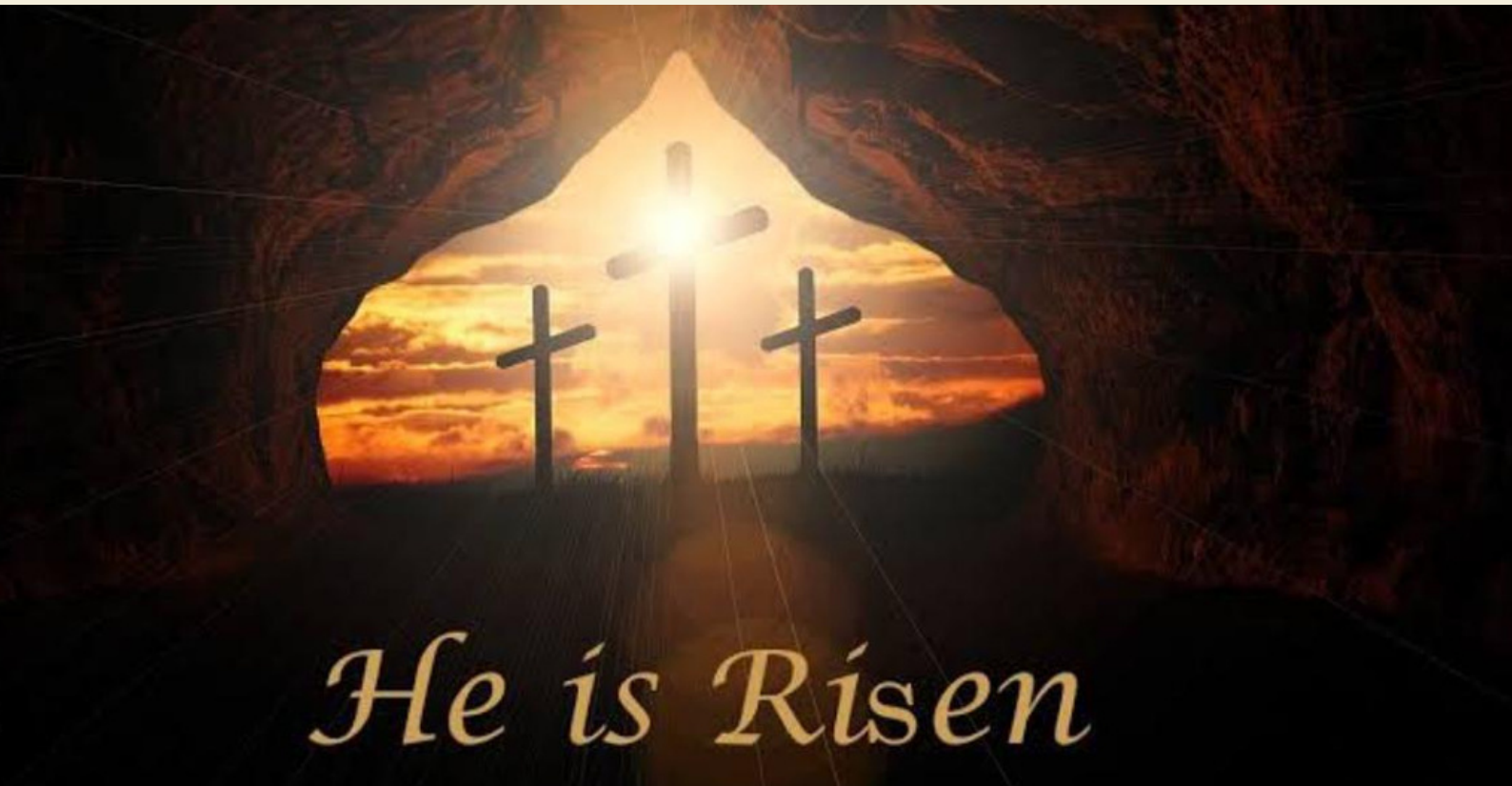




The Voice

The Triannual Newsletter of
Bethel Mar Thoma Suvishesha Sevika Sangham, Sydney



“Women of Purpose”

“For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works which God prepared in advance for us to do. Ephesians 2:10”

Exclusive insights in this issue

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Blessings

Dear Bethel Women,

I am convinced that once we are driven by purpose in life we will never let the weeds grow in our thoughts but will be coming closer to the meaning of life. I am immensely moved to see the theme of the newsletter, 'Women of purpose'. It is quite inherent for us to keep asking the purpose for which we do all things .

There was a time that the purpose of girl children born to families was conditioned by socio-religious don'ts and 'Lakshman Rekhas'. Conditioning is a psychological tool/ method by which we are tuned to think within the limits of an agency (society) . Purpose of life (of women) stems from exposure to the wider world where men and women share equity and equality, finding purpose in relation to each other .

Let me take you to the Gospel of John chapter 4 where Jesus re-defined and re-interpreted purpose of women by conversing with a woman of Samaria . She had no name but had been named after a region Samaria, a region looked down on by the Jews . Jesus released her from her stigma and raised her to be a symbol of a purpose driven woman.

"Many Samaritans from that town believed in him(Jesus) because of the woman's testimony (John 4:39)". She has become Jesus's Apostle saying that she had found the purpose of her life and meeting herself .

It's not just someone who dictates the purpose of our life but we find it ourselves in Jesus.

WWPC (Women With Purpose Conference) has a mission . It helps women to ask the question; what way Purpose enriches one (woman) ? I think it is " living positive " .

May all articles included in the news letter be edifying to you all.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eapen Mathew'.

Rev. Eapen Mathew
President

Bethel Mar Thoma Suvishesha Sevika Sangham, Sydney



“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” (Romans 8:28)

As we reflect on the theme of “Women of Purpose”; in this edition of our church newsletter, let us first express our gratitude to the Almighty. We thank God for the strength, wisdom and grace bestowed upon all the women in our church, allowing us to accomplish our goals over the past year.

