



FEB 2024

Reach Out

MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF SARJAPUR ROAD METHODIST CHURCH



***LIVING IN THE SHADOW
OF THE CROSS***



"On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it."
Matt. 16:18

SRMC @ 12!

We cordially invite you to join us in
thanking our God for 12 years of
existence as a community of Faith
in Bangalore

ANNIVERSARY WORSHIP SERVICE

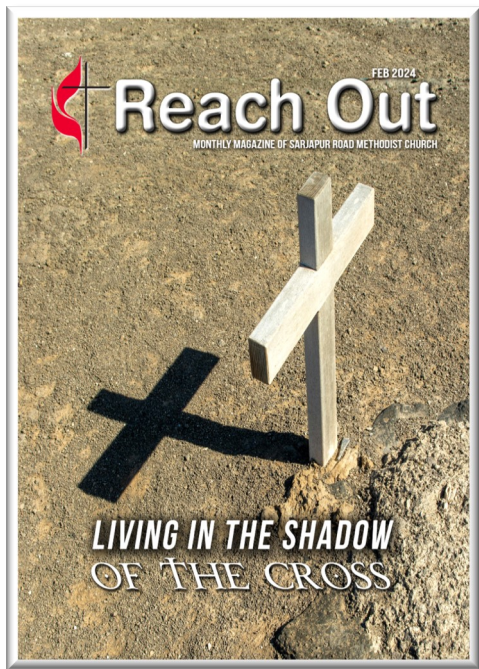
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Sunday, 18 February 2024
9 AM ONWARDS

Live Streamed on www.srmcblr.org

SARJAPUR ROAD METHODIST CHURCH
Beside St. Patrick's Academy, Kodathi Gate, Bangalore

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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

Mobile: +91 98445 64695

Email: alfredsraju86@gmail.com

SARJAPUR ROAD METHODIST CHURCH

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

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PASTORAL LETTER



REV. ALFRED SUDARSHAN

Dear SRMC Members,

Greetings to you all in the matchless name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It gives me immense joy in writing to you all once again through this newsletter. God had been faithful to us as a Church. He is still faithful and remains faithful forever. He is the same, yesterday, today, and forever. As I was thinking and pondering upon the theme for the month of February 2024, as we are also approaching the season of Lent (*Ash Wednesday begins in the middle of the month*), God enabled me to think in lines of Discipleship and Cross. As disciples of Jesus Christ, we are called to deny ourselves and follow the Master. It is also a time where we turn to Christ and His Cross as we journey towards the season of Lent. Therefore, the theme would be **“LIVING IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS”**.

No other symbol in the history of humanity has become as iconic as the cross. Instantly recognized by the millions of the people, the cross has inspired hope and courage and brought new life to untold numbers of people since the scandalous, but necessary, death of Jesus Christ. The Cross is “the emblem of suffering and shame,” was not just a historical event, or even symbolic of a future hope, but a living reality.

When Jesus instructed His followers to take up their cross and follow Him (Mathew 16:24), He envisioned a whole new way of living: In one of the many

paradoxical statements, Jesus said that true life could come only through death, the death of the cross. To His disciples Jesus said, “And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it” (Mathew 10:38-39). Jesus drew parallel between the cross and life - a life that just does not begin when I’m buried, but a life that begins in the present, the moment I give my life to Jesus and cling to the “old rugged cross.”

The gospel and the cross are intertwined, so closely related that we cannot see one without the other. The gospel is the cross. In fact, we need not look far to get a very clear picture of the gospel. The cross-shaped gospel has to do with human being reconciled to God (the vertical beam) through sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the Messiah who died in our place and for our sins. Sadly, many times we disconnect the two beams, undermining the power of the gospel. When we disconnect the vertical and horizontal beams, the Christ—follower and the church limp along, not functioning at full capacity.

The beauty of the cross-shaped gospel is when both dimensions are lived out through a life that has been justified and growing in Christ-exalting holiness, along with loving and engaging our neighbors and society for the glory of God. Church and life just does not get any better than when we are living the cross-shaped gospel.

