

ஆண்டவராகிய இயேசு கிறிஸ்து உயிர்த்தெழுந்தார் என்ற செய்தியும் சம்பவமும் நமது நம்பிக்கைக்கு முக்கியமானதும் நாம் ஆர்வத்தோடும் பிடித்துக் கொள்கின்ற ஒன்றாகும். கிறிஸ்து இயேசுவின் உயிர்த்தெழுதல் நமது வாழ்க்கையில் பெரிய மாற்றத்தை ஏற்படுத்துகிறது. ஏனென்றால் மனித குலத்தின் மரணத்திற்கு ஏதுவாகின்ற இரண்டு எதிரிகளை கிறிஸ்து தன் மரணம், அடக்கப்படுதல், பின் உயிர்த்தெழுதல் மூலமாக தோற்கடித்து வெற்றியடைந்தார். இதுவே நமது விசுவாச வாழ்க்கையில் ஒரு நீடித்த மாற்றத்தை கொண்டு வருகின்ற, நாம் பெற்றுக்கொண்ட, நாம் நம்பின நற்செய்தியாகும்.

இயேசுவானவர் தமது மரணத்தையும் பின் உயிர்த்தெழுதலையும் பலமுறை முன்னறிவித்தார். ஆனால் அவரை கேட்டவர்களுக்கு அவரது வார்த்தைகளின் ஈர்ப்பு சக்தியையும் உள்ளடக்கத்தையும் புரிந்து கொள்ள முடியவில்லை. பாவம், மரணம் என்ற சக்தியிலிருந்து மக்களை விடுவிப்பதே பரலோக பிதாவின் பணியாகும்.

பரிசுத்த யோவான் எழுதின சுவிசேஷம் அதிகாரம் 20 வசனங்கள் 1 முதல் 15 வரை நாம் பார்க்கும் போது - உயிர்த்தெழுந்த அன்று காலை, மகதலனே மரியாள் வாசைன திரவியங்களோடு அவரது கல்லறைக்கு சென்றாள். ஆனால் என்ன ஆச்சரியம், கல்லறை திறக்கப்பட்டிருந்தது. மூடியிருந்த பெரிய கல் அப்புறப்படப்பட்டிருந்தது. அவள் இருதயத்தில் பயமும் ஆச்சரியமும் நிறைந்தது. எது சாத்தியமாகாது என்று அவள் நினைத்தாளோ, அது அவள் கண்முன் சாத்தியமாயிற்று. அவள் இயேசுவை தேடிக்கொண்டிருந்தாள். அவள் போய் அவரை எடுத்துக்கொள்ள எண்ணினாள் (யோவான் 20: 15). அவள் தனது உயர்ந்த நம்பிக்கையையும் பக்தியையும் அவர் மேல் வைத்திருந்தாள். ஆனால் இப்போதோ அவளுடைய கேள்வி என்னவென்றால் - இப்போது அவர் எங்கே?

அதிகாலையில் அவள் இயேசுவை தோட்டத்திலே கண்டு, அவரை தோட்டக்காரனென்று எண்ணினாள். மகதலனே மரியாளின் மனதை அறிந்து கொண்ட இயேசு, அவளிடம் தன்னை வெளிப்படுத்தினார். அவர் அவளை பேர் சொல்லி அழைத்தார். இயேசுவானவர் மகதலனே மரியாள் என்ற ஒருவரிடம் காட்டிய அக்கறையை இது காட்டுகிறது. அவள் இயேசுவின் சத்தத்தைக் கேட்டதும் அவரை அடையாளம் கண்டு கொண்டாள். அவள் அடைந்த மகிழ்ச்சிக்கு எல்லையே இல்லை. அவள் துக்கம் சந்தோஷமாய் மாறியது. எதிர்பாராத நிலையில் உயிர்த்தெழுந்த இயேசுவை சந்தித்தது அவளை உயிர்த்தெழுதலின் நற்செய்தியை அறிவிக்கும் முதல் தூதுவராக உருமாற்றம் செய்தது.

இயேசுவுக்கு நமது இருதயத்தின் வாஞ்சை தெரியும். அவர் நமக்காகவும் நமது குடும்பங்களுக்காகவும் அக்கறை காட்டுகிறார். அவருக்கு நமது வாழ்வின் கடுமையான சூழல்களும், வலியும் வேதனையும் தெரியும். நமது ஆண்டவர் உயிரோடிருக்கிறார் என்பதே நமது நம்பிக்கை. அவர் நாம் ஒவ்வொருவரையும் பெயர் பேராக ஞாபகம் வைத்திருக்கிறார். நமது இக்கட்டான நிலமையில் நம்முடன் இருக்க அவர் விரும்புகிறார். நாம் எவ்வளவு சுமைகளை சுமக்கிறோம் என்பது அவருக்கு தெரியும். நம்மையும் நமது சூழ்நிலைகளையும் அவர் புரிந்து கொள்கிறார். நமது வாழ்வில் சாத்தியமாகாது என்று தோன்றுகிறவை அவரால் மட்டுமே சாத்தியமாகிறது.