The concept of “**Women of Purpose**” is based on an unwavering commitment to live life with a clear sense of direction. These women have discovered their unique calling and have dedicated their lives to fulfil their destiny. Whether they are homemakers, professionals, carers or community leaders, such women of purpose navigate difficult paths with the grace of God, unswerving determination and a burning desire to make a difference.

Be purposeful in all that you do. Pray and meditate on God’s word. Let Him speak to you because hearing from Him enhances your purpose. When you walk in His purpose, you will be fulfilled and blessed beyond measure and your life will take on meaning and significance.

The Bible and our church have shown us countless examples of women who represent the essence of purpose-driven living. As we reflect on the theme of “Women of Purpose”; let us not only recognise the remarkable accomplishments of women past and present, but also renew our commitment to promote the empowerment of underprivileged women in our communities. Let us create environments in which their voices are heard, their abilities are recognised, and their contributions are valued.

As we read the pages of this newsletter, may the stories and achievements of women with purpose inspire us all to embrace our own unique aspirations and work to make a positive difference in the world around us. With hearts full of gratitude and anticipation, let us recognise the opportunities that lie ahead of us, trusting in God’s guidance and provision every step along the way.

Stay blessed and be a blessing for others.



Mrs. Simi Jins
Vice President
Bethel Mar Thoma Suvishesha Sevika Sangham, Sydney



Main Message

Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies. Proverbs 31:11.

King Solomon says that it is not possible to find such a virtuous woman, after experiencing the luxuries of the known world! He was the man who had 100 wives and more than that many number of concubines!

Are we having an overwhelming desire to make a difference for Christ with our lives? You need not do something extraordinary or be someone special. But submit to God and He can make each one of us, a woman of purpose. The Bible teaches us about many women with short comings but with God's grace and submission fulfilled the purpose of their lives on earth.

1. Ask God to make you a risk taker.

The widow in the Gentile city of Sidon to whom the prophet Elijah was sent, was notoriously poor and was hated by Jews. While King Ahab of Israel was ruling the land, she risked her life by welcoming someone into her home, whom the king was waiting to destroy. She risked her existence even, by giving up her last piece of bread, that was the sustenance of her two membered family. The craze of the worldly things, and pride that comes from wealth and importance can tie us up to the train that moves to destruction. 1 John 2:16-17 says, "For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever". God is calling us to come out of our comfort zone. He wants us to rely on Him and be a risk taker for Him.

2. Trust in His unfailing love.

This widow was a woman of desperation and hopelessness. She and her son had withdrawn themselves to die after their last morsel. But when the prophet said that God would multiply her flour and oil, she made the choice to trust God and make a loaf for Elijah.

This opened the flood gates of heaven. God miraculously filled her containers of flour and oil with all they needed to overcome the famine and the drought, even sustaining her household. God taught this widow and her family to feast on the Bread of life. John 6: 48-51. She saw Elijah as a man of God and trusted his words as God's unfailing love. This Gentile widow was remembered by Jesus 900 years later.

Bread of life. John 6: 48-51. She saw Elijah as a man of God and trusted his words as God's unfailing love. This Gentile widow was remembered by Jesus 900 years later.

3. Be a giver of God's grace.

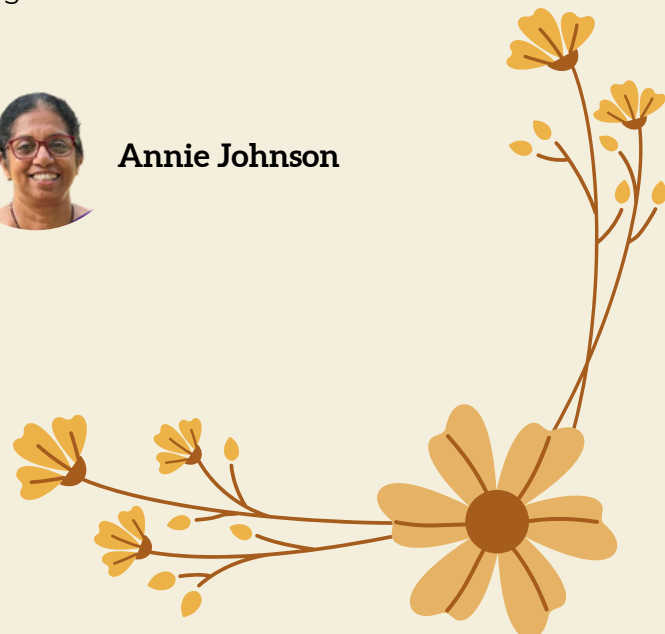
Consider each one on earth as someone created in the image of God and loved by God. ***1 Thessalonians 5:14 says, "And we urge you, brothers and sisters, warn those who are idle and disruptive, encourage the disheartened, help the weak, be patient with everyone".***

Ruth considered her foreign mother-in law Naomi as a special person created by God and extended God's grace, when Naomi travelled back to Bethlehem. She left her own family in Moab and went far away to Bethlehem, clinging on to Naomi. This enabled Ruth to become the grandmother of King David and to enter the genealogy of Jesus. God's grace is marvellous!

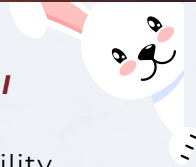
Let us extend our grace to others as how God has given to us.



Annie Johnson



Easter Message



Jesus's resurrection blessed us with the gift of new life. The newness of life means ***I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me (Galatians 2:20)***. For Christ to live within us, we need to clothe ourselves with humility because God dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit (Isa 57:15). To live in Christ, we need to take the path which Jesus took, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death (Phil 2:8).

