



DEC 2022

# Reach Out

MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF SARJAPUR ROAD METHODIST CHURCH | AN EXTN OF HMC

Celebrating

*God's Gift*

On Earth!





# *Christmas Time!*

*It is a season of great joy, a time for remembering the good of the past and hoping for the best in the future!*

*May the glorious message of peace & love fill you with joy, during this wonderful season!*

*With love & regards.*

**Rev. Alfred Sudarshan & Family**

*Best regards from:*

**Rev. Mathew George M & Family**

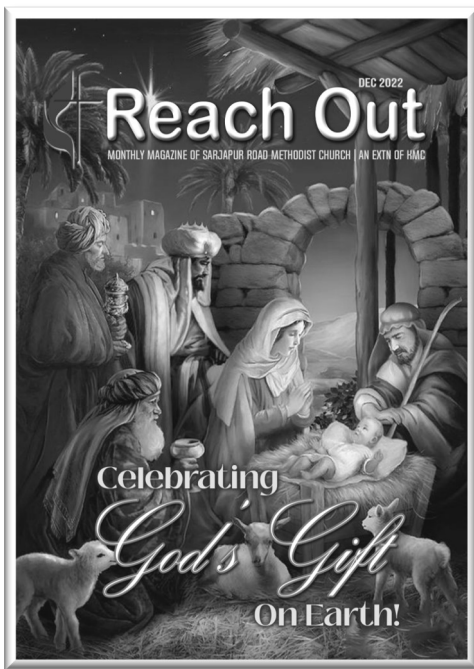
**Rev. Daniel Ezra Naveen & Family**

**Rev. John Shikamani & Family**



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### MISSION STATEMENT

"To be obedient, cheerful, compassionate, humble stewards of God's Word and resources, in utter dependence upon God through prayer, so that we as a congregation and those we reach out to, will experience transformation through the saving grace of God and grow as Christ-centered people, guided by the Holy Spirit."

### SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE:

**9:00 AM**

### PASTOR:

**Rev. Alfred Sudarshan Raju**

Mobile: +91 98445 64695

Email: [alfredsraju86@gmail.com](mailto:alfredsraju86@gmail.com)

### SARJAPUR ROAD METHODIST CHURCH

Beside St. Patrick's Academy, Kodathi Gate, Bengaluru - 560 035.

Web: [www.srmcblr.org](http://www.srmcblr.org) | Email: [office@srmcblr.org](mailto:office@srmcblr.org)

Phone: +91 98445 64695

## PASTORAL LETTER



**D**ear SRMC Family,  
Greetings to you all in the matchless name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus

Christ. It brings me immense Joy to write to you all through this monthly newsletter. God has been faithful in each one of our lives, through his grace he has enabled us to see this 12<sup>th</sup> month of this year 2022. The month of December brings great joy to all of us, as we remember, rejoice in the birth of our Saviour Jesus Christ. I hope and believe that we all had a wonderful month of Thanksgiving. The theme for this month is **“Celebrating God’s gift on Earth”**

As we enter this season of Christmas, it reminds us that God fulfilled his promise to humanity by sending his only begotten son Jesus Christ. He is the perfect revelation of God in human form. As we celebrate this Christmas season, our thoughts turn to that sacred event long ago when the prince of peace and the light of the world was born. Isaiah 9:6: ***“For unto us a child is born, for us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called wonderful counsellor, mighty God, everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”***

Jesus Christ is our saviour and redeemer, who was wounded for our transgression, and with his stripes we are healed; (Isa 53:5). He promised: He that followed me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life (Jn 8:12).

The Greatest gift we have received is Jesus Christ and the greatest gift we can give to others, is introducing the saviour of the world to them, proclaiming to people in darkness *“Emmanuel”* God is with us. And we should not just share our faith but we should reach out to one another with all the blessings that God has given us, especially the gift of peace. Our world, our country, and our homes are often the witnesses to violence, prejudice, and fear. Christmas is a time for us to counter these ills of society by loving each other as God loved us by sending us his son.

As the song writer also reminds us that ... Mary, did you know, that your baby boy is Lord of all creation?... this sleeping child you are holding is the great I am!

