



Cinnamon Gardens Baptist Church

NEWSLETTER | February & March 2025

**Jesus said,
“..... For it is
written:
‘Worship the
Lord your God,
and serve him
only.’”**

Matthew 4:10 NIV



SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES

Tamil 7.30 am
Sinhala 9.00 am
English 10.30 am

A word from Pastor Giyan



One of the most misunderstood and misused words in the modern Church is “Fellowship”. I say this because we, in our pursuit to be closer to God, neglect this vital aspect of what Church truly is. Our goal is to be closer to God, to know Him more and more each day. This is all true and good, as this is what our new life as children of God in Christ is. Paul in his letter to the Philippians writes “What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord,” (Ch 3:8) and in verse 10 Paul writes, “I want to know Christ”. Jesus in His High Priestly prayer prays, “Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.” (John 17:3).

Thus, as our goal is to know Christ, we tend to focus our attention on this, because this is what we desire as Christians and as the Church of Christ. J.I. Packer in his book “Honouring the People of God” writes, “The more strongly one desires an end, the more carefully and diligently one will use the means to it” Thus, in our need to achieve the means of knowing Christ, we focus more on learning God’s word and on prayer which are crucial to the Christian life. Rightly so, but very often we tend not to place the same emphasis on the importance of fellowship.

Christian fellowship is the holy commonality of sharing in one Saviour, through one Spirit and as one body. It is far deeper than the time we have sharing a cup of tea after service or the fellowship lunches that we have on occasions. New Testament fellowship is far deeper than common human friendships; it is a deeply committed relationship with each other. The Apostle John in his First Epistle writes; “We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.” (Ch 1:3) The fellowship that we have with God and with Jesus Christ, is the fellowship that we have with each other.

The same attitude that we have in our relationship with Christ, is what we should have with our brothers and sisters in Christ. As Christ accepts each and every one of us with all our weaknesses and shortcomings we are called to have fellowship with each other in love without distinction.

The Author of Hebrews in Ch 10 verses 24 and 25 says, “And let us consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

This is true fellowship, where we spur and encourage each other. Wherever we disagree we are called to come together, and help each other and encourage each other. Not to criticize but to understand and accept.

To embrace each other in understanding and in love, because each and every one of us has been given a vital ministry in the Church by the Spirit of God Himself and not by human design.

We need to understand the reality of Christian Fellowship as a vital means of God’s on-going grace, as a means of His plan of salvation. Thus, while we go out to make disciples for Christ, we also need to build the Church in Fellowship.

Pastor Giyan Senapathiratne

A new Pastor at CGBC

On the first Sunday in the New Year, we were privileged to welcome our new Pastor Rev. Shriyan Jayamanna who will reside in the Manse together with his wife Shyamali and daughter Dinah and sons Shaun and Seth. We have a resident Pastor after many years, and we welcome the filling of this void. Rev Shriyan is the son of the late Rev Denzil (a long time Baptist Minister) and Perlyn Jayamanne. He was serving in the Hendala Baptist Church for over 10

years, from where he was released to us by the Sri Lanka Baptist Church. He had previously served in the Matale and Beligodapitiya Baptist Churches and counts 21 years in full-time Ministry. Let us join together as a church family, to uphold Rev Shriyan and his young family in prayer and to support and encourage them as they serve our Lord and Saviour in our Church.

Ravi Algama



Message from Pastor Shriyan Jayamanna



Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

As we step into a new year, we do so with both hope and fear, for the future is unpredictable. There is a saying: If nothing changes, nothing will be different. Without a plan, this New Year will quickly become like the last, leaving us stuck in the same place we were before.

So, are we ready to change?

In Jeremiah 29:11, God promises, “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future.”

Therefore, as we begin this New Year, we must ask ourselves: What must be retained in our lives? What must be removed? And what must we remember? While God’s Word & God Himself remain unchanged, yesterday, today & forever, we must reflect on where we stand and in whom or what we place our faith. Are we willing to make the necessary changes to align ourselves with God’s will?

A believer sees this New Year through the eyes of faith, knowing that God has a plan—a plan for hope and a future based on His promises that He will never forsake us and will walk with us every step of the way. We do not face this year alone. God Himself dwells within us to guide and help us. On the other hand, the non-believer looks to the New Year through the lens of self-reliance and luck. So, I ask you:

Which one are you?

Will we allow the Lord to be truly the Lord of our lives?

Will we choose obedience to His Word, or continue to do things our own way?

Will we trust in God, or lean only on our own strength and achievements?

The way we answer these questions will shape what we choose to retain, remove, and remember in times of trial.