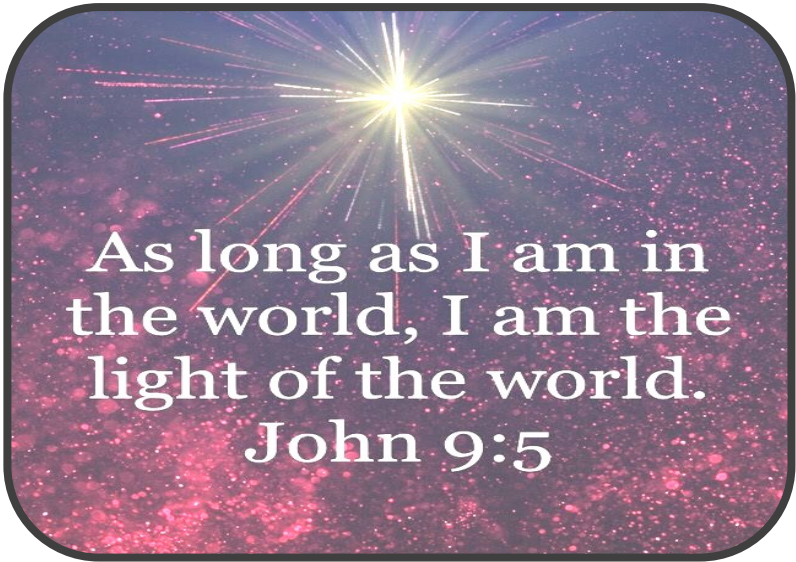
Life is at its richest when we are living in close communion with God and loving our neighbors at the same time. When life becomes solely about quiet times and Bible studies, there’s this innate feeling that something is missing, because something is! On the other hand, when life is just about serving and loving others, and it does not flow from deep affections for God, a sense of disequilibrium creeps in as well.

The Cross-shaped gospel isn’t ultimately about our enjoyment or living our life to the fullest, these are but by-products of two greater realities - the glory of God and the betterment of our world. My Prayer to all of us in this month of February as we also celebrate church anniversary, prepare ourselves to enter the season of Lent is that God will even more glorified in our lives and that our spheres of influence are bettered because we are living in the Shadow of the Cross.

It is my prayer and encouragement to all of us as we mediate on the theme “Living in the Shadow of the Cross” that God would speak to us. We are entering the lent season, where we reflect on what it means to live under the shadow of the cross. It is also a time to reflect on finding light in the darkest fears of our lives Ephesians 5:8-9 “once you were in darkness, now in the Lord you are light.” John 9:5 “as long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

As disciples of Jesus Christ, there is a necessity of bearing the cross and joyfully live under the shadow of the Cross. May God Almighty Bless Us All!!!

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



As long as I am in
the world, I am the
light of the world.
John 9:5

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 *and* PRAYER

PRAISE GOD

- ♦ Praise God for His grace, as we meditated on the theme **Experiencing New Life in Christ** during the month of Jan.
- ♦ Praise God for the wonderful way He has led us and enabled us to celebrate and conduct all the activities during the past month.
- ♦ Praise God that He graciously enabled us to host the **Bangalore Methodist Men's Cricket Tournament** in an efficient manner, without any incident.

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** and his family. Also, kindly keep our extended **Pastoral team** & their families at **KMC** 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 challenges that are involved.
- ♦ 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 and 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 illnesses, economic difficulties, familial tensions, etc, that God may give them strength to cope and 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.
- ♦ 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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Sunday Worship Service** begins at 9 am every Sunday, with services being live-streamed on our website srmcblr.org.
- **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.
- **WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP** meetings are held every last Sunday of the month. **Women's Bible Study** is scheduled for **Wednesdays at 7 pm**. Please contact the women's fellowship members for more details and Zoom meeting IDs.
- **Church Bible Study** is scheduled for every **Thursday, at 7 pm**, via Zoom. Pastor will be leading us in the Bible Study.
- **SRMC Sunday School** is held in the Church premises, every Sunday during the Sunday Worship Service. Please encourage your children to attend the services prayerfully for a blessed time of growing in the Word.
- **Humble request:** Please be consistent in your attendance to the Church—either for the **live service in Church**, or via the **Live Stream** of the service on our website, every Sunday. This will help you to grow spiritually and it will also help the Church to grow both Spiritually and Missionally.