நம் வாழ்வின் கற்களை புரட்டி எறிய இன்னமும் அவரால் முடியும். உயிர்த்தெழுந்த ஆண்டவரில் விசுவாசிக்கிற யாவருக்கும் அவர் ஆசீர்வாதமான நம்பிக்கையை அளிக்கிறார். அவர் இருளை மாற்றி பிரகாசமான, மகிமையான வாழ்வை வைத்திருக்கிறார். ஏனென்றால் அவர் உயிருடன் நம்மோடிருக்கிறார். அவரே வாழ்வின் அனைத்து பகுதிகளிலும் மாற்றத்தை உண்டாக்குபவர்.

ஈஸ்டரை கொண்டாடும் இத்தருணத்தில், உயிர்த்தெழுந்த வல்லமையும் உயிர்த்தெழுந்த ஆண்டவருடைய பிரசன்னமும் நம் வாழ்வின் ஒவ்வொரு அடியிலும் நம்மை பலப்படுத்தி வழிநடத்துவதாக. இந்த ஜீவனுள்ள ஆண்டவருக்கு ஊழியம் செய்வதும் இந்த நற்செய்தியை உலகிற்கு பிரகடனம் செய்பவராக இருப்பதும் எவ்வளவு இன்பமானது!

“அவர் மரித்தவர் அல்ல! அவர் உயிரோடிருக்கிறார்! அல்லேலுயா!.....”

Bethel Fellowship

The name Bethel comes from the Hebrew word - Beth, meaning house, and el, meaning God. Bethel means House of God. It was here that Jacob built an altar and called the place, El Bethel. It was there that God had revealed Himself to him when he was fleeing from his brother, Esau - Genesis 35:7. It was an assurance to Jacob that God is present right there in the midst of his trouble, problem and imminent danger.

Aptly given to this fellowship, Bethel Fellowship, is a monthly gathering at the homes of our members who are in need of prayer. There is a special strength in group prayer that we can claim boldly. It is found in Mt 18:20, “For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them”. God has a special love for His people who pray together. He honours them and is present right there in their midst!

Held on the fourth week Saturday of every month, if you or your household need prayer, the pastor and some members of this Fellowship would visit you. It would be a time of singing, exhortation of the Word and closing with a prayer. To make it easy for you, a Fellowship Chart has been placed on notice board. Prayerfully choose a month that you would like the team to visit you and write your name down. If you want to, you can invite Church members, friends or your neighbours.

May God help us even as we have this fellowship at our homes to show His love and to be His witnesses wherever we live.

Article by: Juno Ravindran

Exciting Year Ahead

2013 is going to be an exciting year as we embark on a journey of faith with God. We have seen many challenges in the past few years and we have decided to take some bold steps and inject God's ideas this year. The first bold step was to move away from the usual planning done in the month of Nov in the midst of year end activity to the following year, Jan. This gave the ministry leaders more time to reflect and plan for the new year. In addition to that, a retreat was held for leaders to take a re-look at all the programmes that are the usual order in the Church. Challenged by the message during the retreat, it came very clearly to the leaders, that for a Church to prevail it requires (Mt 16:13-20):

- A people who remember the mission.
- The leaders discern the presence and call of Christ and follow radically. This requires choosing God's ideas from many good ideas.
- A people who choose to trust God for power and growth.

This would mean that it is no longer more of the same but clearly seeking God and asking for His guidance in every step of our way.

Vision

The Church Vision is: Worship - Word - Witness @ TMC or WWW @ TMC for short.

Mission

A community of people exists to Worship God; live His Word and Make His Glory known.

As a community, it is our desire to give Him our utmost through worship in spirit and truth. A true worship can only be accorded with good understanding of the one to whom it is accorded. Studying God's word reveals about God and His plans for us as individuals and as a Church. It is the essence of our Christian growth. As each of us live by the word, we become the light that shines brightly and make His glory known to others. Indeed, through our lives, many others come to know God.

New Initiatives

There are many new initiatives that have been put forth for this year. This is a result of complete review of the programmes that we are currently having. They will be announced in the bulletin in due time.

How You Can Participate

There are 3 important things that you can do.

- Pray for the Church and all the ministries. Seek God's guidance as to where He leads you to serve.
- Study the word of God in small groups as it is said, “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path”, Ps 119:105. Nothing can guide us like His word!
- Extend the hand of God to a friend who needs Him. Nothing can be more fulfilling than leading someone to Christ!

Article by: Devaraj Daniel

Lease Renewal Committee

A Lease Renewal Committee (LRC) was formed in May 2012 to study and recommend measures to be taken with the view to renew the lease of the Church which will expire in the year 2038. The committee comprised of Mr DA Gunaseelan, the Chairman and 4 members: Mr Richard Jeremiah, Mr Dhanaraj, Mr Edwin Ramakrishnan and Mr Melvin Dineshraj.

Brief History of Our Church Building

A building fund was launched in the year 1915. It took 11 years to see the completion of the very first Church building in the year 1926. The cost was \$20,000 and its address was **No. 1 Short Street**. It occupied half of the present site.

In the year 1984, the state land between our Church and the Presbyterian Church was leased to us by the Commissioner of Lands to tie-in with the first lease which will expire in the year 2038. By then, its address was **No. 14 Short Street**.