How could anyone have known, that the Almighty, eternal God would in his wisdom and mercy come into our world in the frailty of a baby, born in the small-town of Bethlehem in a distant corner of the Roman empire, he would be named as Jesus, which means He will save, save his people from their sins. He would be called 'Emmanuel' – which means “God is with us.” As we see in Isaiah 7:14, which says, therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign; the Virgin will conceive, and give birth to a Son and will call him Emmanuel.”

The Lord himself will do this, Scripture says. In other words, this act, which occurred in the birth of Christ, was God-ordained and God-accomplished. This points to the grace, which comes not through human effort but rather through relying on God to do what we humans cannot. This was the reason Christ came. God gave us this child, named Emmanuel.

### ***What Emmanuel means to us Today***

In truth, God is and always has been with us. He is omnipresent, which means He is everywhere all the time. Speaking of God, the ancient psalmist David wrote, *“Where can I go from your spirit? where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in depths, you are there, If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.”* (Psalms 139:7-10). God has always been present, throughout the universe. But he has been present with his people as well. This was what made him so different from all other gods the pagan nations worshipped.

The New Testament makes it clear that Jesus, God's son, was the fulfilment of Old Testament prophesy. He was the long-promised Emmanuel, sent by God to save his people and usher in a new kingdom. He came as a mediator between God and man, as our redeemer, saviour, and friend. 2000 years ago, God looked upon our sin-ravished world, saw our hopelessness and all our futile attempts to make ourselves right with Him. And he did what we could never do- He came to

us. When Christ came to earth, he quite literally became “God with us” but he did so much more than enter our humanity. He lived among us, showed us the way to the Father, then paved that way himself through his death on the cross.

Because of Christ’s death and resurrection, we truly can receive the gift of “God with us” not just with us, as a friend he walks beside us, though he comes to live inside us, giving us strength in the place of weakness and courage in the place of fear, and vibrant life in all those dark places that once felt dead. The “God with us” changes us and everything around us through his presence. Therefore, let us welcome this Emmanuel amidst of us with joy and celebration.

As we celebrate Christmas, dear SRMC members let us remember that God became human being so that we can know God on a human level. There is a gracious invitation to all to personally know the Lord, the saviour and experience his presence in our lives. May this Christmas be a Christmas where we welcome him in our hearts, in our homes, in our churches and in our societies this “Emmanuel.”

May each of us be blessed during this joyous time of the year, and may we acknowledge with gratitude our heavenly Father’s incomparable gift to us - his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Wishing you all Happy Christmas and blessed new year 2023! God bless us all!!!

Yours in Christ,  
**Rev. Alfred Sudarshan Raju**  
(Pastor, SRMC)

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Please continue to support SRMC’s vision of a wholesome and God-loving Faith Community in this part of the city. You can send in your tithes/offerings to the Church by scanning this QR code. May God bless you abundantly.



# PRAISE & PRAYER

## *Praise God*

- ♦ Praise God for His grace, as we meditated on the theme **“Giving Thanks to the Lord”** during the month of November.
- ♦ Praise God for the ministry of **Rev. J. Uday Kumar**, for helping us participate in Holy Communion and also bringing the word of God unto us, during the month of November.

## *Remember and Pray*

- ♦ Continue to pray for our Bishop N. L. Karkare, Madam Kamal Karkare, Executive Secretary Rev. David Nathaniel, Conference Treasurer, Rev. Mathew George M., District Superintendent Rev. Sebastian Ravikumar. Pray continuously for the Bangalore Regional Conference and that God’s will be accomplished through the conference.
- ♦ Pray for our dear Pastor, Rev. Alfred Sudarshan Raju and his family. Also, kindly keep our extended Pastoral team & their families at KMC; Rev. Mathew George, Rev. Daniel Ezra Naveen, Rev. John Shikamani and our Pastorate Committee members and their families in prayers.
- ♦ Pray for the SRMC Sunday School, children & teens ministry. Pray for wisdom and health for all teachers and volunteers, for the media team and for the technical challenges that are involved.
- ♦ Pray for the Advent Season and the events and services planned during this month.
- ♦ Pray that God may raise people in the Church and outside, who can own the Project – **‘Arise, let us build’** and support in building up the place of worship at Sarjapur Road. Please pray for the right decisions to be taken going ahead.
- ♦ Pray for the Management Team of SRMC and their families as they help in various activities of the church.
- ♦ Pray for the Bible Study group, Worship team, Men's & Women's fellowships, Sunday School, Choir and all the volunteers who are striving hard to serve and raise resources for our Church.