REPUBLIC DAY CELEBRATIONS - 26 JAN '24



BANGALORE METHODIST MEN'S CRICKET TOURNAMENT

26th—27th January 2024



THE SRMC CRICKET TEAM 2024



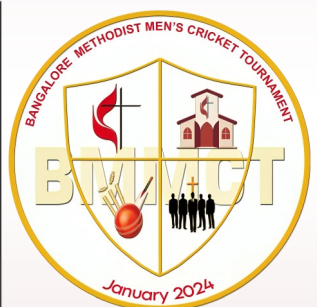
THE FOUR PARTICIPATING TEAMS



BEST BATSMAN: RAJ KATUKA (SRMC)



WINNERS: RTMC | CAPTAIN: ALFRED

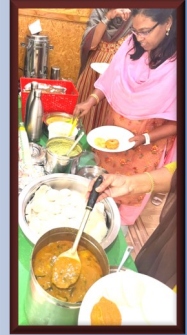


RUNNERS-UP: IMC
CAPTAIN: ANBU



THIRD PLACE: KMC
CAPTAIN: ANSHUMAN

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST - 13 JAN '24



WOMEN'S FASTING PRAYER - 20 JAN '24



PINCH ME, I MUST BE DREAMING!

SURPRISE!

Surprise endings may be difficult for us to imagine as we suffer in an apparently hopeless present! We must remember, however, that **God is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine. (Ephesians 3: 20).** Not only that, there may be a day when people look at us and say, 'The Lord has done great things for them.' And there may yet be a day when we look at each other in wonder and say - Pinch me, I must be dreaming. We all know what happened at Bethany where Martha, Maria and Lazarus lived.

“Jesus said, ‘Take away the stone.’

Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to him, 'Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days.' (John 11: 39 -40) The more I study and learn about Martha of Bethany, the more I love this lady. Too often, she has been characterized as a frantically over-worked woman who took too much on herself. While Martha did have a lesson to learn about balance and boundaries in her life, it would be good to remember that it was Martha who repeatedly focused on the care and comfort of her Friend and Master – Jesus.

With all the traveling by foot , healing and touching hundreds everyday and having sleepless nights praying, having a home of Martha as His refuge must have been such a balm to Jesus' life. Furthermore, having someone who wanted to make certain He had good meals to eat and a restful environment where He could relax, had to have touched our compassionate Lord in ways we can hardly understand.

This is why I was personally enlightened by the words of Matthew Henry who offers several different lines of thought regarding Martha's response when Jesus instructed those at the grave of Lazarus to remove the stone. First, Martha may have been thinking about the comfort of her Master, wishing to shield Him from the potentially offensive odor of her brother's body after

being in the grave for four days. Henry Mathew also suggests that Martha may have responded as she did because according to Jewish thought at the time, after four days, the body was in such a condition as to be unrecognizable. Martha witnessed Jesus' weeping and I think she did not want Him to be upset even more.

Whatever the reason for her immediate response which was basically, 'Jesus please don't so that', Martha's longing to put a stop to something that appeared to be so out of the norm should grab our attention. Perhaps people who stood there thought Jesus was behaving in a strange way!

If you and I had been there on that day, I believe we may well have gasped in horror when that stone was rolled away. But just because of everybody's discomfort, Jesus did not stop what He was doing. He didn't put a halt to the unexpected! There is also one other important point which I want to make here. After four days in a tomb, believe me all their hope was gone. As long as Lazarus was breathing, there was definitely an anticipation that Jesus would make it to Bethany in time. Lazarus was His beloved friend so everyone thought He would definitely rush to Bethany!

But as Lazarus took his last breath, their hope was lost.