The term 'humility is derived from the Latin word **'humilitatem'** which in turn is derived from 'humilis' which means 'grounded'. Humility should not be mistaken with being passive or exhibiting low self- esteem or lacking self-confidence. Humility is a complex trait that involves multiple attributes that equip us to remain level-headed and well-grounded. Humility involves self-realisation of one's strengths and weaknesses, accepting one's limitations, being open-minded and having an inclusive attitude, appreciating and acknowledging others as well as being empathetic towards others.

"Humility is not thinking less of yourself, it is thinking of yourself less" (C.S.Lewis).

Jesus, who exemplified humility, commanded to love one another. Love cannot prevail without humility as humility involves reconciliation and peaceful coexistence. ***A humble attitude is a not only a powerful weapon to combat against the works of flesh which includes envy and hatred (Gal 5:19-21)*** but it is also a psychological strength that enable us to align our perspective and exercise the fruits of spirit which includes gentleness, meekness and temperance (Gal 5:22-23). Once we are in Christ, our attitude matters! Let us be encouraged to walk humbly in Christ and take comfort and strength in His promise. ***For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted. (Matt: 23:12).***



Ligy Eapen



Bible Quiz & Poem

1. What was the Jewish feast which was being celebrated the week Christ was crucified?

2. Where did Jesus eat the Passover with his disciples?

3. What did Jesus and his disciples eat at the last supper?

4. What did Judas say before he kissed Jesus?

5. After the Passover Jesus and his disciple went to which mountain?

6. Who was the first person to see the risen Christ?

7. When Jesus died there was darkness in the land? How long did it last?

8. A man named Simon was compelled to carry the cross of Jesus. In Mark 15 we are told the names of Simon's two sons. What were their names?

9. What was the name of the high priest servant who had his ear cut off by the disciple and subsequently reattached by Jesus?

10. Which disciple cut off the ear of the high priest's servant in an attempt to protect Jesus from being taken as a prisoner?

Forgiveness

Did the human in you
Want to break down in tears,
When they stripped off your clothes,
And flogged you to your bones?
Were you driven insane,
By the insurmountable pain
Of the merciless whippings,
The burden of shame,
The fearful denials
And the cruel betrayal?

Your divine self,
That transcends
All human understanding
Of selfless love,
Bore it all,
So I wouldn't fall
Down a bottomless hole;
You did it,
For lowly me -
This, I believe.

And so you chose,
To expose
The human in you,
To unimaginable pain, suffering,
Shame, and abject misery.
Yet, woe be to me,
That I fail to forgive,
As you have so freely
Forgiven me.



Beena Saji

1. Passover [22:1]
2. In a house [Mathew 26:18]
3. Bread and Wine [Mark 26:26-29]
4. Rabbi Rabbi [Mark 14:45]
5. Mount of Olives [Mark 14:26]
6. Mary Magdalene [Mark 16:9]
7. 3 hrs [Mathew 27:45]
8. Alexander and Rufus [Mark 15:21]
9. Malchus [John 18:10]
10. Peter [John 18:10]

Sumitha Rachel Kurien



Helpful Tips for Healthy Bones and Falls Prevention

As a Rehabilitation Physician, a lot of my patients who are in hospital are Post menopausal women with injuries related to falls and osteoporosis

April Falls Month is a NSW health Campaign to focus on Falls prevention and awareness and I hope that this article will give you some tips and get motivated this April to start being active and to stop that Fall .

37% : Injury Related Death is due to Falls
30%- Over 65 Fall each Year
23% - Decrease in Falls with Regular exercise

After the age of 30 years Peak Bone mass starts to decline so it is crucial to look after our bones even from a young age.

Osteoporosis is when bone becomes fragile and less dense as it loses Calcium. As a result, even a minor bump or accident can result in a fracture (broken bone).

Facts about osteoporosis

During menopause Oestrogen levels drastically decrease leading to rapid bone loss

1 in 3 Women over 50 years of age suffer from an osteoporotic fracture

Certain medical conditions can put you at risk of osteoporosis such as Thyroid Disease , Anorexia Nervosa, Coeliac disease, Diabetes > Prolonged Steroid use such as in treatment of Rheumatoid Arthritis or Asthma is a risk factor as with certain treatments for Breast Cancer .

Any woman over 50 years old with a broken bone should be investigated for osteoporosis. See your GP to organise blood tests and a special X ray called a '*bone mineral density scan*'

What can you do to prevent Osteoporosis?