Proverbs 3:5-6 reminds us: “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight.”

When we trust in the Lord, the future grows brighter because we are confident that He has a plan for us, one that is filled with hope and a future.

Trusting God is not always easy, not because He doesn’t want to help us, but because we often struggle to let go—even of things that are harmful to us. This year must be a year in which we see God do something amazing, not just in our individual lives, but in the life of our church family as well. Just as the end of one year makes way for the start of another, those who are in Christ should be leaving behind old ways, trusting God to bring about the changes that will transform our lives.

As believers, we are called to hold on to the things that God has given us and the things He has ordained for our lives. We stand firm on His promises, holding tightly to everything He gives us: His passion, His compassion, and His kindness, all with a sincere heart. “Christ in us, the hope of glory.” Remember who you are in Christ!

As we enter this New Year, let us remember that time does not slow down; it has a way of either making us or breaking us. So, let us live wisely. Let us recall the words of William Carey: “Expect great things from God. Attempt great things for God.”

May God bless you with peace, joy, and abundant hope in this coming year.

Pastor Shriyan Jayamanna



Light of the world – CGBC Carol Service 2024

On 14th December 2024, the Cinnamon Gardens Baptist Church (CGBC) English Congregation came alive with the joy and wonder of the Christmas season through its much-anticipated Carol Service, aptly themed "Light of the World." While this service was a testament to CGBC's commitment to spreading the good news of Christ's birth and living out the true meaning of Christmas, the enchanting evening brought together the congregation to reflect on and celebrate the profound truth of Jesus Christ as the Light that dispels darkness and brings hope to the world.



A celebration of light and joy

The service opened with a warm welcome and prayer by Pastor Giyan, setting the tone for an evening filled with worship, reflection, and praise. The congregation, joined by the choir and orchestra, lifted their voices in a medley of classic carols, including "O Come, O Come Emmanuel," "O Come All Ye Faithful," and "Joy to the World." These familiar hymns filled the church with a sense of unity and reverence.

Andy Meinzinger's reading, "Light of the World," beautifully encapsulated the evening's theme. Drawing from John 8:12, where Jesus declares, "I am the light of the world," Andy reminded us of the transformative power of Christ's light in dispelling the darkness of sin and guiding believers toward eternal hope.

A journey through the nativity

The children of CGBC brought the story of the Nativity to life with heartfelt narration and engaging performances. From the angel's visit to Mary to the humble birth of Jesus in a manger, each scene was portrayed with sincerity and warmth. The journey of the shepherds and the wise men was a moving reminder of the universal significance of Christ's birth, as heralded by the bright star that led them to Bethlehem.



Cont...

Music that illuminated hearts

The Junior and Senior Choirs added a vibrant dimension to the evening. Their renditions of "He Is the Light of the World", "Celebrate the Child: The Light" & "Reflection - Jesu Light of lights", resonated deeply, reminding everyone of the joy and salvation that Christ brings. The interpretative dance to "Go Light the World" was a moving call to action, urging the attendees to carry Christ's light into their communities.



A message of responsibility

In the closing moments, Andy and Pastor Giyan emphasised the call for believers to reflect Christ's light in their lives. The congregation was inspired to embrace their role as beacons of hope, love, and truth in a world yearning for redemption. The symbolic lighting of candles (replaced this year by a more environmentally friendly use of mobile flashlights) created a touching visual of unity and purpose.



Closing in unity and praise

The service concluded with a medley of timeless carols, including "O Holy Night" and "Silent Night." The choir's recessional, paired with the traditional "We Wish You a Merry Christmas," left everyone with hearts full of gratitude and a renewed sense of purpose. The CGBC Carol Service 2024 was a profound reminder of the enduring power of Christ's light. As the congregation departed, they carried the message of "Light of the World" into their lives, inspired to share the hope and love of Christ with a world in need.



Kithu Mithu Maga (Sunday School)

Christmas Party

On 6th December the Kithu Mithu Maga (Sunday School) kids had their annual Christmas Party, a party every KMM child looks forward to. It was wrapped with games, singing, refreshments and gifts from Santa and not forgetting a message from Mr Andy Meinzingler on the true meaning of Christmas.

This year too, we invited the Peliyagoda Mission Point Sunday School kids to join our party and we had 21 kids from there who also received gifts from Santa.

A special feature at the party was, we recognized the kids who had attended Sunday School regularly during the whole year and they too received a special prize from Santa.

The most colourful part of the party were the little ones of the cradle roll; they too joined the party and enjoyed themselves in their own special way.

We praise and thank God for His providence and taking us through this year.



