

the Saint
Andrew



The Kirk Session of St. Andrew's with Interim Moderator Revd Jim Sharp

Church of Scotland – Presbyterian

For private circulation only

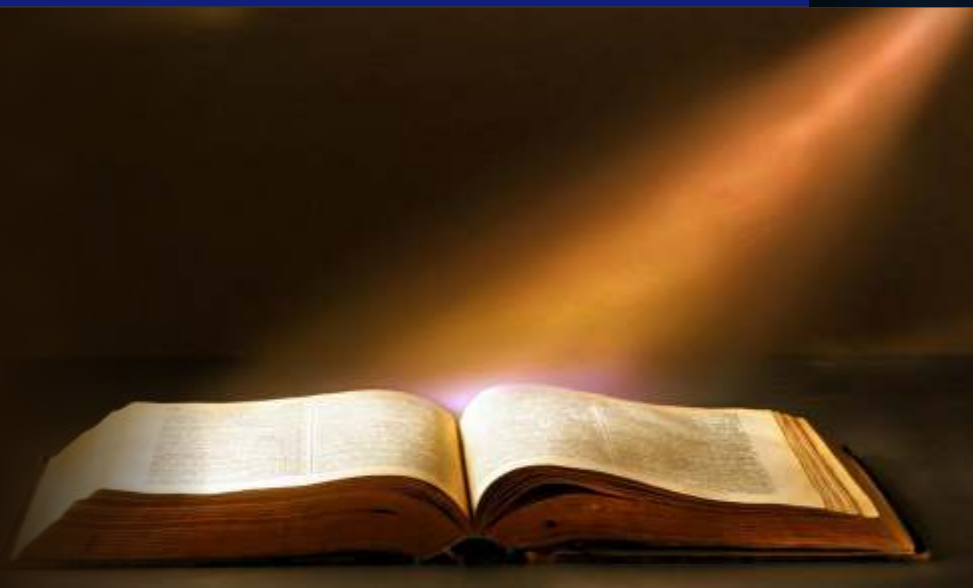
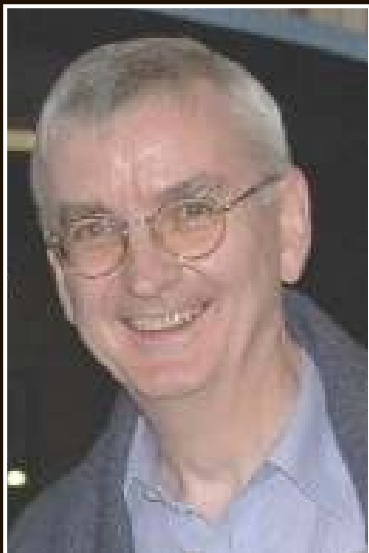


Contents



Minister's Letter _____	02
Local Church Review _____	03
Through the Lens - Looking back at Holy Week _____	06
Music at St. Andrew's _____	08
Say Hello to our Confirmed Young Adults _____	10
Meet Our Congregation – Major Andrew Moreland _____	12
A Church on our Travels – Glasgow Cathedral _____	13
St. Andrew's in Chennai turns 200 _____	16
The Story of the Hymn – Here I am, Lord _____	17
What is Whitsun? _____	18
Netherlee News _____	19
Upcoming Services at St Andrew's Scots Kirk _____	20





Dear friends at St Andrew's Scots Kirk,

As I write this, I am attending the annual General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, which brings together some 750 Minister and Elders from all across the Church of Scotland - in Scotland, in England and in what we call the "International Presbytery" including you in St Andrew's Scots Kirk in Colombo, for a week of deliberation which sets the policy of the Church of Scotland. As a Presbyterian Church, we have no hierarchical system such as one involving Bishops; all decisions, whether at local (Kirk Session) or regional (Presbytery) or national (the General Assembly), are made by a collective of Ministers and Elders.