And now to have Jesus uncover His friend's grave after four long days was not just unconventional, but it was inconceivable. Things were not done this way at all! And here's where this particular event in the lives of the family in Bethany touches your life and mine several thousand years later.

Those sisters had a desperate need and they had trusted that Jesus would intervene on their behalf. Has that ever happened to you? Have you or are you facing a health diagnosis or a marital problem or a financial disaster that is so threatening that you are right on the brink of losing hope that Jesus can or will do something to help you?

I love the words shared several years ago by Ruth Bell Graham, wife of Evangelist Billy Graham. She honestly reported

that, “God has not always answered my prayers. If He had, I would have married the wrong man ” Her words gave me pause as I reviewed the fact that there have been more than a few times in my own life when, like Martha, I said to Jesus, “Stop, You Can’t Do That!”

And why did I react in such a way? It was because what Jesus was doing didn’t match my prevailing idea of what He needed to do. No one at Lazarus’ tomb had “resurrection” on their minds. In fact, in their mind , Jesus had not answered their prayers. He had let them down – especially Martha and Mary who trusted Him with all their hearts. They believed in His power and they believed He was the Messiah.

But as one author points out, when our “sense and sight may stagger, and stumble, and fall, we may be able to see no break in the clouds, yet the Lord will command His loving-kindness in the daytime, and in the night His song shall be with me.

Dear friends! Whatever you face today, even when you feel your prayers are not answered, the Friend of Lazarus stands beside you. He is still the God of surprises. The Lord of the unexpected. I believe He will give each one of us just what we need. And then you will understand that God knows the best for you!

What’s more, it will come to us on the timeline set up by His gracious hand. And we will be standing there looking at each other saying, “Just pinch me. I think I’m dreaming.”

- Mrs. Prema Sunder Raj



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TO OUR CHANNEL
@SRMCBangalore

HYMN HISTORY

OPEN MY EYES THAT I MAY SEE

Clara H. Scott (1841-1897) provides us with a hymn of consecration that has been sung for over 100 years. A Midwesterner, she was born in Illinois and died in Iowa.

In 1856, Scott attended the first Music Institute held by C.M. Cady in Chicago, Ill. By 1859, she was teaching music at the Ladies' Seminary, Lyons, Iowa. She married Henry Clay Scott in 1861, and published in 1882 the Royal Anthem Book, the first volume of choir anthems published by a woman.



Horatio R. Palmer, an influential church musician in Chicago and later New York City, was a source of encouragement for Scott, and helped her publish many of her songs. Three collections were issued before her untimely death, when a runaway horse caused a buggy accident in Dubuque, Iowa.

The text of "Open My Eyes" was written in 1895 shortly before Scott's death. Each stanza reveals an increasing receptiveness to the "Spirit divine." Open eyes lead to "glimpses of truth." Open ears lead to "voices of truth." An open mouth leads to sharing the "warm truth everywhere." An open heart leads to sharing "love to thy children."

The image of open eyes is common in the Bible. In some cases, this is a sign of Christ's healing power, as when Jesus gave sight to the blind man at the pool of Siloam in John 9. Closed eyes, on the other hand, could be a metaphor for avoiding the truth as in the case of John 12:40, a passage following the triumphal entry of Christ into Jerusalem and beginning his journey to the cross: "He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them."

The image of open ears is also significant in the biblical witness. Matthew often reprises the theme "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." Closed ears become a metaphor for a lack of

understanding: "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Matthew 13:15).

While the eyes and the ears are receptive organs, the mouth has the capacity to project. The mouth may project "cursing and deceit and fraud" (Psalm 10:7), or it may be an organ that projects praise, as Psalm 51:15 exhorts us: "O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall show forth thy praise."

The heart is the only organ included in this hymn that is not visible. It may harbor deceit. Jesus asks in Matthew 9:4, "Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?" But Jesus also realized that the heart has the capacity for purity: "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8).