Nativity Play

The Kithu Mithu Maga Nativity play was held on 8th December to coincide with gift Sunday, and we were able to perform at both services, i.e. Sinhala/Tamil (bilingual) and English services. The theme of the play was 'Hope in Christ, Yesterday, Today and Forever'. The narrator of the play explained about the present struggles children go through in their life be it social media and comparison, peer pressure and substance abuse and even loneliness and anxiety and the hope in seeking Jesus for the answers/challenges they face. The play ended with 'Jesus is the answer, Yesterday Today and Forever'.

The kids did their parts very well and it was well explained in each of the roles they acted; we praise and thank God for their God-given talents.

Please pray for our KMM kids that they will feel His presence always and put Him first in their lives.



Amali Balasooriya

Women's Fellowship

Outreach programmes of WF November/December

Outreach Programme (1)

- Visiting the 'Suhada Lanka' orphanage at Willorawatta, Moratuwa on 13th November 2024

This orphanage is a part of the Methodist church. The children are in the range of 7 to 19 years. They were thrilled to have us and were very happy to receive gift supplies from the WF.



Outreach programme (2)

- Visiting 25 pregnant mothers at Peliyagoda on 1st December 2024.

The Committee donated each pregnant mother with gifts and a nutrition pack worth Rs.1500/=. We sang carols and we were also happy to share God's word with them.



Boot Sale – WF wants to thank everyone in the congregation for always supporting us and for the donations received for the boot sale. We were able to give each KMM child and a few single ladies a voucher for Christmas.



We ended the year with a lovely **Christmas party** for the ladies.



News from the Home Cells

Nugegoda Home Cell

Sunday Home Cell Group Year End Get-together

The two Sunday Home Cell groups (those who meet physically and those who meet online) had a wonderful time of fellowship at our year end get-together on Saturday 28th December at the home of Thilal and Dilu. We commenced the evening with a time of prayer followed by games and singing of carols. There was a time to testify to God's goodness and blessings during the year, and we were encouraged by the many experiences that were shared. The proceedings were concluded with a fellowship meal. All of us enjoyed the evening which was a wonderful time of fun, laughter and fellowship.



Sumudu Senapathiratne

Colombo Home Cell Activities in December 2024

The Colombo Home Cell group continues to meet every Friday via Zoom, with physical meetings held once each quarter. Our Zoom gatherings allow us to include attendees from various countries, such as France, India, Kenya, the Philippines, South Africa, and Sweden. Whenever children join, they are sent to a breakout room with one of our facilitators for their own activities.

Fellowship Dinner

On December 20th, we gathered in person for a festive time of carol singing, charades, and special songs performed by the children. Andy shared a brief message with us. During the dinner, we also had the joy of welcoming Sammy's family—Eva, Daniel, Daisy, and Dalia—who were visiting from Kenya, Sanjeev Gunawardena & Shanta Premawardhana from the USA



Carol Singing

On December 21st, a group of us traveled to Moratuwa to sing carols and pray with Aunty Hope Edward. It was a blessing to spend time with her.



Our next stop was at Aunty Ranjani and Uncle Kingsley de Alwis', where we had an audience eager to join in the singing in the foyer. By then, more carollers from our Home Cell had joined our group



Our final visit was to Aunty Sita Ranasinghe and her beautiful family, where we sang and prayed together. Aunty Sita graciously organized a delightful lunch and gifts for the singers



Goodbye to Moffat

We bade farewell to Moffat, who was leaving Sri Lanka after completing his MBA to return to Malawi. We pray for God's richest blessings on him and his family and thank him for all the support he provided to the Home Cell group.



As the Colombo Home Cell, we thank and praise God for all His blessings and continue to trust in His guidance.

Kuveni Wijeratne

Bible Verses for the month

February 2025
2 Chronicles 7:14 (NIV)

If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

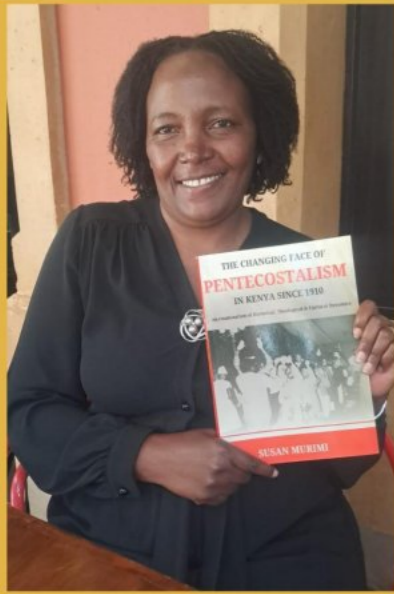
This verse is a prayer for healing and restoration, reminding the people to seek God's guidance and favour for their nation. It emphasizes humility, repentance, and the power of prayer to bring blessings upon our country.