I retain fond and positive memories of my two weeks with you in the lead-up to Easter - and especially of our service on Easter Sunday during which I was privileged to baptise a baby, Aleena Raaya Gooneratne, and a young adult, Buwanika Weerasinha, to confirm into membership of the Church Buwanika and two other young people, Sarah Shivaji Arunakumar and Jaitra De Saram, to celebrate Holy Communion and - of course - to celebrate Easter Day. A wonderful celebration indeed, with some 130 people in the congregation!

In June, St Andrew's Scots Kirk received the visit of three other members of the International Presbytery of the Church of Scotland. Revd Jimmy Brown from Bochum in Germany (who was with me when I visited you in September 2017) returned, accompanied this time by Revd Lance Stone, Minister in Amsterdam and Dr Mary Couper, an Elder in the Geneva congregation. They came to Colombo to conduct a "local church review", which the International Presbytery undertakes every 5 or 6 years as a means of encouraging the mission and

discipleship of all our congregations. I know you made them feel welcome, as you did me when I was with you in March and I thank all of you for that.

The Kirk Session, under the guidance of Chandan de Silva as Session Clerk, continues to give tremendous leadership to St Andrew's Scots Kirk, especially during this time of vacancy. It is a great pleasure for me, as your Interim Moderator, to work closely with Chandan and the other Elders - to all of whom I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation.

We are also greatly privileged to have the services of a devoted group of local clergy people who diligently lead worship at St Andrew's Scots Kirk during this period of vacancy. I extend my sincere thanks to all of them, and ask God's blessings on them.

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to Denham Pereira, our Organist and Director of Music, who has decided to seek out new paths for his future away from St Andrew's Scots Kirk. We are immensely grateful to Denham for his service to St Andrew's Scots Kirk over many years, and wish him all God's blessings wherever He may lead him in the future.

I also wish all God's blessings on all of you as we progress in fulfilling His Great Commandment to all of us:

"A new command I give you: Love one another. 'As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.'" (John 13:34-35)

Your Interim Moderator,
Revd Jim Sharp



June 8th – June 10th 2018

St Andrew's Scots Kirk had a very busy weekend of meetings and visits to our Mission Projects with the team from the Church of Scotland, International Presbytery. Our friends came from three different cities in Europe to learn all about Scots Kirk and to meet with the congregation.

Elders with specific responsibilities discussed the Financial Management of the Church and our plans for the future, safeguarding of our children and vulnerable adults, teaching at our Sunday school and youth group and the "Helping Hands" Mission Project which helps our local residents in need. The Kirk Session had the chance to understand their position within the Presbytery and the expectations for the future of Scots Kirk.

Revd Lance Stone, Revd Jimmy Brown and Elder Mary Couper spent a very busy Saturday morning visiting Mission Projects at both Netherlee Cottage Mental Health Rehabilitation Centre in Talahena and Mulleriyawa Mental Health Hospital to meet the ladies that Scots Kirk support and to view and understand the improvements that we have been able to make in their lives.

Revd Lance Stone gave a modern inspiring sermon on Sunday morning and the congregation enjoyed fellowship and the chance to meet with our guests after the service.