Vitamin D enriched food:
Salmon, Egg yolks, Canned Tuna, Mushrooms

Calcium enriched food:
Dairy, Spinach Kale, Chia seeds, Sardines, Almond

Diet

Vitamin C enriched food:
Citrus, Kiwi fruit
strawberries, tomatoes

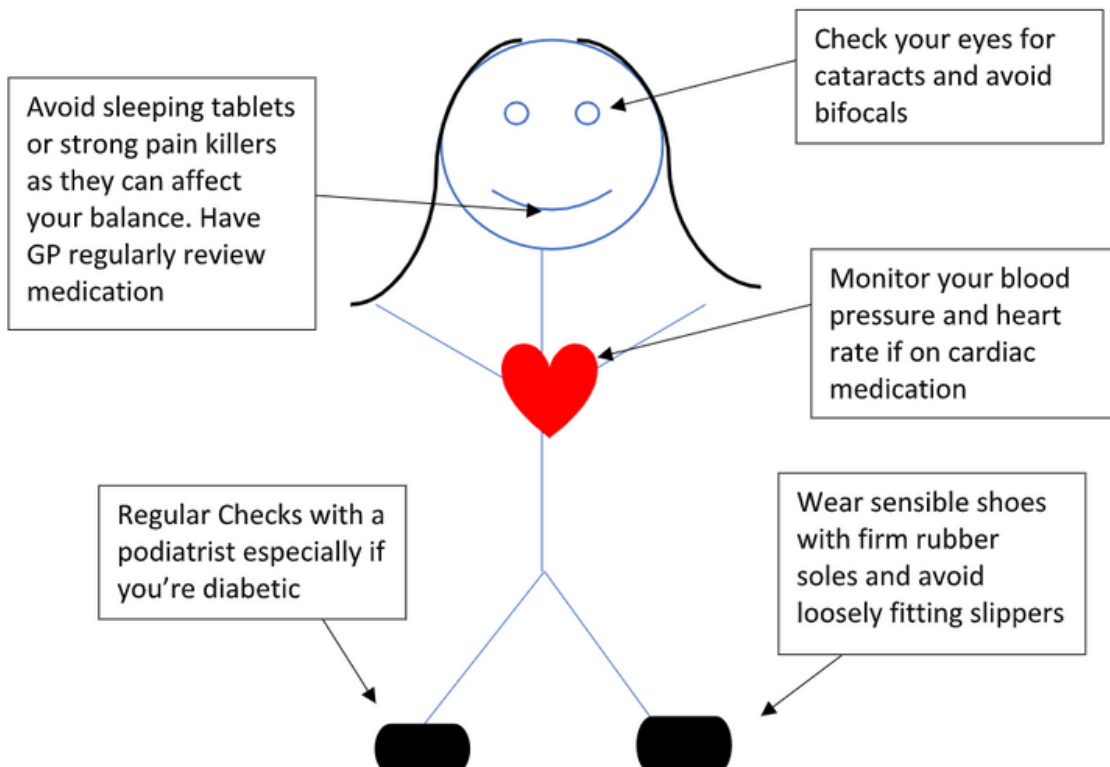
Balance exercises: e.g. standing still exercises (standing on one leg, tai chi), moving exercises (walking in small circles or with a sudden change in direction) and dual task exercises (standing on one leg while throwing and catching a ball)

Exercise done on your feet so you are bearing your own weight. E.g. jogging, skipping, basketball. Netball, dancing, stair walking

Exercise

Resistance training: training with weights that progress in intensity over time

Falls Prevention Strategies for Seniors :



Tips to Avoid Falls at Home :

- Remove Clutter from pathways and corridors
- Remove Rugs or fix them firmly to ground
- Ensure Good lighting outdoors and on halls ways especially on way to toilet
- Install Grab Rails in the shower or near toilet and on stairs
- Never Store anything on Stairs
- Consider getting a Personal Alarm pendant or Wrist watch that can sense fall and call for help
- Consider a night Light
- Use Non slip mat in shower / bath
- Avoid Rushing and getting up quickly
- If you are Over 65 yrs old get registered with My Aged Care and ask for an Occupational Therapist Home Visit

References :

<https://fallsnetwork.neura.edu.au/aprilfalls/>

<https://healthybonesaustralia.org.au/resource-hub/fact-sheets/>



Dr Anuka Parapuram



Tianka Parapuram



The Women at the Cross

The women have always had significant roles in God's Kingdom. The Gospel writers noted that the Women at the Cross (listed below) did not flee but decided to follow Jesus all the way to the cross and beyond.

1. **Mary**, the mother of Jesus, and her sister (John 19:25).
2. **Mary Magdalene**, a woman whom Jesus had cast out seven demons (*Matthew 27:55-56; Mark 15:40-41; Luke 8:2; John 19:25*).
3. **Salome**, the wife of Zebedee and mother of James and John, the "sons of thunder" and two of Jesus' disciples (*Mark 15:40-41*).
4. **Mary**, the mother of James the younger and of Joseph (*John 19:25, Mark 15:40-41*).
5. Many other **daughters of Jerusalem** (*Luke 23:27-31*), *unnamed women* (*Mark 15:41*), and *acquaintances of Jesus* (*Luke 23:49*).

They have set great examples for us to enjoy a fulfilling spiritual journey. So, what do we learn from them?

Perhaps, Mary, the mother of Jesus was the most significant and distressed woman at the cross. She had felt her son's very first movement and also had to watch Him take His last breath, a heart wrenching moment for a mother, so that through His death our sins are forgiven, and we might live. We may face various challenges in our lives with no power to control or change the difficult situations. Like Mary, a unique witness of Jesus Christ, let us focus our eyes on our Saviour, Jesus Christ, who will give us the eternal peace and strength as there are no mountains that He cannot move.

Mary Magdalene stayed by Christ's side even after his death, despite the approaching Sabbath. She was present as Jesus's lifeless body was lowered from the crucifixion, helped to prepare for His burial and became the first witness of His resurrection. Her life teaches us that no obstacle in life can keep us from having profound spiritual experiences. Regardless of the trials and temptations we have had in the past, we must always incline towards our God Almighty. Like Mary, we may also discover the wonderful delight of that Easter morning and hasten to extend an invitation to others to witness it.

Throughout Jesus' ministry, many women travelled with Him. Like Mary Magdalene, the other women at the cross came to the tomb and helped to prepare the body of the Savior for his burial. The situation appeared to be a complete collapse of all their hopes, but they stayed united as family and friends, comforted each other.

We can find hope and strength in the faith of these women who endured this painful experience at the cross of our Lord and Saviour. Their sorrows turned into joy on that Easter morning. Because the Resurrected Saviour lives, so too can our tears dry, our sorrows can be swallowed up, and we can feel the joy that only Jesus Christ can bring.