- ♦ Pray for the sick, elders, widows and the poor, who need help in our church. Pray also for all the families that you remember at our Church.
- ♦ Pray for all the families who are still suffering due to the effects of Covid, that God may give them strength to cope and hope to move ahead.
- ♦ Pray that God may reveal His Plan for us in this locality and that the SRMC family may become a channel of blessing in this vicinity.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **PASTORAL CARE** is available through the Church, you can avail the services by speaking to the Pastor personally.
- **REACH OUT** is the in-house magazine of SRMC and you are welcome to contribute your stories, missionary stories, testimonies, activity pages for children and other articles. You also have the opportunity to suggest the theme for the next Month and related resources.
- Please continue to support through your **tithes**, faithfully every month. You can offer **offerings and tithes** by utilizing online payment options given in our website ([www.srmcblr.org](http://www.srmcblr.org)) or cash. It is only through your contributions that we can build the Kingdom of God. Giving is a sign of a good Disciple.
- Project – ‘**Arise, let us build**’ contributions can be made through our website as well.
- **SRMC Sunday School** is held in the Church premises, every Sunday during the Sunday Worship Service. On break for December, will resume in January.
- **Humble request:** Please be consistent in your attendance to the Church. This will help you to grow spiritually and it will also help the Church to grow both Spiritually and Missionally.
- **Sunday School, Women’s & Men’s Fellowship meetings, Bible Studies are all on break during the Christmas Season. Will resume in January.**



# SRMC WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP VISIT TO PROVIDENCE NILAYA – FDP HOME FOR THE AGED

November 26<sup>th</sup> 2022



# SRMC ANNUAL THANKSGIVING SUNDAY

NOVEMBER 13<sup>th</sup> 2022

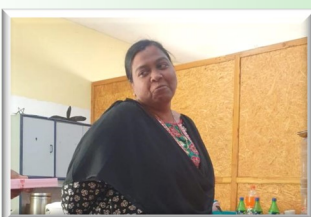
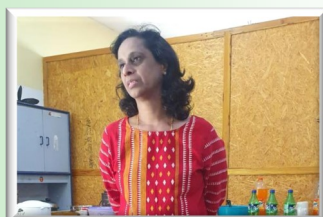






# SRMC WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP GET TOGETHER & POTLUCK LUNCH

December 3<sup>rd</sup> 2022



# CHRIST CAME DOWN ON CHRISTMAS DAY!

With a lowly birth, o'erflowed heavenly mirth  
As the son of God, Willingly trod  
The face of the earth  
While angels sang of His birth;

Heavens rejoiced, Earth was glad  
As the king of kings, poorly clad  
Lay in a manger, that winter night  
With stars that shed heavenly light,  
Light that led **wise men** afar  
To search for this king, fairer by far  
Gifts did they bring, fit for a king  
Happy were they, to behold the babe on the hay

As the gentle babe lay, **Shepherds** came to pay  
Homage to their Lord, their shepherd and God  
Angels choir sang, heavenly chorus rang  
Through the skies and to the earth  
As they heralded the saviour's birth

And on this night that we hold dear  
Let us come to our saviour near  
Rejoicing his birth, in a world so drear  
Proclaiming His word with holy fear  
Singing His praise, His anthems raise  
As God of Gods, **we** humbly thank  
For forgiveness and grace, He freely did grant  
So we could be in those mansions so bright  
When our heavenly abode, we do alight

Now thank we, our saviour and Lord  
For this day that He our God  
Came to this earth to light our day  
And Christ came down on Christmas day!

*- Penned by Mrs. Gracia Dilip*



## Hymn History - IN THE BLEAK MIDWINTER



**Christina Georgiana Rossetti** (1830-1894) gives us one of the most beloved Christmas hymns. The author of three collections of mostly religious poetry and four devotional books, she came from a family steeped in the arts. Her deep faith is thought to be partially the result of the solace that she found in writing as a result of her poor health from age sixteen.