At the Mulleriyawa Mental Health Hospital



With the Ladies of Netherlee Cottage





Meeting The Kirk Session



Sunday Service with Ramesh Schaffter and Revd Lance Stone



Local Church Review



Fellowship with the congregation





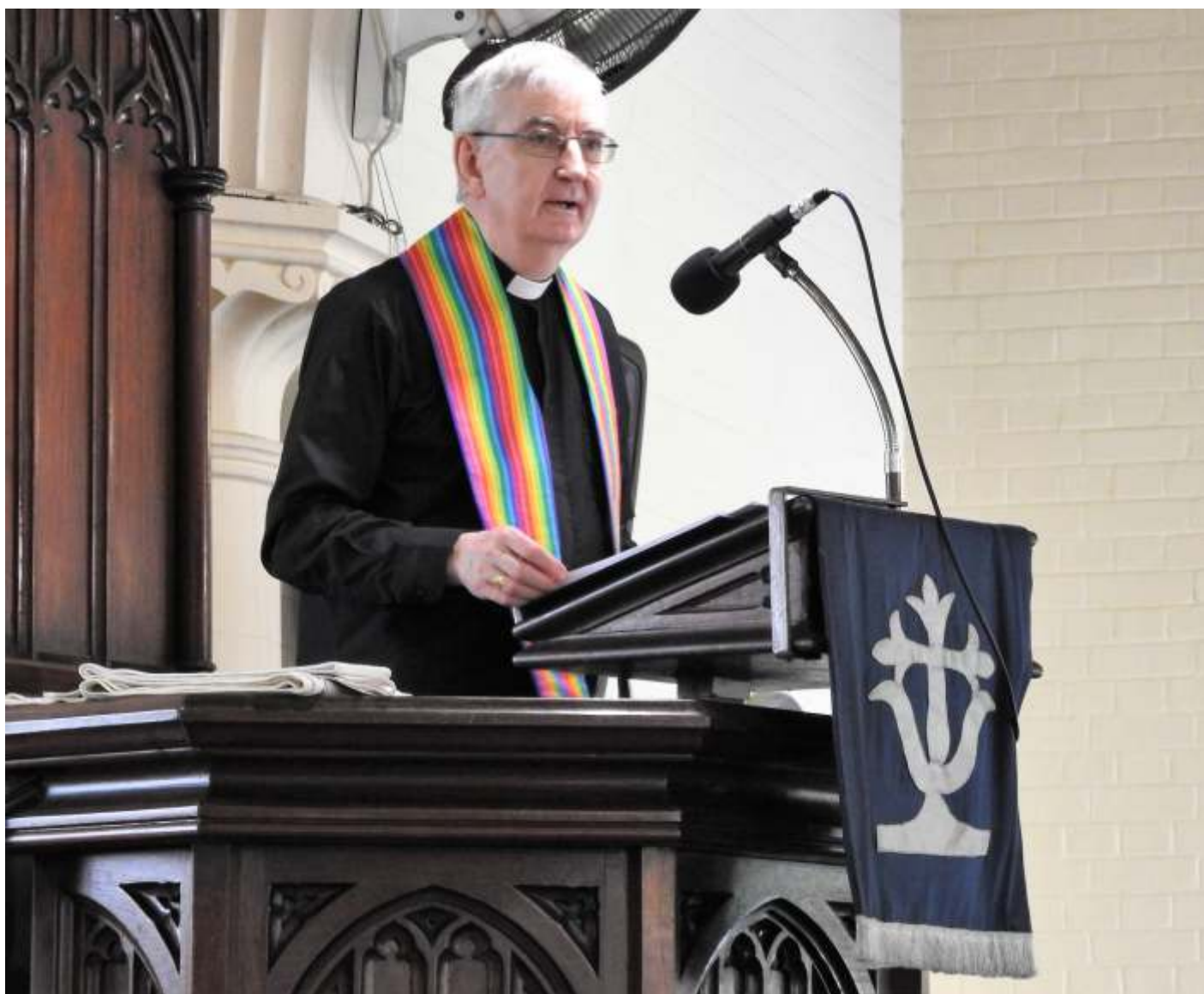
A look back at Holy Week at St. Andrew's

Holy Week at St. Andrew's was truly and inspirational, an uplifting week beginning with the service on Palm Sunday which heralded a large congregation and the full contingent of Elders participating in the Sunday Service conducted by Dr Dhanan Senathirajah.

Service was also held on Maundy Thursday, the perfect lead up to the Good Friday Service which pushed boundaries in getting the congregation to relive the entire story of Jesus' death and the surrounding event. The sequence of words and music had the service sung by Voice of Praise, the chamber choir affiliated to St. Andrew's and directed by St. Andrew's Music Director Denham Pereira. The lessons took the passion narrative of the Gospel according to St. Mark, with the addition of

a further passage from St. John's Gospel, emotively read by Elder Shalini Wickramasuriya.