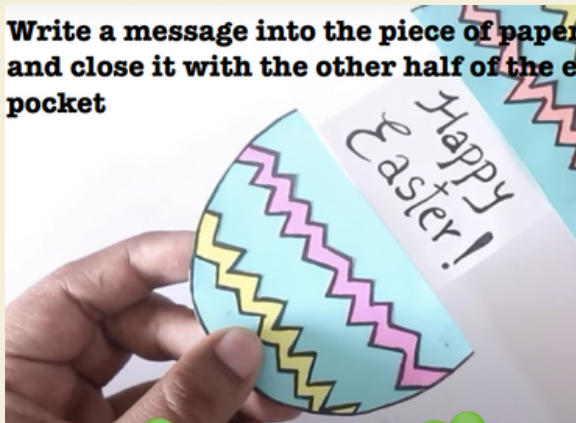
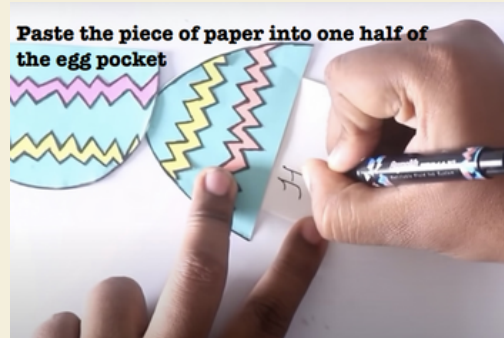
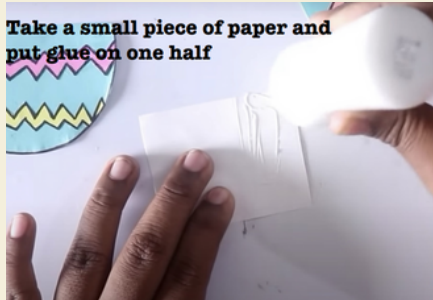
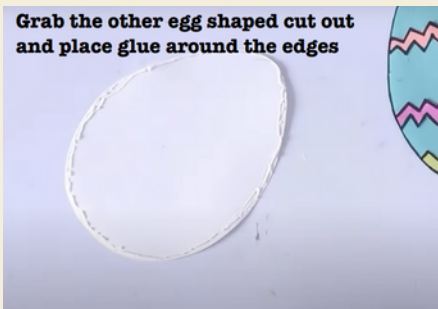
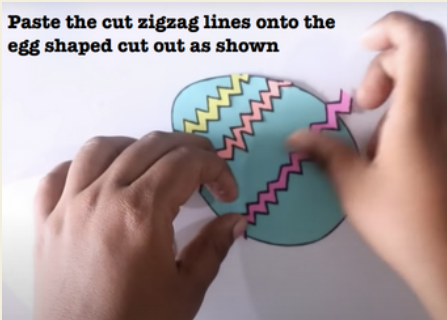
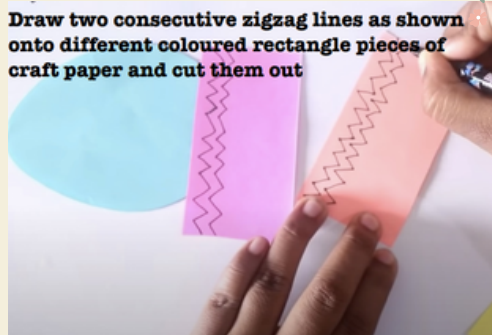
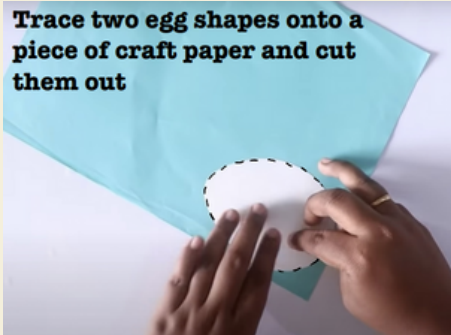
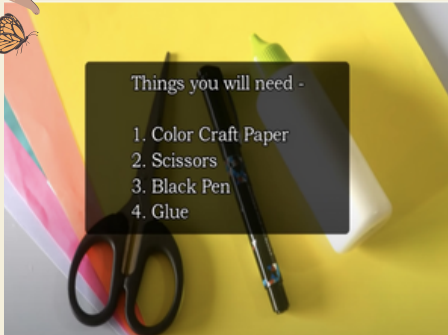
Let us lift our eyes to the risen Christ, support, and comfort each other in times of need!!



Susan Jacob



Easter Craft



Anu Gee Varghese



Purpose is integral to leading a meaningful life, adding drive, value and a profound appreciation for human existence. A woman of purpose is ambitious, seizing every opportunity to enhance her inner self and contribute to the betterment of her immediate surroundings and the wider society.

She values her **worth** and the importance of **independence** while maintaining positive familial, interpersonal and spiritual relationships. Breaking down her dreams into goals, she works towards them every day. When a woman is **goal-centric** and centres her life around her purpose, she is deeply empowered and can extend her contribution beyond her immediate familial circles.

Furthermore, **self-awareness** is key to having a greater purpose. Understanding her weaknesses and limitations is part of the life process, requiring openness, acceptance and adaptability to transform as well as finding ways to transcend countless obstacles. She persists in dreaming until triumph becomes the woven tapestry of her existence.



Shreya Elizabeth Boby

Succulent Garden with Pistachio Shells



Next time you buy pistachios, try saving the shells and turn them into a charming succulent garden that you can use as a home decor, indoors or outdoors. All that you need is pistachio shells, hot glue, paint (any colour), and a paint brush.

Start by applying hot glue to the bottom edge of three shells and stick them together to form a small cluster. Continue adding shells to the cluster, gluing them directly to the first bunch until you have a flower of the size you want. You can leave it in its natural colour or use craft paint to give the flower a colour of your choice. Nestle your finished flowers in teacups, flowerpots, or even seashells for a whimsical touch. Alternatively, glue them onto a frame for a unique wall hanging and you can use these as a decor for your home or to gift someone!



Simi Jose

Kulfi Mix

Chill the hot summer with this yummy Kulfi!!