The present 4-storey building was completed in Mar 1989 at a cost of \$2.2M. It is now 24 years old and its current address is **No. 8 Short Street**.

Important Findings By LRC

In making an early engagement with relevant authorities, the committee made important findings.

- After speaking to SLA (Singapore Land Authority), it was found that the Government's policy in general, is to **allow leases to expire without extension**. In land scarce Singapore, the Government need to recover the land upon lease expiry to re-allocate it to meet fast changing socio-economic needs.
- The Government would **consider extension of State leases on a case-by-case basis** where they are in line with planning intention and help to further specific economic and social objectives.
- Further discussion with URA (Urban Redevelopment Authority), revealed that the current master plan for usage of this land, indicates "Place of Worship". However, as this being the prime land, it is not guaranteed that this land would remain the same in the year 2038. It depends upon a **new master plan that will be released in the year 2030**.

Here's What You Can Do

- Pray for the Committee as they work out recommendations based on these findings.
- Pray that God will set aside this land for His use in the new master plan.
- As Abraham walked the length and the breadth, let us walk around the surrounding areas and claim it for His Purpose as well (Gen 13:17).

Article by: DA Gunaseelan

Preparing the Next Generation: Sharing the Joy of An Answered Prayer

The children's ministry has seen a gradual growth in the past years. Currently the Sunday School has an enrolment of 40 students grouped in 5 classes by age group. We have a team of dedicated and committed teachers and helpers who have been working very hard to reach out to these young ones. You would have seen the little children presenting beautiful songs during Special Worship Services and the teenagers leading singspiration on 4th Sundays. This is an evidence of the fruit of the labour of our dedicated and talented teachers. Moreover, the children are trained rigorously to recite the memory verses on every Sunday.

For many years now the children have been using the social hall for the Sunday School. By God's grace, the Sunday School is now planning to move up to fourth level hall that has been vacated by SCGM.

The LCEC has been working very hard for the past three months to re-organise this hall. After consulting with interior designers and contractors, the cost was estimated to \$60,000. We placed the proposal before God and sent an appeal to the congregation for donations.

We have received immediate responses from many of you! We want to praise God for answering our prayers through your generous donations. This is indeed a great encouragement to all of us, especially to the children in Sunday School! This experience of Jehovah Jireh, God's provision, will be remembered by the children. Thank you for your partnership in this ministry. Your donations towards this cause is making way to build a vibrant Sunday School ministry helping our children grow in Christian faith with a Church that loves and cares for them.

Article by: Shireen Pandian



KOINONIA Tamil Methodist Church

8 Short Street, Singapore 188214

Tel: 63366148

Email: tmc1887@singnet.com.sg

Website: www.tamilmethodist.sg

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The Joy Of Resurrection

The event and the message of resurrection of Lord Jesus Christ are cardinal to our faith that we earnestly cling on to. Resurrection of Lord Jesus Christ makes the difference in our lives. The reason is two deadly enemies of humanity sin and death are conquered and defeated by Christ, death, burial and resurrection. This is the gospel message we all received, believed, profess and which brings about a lasting difference in our faith life.

Jesus predicted his death and resurrection many a time. But His hearers could not comprehend the gravity of his words. However Jesus was on a mission. Mission of his heavenly father to redeem people from the power of sin and death.

In John's gospel chapter 20 verses 1 to 18 we see - On the day of resurrection Mary Magdalene went to the tomb to apply spices to Jesus body, to her surprise the tomb was opened. The big stone was rolled away. Thoughts of fear and wonder filled her heart. What she thought to be impossible became possible in front of her life. She was looking for Jesus. She was in tears. She wants to go and get the Lord (John 20:15). She placed her utmost faith and devotion on Him. But she had a pressing question- where is He now?

In the garden early in the morning, she saw Jesus but mistook Him to be a gardener. Jesus knew the heart of Mary Magdalene and He revealed himself to her. He called her by her name. This shows that Jesus cared for one person, Mary Magdalene. When she heard Jesus' voice, she recognized Him and her joy knew no bounds. Her sadness turned into joy. The encounter with the resurrected Lord transformed her to be the first messenger of the good news of resurrection.

Jesus knows our heart's desire. He cares for us and our families. He knows our tough situations, pain and agony in life. The confidence we have is our Lord is alive. He remembers us by our name. He loves to be with us during our predicaments. He knows how much burden we can carry and He understands us and our situations. Things which appear to be impossible in our lives are possible to Him alone.

"He can still roll the stones away in our lives". The resurrected Lord grants blessed hope to all those who believe in Him. What a joy! He turns the darkness and gloom away and assures a bright and glorious life ahead, because He is alive and with us. It is Him who makes a difference in all areas of our life.

As we celebrate Easter may the power of resurrection and the presence of the resurrected Lord continue to strengthen and lead us each step of the way all along the way. What a joy it is to serve the living God and herald this good news to the world.

"He is not dead! He is alive! Halleluiah!....."

Your Pastors in Christ,
Rev James Nagulan
Rev Anil Kumar Samuel
Rev Babu Immanuel