A visibly moved Revd Jim Sharp led the service, while Voice of Praise aptly chose some spectacular pieces. Wash Me Thoroughly set the landscape as a musical thread throughout the service, while anthems with music by Thomas Tallis, Antonio Lotti and Edward Bairstow with word placements taken from the Lamentation of Jeremiah for the latter could have placed the congregation walking side by side with Jesus on his last walk and his crucifixion. And there was not a dry eye in the congregation as that crucifixion scene was remembered, with the choir singing the impassioned African American Spiritual, Were you there when they crucified my Lord?



Revd Jim Sharp conducting the service on Easter Sunday



Easter Sunday was one of celebration as Revd Jim Sharp took to the pulpit in a rainbow hued stole symbolic of new life, new hope and new meaning. He also conducted two baptisms and three confirmations during the service. Baby Aleena Raaya Gooneratne and young adult Buwanika Weerasinha were baptized, while Buwanika was also confirmed together with Jaitra De Saram and Sarah Shivaji Arunakumar.



Baby Aleena Raaya Gooneratne gets baptized

The service was followed by the traditional Easter Brunch, contributed towards by the congregation which had an overwhelming attendance and happy fellowship. A confirmation cake placed the spotlight on the three young people who cut it together to much applause.



Music at St. Andrew's



Sunday services have been led in music by some spectacular visiting choirs once a month. It's certainly been a privilege to hear them sing.



Contempo (the old girls' choir of St. Bridget's Convent) - Directed by Harin Amirthanathan



Resonance – Directed by Rapti Fernando



Music at Midnight

The church also played host to an unusual event – Music at Midnight by the award winning all female choral group Soul Sounds – whose collective of amazing voices resonated for an hour of choral and gospel music. The singing was nothing short of outstanding and the church itself, fittingly lent itself to the occasion. With its interiors lit up with a host of candelabra and subtle lighting that set the mood for the full audience in attendance, St. Andrew's lit up its magnificent stained-glass windows for the first time, adding a dramatic feel to the choir's magnificence. Cake and coffee under the porch concluded a perfect evening (a little after midnight).



Soul Sounds – Directed by Soundarie David-Rodrigo



Jaitra, Buwaneka and Sarah getting ready to cut their confirmation cake

SARAH SHIVANI ARUNAKUMAR

Sarah is 18 years and will be traveling to the UK to study medicine at the University of Bristol. An only child, her mother is Selvinee and dad is Justin.

What was it like being confirmed?

Confirmation allowed me to have a deeper and more personal connection with my faith in God. It gave me the freedom to ask questions and really understand the complexities of Christianity.

Did you enjoy the lead up to it?

I definitely did. It was a great time of exploration and reflection.

What is the most valuable lesson you learned in the process?

That my connection and my interpretation of faith is deeply personal and does not have to align with everyone else's.

Why did you want to get confirmed?

Since I was little, organised religion in church has always been taught to me by rote, with no real understanding as to why I was doing various things. Getting confirmed, allowed me to understand and more importantly realize that I really did love God and I valued my faith in him because it came from

within me and not from what people were telling me to do.

What is it about St. Andrew's that you like most?

How open and inclusive the church community is. The congregation is so welcoming.

What would you like to see the youth group at St Andrew's doing in the future?

Hopefully recruit more members and maybe collaborate with other church youth groups to conduct more outreach projects.

What are your hobbies?

Reading, listening to music, playing the piano and singing, writing

How do you chillout?

Watch a few episodes of my favourite tv show or movie, while having a bowl of ice cream.

What's your favourite food?

That's a very difficult question. It's a tie between Italian, Japanese and Mexican

Who do you admire most and why?

