan Ann Augustine (wife of Eddie) who used to always be at the serving table.



The Closing Worship of the Bicentenary Celebrations of the Diocese of Calcutta

The Church of North India diocese of Calcutta, founded in 1814 celebrated two hundred years of God's faithfulness with a closing service of thanksgiving in St. Paul's Cathedral on Sunday 13th December, 2015 at 2p.m. The Most Rev David Chillingworth, Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church, brought the message. Present in the service were also the Most Rev Pradeep Kumar Samantaroy, Moderator, and Mr. Alwan Masih, General Secretary of the Church of North India, the Most Rev Thomas Desouza, Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Calcutta, the Most Rev Sisir Sarkar, the Moderator of the Church of Bangladesh. Even with everyone being frisked for security, the Cathedral Church was packed to capacity with the crowd overflowing to the side chapels, gallery by 1.30pm and latecomers had to go for the open-air seating. About six bishops from the CNI, members of churches, institutions, NGOs, Bishop's College, heads of institutions, visiting clergy of the Episcopal Diocese of St. Andrew, Dunkel and Dunblane in Scotland, Ms. Sushma Ramaswamy, CNI programme coordinator, were some of the participants at the worship. The Rt. Rev Ashoke Biswas presided over the service and Rev Nigel Pope, Presbyter of St. Paul's Cathedral proficiently conducted the service.

Following the service we were given boxes with refreshment and made our way to the south lawn. At the stroke of 4.30pm, the President of India, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, accompanied by the Governor, Shri Keshri Nath Tripathi arrived and were received and taken to the rostrum by our bishop and the CNI Moderator. In the hour long programme, there were speeches and special songs by St. James' School and the Diocesan English Choir accompanied by the Oxford Mission orchestra. Over 2000 people were present at the ceremony. Following this there were felicitations, more songs and giving of prizes to the Sunday School competition winners. At 7:15pm all of us went to the parish hall where we took part in a fellowship dinner of "Khichidi", a fitting finale to an unforgettable day. God had blessed the diocese of Calcutta exceeding abundantly more than we could ever ask or imagine (Ephesians 3:20).

