



Church of Scotland – Presbyterian



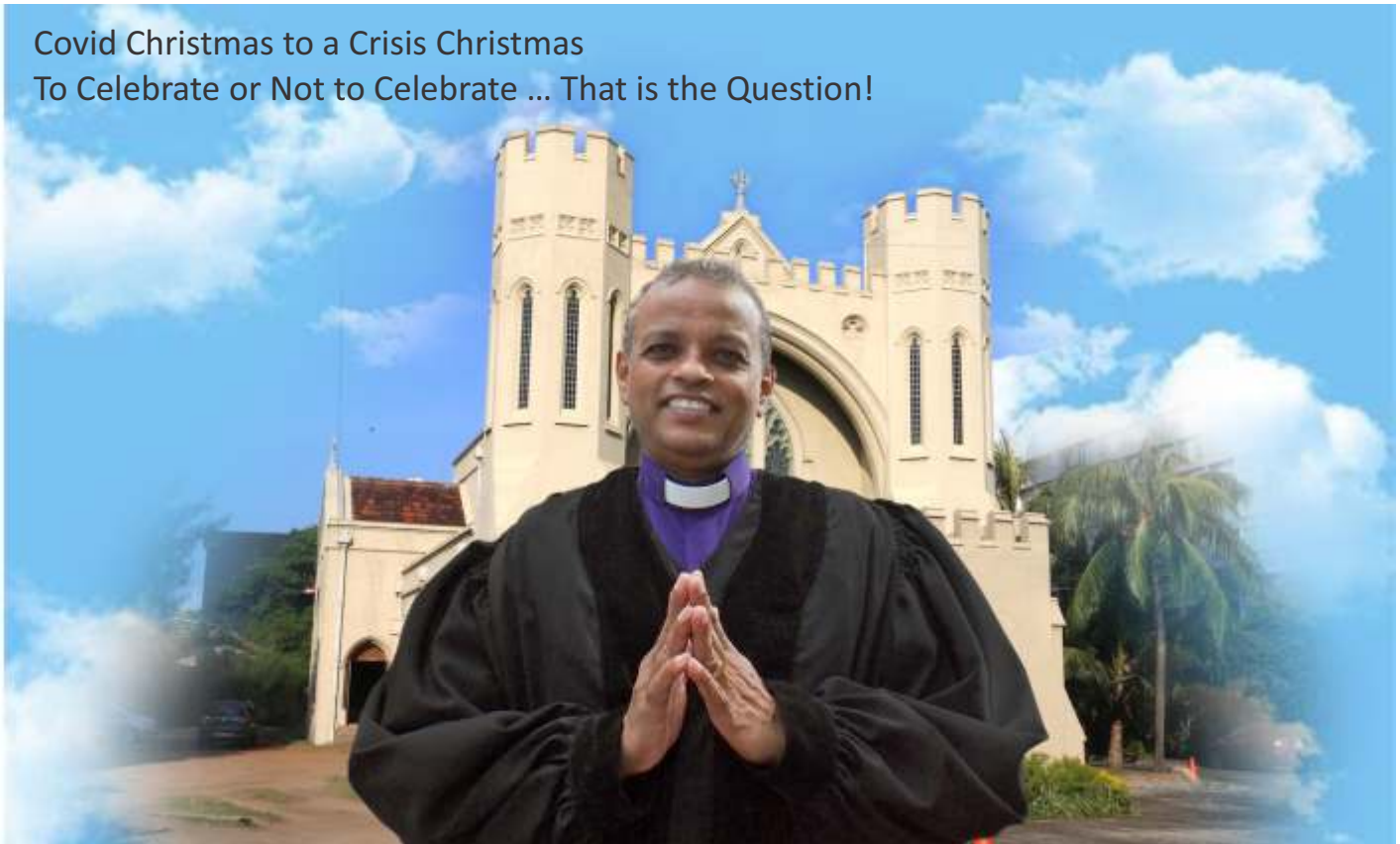


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Covid Christmas to a Crisis Christmas  
To Celebrate or Not to Celebrate ... That is the Question!

I count it a great joy to pen a few lines for our 'colourful newsletter' which updates our members near and far on what the **Lord is doing** in our congregation and through our congregation.

Two years ago, the pandemic took the lives of many people and resulted in lockdowns and curfews which meant that Christmas 2020 was celebrated with many restrictions. Many people preferred following online services, avoided Christmas shopping and canceled Christmas parties. The next Christmas (2021) witnessed an additional crisis when the 22 million living on our island suffered extreme economic hardship with severe shortages of essentials including food, fuel, gas and also struggled with daily power cuts.

This year, the economic crisis is not as severe but we are certainly not over the crisis; supermarket shelves have more items than the previous year, fuel queues are shorter but rationed. However, most may still not have the means to celebrate the most joyful time of the year, due to high inflation resulting in the high cost of living.

So, this Christmas too, many will not be fortunate to purchase their annual Christmas menu for traditional Christmas family lunches or dinners, nor serve Christmas cake to family and friends who visit. The Christmas tree with decorations of bells,

reindeer, garlands, stockings, wreaths and angels may be unaffordable.

In addition, when there are children affected by the economic crisis in Sri Lanka, particularly, impacting the poorest and marginalized, when there is a shortage of life-saving medicines in hospitals including drugs to address cancer and other terminal and Non-communicable Diseases (NCDs), can we joyfully celebrate Christmas?