I really admire Malala. She was able to stand up for what was right and did so at the expense of getting shot. And even after that, she didn't give up. Her courage and bravery are extremely admirable.

Say Hello to our Confirmed Young Adults



JAITRA DE SARAM

Attending S. Thomas' College Mount Lavinia, Jaitra De Saram is 12 years old. His mum is Samantha and dad is Savantha. He has two younger brothers, Janava and Jayin.

What was it like being confirmed?

Getting confirmed was exciting and I enjoyed the lead up to it.

What is the most valuable lesson you learned in the process?

That it is ok to question things I don't understand.

Why did you want to get confirmed?

I got confirmed to be closer with God.

What is it about St. Andrew's that you like most?

I used to love attending Sunday School at St Andrew's and am looking forward to all the activities in youth group.

What would you like to see the youth group at St Andrew's doing in the future?

Doing a lot of fun activities.

What are your hobbies?

Playing tennis. My favourite tennis player is Milos Raonic. He has one of the fastest serves. My dream is to play like him one day. I also admire Roger Federer, who is the best tennis player ever.

How do you chillout?

Playing computer games

What's your favourite food?

Steak and fries

BUWANIKA WEERASINHA

A First Officer at SriLankan Airlines, Buwanika Weerasinha is 24 years of age. Her mother is Romaine, father Channa and brother is named Minal.

What was it like being confirmed?

It was enlightening and felt like getting closer to God.

Did you enjoy the lead up to it?

Absolutely yes. Enjoyed every session with Revd Jim Sharp, including the Skype lessons. He made every lesson fun and exciting.

What is the most valuable lesson you learned in the process?

That God loves you no matter what and he is a very loving, caring and forgiving god.

Why did you want to get confirmed?

Because I have built a strong bond with God and I wanted to dedicate myself to him.

What is it about St. Andrew's that you like most?

I like how everyone is very friendly, welcoming and open. I like the family atmosphere they create.

What would you like to see the youth group at St Andrew's doing in the future?

Grow bigger in numbers and make a difference in the community.

What are your hobbies?

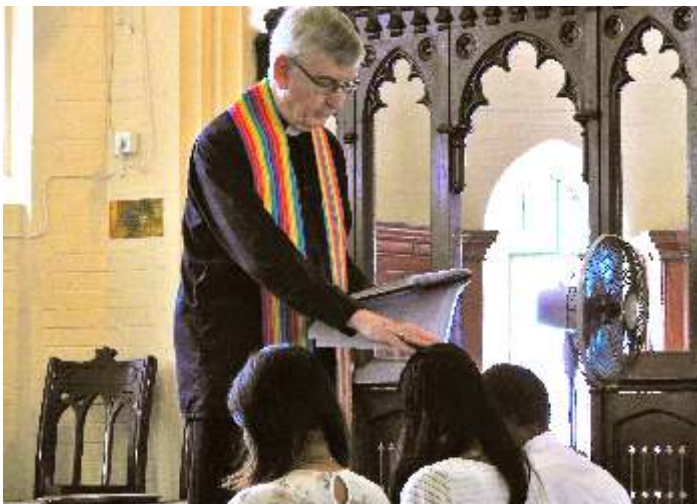
Painting, playing with my pets, watching TV

How do you chillout?

Trying out new cafes and restaurants with my best friend.

What's your favourite food?

Thai cuisine



Bestowing a blessing on the three confirmed young people



The Confirmation Cake at the Easter Brunch



Major Andrew Moreland

How would you describe yourself?

Overweight, overage and over here.

Tell us about your family

I have three sons, Andrew is 56 and lives in France and twins Nigel and Stephen who are 53. Stephen is in Cyprus and Nigel is the only one left in England. I was born in the UK but have never spent much time there. I have lived all over the place, normally for a maximum of 2 years in one place but I have lived in Sri Lanka for 14 years. I live with a Sri Lankan family in Thalawathagoda and Singhithi is in charge. I met Singhithi in Cyprus when I was thinking about where my next move would be. I questioned her closely about her suggestion to live in Sri Lanka and eventually came to have a look and I am still here.