Christina's father, Gabriele Rossetti, was a professor of Italian at King's College, London, living in exile in England. Her brothers Dante Gabriel and William

Michael gave birth to a nineteenth-century art movement, the Pre-Raphaelites, for which the beautiful Christina often served as a model (*see the photo*), especially for portraits of the Madonna. Among the family friends was Charles Dodgson, who, under the pseudonym of Lewis Carroll, authored the famous *Alice in Wonderland*. An ardent Anglican, Christina rejected one suitor because he was Roman Catholic.

Her most famous hymns are the Christmas texts, "Love Came Down at Christmas" composed in 1885 (UM Hymnal No. 242) and "In the Bleak Midwinter," the latter first published as the poem "A Christmas Carol" in *Scribner's Monthly* in January 1872. It first appeared as a hymn in *The English Hymnal* (1906), where it was paired to a tune by the famous English composer Gustav Holst (1874-1934). Now, over 100 years later, we sing this hymn in virtually the same form as it appeared in 1906.

In the first memorable stanza, Rossetti creates a dreary and desolate image of the world into which the infant Jesus appeared by drawing on the experience of a British winter. She is not suggesting that it literally snowed in Bethlehem, but is drawing on a long-established literary idea of associating snow with Christ's birth. The famous seventeenth-century poet, John Milton, used the winter imagery in his poem, "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity," as a pure covering to hide the sin of the world.

*It was the Winter wilde, While the Heav'n-born-childe,  
All meanly wrapt in the rude manger lies;  
Nature in aw to him, Had doff't her gawdy trim . . .*

Rossetti exploits this metaphor in the opposite way in her opening stanza. The Incarnate One, the Light of the World, brought warmth into the most forlorn and dreary of sinful situations.

The second stanza uses the device of antithesis to make the point that the eternal One whom "heaven could not hold" nor "earth sustain" appeared during the "bleak winter" of human existence where "a stable place sufficed." This paradox of the eternal One born in a humble setting is a primary theme of many hymns of this season.

An omitted third stanza explores the intimacy of the manger scene.

*Enough for him, whom cherubim, Worship night and day,  
A breastful of milk, And a mangerful of hay;  
Enough for him, whom angels Fall down before,  
The ox and ass and camel, which adore.*

The fourth stanza once again contrasts the heavenly glory of gathered "Angels and archangels" and "cherubim and seraphim" with the mother who alone "worshipped the beloved with a kiss."

The final stanza is perhaps one of the most endearing to singers of Christmas hymns. Yet, as British hymnologist J. R. Watson observes, "The final verse is strangely interesting."

*What can I give him, Poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;  
If I were a wise man, I would do my part;  
Yet what I can I give him; Give my heart.*

Watson cites an article by British hymn writer Elizabeth Cosnett (b. 1936) who provides a social commentary that may shed light on this stanza. She notes that, "when a woman wrote these words women were largely excluded from the professions and from higher education." Like the shepherds, she was not employed; like the wise men, Rossetti held no degree. Watson concludes that this reading of the final stanza "does not invalidate the more general reading of the verse; but it gives a special sharpness and poignancy to the last verse for those who wish to find it."

The writer invites us to offer our own gift to the Christ Child just as the shepherds and wise men did. Rather than the present of a lamb or expensive gifts, however, we offer the most important gift -- our hearts.

Christina Rossetti died on 29 December 1894 and was buried on New Year's Day 1895 in the family grave on the west side of Highgate Cemetery. There she joined her father, mother and Elizabeth Siddal, wife of her brother Dante Gabriel. Her brother William was also buried there in 1919, as were the ashes of four subsequent family members.

There is a stone tablet on the façade of 30 Torrington Square, Bloomsbury, marking her final home, where she died.

