

St. Andrew's Church, Kolkata
Roster for June, 2017.

Sunday Services at 9:30 am

4/6/17. Pentecost: The gift of the Holy Spirit

Conductor & Preacher : The Revd. Dr. Sunil M. Caleb
Joel 2: 28- 32 : Ms. Devjani Samaradivakera
Acts 2: 1-11 : Mr. Rajan Joy

11/6/17. Trinity Sunday : God the Holy Trinity

Celebrant and Preacher : The Revd. Dr. Sunil M. Caleb
Romans 8: 11-17 : Ms. Louisa Jackson
Mark 1: 7- 13 : Mr. Ashok Pasricha

Deacons' Court and Kirk Session meetings after service

18/6/14. 2nd Sunday after Pentecost : Jesus tells us who are truly blessed,
happy

HOLY COMMUNION

Conductor & Preacher : The Rev. Dr. Swarup Bar
Isaiah 61: 1-9 : Mr. Charles J. Nyss
2 Corinthians. 6:3-10 : Mr. David John
Matthew 5: 1-12 : The Rev. Dr. Swarup Bar

25/6/17, 3rd Sunday after Pentecost. Our hearts must be kept free from anger
and hatred

Conductor and Preacher : The Rev. Dr. Swarup Bar
1 John 3:11-18 : La Martiniere for Boys
Matthew 5:17-26 : Mrs. Sonali Bar

Free Homeopathy Clinic every Wednesday from 12 noon to 2 pm



St. Andrew's Church
Newsletter

MAY 2017

Private Circulation Only

FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESBYTER-IN-CHARGE

Reformed and Presbyterian Doctrine and Polity

The present year, 2017 marks the 500th Anniversary of the Protestant Reformation: an event that tradition tells us begun on 31st October, 1517, when the German monk, Martin Luther posted his ninety-five theses on the door of the Castle Church, Wittenberg, Germany. This was an effort to expose the evil practices in the then Catholic Church. The Reformation had a profound effect not only on theology and the church but also on culture, science, business, politics, language and education. The Reformation of the 16th c. spread across Europe and gave rise to various protestant denominations. It is in this context of the recollection of the legacy of reformation, that we discuss few aspects of Reformed or Presbyterian Church doctrine and polity. This is relevant to us as St. Andrew's continues in the Presbyterian/ Reformed tradition in its worship and administration, even though it is under CNI from 1970 onwards.

Origin

Contemporary Presbyterianism originates from the Protestant Reformation, particularly in Calvin's Geneva. Presbyterian doctrine and order is found in John Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, one of his major works. Calvin was a French reformation theologian (contd. P. 3)



Martin Luther
(1483-1546)



John Calvin
(1509-1564)



Kolkata-Scottish Pioneering Relationships - *The Legacy of Rev. Krishna Mohan Banerjee(1813-1885)*

Krishna Mohan Banerjee was born in 1813 in Calcutta, Bengal. His parents were orthodox Brahmins. It was the period of Bengal cultural renaissance under the impact of Western education and Christian missions. Krishna Mohan initially came under the influence of the rationalist professor of Hindu College, Henry Derozio and joined the agnostics and atheists. Later, Krishna Mohan became acquainted with the Scottish missionary, Alexander Duff. Influenced by him, Krishna Mohan, along with others became diligent students of Duff's weekly classes, which led to his conversion and baptism in 1832. Later, writing on his conversion, Krishna Mohan discusses how the Trinitarian belief in Christianity along with a salvation centred in the atoning death of a Divine redeemer gradually made sense to him; rather than the Unitarianism of the Brahmo Samaj. Although he was baptised in the Presbyterian tradition by Alexander Duff, later he joined the Church of England. He was rather unhappy about the tension he observed as existing between the Anglican and the Presbyterian missionaries. But the fact of his friendship with Alexander Duff became of decisive importance for his baptism.

Krishna Mohan's Contributions: Krishna Mohan as a Christian minister and professor contributed to the cultural renaissance of Bengal. He was a member of Bethune Society formed in 1852 as a common forum for Indian-British friends for promotion of arts, sciences and women's rights. His services towards the Calcutta University was recognised by conferring on him the Doctorate degree in 1876. He became the first president of the Bengal Christian Association to develop autonomy of the Church from Western missions. In this decade he turned his attention from refutation of Hindu religion and philosophy to explorations into building Indian Christianity in continuity with the Hindu tradition. According to one biographer, Krishna Mohan indicates the beginnings of indigenous self propagation of Indian Christianity. Among his well-known works, *The Arian Witness*(1875) and *The Relation between Christianity and Hinduism* (1881) concerns establishing a positive relationship between Vedic religion and Christianity. He proposed that Christ is the true *Prajapati*, and suggested a parallel between the idea of sacrifice in Christianity and Vedic Hinduism. (Source: M.M.Thomas & P.T.Thomas, Towards an Indian Christian Theology)

in its second phase. He sought to continue the work begun by Luther and other reformers.

Doctrine

In the *Institutes*, the idea of God's sovereignty is the key to both the doctrine and order of the church. The Presbyterian Churches have adopted the Westminster Confession of Faith(1646) which consists of affirmations on Scripture, Trinity, Creation, Providence etc. The theology behind Presbyterianism is predominantly Calvinism. But scholars are of the view that much of what goes by Calvinism cannot be attributed to Calvin. Reformed theology, from which Presbyterianism draws from is distinguished by its emphasis on the centrality of God, salvation in its entirety as the work of God, our personal and corporate life as subjected to God, Christocentricity- a consistent focus on Christ as ground of our knowledge of God, pluriformity- encompassing diversity amidst an over-all consensus. Frequently, the mnemonic TULIP (Total depravity, Unconditional election, Limited atonement, Irresistible grace and Perseverance) is used to summarize what Reformed theology generally stands for. TULIP can be summarized in one sentence as: human beings are sinful and they can do nothing on their own to achieve salvation except by the grace of God, and God's choice or election. However, it is important to note that from 19th c onwards the Presbyterian churches has had a softening stance on predestination, mainly in its reprobation part.

Polity

Presbyterianism has sought to restore a biblical church order. The church government must conform to the Scriptural pattern. Jesus, the head of the Church rules his church directly by his word and Spirit. All office in the church exists by his appointment. Those chosen by the church are either ministers of the Word or elders. The elders participate in preaching, teaching and administration of sacraments. The normal pattern of government is a hierarchy of interrelated bodies: the Session (Kirk session), Presbytery and General Assembly. The office of the deacon is one of ministry rather than spiritual government. Most Presbyterian churches ordain both women and men as ministers and elders. (Source: A New Dictionary of Theology, 1983, 1998)



The New College Building, Edinburgh University, where the Church of Scotland General Assembly meets every year.