Most memorable moment in Sri Lanka

Every day is exciting, I have still not discovered the whole island. I have been to all the corners but not yet had chance to visit in detail. I would like to travel more. It will happen. Living here is just memorable. This is the longest time I have ever spent in one place.

How do you chill out in Sri Lanka?

I like to read, whether it is French, German or English, it does not matter

What are the three things that you cannot do without?

Female company, good friends and good books

What has been most challenging in your life?

Without a doubt, the basic training for the Marines.

What is it that you like about Sri Lanka the most?

I like the people, the climate and the environment. I hope to stay here forever.

What is your favourite food?

All spicy food, particularly curry. My taste buds have become so decayed.

Who would be my role model?

My father was my role model, he was in the parliamentary army. He was a mid-ranking officer and died in 1963.



What is your pet peeve?

I dislike hard work. Physical work with mental application is interesting but repetitious mindless slog I cannot tolerate.

What compelled you to worship at St Andrew's?

I have always been attracted to the Church of Scotland although I was christened in the Church of England. I have been to the Church of Scotland in several places including Bahrain and Bombay. I find the Church of Scotland is very embracing without being picky or choosy.



A walk through Glasgow Cathedral

Despite visiting Glasgow numerous times, I had never been to Glasgow Cathedral. Just a short walk from the famous shopping areas of Buchanan Street, we delighted in the stories associated with the Cathedral.

The Cathedral dates from 1136 and its Gothic Architecture is maintained by Historic Scotland and thus belongs to everyone as a House of God. The worship is led by the Church of Scotland in the reformed Presbyterian tradition.

One is first thrilled by the sheer height of the timber roof of the Nave at 32m and the great west Window.

Turning in the opposite direction, we enter The Quire (an alternative spelling of Choir) through a Stone Screen dating from the early 15th century.

The oak boarded ceiling of the Quire was renewed in 1910. It has three rows of carved and painted bosses depicting the Life of Christ.

The first organ in the Church was built in 1460. It had 15 notes, each key was four inches wide and it was struck with a clenched fist.



A Church On My Travels



We found this copy of James VI Bible at the far end of the Quire. Printed in 1617, it has wooden covers and a chain to secure it to a Lectern. The reader would read to the congregation for up to an hour before the Minister began his sermon. The Bible disappeared from the Cathedral about 250 years ago and was found in someone's attic about 150 years later. It was returned to the Cathedral in time for the visit of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert in 1849.



Glasgow Cathedral is known for its stained glass windows and this one, found as we walked along the South aisle was donated by the merchant house of Glasgow. They still continue to support the Cathedral today.

A Church On My Travels



From this area we walked down the stone steps to the Lower Church. This is a unique feature of the lower end of the 12th century Cathedral and it is the tomb for St Kentigern.

The tomb sits between four columns and is directly below the Communion Table in the Quire above. St Kentigern is more commonly known as St Mungo, meaning "dear one". At the age of 25 Mungo began his Missionary work on the banks of the River Clyde in Glasgow. The site of his original Church is part of Glasgow Cathedral. He died in AD614. In order for someone to become a Saint he must be seen to perform miracles and it is said that Mungo performed four miracles which are capsulated in the poem that every child of Glasgow learnt at school.

*Here is the bird that never flew
Here is the tree that never grew
Here is the bell that never rang
Here is the fish that never swam*



St Mungo is the Patron Saint of the city of Glasgow, He appears in the crest of the Coat of Arms which also tells the story of his miracles.

The Bird — Mungo restored life to a robin, that had been killed by some of his classmates.

The Tree — Mungo had been left in charge of a fire in Saint Serf's monastery. He fell asleep and the fire went out. Taking a hazel branch, he restarted the fire.