***Compiled by Joel Dubba***

*Source: [umcdiscipleship.org](http://umcdiscipleship.org) | [Wikipedia.org](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christina_Rossetti)*

# 6 FACTS ABOUT JESUS' BIRTH

**H**ere are seven amazing facts about the birth of Jesus Christ that are found in the Bible.

## 1. *Where is the Innkeeper?*

I looked in the Bible for the innkeeper in the story of a very pregnant Mary and Joseph but couldn't find it in the Bible. The fact that about every Christmas play I have ever seen has an innkeeper but there's not one in the account of Jesus' birth which sort of mystifies me. Where did that come from? Where did this originate? I'm not saying there wasn't an innkeeper in the experience of Joseph and Mary but we can't dogmatically say that there was. That is sheer speculation and that's not solid ground upon which to build an account of a biblical story.



## 2. *Singing Angels at Jesus' Birth?*

Nearly every Christmas card with a nativity scene in it has an angel present and watching over Joseph, Mary, and Jesus but it's not found in Scripture. The same belief that angels were singing at the time of Jesus' birth is not found in the Bible; it only says that "a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased" (Luke 2:13-14). They were "saying" not singing. That's altogether a different Greek word.

## 3. *The Kings of the East?*

The Bible never says that there were three kings or wise men (Magi) that visited Jesus. They did bring three gifts to Jesus and these were all fitting for the King; gold which was a gift to be given that was worthy of a king; there was frankincense which may have represented prayers being offered up to God; and there myrrh which would be used at Jesus' death for His burial. I doubt very much if there were only three kings on three camels. There may have been a dozen or more kings or Magi but there would have certainly been support staff and armed guards as they had likely been traveling for over half a year or more.

## 4. *No visit in the Manger*

I discovered that Jesus was not a babe lying in a manger when the Magi

or wise men (three kings) visited Jesus and presented their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. When they did arrive, it was well after the birth of Jesus after Jesus had already been presented in the temple (Luke 2:22-39) so when the wise men (Magi) “went into the house (not a manger) they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh” (Matt 2:11). The word used for child come from the Greek word “paidion” which means “young child, a little boy,” or “a little girl” which is different from the Greek word used for infant. The Magi came “after Jesus was born in Bethlehem” (Matt 2:1) but not right at His birth.

## **5. *An Un-Stable Account?***

There is no record in the Bible that Jesus was born in a stable or a cave but we do know that there were animals present, therefore we can presume that Jesus was born in a place that housed animals or where animals were kept. Was it outside? Was it in a barn or stable? The Bible never tells us. The only clue we have to where Jesus was born was that He was born in a feeding trough (a manger) and animals were present. I suppose my conclusion is this; if God had thought it was important enough for us to know, He would’ve included it in Scripture. I think God wanted the focus to be on Christ and not the place.

## **6. *Parental Rights***

Jesus’ parents, Joseph and Mary had no say in what to call the baby. Maybe they had some other name picked out. Not likely though since Joseph found Mary to be with child even before they were married so deciding on a name was probably the farthest thing from their minds. Instead, Joseph wanted to secretly divorce Mary to shield her from public shame and scandal but an angel told Joseph that Mary “will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins” (Matt 1:21). Joseph was not the real father but the Spirit of God was, even so God had predetermined the name Jesus which means “savior” because “he will save his people from their sins.”

## ***Conclusion***

When it comes down to it, it doesn’t really matter if we don’t fully understand every detail in the account of Jesus’ death. What does matter is if you have a relationship with Him or not. Jesus said “Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters” (Matt 12:30), there is no 3rd option. You must repent and believe in Christ or you will die in your sins by your refusal to repent and trust in the Savior.

**- Written by Pastor Jack Wellman**  
(for [godtube.com](http://godtube.com))



# CHRISTMAS WORD SEARCH



O P R I N L I G G Q Q R G L U N H Z E F  
C H Z Q E J A O R E I N D E E R I R L Q  
M B M O L S Z T V W U P O B N D T T V V  
N H N J O L L Y N U Y E N M I H C C E U  
X P M N P P S F I A G K A C L Y V H S Z  
D L A E H X C E L B S F P G C E T Q E G  
Z O M N T H E D A Y S G N I T E E R G M  
S D Z I R V T Q P S G S B W C C P W V Q  
P U I Z O V A J A E O R U A C F S O G S  
G R E H N X R L B P Y N N N H R S O I L  
B N Z C S T B H J O M D P I M O A B V M  
Y M I S T L E T O E Y R D E E S M C I U  
G O C N O R L D K C O Q O N R T T W N B  
W K Y Q C Z E J A G O V T D R Y S D G Q  
L O R T K L C N I C G P N R Y L I N X S  
J N X J I R E F B A V A P J E H R D C Z  
X L W O N H T A E R W V I I L E H A Y E  
W L R D G Z G Y L D J C G N X E C M B O  
M Y A D I L O H L S U H J A W N Z A M J  
I X P D B T V H S K M W S E L D N A C U