UNICEF states that more than 5.7 million people, including 2.3 million children, require humanitarian assistance and that Sri Lanka is among the top ten countries with the highest number of malnourished children. Numbers are expected to rise further.

So, should we celebrate Christmas? Yes, we should. Not in terms of celebrating a commercialized Christmas but celebrating the birth of our Savior as proclaimed by the angel to the shepherds, which makes Jesus the source of our joy, and the reason for the season.

But the angel reassured them. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news that will **bring great joy** to all people.

The **Savior**—yes, the **Messiah**, the **Lord**—has been **born**". (Luke 2: 10 & 11)

**Rev. Roshan Mendis**



As some of you may know, I am the new Interim Moderator for the Congregation of St. Andrew's Scots Kirk Colombo and it is my hope and prayer to serve you and guide you forward over the challenging times that we in the church and the world share.

A little bit about me:

I have been a Minister of the Church of Scotland for many years and served in congregations in Scotland. I then became a locum serving your church, after the Rev John Purves left in 2013, after which I travelled onto our churches in Bermuda, Spain, Portugal and the Netherlands as locum.

I have had a long-held interest in the Church of Scotland as it was planted across the globe. Initially

these locations were to suit Scottish businesses and families traveling for work and reward. Gradually, these became churches far wider than just Scottish in style, embracing a wide variety of cultures, languages and denominational backgrounds. I believe that to be a great bonus, enriching the church at home and overseas. We are part of God's creation, part of His people on earth. Let us seek ways to discern His will.

I hope to be with you sometime in 2023, to share worship with Rev Roshan, and together praise God and learn to be in His Service

Blessings to you all

**Rev Norman Hutcheson**

## Why did Charles Dickens write A Christmas Carol?



Besides the story of the Nativity which takes centerstage at Christmas, A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens is probably the next most popular Christmas story of all time. We've all been wide-eyed and spellbound as the story of Scrooge unravels with Tiny Tim's cheerful demeanour despite the odds, bringing a tear to the eye.

But what prompted Charles Dickens to write this masterpiece? He was a popular and successful novelist and self-made man. However, he was struggling financially and realized that he had to get a book out by Christmas to assuage some of his financial pain.

By this time, Dickens had written The Old Curiosity Shop which became a serialized novel but his next book, The Life and Adventures of Martin Chuzzlewit was not doing too well, resulting in his publishers reducing his pay significantly. He was in debt and had a family support – not forgetting that he had a fifth child on the way.

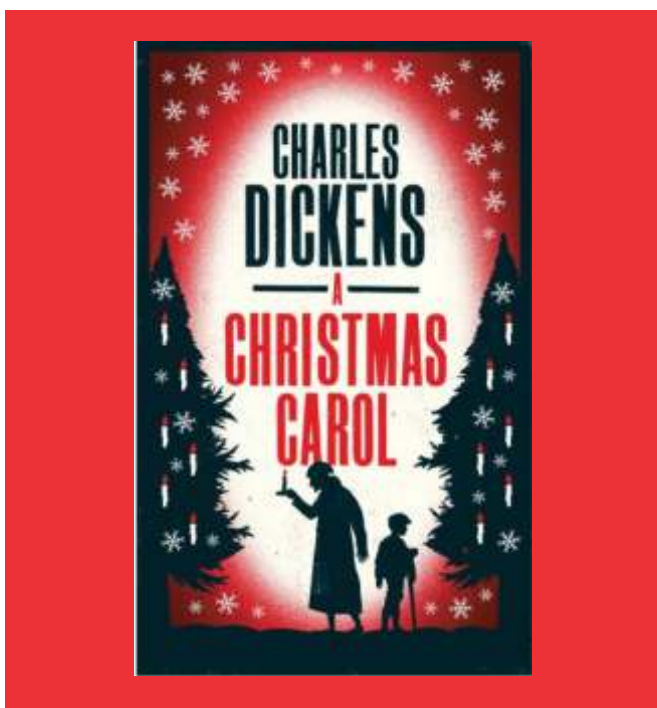
Dickens lived in an era when the poor were left well alone by those with means – in fact, the poor were considered unlucky to have around or to meet on the street. They were largely uneducated, powerless, ignored for the most part and exploited by factory owners because of their poverty.

Here's the difference though – Dickens was a man with a social conscience and while his financial issues may have been the key driver, it was that poverty that gave him inspiration for an all-time favourite classic.

The story itself originates in the north of England, when Dickens was invited to speak at the Manchester Athenaeum which was a philanthropic organization for the working poor. It was 1843 and his presence at the event would be the draw to raise money for the organization. He was among the star-studded celebrities billed to speak that day alongside Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli and politician Richard Cobden.

During his time in Manchester when he was surrounded by abject poverty and exploitation, Dickens was convinced that he need to confront the problem. He took the twin threats facing England – Want and Ignorance, portraying them as two horrifying children living in the slums of England's newly industrialised cities and began his story, setting it at Christmas time – the time of giving, love, hope and joy, but also a time when the poor generally have no means to celebrate.

He put pen to paper and six weeks later, A Christmas Carol was born!



God Rest Ye, Merry Gentlemen is a song that is mentioned in A Christmas Carol. The singing of this Christmas carol annoyed Scrooge and the text goes thus: "Scrooge seized the ruler with such energy of action that the singer fled in terror."



## A Reflection for Christmas 2022

We all have memories of Christmas Past, memories of gifts or family times, worship shared and meals shared. Hopefully these will be good for you to recall with affection in the spirit of Christmas Past.