The Bell — the bell is thought to have been brought by Mungo from Rome. It was said to have been used in services and to mourn the deceased.

The Fish — refers to the story about Queen Languoreth of Strathclyde who was suspected of infidelity by her husband. King Riderch demanded to see her ring, which he claimed she had given to her lover. In reality the King had thrown it into the River Clyde. Faced with execution she appealed for help to Mungo, who ordered a messenger to catch a fish in the river. On opening the fish, the ring was miraculously found inside, which allowed the Queen to clear her name.



-Gillian Mailler

St. Andrew's Church Chennai turns 200



As published in The Hindu April 06th 2018



'Faith and passion of the Scottish community behind this marvel'

It was on April 6 in 1818 that the first stone was laid for the construction of St. Andrew's Church, popularly known as the Kirk. With its 111 3/4 feet-tall steeple, the church is an impressive structure on Poonamallee High Road. It was consecrated in 1821.

To mark the completion of 200 years of this event, a thanksgiving service will be held at 7 p.m. on Friday at the church. A special commemorative booklet was released during the service with an account of the event, the construction of the church and its architecture.

The first stone had a brass plate with an inscription in English and Latin, with several coins of the British and Madras currency placed below it. A parchment with the inscription in Tamil and Telugu, sealed in a bottle along with more coins of the period, was also laid with the first stone.

The church stands on what was once a marshy flood plain to the south of the Coom.

Speaking on the significance of the Kirk, Isaac Johnson, church pastor, said the faith, belief and passion of the Scottish community at the time inspired them to build a place of worship of this scale and beauty, when the area around it was an open plain.

Dulip Thangasamy, Secretary of the Kirk Session, said the church was designed and built by Major Thomas de Havilland with Colonel Caldwell as chief engineer, at a time when a number of neo-classical churches were being built in England and Scotland. St. Andrew's follows this style of architecture. A part of the church is circular.

The story of the Hymn



Here I am, Lord - *By Dan Schutte*



The one thing American Hymnist Dan Schutte didn't anticipate as he penned this ever popular Pentecost hymn is that it would become as popular as it is today. Written in 1981, the lyrics describe a Christian answering God's call and is based on Isaiah 6:8 and 1 Samuel 3. The tune gained popularity when it was first published by OCP publications and by 2004, firmly held status as a Reader's Favourite by The Tablet and the 5th most popular hymn in Britain on a survey conducted by Songs of Praise.

Schutte was a 31 year old Jesuit, studying theology in Berkeley when a friend asked him to write a song for a diaconate ordination. He told America Magazine, "I sort of had to catch my breath, because he was knocking on my door on Wednesday and the ordination was on Sunday." His brief was that the song should contain imagery of the word of God, the light of Christ and bread and wine.

Schutte, suffering from a bad bout of flu sat at his desk, very feverish, with guitar in hand and no idea how to begin. That's when he did the only thing he could: he said a prayer. "When I write, I often use scripture as the basis of my songs and turned to stories of the prophets like Jeremiah. I realised that in all those stories, they have all had self doubt and humaneness."

Song completed, he showed it to the St. Louis Jesuits, a group of young Jesuit songwriters who reverted with some criticisms and suggestions which resulted in the change of the original chorus from, "Here I am, Lord; Here I stand, Lord" to "Here I am, Lord; is it I, Lord?"

All this took just two days and Schutte handed the final to his friend, still scribbling edits along the way. The result was a song that people praised unendingly and held apace until the modern day. Dan is credited with writing over 150 hymns and mass settings.

Here I am, Lord

I, the Lord of sea and sky
I have heard my people cry
All who dwell in dark and sin
My hand will save

[Chorus]

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night
I will go, Lord, if you lead me
I will hold your people in my heart

I, who made the stars of night
I will make their darkness bright
Who will bear my light to them?
Whom shall I send?