March 2025
Matthew 4:1-2 (NIV)

"Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry."

This verse highlights Jesus' time of fasting and temptation in the wilderness, marking the beginning of his public ministry. It is a powerful reminder of the importance of self-denial, prayer, and reflection during Lent, following the example set by Christ.

The Changing Face of Pentecostalism in Kenya since 1910 by Susan Murimi



It's wonderful to hear that Susan Murimi, a member of CGBC, has authored a book on the changing face of Pentecostalism in Kenya. This is a significant contribution to understanding the historical and cultural shifts within the movement, especially in the context of Kenya. Her work is bound to provide valuable insights into how Pentecostalism has evolved and how it continues to shape religious and social dynamics in the region.

As a church family, it's a source of great pride to witness one of our own contribute to the academic and religious community. Such work not only enhances our collective understanding of Pentecostalism but also strengthens the church's role in the broader intellectual discourse on religion. It's inspiring to see members of CGBC engage with important subjects in a way that will benefit others and foster further dialogue on this evolving movement.

From the Publishing House

In "The Changing Face of Pentecostalism in Kenya since 1910," the author delves into the intricate journey of faith that has shaped Pentecostal Christianity's inception in Kenya. Through rigorous historical analysis, the book uncovers vibrant dynamics of theology, spirituality, and community engagement within the Kenyan context. As the study reveals, while core doctrinal beliefs have endured, the interpretation and expression of these tenets have undergone significant transformation, influenced by a multitude of factors ranging from historical precedents to contemporary socio-economic realities. This exploration highlights the resilience of Classical Pentecostalism and illuminates the broader implications for Christian mission in an increasingly globalized world.

The findings challenge conventional assumptions about religious constancy, revealing how Pentecostal communities adapt their beliefs and practices in response to external stimuli. The author posits that understanding these shifts is crucial for grasping the current landscape of faith in Kenya and beyond. By addressing the interplay of charisma and organization, the necessity of media in modern missions, and the complex relationship between faith and politics, this book serves as both a scholarly resource and a call to action for Pentecostal leaders. It advocates for a reimagined approach to theology and social engagement, urging a deeper alignment with both scripture and the realities of the Kenyan people. As readers navigate the historical and contemporary currents of Classical, Pentecostalism, they are invited to reflect on their own spiritual journeys within the broader narrative of faith in an ever-changing world.

Thanks for sharing the Word of God



Rev Shriyan Jayamanna, Pastor Giyan Senapathiratne, Mr Andrew Meinzinger & Prof. Amal Kumarage

Family News

Wedding Bells



Yujith Perera & Ruth Colombage were married at CGBC on 4th January 2025

**Congratulations Yujith & Ruth!
May your marriage be blessed with love, joy and companionship for all the years of your lives... God bless you!**



Baby Dedication



Praneedi and Niruban, dedicated their son Arlo Faith Satchi in November 2024



**Let's pray for our children as they develop spiritually, mentally, emotionally, and physically.
Pray they come to know Christ and grow in their faith.**



Baptism

Yuxuan & Viraj Priyadarshana were baptized by Rev Priyantha Wijegoonawardena on 29th December 2024

Goodbye Moffat



Moffat Mtonga from Malawi left Sri Lanka after successfully completing his MBA at The Postgraduate Institute of Management, University of Sri Jayewardenepura.

He was an active member of the choir, Colombo Home Cell & always assisted the worship team. We will miss you Moffat!



May the Lord bless you with the Riches of His Grace, the Treasures of His Love, the Comfort of His Mercy, the Strength of His Presence and the Touch of His care!



Welcome Back

Welcome back Roma and Simal

Welcome back! We're so happy to have you both back with us after spending time with your family overseas. We've missed you and look forward to catching up!



Greetings

Greetings from Amandi

I regularly worshipped at CGBC and also sang in the Choir until I recently moved to the UK to pursue my higher studies. I now live in Birmingham, from where I'm reading for a 4-years Forensic Psychology degree at De Montfort University (Oxford International) in Leicester. This was the first Christmas away from my church family, and I deeply miss each and every one of you. I'm grateful for your prayers and support, and look forward to the day we can worship together again. God bless you all.