While I was reflecting on what I would like to say, I started to relive a very personal experience associated with Christmas but not at that time of the year.

It was my first visit to Bethlehem in Judea as a pilgrim where we are guided through the maze of churches that celebrate part of the life of our Lord. At Bethlehem, the Church of the Nativity which is an eastern rite church has a steep flight of stairs which one descends to enter a Roman Church, where the cave of the Nativity is to be found. Jerome, the early church historian visited this site, and believed this was where our Lord was born.

I was extremely lucky on that day, as I had the cave to myself, unlike later visits that were packed with

people jostling for space in the enclosed atmosphere.

I could stand on my own and reflect that in this place of poverty, so long ago, the world was changed for ever. All the wealth of later decoration could not take away for me that here in a cave, only a few miles from Jerusalem the Son of God was born, not in a palace or a temple, but a cave.

The simplicity of that visit has never left me, and even with all the memories of past Christmases, I welcome that I saw something wonderful and earth shattering in a cave at Bethlehem so long ago.

May this Christmas be blessed for you, and may you in your heart travel back to a cave in Bethlehem, and greet the new born, the one we call Emmanuel.

Blessings to you and those you love this Christmas  
**Rev Norman**



The place where the Lord was born in the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem

## Stories behind the Carol

### The Little Drummer Boy

Written by school teacher Katherine Kennicott Davis in 1940, this carol is similar to a twelfth century legend, 'The Juggler of Notre Dame'. In that story, an old poor juggler had no gift to give Jesus at Christmas and went to church on Christmas night, stood in front of the nativity and gave the best juggling performance he ever had. The statue he juggled in front of was a somber Mary holding an even more somber baby Jesus, but once the juggler had concluded his performance, Jesus was apparently smiling.



# CHRISTMAS CAROL

**The Little Drummer Boy.**  
<https://dazwatsonmusic.weebly.com>

♩ = 120

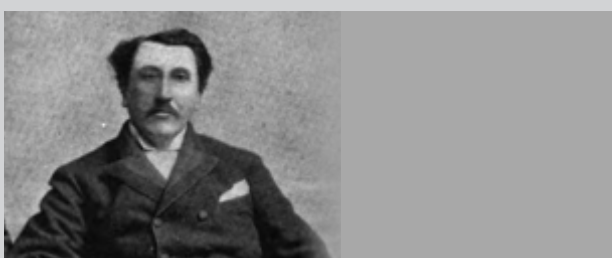
1. Come they told me you ran your drum pu - m. A new born  
 2. Let - tle to - be you ran your drum pu - m. I am a  
 3. Ma - ry had - a - do - dle you ran your drum pu - m. The ve - ry

King to see you ran your drum pu - m. Our Five - out gifts we bring you  
 poor lay - low you ran your drum pu - m. I have no gift to bring you  
 lamb - kept three you ran your drum pu - m. I played my drum for Him you

ran your drum pu - m. To lay his - here the King you ran your drum pu - m.  
 ran your drum pu - m. That's fit to give a king you ran your drum pu - m.  
 ran your drum pu - m. I played my best for him you ran your drum pu - m.

ran your drum pu - m. ran your drum pu - m. So to live - our him you  
 ran your drum pu - m. ran your drum pu - m. Shall I play for you you  
 ran your drum pu - m. ran your drum pu - m. Then he smiled at me you

ran your drum pu - m. Wh - on we see - me.  
 ran your drum pu - m. O - a - my dra - m.  
 ran your drum pu - m. Me and my dr - um.



William C. Dix, 1875      **What Child is This?**      (English folk tune Greensleeves)

1. After that he took also with him On Mary's lap he slept - ing  
 2. In - noc - ent... with in - noc - ent... while she - her's watch - ing  
 3. This - he is Child the King... when shep - herds guard - ed  
 4. He - re... he is the Son of Ma - ry

2. Why look in each man's eye  
 Of sin or guilt who are they?  
 Used of riches, poor, for sinners here  
 The word of God is placing a dove

3. To bring like sinners, gifts and wealth  
 Come, present King, to see the King  
 The King of Kings who shall all give  
 Let us sing hearts with love like this one

### What Child Is This?

It all boiled down to a near death experience! William Chatterton Dix was a manager of an insurance company but a severe life threatening illness made him bed-ridden and depressed. This was in 1865. But being in the doldrums, he did strive to reignite his faith which led him to author several hymns including What Child is This?

The hymn was published in 1871 and set to the tune of Greensleeves, a romantic ballad from the 16th century.



## Getting to know St. Andrew's new Locum Minister – Rev. Roshan Mendis

### Family

**Wife:** Rebecca (met at Dutch Reformed Church Dehiwela where both families became family friends)

**Children:** Rachel and Yohan

**Parents:** Lyn and Mignonne Mendis

**Sister:** Roshini

**Lived in:** Dehiwala, Sri Lanka

### Quick Facts

Date of birth: February 7th 1965

**Alma Maters:** S. Thomas' Preparatory School in Kollupitiya & S. Thomas' College Mount Lavinia

**Hobbies:** Writing sermons, watching Yohan play cricket, maintaining a scrapbook of Yohan's achievements, downloading Spotify for music (country & western, romantic love songs, spiritual and praise & worship instrumental music), playing guitar and piano

**Fears:** Public speaking

**Enjoys:** Singing, watching public speaking and sport

**Passionate about:** Cricket

**Happiest moment:** When Sri Lanka's cricket team excels



### Epitaph to be etched on tombstone:

'Yet preaching the Good News is not something I can boast about. I am compelled by God to do it.

Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!!

1 Corinthians 9: 16



### Spiritual Beginnings

Called to God: At 13 years of age

Inspired by: John 3:16 spoken by Rev. George Lee

Mentors: Rev. Charles Jansz, Rev. Crosby De Kretser, Rev. Neville Koch

Urged to preach by: Father Sunil De Silva, Chaplain, S. Thomas College, Mount Lavinia

First preached at: The Chapel of the Transfiguration, Mount Lavinia as a student

### Theological Studies

Dutch Reformed Church Seminary & Bible Institute in 1985

Reformed Theological College, Geelong Australia 1988 - 89

Alliance Biblical Seminary, Philippines, 2004- 05

Qualifications: Bachelors in Divinity, Diploma in Marriage and Family Ministry

Ordination: Minister of the Word and Sacraments of the Dutch Reformed Church, 1990

### Official roles

Minister at Dutch Reformed Church for 23 years, pastoring at Wolvendaal, Bambalapitiya and Kohuwela

Associate Chaplain, S. Thomas' College Mount Lavinia (2014 - 2022)

Board of Governors, Methodist College

Board of Governors, Colombo Theological College

Executive Committee Member, Evangelical Alliance of Sri Lanka

Executive Committee Member, National Christian Council



## Celebrating Christmas in the Middle Ages



If one thought modern day Christmas celebrations are over the top, Medieval Europe's Christmas celebrations were surely the stuff of legend! Roughly from the 5th century to 1500 AD, medieval Europe celebrated with twelve full days of feasting and revelry which climaxed with the crowning of a 'King of Misrule' on the Twelfth Night which was a rather raucous affair.



A month of austerity always preceded this period of festivity, when during Advent, Christians avoided rich food and over-indulgence. But come December 25th, they pulled out all the stops. It was time to eat, drink, be merry, dress up, play games and dance all over the neighbourhood on all twelve days. The chances are all that partying needed stamina so most often people collapsed in a heap long before the Twelfth Night came through, although they did rouse themselves from a stupor for one last sip and dance!

On Christmas morning, it was off first to Christmas mass which officially signaled the end of advent and the start of the festive season. The degree of decadence depended on social status but even the poorest slaughtered at least a pig in November, salted and smoked it to be ready for Christmas ham and bacon.

Wealthy lords gave their tenant farmers twelve days off and often served them a festive meal. The *Goodman of Paris* written in 1393 outlines that a special feast could begin with a course of pasties, sausages and black pudding; then four courses of fish, fowl and roast meats; and a final course of custards, tarts, nuts and sweetmeats.



However, when it came to royalty, feasting was taken to another level. King Henry III for instance ordered forty salmon, heaps of venison and boar meat and "as many lampreys as possible." Henry V included even more exotic delicacies on his Christmas menu including crayfish, eels and porpoise.

Drinking was as important as eating, with the bottom end of the social ladder having ale and spiced ciders, while the lords and royalty indulged in wine by the barrel. Henry III ordered 60 tons of wine one Christmas, that's 76,320 bottles.

And then there was the Feast of Fools which probably happened due to the excessive drinking. Dress-up games and role reversals were very much a part of medieval celebrations, probably rooted to pagan customs around the Winter solstice. People would dress up in animal masks or be disguised as women, going door to door singing festive folk songs or telling jokes for a few coins or small gifts.



## THROUGH THE LENS – Services, Events & Mission Projects

### REV. ROSHAN MENDIS INDUCTION AS LOCUM MINISTER

After years of being a shepherd-less flock, St. Andrew's Scots Kirk inducted a locum minister in September this year. Rev. Roshan Mendis who was the Associate Chaplain of S. Thomas' College Mount Lavinia and an ordained Minister of the Dutch Reformed Church was appointed as Locum Minister. The induction service was a moving one, with the church filled to capacity and a collective of ministers presiding.

Dr Dhanan Senthirajah delivered the sermon while Rev. Saman Perera, Rev. Charlie Jansz and Rev. Casper Van Dorp officiated at the ceremony.

The service which had the apt solemnity befitting the occasion, however gained a vibrancy with the singing and a praise and worship segment. Fellowship followed as did a much awaited congregational photograph after the service.



### THE CAROL SERVICE

#### Nine Lessons & Carols at St. Andrews

Joy was the theme of this year's carol service at St. Andrew's prominently bringing to life the story of the birth of Christ, retold via Nine Lessons & Carols. Beginning with the book of Genesis and the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, the lessons carried the congregation through to the final proclamation of the birth of Christ as told in the book of John.

Each reading was interspersed with a symbolic carol or song with either the choir or congregation leading it. The carols and songs ranged from the well-loved O Little Town of Bethlehem, O Come All Ye Faithful, Ding Dong Merrily on High, God Rest Ye

Merry Gentlemen, Angels from the Realms of Glory and I saw three ships to the children of the Sunday School singing Away in a manger.

For the first time in the history of the carol services at St. Andrew's, a congregational choir trained by Neranjan de Silva and led by Choirmaster Eshantha De Andrado took centerstage. The children were accompanied on the piano by Salome Rosa for their featured song.

An evening of fellowship ensued under the church porch with Christmas joy being spread in good measure.