BELLS  
CANDLES  
CANDY CANE  
CARDS  
CELEBRATE  
CHIMNEY  
CHRISTMAS

RUDOLPH  
SANTA  
SEASON  
SLEIGH  
STOCKING  
TREE  
WREATH

ELVES  
FROSTY  
GIFT  
GIVING  
GREETINGS  
HOLIDAY  
JOLLY

JOY  
MERRY  
MISTLETOE  
NOEL  
NORTH POLE  
REINDEER





## CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR COMMUNION WORSHIP SERVICES

24/12/2022 | Saturday, 10 PM

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP SERVICE | PEACE ON EARTH | LUKE 1:67-79

Speaker: Rev. Alfred Sudarshan Raju

25/12/2022 | Sunday, 9 AM

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SERVICE | GRACE UPON GRACE | MATT 2:13-23

Speaker: Rev. Alfred Sudarshan Raju

31/12/2022 | Saturday, 10 PM

COVENANT RENEWAL SERVICE | NAHUM 1:1-5 / 1 PET 2:1-10

Speaker: Rev. Alfred Sudarshan Raju

01/01/2023 | Sunday, 9 AM

NEW YEAR'S DAY WORSHIP SERVICE | ISAIAH 43:14-28

Speaker: Rev. Alfred Sudarshan Raju



**SARJAPUR ROAD METHODIST CHURCH**

*Christmas Fellowship Dinner*

An evening of fellowship, sumptuous dinner,  
Carols singing and a presentation of the  
Christmas play by our Sunday School children!  
Come join us with family, friends & neighbours!

**17 DEC '22 | 6 PM ONWARDS**

Besides St. Patrick's Academy, Kodathi Gate, Sarjapur Road, Bengaluru  
Website: [www.srmcblr.org](http://www.srmcblr.org)

ADULTS (12+) ₹200

CHILDREN (<12) ₹100

The poster features a festive design with red and white snowflakes, a Christmas tree, a nativity scene, and a circular logo with a cross and the letters 'SRMC'.



**SUBSCRIBE**  
TO OUR CHANNEL

[www.youtube.com/SRMCBangalore](http://www.youtube.com/SRMCBangalore)



# SARJAPUR ROAD METHODIST CHURCH

## Pulpit Calendar

*"Glory to God in the highest heaven and on earth  
peace among those whom he favours." Luke 2:14*



### DECEMBER 2022

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1st Sunday | 04/12/2022 | 9 AM

**COMMUNION SUNDAY** | WORD OF GOD

MATT 1:18-25 | SPEAKER: REV. J. D. VIJAY KUMAR

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2nd Sunday | 11/12/2022 | 9 AM

**WOMEN'S CHRISTMAS** | EMMANUEL GOD WITH US

MATT 1:18-25 | SPEAKER: MRS. GIFTY JOHN

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3rd Sunday | 18/12/2022 | 9 AM

**CAROLS SUNDAY** | INSIGNIFICANT BECAME SIGNIFICANT

LUKE 2:8-20 | SPEAKER: REV. ALFRED S. RAJU

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4th Sunday\* | 25/12/2022 | 9 AM

**CHRISTMAS DAY** | GRACE UPON GRACE

MATT 2:13-23 | SPEAKER: REV. ALFRED S. RAJU

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All services are LIVE STREAMED on [www.srmcblr.org](http://www.srmcblr.org)

**SARJAPUR ROAD METHODIST CHURCH**

Besides St. Patrick's Academy, Sarjapur Road, Bengaluru

*Celebrating God's Gift*

**ON EARTH**