Ingredients:

1. Thickened cream -300 ml
2. Sweetened condensed milk - 400g
3. Evaporated milk - 340 ml
4. Pistachio powdered - To garnish

Method:

1. Mix ingredients 1, 2 and 3 in a mixer jar to blend nicely for about 30 sec to 1 minute.
2. Pour the mixed content into a container with a tight lid.
3. Freeze it overnight.
4. Serve by garnishing a little pistachio powder on top and enjoy.



Elizabeth John [Reshmi]

Banana Halwa

Ingredients:

1. Bananas (ethapazham)- 6 (very ripe)
2. Jaggery 150-200 grams, grated and made into a syrup using $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of water.
3. Olive oil or ghee – 3 to 4 tablespoons
4. Cardamom powder – 1 tsp
5. A pinch of salt

Method :

1. Steam the bananas. Remove the skin and black seeds in the centre and mash in a blender or mixie.

2. Heat a thick bottomed pan and add a tablespoon of oil or ghee. Add the mashed banana and keep stirring. When the mixture starts to boil, add half of the jaggery syrup and keep mixing on a medium flame using a long spoon or spatula.

3. Check for sweetness and keep adding the oil and syrup at intervals. Add salt and cardamom powder to enhance the flavour.

4. The whole process should take 25-30 mins. Turn off the heat when the halwa leaves the sides of the pan and forms like a ball around the spatula.

5. Transfer to a greased plate and flatten with the back of a well-oiled spoon. Cool and cut into desired shape.



Tanu Bose

Mothers with babies and young kids

Motherhood is the beginning of a beautiful journey filled with great joy and challenges which enables a woman to explore her hidden strength within. Coping with health-related issues in babies and young kids is what most mothers fear although most of them can be treated with simple home remedies.

Neonatal jaundice

Cause

Overload of bilirubin in the blood and tissues

Remedies

Continue feeding and keep the baby well hydrated. Issue often clears by itself in the first week. Poor feeding and lethargy will require medical attention

Abdominal colic

Cause

- Immature digestive system
- Food intolerance or allergy
- Overfeeding -effect of maternal diet in breast fed babies -gastric reflux
- Imbalance of healthy bacteria in digestive tract

Remedies

- Avoid ingredients that cause intolerance in the diet of mother and baby.
- Encourage breastfeeding as it enhances growth of healthy gut bacteria for digestion
- Frequent burping post feed.

Poor sleep pattern

- Excessive day time sleep
- Lack of conducive environment
- -Discomfort from colic/reflux/pain/illness
- Diet
- Fear/insecurity

Remedies

- Keep the child engaged in activity during the day
- Read story, sing lullabies or use white music machines
- Consider a healthy diet free of excessive sugar, preservatives etc...
- Keep night lamp on to avoid child waking up in a dark room.

Frequent cold and nasal congestion

Cause

- pollutants/irritants that trigger excess mucus production
- Immature immune system -Narrow nasal passage

Remedies

- Gentle nose massage
- Use steam mist/room humidifiers
- warm bath
- saline nasal drops
- eliminate pollutants from home



By
**Mini (Annamma Varghese)
& Marin Abraham**

Eczema (common skin condition causing itchy/inflamed and scaly patches on skin)

Cause

- Contact with irritating chemicals-soap, fabric etc
- Exposure to allergens-dust,animal fur
- Food allergies/intolerance
- Infections

Remedies

- Avoid causative factors
- Keep skin moisturised
- Short warm baths
- Keep child away from direct sources of heat like heaters.
- Prefer cotton clothes
- Distract the child when bothered by itching with talking, reading etc and keep the child's fingernails short and clean

TIPS TO MUMS

- Trust your instinct as you know your child better.
- Exercise patience and adapt to new changes in life
- Seek help from family and friends if needed
- Seek medical attention immediately if concerned
- Relax and embrace the season of your life

Sevika Sangam Event List 2023- 24

Watch this space

April 14 SS Annual Quiz

May 05 SS Annual Food Sale

June 08 SS Annual Retreat

Ongoing Events

Friendly House Visits of Senior Ladies (who are unable to attend church)

Revive & Survive Monthly Women Fellowship

Prenatal Prayers

Return and Earn Family Challenge



Handy hints and tips for the kitchen

1. Fruits and nuts will not sink to the bottom of the fruitcake batter if they are heated slightly in a warm oven for few minutes .Then roll them in flour before adding to the cake mixture
2. If you have added too much salt in your soups, curry or casseroles drop in a peeled potato while cooking, then remove after few minutes. It will absorb most of the salt.
3. Heavily burned food from cooking pots will ease off with a good soaking of vinegar overnight and scrub with steel wool the next day.
4. When boiling eggs, add a pinch of salt to keep the shells from cracking.
5. After boiling pasta or potatoes, cool the water and use it to water your houseplants. The water contains nutrients, which your plants will love.
- 6 . If two drinking glasses become stuck together after stacking , it is possible to unstick them. Just put ice in the inner glass and dunk the outer glass in warm water. The warm glass will expand and the cold glass will contract , making the glasses separate easily.
7. Clean mushrooms as you use them with a damp cloth. A quick rinse is fine, but never soak them or they will get soggy.
8. To skin almonds , put them in a basin and pour over boiling water and soak them. Leave for few minutes , drain and rub.
9. Onion and potatoes if stored together continue to rot each other.
10. The best way to peel ginger is to scrape It with a stainless steel teaspoon. Try it and You will be amazed with the result.
11. To avoid teary eyes while chopping Onions, keep them with skin in the freezer for 15 minutes before chopping.
12. Green chillies will stay fresh if you follow this tip: Take stalk off each chilly . Wrap them in newspaper like you do pothichoru and store in plastic containers in the fridge.



Susie Abraham



The Women I admire....

Cruising through joys and tumbles of life, I have always looked up to some women in the Bible. Their valor, courage and dedication have inspired me. They all had such unique qualities, and it was easy to understand why God had chosen them.