## THROUGH THE LENS – Services, Events & Mission Projects (cont...)

### SUNDAY SERVICES

Sunday services continue to be participatory at SASK with fellowship after the service returning given the lifting of COVID19 rules. The music is uplifting as are the Praise & Worship segments each Sunday. The service continues to be livestreamed on the SASK FB page with people joining the service from around the world. Keeping the church united despite geographical borders is rewarding indeed. We also had some visiting preachers add spiritual food into the congregation including Rev. Casper Van Dorp, Pastor Abby Schaffter and Channa Dayaratne.

In an effort to bring families together spiritually, Rev. Roshan Mendis initiated the Family Sunday Service designated for the first Sunday of each





# THROUGH THE LENS – Services, Events & Mission Projects (cont...)





**BIDDING ADIEU TO BUWANIKA**

One of our most supportive congregation members who also volunteered at the St. Andrew's Sunday School, Buwanika Weerasinghe bid adieu to the congregation as she made her way Down Under to continue her studies. Buwanika was a pilot at the national carrier and assisted with numerous church activities whenever her busy schedule allowed her to take time off. We wish her well.





## THROUGH THE LENS – Services, Events & Mission Projects (cont...)

### NETHERLEE COTTAGE NEWS

The focus of the project in the last few months has been about working with the new ladies in our care to prepare them for their future. They must learn to live independent of the hospital and the Cottage. We have been in touch with their families to understand the reasons behind their residency in the Mental Health hospital. We have also listened to reports from doctors in the hospital and discussed aspirations for the future with the ladies.

We teach them daily routines including caring for themselves, friends, the environment and getting a sustainable income by earning a living wage.

One of our longer-term residents works daily for the neighbour and the others have grown in confidence to socialise with the local community and do their own shopping.

The Cottage has not been immune to the increase in cost of living and our food expenses have risen from Rs 40,000 to Rs 80,000 per month, with substantial increases in the utility bills.

Unfortunately, the polecats have been inside our roof again and damaged the ceilings. We await the rains to abate to have repairs done.

The residents at the Cottage were very pleased to welcome Rev Roshan Mendis and his friend Sriyantha to Netherlee Cottage recently.



**SAINT ANDREW'S SCOTS KIRK**  
COLOMBO SRI LANKA

**Lend A Helping Hand**

dry rations and meals for those in need in Sri Lanka

acc no: 101000786967  
bank: NDB Bank  
account name: Lunch Project  
branch: Dharmapala Mawatha  
info@scotskirk.lk  
tel 0779978870/ 0779997331

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### THE LUNCH PROJECT

The Lunch Project commenced in 2018 and has weathered some storms. The programme remained closed for some weeks after the Easter Sunday tragedy and experienced closure again due to COVID, when we should have been serving lunches due to the economic downturn.

However, serving lunches every Thursday now continues and about 150 people attend.

We are fortunate to have a reliable supplier who provides a nutritious meal every week.

We also have a robust team of volunteers who regularly attend to serve lunch and assist on the day. The volunteer servers also provide eggs and yogurt to add to the nutritious meal.

## THROUGH THE LENS – Services, Events & Mission Projects (cont...)

Rev Roshan prays ahead of the programme, thereby providing spiritual sustenance ahead of lunch. We have also had Pastor Gabriel visiting from Singapore who performs magic with a Christian message and has also been able to mobilize significant donations.

We are fortunate, that in addition to our regular donors, we have had many reach out from overseas, as Sri Lanka is on the cusp of the worst humanitarian crisis in recent history. Many have lost jobs and those of the informal economy who regularly lunch with us, are affected the most. The present crisis has prompted The Lunch Project to extend the scope of the programme and in addition to

providing a nutritious weekly meal, also provides dry rations to sustain the community through the week. Recently, we were able to distribute 750 kilos of rice, 150 kilos each of sugar, dhal, soya, sprats and a quantity of tea and cooking oil.

We are immensely grateful to our overseas donors and our generous members of the church community for the contributions. We intend to continue the gesture and are appreciative of funds to ensure providing for those in need.

**The Lunch Project Team - Meneka, Annika, Priscilla, Sam, Yamini & Shalini**





**PRAYER OF SOMEONE IN NEED**

We are all in need of God's love and when we doubt of where that is,  
just look around you and you find it.

I found it in the generosity of Milinda  
The young man who travelled in crowded  
Rundown buses to save  
So, I could buy medicine with his donation.

I found it in the anonymous donor  
Who for a decade has given financial support  
On a monthly basis never once forgetting me.

I found it in the Congregation of Livingston Church  
Who yearly collects funds for me and you  
To eat a bowl of rice.

I found it in the Ministers of the International Presbytery  
Who provided 35 kilograms of rice  
And we shared it among our dear ones.

I found it in the Singaporean Pastor  
Who through his connection  
Channels funds  
So that my wheelchair can be repaired.

I found it in that young lady  
Who went to Australia  
Providing me with milk powder  
For my new born baby.

I found it in that far away donor  
Who covered the cost  
Of my young son's cancer drug.

I found it in the lady at the Christmas party  
She played Santa  
And gave out gifts to all the children.

I found it in the team with whom I chat  
When I despair and need support.

To all of you I pass on this Franciscan Blessing  
**MAY GOD BLESS YOU WITH ENOUGH FOOLISHNESS  
TO BELIEVE THAT YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE  
IN THIS WORLD, SO THAT YOU CAN DO  
WHAT OTHERS CLAIM CANNOT BE DONE.**

-The Helping Hands Team



### HELPING HANDS

The spirit of Christmas couldn't have been spread better than at the Christmas Party held at the SASK Hall for the beneficiaries of the HH programme. Sixty beneficiaries were present to enjoy an afternoon of fun and games, concluding with lunch and ice-cream, gifts for the children and vouchers from Cargills for each family.