[Chorus]

I, the Lord of snow and rain
I have borne my people's pain
I have wept for love of them
They turn away

[Chorus]

I will break their hearts of stone
Give them hearts for love alone
I will speak my words to them
Whom shall I send?

[Chorus]

I, the Lord of wind and flame
I will send the poor and lame
I will set a feast for them
My hand will save

[Chorus]

Finest bread I will provide
'Til their hearts be satisfied
I will give my life to them
Whom shall I send?

[Chorus]

What is Whitsun?



At a service led by the Elders of St. Andrew's, Elder Jill Macdonald who gave the sermon narrated the stories that surrounded Whitsun and how it came to be. As she piqued our interest to this festival, the underlying fact is that Whitsun originates from the traditional church, which referred to Pentecost as Whitsun or Whit Sunday.

While the genesis of the word Pentecost comes from the Greek word 'Pentekostos', meaning 50 as its celebrated on the seventh Sunday after Easter, marking fifty days since the final Sabbath of Passover, Whitsun is derived from the Anglo-Saxon word, 'wit' meaning 'understanding and wisdom'. This understanding is about celebrating the disciples being filled with Holy Spirit and the wisdom they gained with it.

While not as 'popular' a celebration as Christmas or Easter, Pentecost is one of the most significant dates in the Christian calendar as it describes the disciples gathered to celebrate the Jewish harvest festival of Shavout. With the Holy Spirit descending on them, they begin to talk in foreign tongues leading onlookers to assume they were drunk.

Whitsun essentially means 'White Sunday' because it is a date when people were baptised and hence would dress in white. Another 'white' theme is the Whitsun Weddings. The British Government frees marriage taxes for this day and the lower economic classes would use Whitsun to get married, which meant the streets were always full of white clad brides, topped and tailed grooms and excited wedding parties.

However, as tradition goes, some churches hold Whit Walks and cheese rolling and Morris Dancing are also part of celebrating this Sunday. In Dorset for instance, there is club walking. This stemmed from the practice that all members of a club had to pay 2s.6d as a contribution for the 'death rate pay' if a club member died. The members would don their sashes and rosettes and carry flags and banners to the beat of a marching band, carrying a decorative blue pole with white bands and brass embellished tops (quite a collector's item from those days), stopping at all the principal houses in the parish for refreshments and money. They would be back in time for the noon service, after which they would gather for the feast in a large tent and conclude the festivities with games, music and much ale.



The Whit Walk



The famed poles carried in the Whit Walk



The Netherlee Project team invited the neighbours to celebrated Sinhala New Year with the residents and staff at Netherlee Cottage.

New Year games included the Lime and Spoon Race, Pass the Parcel, Musical Chairs and Spot the Eye of the Elephant.



Outside of the fun and games and the social gatherings at Netherlee Cottage, the staff and the Project team are constantly dealing with the roller coaster of trying to push the residents beyond their comfort zone to improve their behaviour with one another and with their staff, friends and neighbours to prepare them for independent living.

Netherlee welcomed Violet, a new resident to the Cottage during May. Violet has spent 20 years living in the Mulleriyawa Mental Health Hospital and she will need all your prayers and support to help her adjust to her new home.

Upcoming Services at St Andrew's Scots Kirk

Church Services

Services at St Andrew's Scots Kirk are held every Sunday at 9.30am.

The first Sunday of each month is Communion Sunday.

Dates to remember!

8th July – Visiting Choir - St. Benedicts College, Kotahena, directed by Krishan Rodrigo

12th August – Visiting Choir - The LG Singers directed by Willie Godridge

The Bible Study led by Ramesh Schaffter is held every fortnight at the Manse every 2nd and 4th Wednesday for an hour from 6 pm. All our welcome.



73, Galle Road, Colombo 3, Sri Lanka T: +94 11 2 323765

<http://www.scotskirk.lk/> <https://www.facebook.com/standrewsscotskirk/>

Editorial Committee:
Savithri Rodrigo
Gillian Mailler

Layout: Rohan Jayasekara