1. Esther – Raised from Jewish obscurity to a Queen.

Esther has an impressive family tree whose lineage can be traced back to Jesse, father of David. But she is like a small leaf on a huge oak tree. Esther is mentioned as one of the most beautiful women, but it is not her beauty that sets her apart. It is her personal, saving relationship with God that saves her. She is the epitome of love, courage, wisdom, knowledge and fear of the Lord. Esther prays and fasts to the Lord for three straight days before deciding how to proceed. It is the fact that she realises that God has a purpose in her life and aims to find it, what sets her apart. Her unwavering courage to act when the time comes.

2. Hannah – A woman who never doubted.

Hannah had numerous reasons to feel grief and doubt her capacity for motherhood. But she believes and does not give up on praying. Hannah is recognized as mother of Samuel—who becomes a prophet, judge, and priest. She proves herself independent and resourceful, never abandoning her goals or demeaning others to achieve them. She can demonstrate social responsibility by making a vow that is upheld by her husband. She is not just dedicating her son but also herself to the will of God. It is the trust that she has in her prayer that sets her apart.

3. Mary – A Woman of quiet wisdom

The calmness and grace with which she took the news of the angel announcing that she was going to have a baby is amazing. She dedicates her life to Jesus even before seeing Him, raising Him, loving Him and fulfilling her role that God had given her. From the very first instance, Mary completely believes in Him as the Son of God. She knows firsthand what He has done, and what He will continue to do. As a mother her pain is unbearable yet she remains strong in the knowledge that her mission is accomplished.

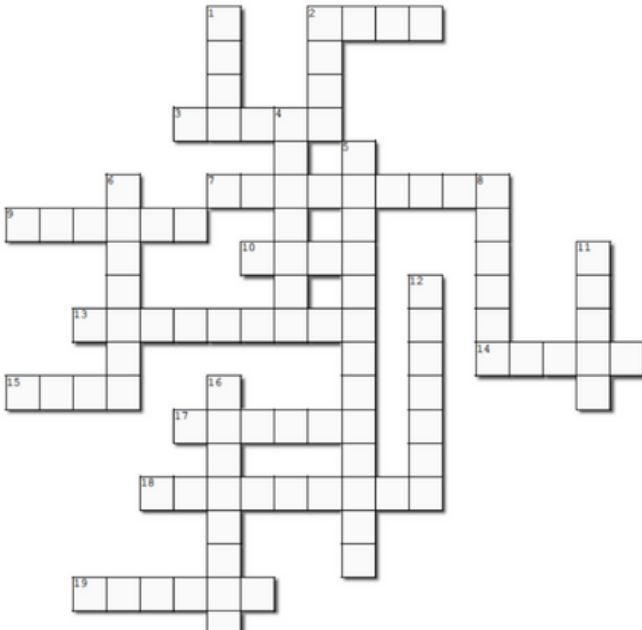
At times as women we might feel overburdened by the turmoils of life. I often look up to these great models in the Bible and strive to be like them. I pray that God will bless each woman in our church and strengthen them like He strengthened these simple women.



Bindu George

Cross Word Puzzle

Inspiring Women in the Bible



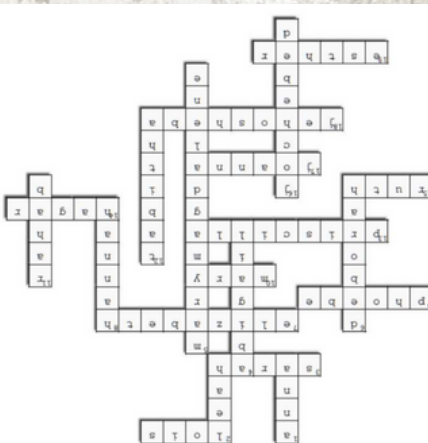
Across

2. A grandmother mentioned in new testament who influenced her grandson to develop a sincere Christian faith.
3. Mother of nations
7. The baby leaped in her womb and she was filled with the Holy Spirit.
9. Paul mentions her as a deacon of the church of Cenchreae.
10. The angel said to her, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."
13. She, along with her husband, played a significant role in spreading the Gospel and supporting Paul in his ministry.
14. She was the first person in the Bible to use a personal name for God because, in her suffering, she realised that God saw her
15. Despite being a Moabite, she was chosen by God to play a significant role in the ancestry of His son.
17. A woman who supported Jesus' ministry from her own means.
18. Who exhibited exceptional courage by rescuing her nephew from a massacre.
19. Her courage and trust are evident when she risks her life to save her people.

Down

1. She recognized Jesus as the Messiah when he was presented at the temple.
2. She was unloved by her husband but was favoured by God.
4. When faced with potential conflict, which wise and resourceful woman interceded to prevent David from taking revenge?
5. She was one of the closest followers of Jesus and among the first to have seen the empty tomb.
6. When Israel sought deliverance, this woman was chosen by God to lead them to peace for a period of 40 years. Who is she?
8. Whose song is this ' It is not by strength that one prevails; those who oppose the Lord will be broken.'
11. An unlikely ancestor of King David, chosen by God to play a key role when Israelites began to take the possession of the promised land.
12. She was known for her acts of kindness and charity and was restored to life by one of the disciples of Jesus.
16. She was not afraid of the king's edict and saved her son.

Answer



Tinju Abraham

Pain

In this article, the pain in question is the unpleasant sensation most of us have experienced at some time or the other. Pain generally indicates something is wrong. There are many ways in which pain is classified but here only acute and chronic pain will be discussed briefly.

Acute pain is pain which begins quickly and disappears when the cause is removed, e.g. pain of appendicitis disappears when the appendix is removed, pain caused by an abscess is resolved when the pus is drained. The pain of a papercut will disappear when the cut area of skin closes over. Medication to ease pain is used short term in these cases. Sometimes antibiotics may be required depending on the cause of pain.