One of the games which brought out the creativity in each of our participants was the Christmas tree dress up game, where the beneficiaries were divided into groups and each group dressed up one person as a Christmas tree with coloured paper, string and streamers.

Much laughter and jolly conversation ensued.





## THROUGH THE LENS – Services, Events & Mission Projects (cont...)

### WARD 8 – MULLERIYAWA HOSPITAL

(A part of the National Institute of Mental Health)

The Mulleriyawa Ward 8 Paint Project

St Andrew's Scots Kirk supports Ward 8 at Mulleriyawa Hospital which comes under the umbrella of the National Institute of Mental Health in Sri Lanka and known as the Halfway Home.

Our support extends to providing lunch each month for the 33 patients, maintenance of the infrastructure of the Ward, facilities to improve the administration and make the lives of the patients better.

Corinthians 9:6-8

*“Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”*



The Ward 8 Team is grateful for the generous donation of Rs 47,642.72 received from a member of our congregation in response to the appeal made by the team via a power point presentation in October 2022.

A special thank you to Gerald De Saram (not affiliated to SASK) for his assistance in obtaining a discount of 80% from Akzonobel Paints Lanka (formerly CIC) for painting of the interior and exterior of the ward. We are especially grateful to CEO Wasantha Heenatigala.

We also wish to extend our appreciation to Managing Director of JAT Holdings Aelian Gunawardene MD JAT Holdings for the generous discount offered on the balance paint and accessory requirements, which will be purchased soon.

Our labour cost is approximately Rs 225,000 and we would be grateful if we are able to get donations to cover at least 50% of the expenditure.

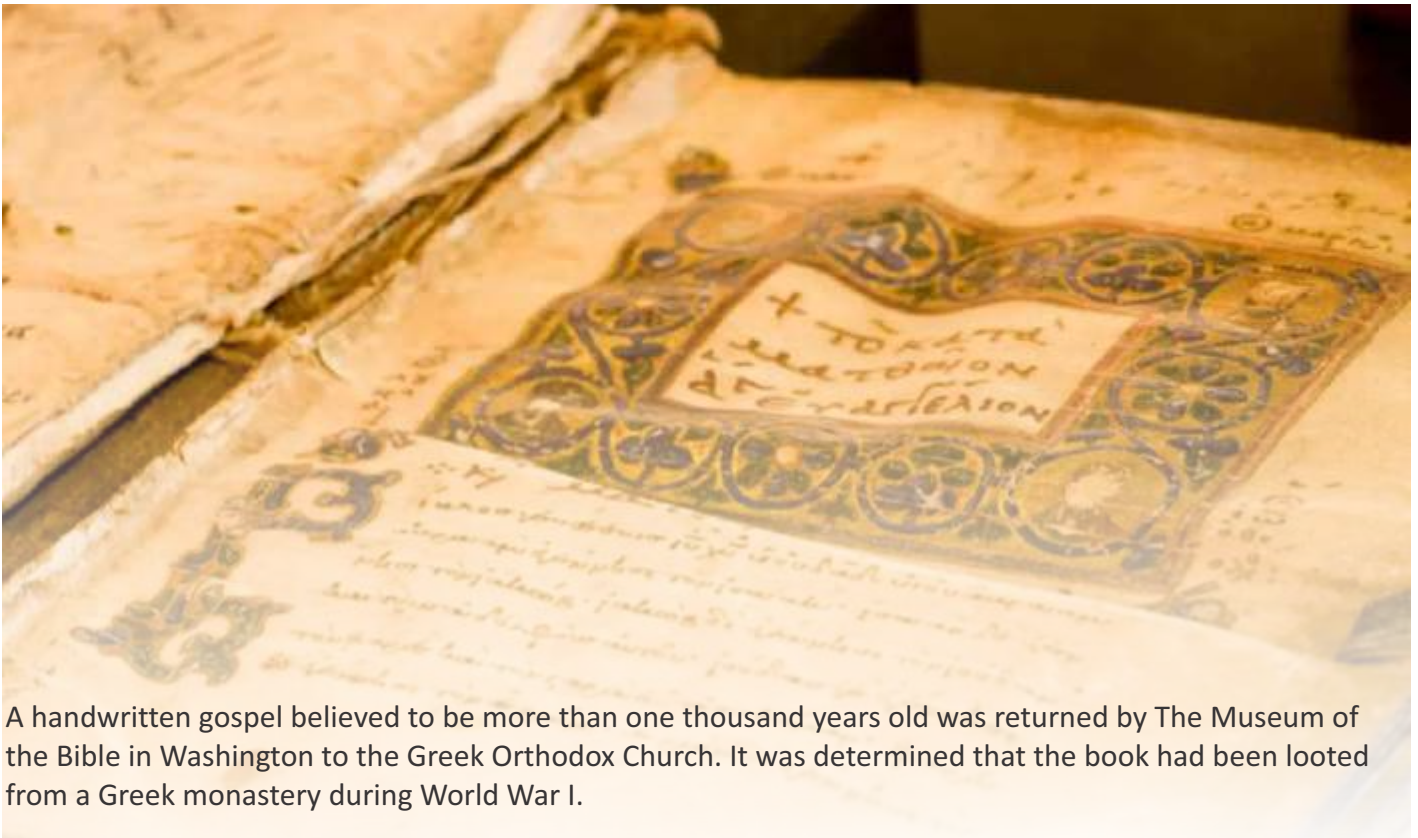
The ward also required 33 medium size box files for maintaining patient records as the current files were broken and needed to be replaced urgently. The Thrift Shop generously stepped in to purchase those files.