Scott has given us not only a list of organs through which we may receive and project truth and love, but also provides the method in her refrain:

*Silently now I wait for thee,
Ready my God, thy will to see.
Open my eyes, ears, and heart,
Illumine me, Spirit divine*

Learning to use these organs requires patience and reflection. The gentle 6/8 meter of Scott's music provides a subtle sense of dancing in tune with the Spirit as we learn to see, hear and speak the truth from our hearts.

Clara H. Scott died tragically in 1897 after being thrown from her carriage by a spooked horse.

Compiled by Joel Dubba

Sources: umcdiscipleship.org/wikipedia.org

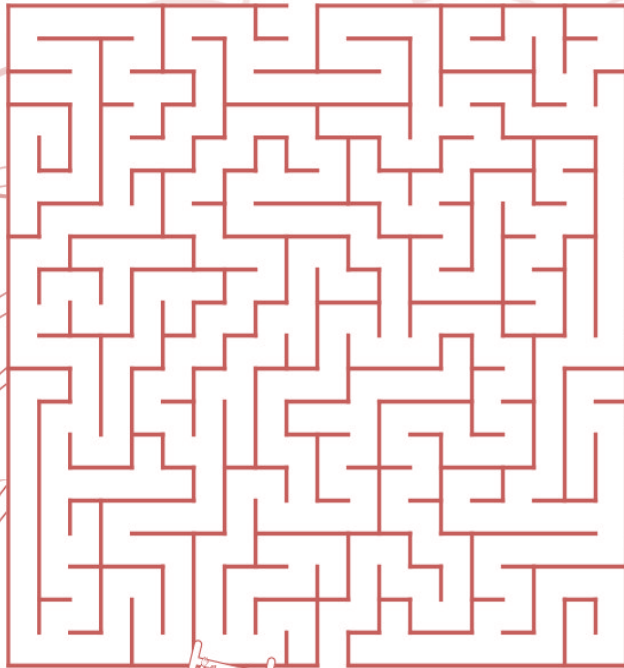
Saved With Amazing Grace

Bible Maze

"I AM" THE WAY, TRUTH, & THE LIFE

Guide the angels to heaven.

END



START



LENTEN MEDITATIONS 2024

"I AM" SAYINGS OF JESUS CHRIST

23 rd February '24 <i>I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE</i>	7:00 pm	John 6:35
01 st March '24 <i>I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD</i>	7:00 pm	John 8:12
08 th March '24 <i>I AM THE DOOR</i>	7:00 pm	John 10:9
15 th March '24 <i>I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD</i>	7:00 pm	John 10:11-14
22 nd March '24 <i>I AM THE RESURRECTION & THE LIFE</i>	7:00 pm	John 14:6

GOOD FRIDAY & EASTER

GOOD FRIDAY SEVEN WORDS ON THE CROSS	29 th March '24 12:00 pm
EASTER JESUS CHRIST IS RISEN!	31 st March '24 9:00 am

REFLECT. REPENT. RENEW.



LIVING IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS

Reach Out

DESIGN BY FAITH
SOLUTIONS

SARJAPUR ROAD METHODIST CHURCH

Pulpit Calendar

“And whoever does not take his cross and follow me
is not worthy of me.” *Matt 10:38*

FEBRUARY 2024

1st Sunday | 04/02/2024 | 9 AM

COMMUNION | LIVING IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS
JER 20:7-9 | MATT 16:21-27

2nd Sunday | 11/02/2024 | 9 AM

THE CROSS-CENTERED INSTRUCTION THAT AFFECTS OUR LIVES
MARK 9:30-50

ASH WEDNESDAY | 14/02/2024 | 7 PM

CROSS: CALL TO SELF-DENIAL
JOHN 6:35

3rd Sunday | 18/02/2024 | 9 AM

ON THIS ROCK, I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH
MATTHEW 16:1-20 | CHURCH ANNIVERSARY SUNDAY

4th Sunday | 25/02/2024 | 9 AM

THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP
LUKE 14:25-35

All worship services are LIVE on www.srmcblr.org

SARJAPUR ROAD METHODIST CHURCH

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