Amandi Ekanayake



Please pray for

Anya Weerasinghe in Australia

Amandi Ekanayake in England

Pastor Kumar Subramaniam, Pradeepika & Jeremy in the USA

Osanda, Amy, Liyana & Imaya Senapatiratne in the USA

Lasantha, Indunil & Oshem Soysa in the Philippines

Our elders: Prayers are requested for all our elders and those who are sick, including Sunil Perera, Kingsley & Ranjani de Alwis, Hope Edward, Pathma Arulgnanam, Iroma Jansen, Frank & Beatrice Wickremasinghe, Lakshmi Raghavan, Jayalath & Heather Ameresekere, Lionel Pitigala, Anton & Lalani Amaratunga, Sriyangani Senaratne, Lakshman Herath, Ranjit & Ruth Ameresekere

The sick: Beulah Jeganathan, Hope Edward, Iroma Jansen, Pastor Peter & Margaret Goodall, Ranjani & Kingsley de Alwis, Mihiri Ekanayake, Pathma Arulgnanam, Rev Fred & Hilary George, Sriyangani Senaratne, Lakshman Herath, Pradeepika Subramaniam, Lanil Peiris,

Visitors from overseas 

Australia – Anya Weerasinghe



Australia – Yujith & Ruth Perera



Qatar – Sajinda & Kishani Jayasuriya



Cinnamon Gardens Baptist Church

USA – Sanjeev & Amali Gunawardena



Belgium – Bruno & Michele Van de Vliet



Canada – Deepani & Yuxuan



USA – Princy & Jonathan (Mala's daughter & son-in-law)



USA – Dilanthi, Ian & Dylan Mummert

USA – Jayanthi Jayawardena

England – Kesara & Dinura Gunawardena



Kenya – Eva, Daniel, Daisy & Dalia Likhali



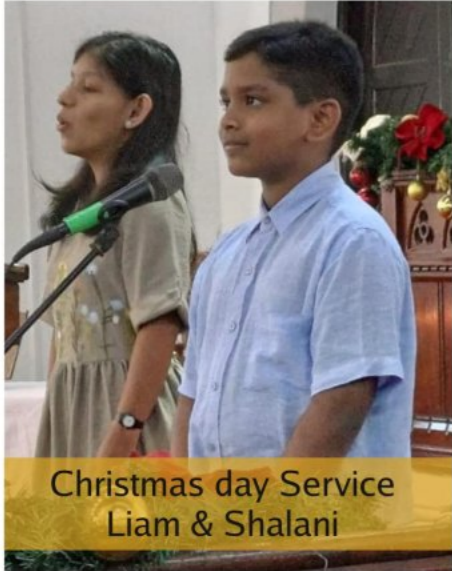
USA – Pastor Kumar Subramniam



Photo Gallery



Arul & Thomas



Christmas day Service
Liam & Shalani



Children's Church



Ladies' Bible Study



KMM Staff

What our readers say

I can't fathom the effort that goes into such a perfect newsletter month on month. God bless you, it's such a pleasure to read.

Lakmal Ratnayake | Australia

Thank you! Keep up the good work! Well presented.

Shantha Yahanpath | Australia

Thank you so much for faithfully sharing the newsletter with us. As always, I look forward to catching up with all the latest news from CGBC. Appreciate all the hard work you put into this.

Blessings

Josh Stephens | Canada

Thank you.

Well done!
Happy to see 2 pictures (my 30's and 70')
Season's Greetings

Tom & Sanami Nishida | Japan

Thank you so much for the Christmas Newsletter and for including our greetings. I'm looking forward to sitting down quietly and

reading it in detail.
Blessings

Nalin Senapatiratne | USA

Thanks for the wonderful work done with the newsletter.

God bless you

Dinuke Wijesinghe

Thank you for including me in the circulation.

The design is well done, and the pictures are great in telling the stories of God's faithfulness. I am especially touched by remembrance of Rev Kingsley whose love touched me for the seasons I have been in Sri Lanka.

May the Lord bless the work of His people.

Kind regards,

Sammy Likhali

Weekly meetings

Sunday 9:00 am Kithu Mithu Maga (Sunday School)

Thursday 10.00 am Ladies meet for prayer

Thursday 6.00 pm - 8.00 pm Ladies Bible Study (Fortnightly)

Pastor - Rev Shriyan Jayamanna 077 694 0135

Mentor Pastor - Rev Priyantha Wijegoonawardena 071 857 7310

Associate Pastors - Pastor Giyan Senapathiratne 072 335 9420
Pastor Ajith Jayawardene 077 663 4263

Acting Associate Pastor - Pastor Jeyaraj Sivarajasingam 076 722 7452

Elders - Prof. Amal Kumarage, Mr Ravi Algama & Mrs Mangeshwari Ravichandran

Secretary - Mrs Devika Ukwatte 077 715 4007

Treasurer - Mr Dinuke Wijesinghe 071 157 7777



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