Every little will help and we thank you in advance for your generosity and support.

**Ward 8 Team**



## An ancient gospel looted from Greece is returned



A handwritten gospel believed to be more than one thousand years old was returned by The Museum of the Bible in Washington to the Greek Orthodox Church. It was determined that the book had been looted from a Greek monastery during World War I.

The Gospel which had been acquired at a Christie's auction in 2011 was repatriated to the Kosinitza Monastery in northern Greece, where it had been used in liturgical services for hundreds of years before it was stolen by Bulgarian forces in 1917.

The Museum of the Bible traced the manuscript's history and the chain of ownership, from its creation in the late 10th- or early 11th century, through the looting of the monastery in 1917, through various sales after the war ended. It was resold at an auction in the United States in 1958, and more recently by Christie's in 2011.

Some of the manuscript's pages are darkened by the smoke from candlelit prayers and others smudged over centuries by monks turning the pages. It was among a library of more than 400 manuscripts carted off on mules by Bulgarian forces who stormed the monastery in 1917.



The back cover of the manuscript shows the notation M.K., believed to have been added later to show the monastery where the manuscript was taken from.



The thousand year old handwritten Gospel



## A TRIBUTE TO MILINDA RATHNASURIYA

By Shanthini Ahangama  
Never judge a book by its cover!



Milinda conjures up and evokes different emotions and imagery to those who knew him.

I had the privilege of working closely with him in the Nominating Committee.

My first impression of Milinda was that of exasperation. However, I was soon to realize that Milinda's heart was entwined with what was best for SASK supported by his steadfast Christian beliefs. He was passionate about his views and did not hold back his convictions.

Since his focus was narrow and uncluttered, Milinda would analyze points differently and have extraordinary insights into varying subjects pertaining to the task at hand within the committee.

Milinda was outspoken and would stick to his unwavering views and drive his thinking forwards, unmindful of the colour change at the traffic lights nor people at the intersection!!!

The Nominating Committee valued his contribution and began to understand him on a different level. Milinda would extend a helping hand to anyone in need and was supportive of our many mission projects.

We are deeply saddened by his sudden demise and express our most sincere condolences to his sister Mihiri and the family who we hope will remain in touch with us.

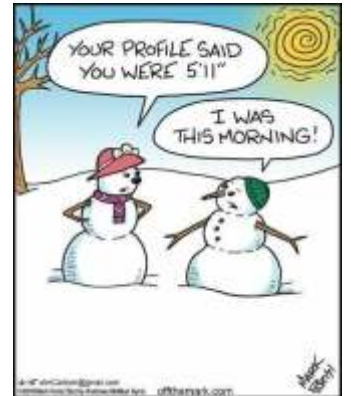
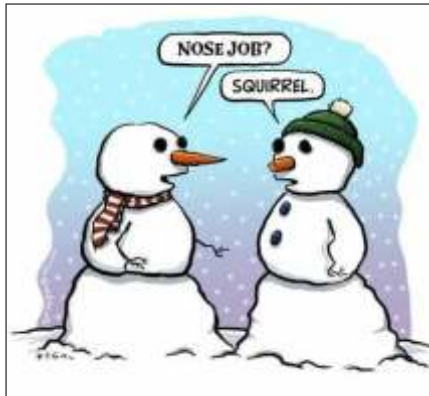
I was in for a pleasant surprise upon meeting Milinda's sister Mihiri and her husband Erash Fernando.

Mihiri spoke about his childhood where their mother always supported Milinda, which made him more dependent on her. Milinda is a student of Royal College and was born a Buddhist. He lived in his ancestral home in Borella. Mihiri was pleased to know that he was accepted by SASK and was a valued member of the Nominating Committee.

I am happy I was able to have this interaction with Milinda's family. Mihiri mentioned her daughter was at an athletic meet and was unable to attend the funeral. Upon my casual question, "For which school?", she mentioned Bishops College of which she too is a past pupil. I now rest my case.

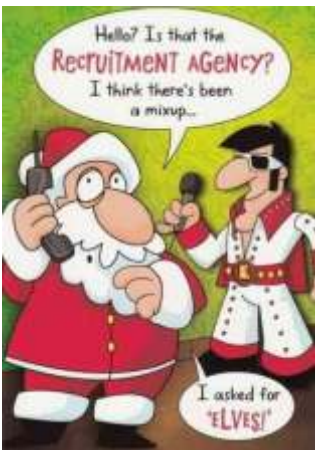
**'Never will I judge any book by its cover'**


*Rest in the Arms of Jesus Milinda – You will be missed*



**"What do you want for Christmas?"**

**"Hmmm ... lately, I've been really into groceries and gas. Utilities are cool too. Stuff like that."**





How did Mary and Joseph know Jesus' weight when he was born?  
They had a weigh in a manger!

Who hid in the bakery at Christmas?  
A mince spy!

Who is never hungry at Christmas?  
The Turkey he's always stuffed!



## 7 Tips to Find Peace at Christmas

With everything that goes on around us in December, it truly is the busiest time of the year. Despite it being a celebration of the birth of the Prince of Peace, finding inner peace at this time can be challenging. So, here are some tips to find peace at Christmas:

### 1 Breathe

The rhythm of your breath is the first sign of stress – if it's rapid and shallow, that spells stress. Calm yourself by exhaling and inhaling very slowly while counting to five with each breath.

### 2 Go outside

We Sri Lankans are fortunate to have sunny weather all year around but wherever you are, get outside and enjoy the fresh air as well as give some R&R to your eyes. Being outside, changes moods, gives us energy and helps us enjoy the beauty that God has created.

### 3 “How” is more important than “how much”

Take that To-Do list and prioritise. Some things on that list are not worth stressing over. There probably are some things you could do less of and some you could enjoy doing more.

### 4 Savor little things

Recall the words of that powerful hymn, “All things bright and beautiful.” Isn't this what God wanted us to do, to enjoy the little things in life? The fact that you wake up to a beautiful morning, that you have time to have a cup of coffee, enjoy flowers in your garden or fellowship at church. These are small pleasures that bring you peace and joy.

### 5 Make amends

It's been a rollercoaster year and knowingly or unknowingly, you've probably hurt someone along the way or feel that someone hurt you. Start off your new year by letting go of that bitterness. Forgiving and forgetting will bring you that gift of peace.

### 6 Pray

God never leaves us alone even when we forget he's around. Just as often as you speak with family and friends, make time to talk with God. It is he who carries your burdens and we cannot have peace without him. And don't forget, this Christmas we are celebrating Jesus!

### 7 Spend time with people you love

You don't have to be seen everywhere with everyone. Sometimes the season gets too jolly and you may feel you don't want to miss out. But prioritizing is important. Spend time with the people closest to you, enjoy your time with them. The last two years have shown us that everything on earth is temporary. Make your time on earth fruitful, joyous and full of peace – God will take care of everything.





Jim and I were part of the congregation at Scots Kirk in Colombo from 1999 until 2006. My husband Jim Smith, who went to his eternal rest in October 2019, served as Session Clerk for some of that time and we were very active in visiting Ward 19 (now Ward 8) at Mulleriyawa Hospital.

It was during these visits that we realised, not all those in Ward 19 should actually be living in the hospital. We were convinced that with training by compassionate members of the congregation and appropriately trained staff, they could live a life in the community. So with the generous help of Netherlee Parish Church in Glasgow Netherlee Cottage was born. "Soli Deo Gloria"

As we approach and look forward to celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ in 2022, I pray that my sisters and brothers in Christ at St Andrew's Scots Kirk in Colombo will be greatly bestowed by the gift of Faith, the blessing of Hope and the Peace of His Love at Christmas and always.

Blessings and a joyous Christmas to all  
**Ayesha Smith**

**Greetings &  
a blessed  
Christmas**







**What they said....  
about The St. Andrew Summer Edition**

Thank you for this newsletter, as always, a very good read and update on St Andrew's.

**Pamela**

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Thank you for sending the newsletter. The people who produce it put a lot of time and effort into its production and it contains a wealth of information.

**Charles**

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It must be quite a challenge thinking up new items each time, but it obviously gives many people pleasure and keeps us all up to date and entertained.

**Sue and Roderick**

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Thank you so much for the latest newsletter.

I had been very concerned for the safety of all at St Andrews when I saw the reports on the news about the rioting in Sri Lanka. I am very glad that you all seem to have survived.

The newsletter, as usual, was very informative and I am amazed at what you are able to achieve.

My very best wishes to everyone at St Andrews, especially the ladies at Netherlee Cottage.

Yours sincerely,

**May**

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**We are international, interdenominational, open to all  
All are welcome.**

Sunday morning service will continue each week at 9.30 am.

16th Dec 7.00 pm The Philharmonic Choir – Conductor: Harin Amirthanathan  
18th Dec 9.30 am Worship Leader Rev Roshan Mendis, Preacher Mayuka Perera - Managing  
Director “Back to the Bible”  
24th Dec 10.45 pm Christmas Eve Service  
25th Dec 9.30 am Christmas Day Service  
31st Dec 10.45 pm Watchnight Service  
1st Jan 9.30 am New Year's Day Service

**Mission Work at Scots Kirk**

**Helping Hands –**

Financial support for those disadvantaged and living in the area of St Andrew's.  
Contact Lakshmi 9477167 4079

**Netherlee Cottage -**

Rehabilitation Centre for Mental Health issues.  
Contact Gillian Mailler - email [gillmailler@gmail.com](mailto:gillmailler@gmail.com)

**Lunch for the Needy** - Held each Thursday from 11.45 am to 1.30 pm following strict COVID  
guidelines. Volunteer servers are needed each week.  
Contact Shalini - email [swickramasuriya@hotmail.com](mailto:swickramasuriya@hotmail.com)

**Mulleriyawa Hospital Ward 8 -**

Contact Shanthini Ahangama - email [shani\\_ahangama@hotmail.com](mailto:shani_ahangama@hotmail.com).

**Our Church is used by;**

The Korean Church every Sunday  
The Four Square Church, every Sunday evening and Thursday lunch time

St. Andrew's Scots Kirk Interim Moderator - Revd Norman Hutcheson  
[email.norman.hutcheson@gmail.com](mailto:email.norman.hutcheson@gmail.com)

Resident Locum Minister Revd Roshan Mendis - email [minister@scotskirk.lk](mailto:minister@scotskirk.lk)

Church Officer: K S Kumar – [churchofficer@scotskirk.lk](mailto:churchofficer@scotskirk.lk)



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