Chronic pain on the other hand lasts more than six months despite treatment of the cause, eg: pain of osteoarthritis, of endometriosis or of fibromyalgia.

Whatever the type of pain, it needs to be managed as best as possible. This is especially true for chronic pain, as it can affect a person's mood causing anxiety and or depression, affect activities of daily living, relationships, work and finances and social connectedness.

Management will consider how pain has affected the individual and use of various resources to help the individual. This may involve medication, from Paracetamol to anti-inflammatory medication to nerve pain specific medication to cortisone injections, to short- term narcotic analgesics, physiotherapy, hydrotherapy, use of aids to help the individual e.g. walking stick, knee brace, walking frame, seeing a psychologist to help with the mood changes and cope as well as possible, improving socialisation, attending a Pain Clinic .The above is a brief look at pain and it has only skimmed the surface of a challenging aspect of life.



Dr Rebekah George

State of Mind

Are illness or disorders of mind different for women?

Yes !Psychological disorders are almost twice as common in women compared to men. While men and women can get similar illness or disorders , for a girl or woman, the experience can have unique features such as :

- Social and relationship difficulties have more negative impact on most women.
- Women are also more likely to experience certain medical conditions such as anemia, thyroid disorder, migraines , certain cancers in which symptoms can be mood and thinking alterations .
- Mood and thinking problems are associated with menstrual cycle, pregnancy, infertility, menopause and after .

Life stages of girl or woman and psychological problems

• **Childhood (0-12years)**

In this stage, anxiety, neglect ,abuse, attention deficit disorder and some forms of autism can affect girls significantly. When family or society values a girl as lesser than her brother or male school mate , it can impact her for the rest of her life.

• **Adolescence and youth (13-18years)**

In addition to continued child hood problems ,new anxiety, depression, body dissatisfaction with changes in eating habits (eg. skipping meals, making self-throw up food and losing too much weight) occur. Some girls can start to experience premenstrual psychological symptoms (PMS) which causes pain, tiredness, low mood days prior to periods. Girls are also more negatively affected by family difficulties, social media and problems at school. Additionally, girls become addicted more easily than boys if they smoke, vape or use drugs .

Many here don't go to professionals worrying if they are of a different background to us and may not understand our problems which may worsen mental state . However, this may not always be the case, as professionals can be culturally sensitive in their care.

What are the reasons women are so affected?

This can be due to higher level of personal and social difficulties experienced ,the influence of female hormones and stress on brain and mind,.Women often have negative emotions such as shame and self blame when ill or having difficulties which increase the burden .

Getting help

Women often seek support and treatment but may not always receive adequate care. There may be expectations that the woman should "keep calm and carry on " or that their concerns are "normal"; in the course of life or ageing . Women more frequently than men do not continue treatments , because they either put others first .So being well informed to seek the right and timely help for ourselves and our loved ones becomes a necessity.

So ,when should one seek help or get help for a loved one

When any mood, thoughts, behaviors are a change from usual or what is expected for the circumstances.

When these troubling changes are present for most of the time, most of the days, either in periods or continuous.

When these psychological troubles have an effect on sleep, eating, weight ,energy ,sex lives and or affect studies, work ,hobbies and relationships .

Who should you go to :Your GP doctor, they have training and experience to help with understanding, diagnosis ,treat and or refer to specialized professionals.

Can you help yourself? Of course! By recognizing psychological changes in oneself or others close to you.

Break the culture of silence and talk about psychological matters especially to your daughters ,mums ,other women and men in your lives so they can help and get help for themselves .

Though “Dr Google” gets a bad rap, there are reliable sources eg check RACGP ,RANZCP , Beyond Blue etc .Podcast buffs may find medical experts such as Dr Rangan Chatterjee ,Dr Louise Newson etc helpful. Beware of those who advise a very narrow approach e.g that dieting, supplements or medication alone is sufficient or not being positive or happy is your failure .

Adult (18+years)

Mental health problems of earlier life can continue or they can experience it for the first time especially if not helped or treated .This is also the stage in life where women are caring for family members, taking on responsibilities at home, work and elsewhere which brings additional emotional and physical demand. Some life events affect women e.g

Pregnancy

Women can experience significant change during or after delivery of baby with excessive fears, depressed mood and unstoppable anxious thoughts.

Before and after Menopause

After about 40yrs of age women start to have hormonal changes, even if periods are regular and prior to menopause (which is when periods stop). Women commonly experience memory problems, moodiness, sleeplessness and physical symptoms such as hot flushes, fatigue and unexpected weight gain.

Seniors (mid 60s onwards)

In this stage, either previous problems continue, may become worse or women can experience depression, anxiety and psychosis for the first time ever in their lives even when there are no life problems. Additionally dementia-like Alzheimer type is twice as common in women as men.

With women living longer than men , the effects of illness, isolation, loneliness, loss by death or distance from family and friends can be huge . For many, unwanted memories of the terrible past events with strong feelings and emotions become part of everyday life , even if they have managed without issues previously

Migrants

All types of psychological illness and disorders happen in our home country too. Migrants are at slightly higher risk to develop psychological disorders . Sometimes because the problems migrants wanted to leave behind do not go away e.g difficult relationships , financial troubles .Also settling into new country for many years place above normal levels of stress on the woman . Many women may have left behind their strongest emotional supports like own family and friends .

Can being female an advantage ? Of course ! Girl babies survive more than boys if ill, some serious mental illness are commoner in men and worse symptoms , ability to bounce back psychologically can be higher in women.Women also live longer, have more social connections which is life and health enhancing.

I hope this article increases awareness, stimulates discussion and helps to seek care for your selves or your loved ones

Dr Anila Jacob
Specialist In Psychiatry



Women of Valor: Untold Stories from the Bible

Did you know that behind many of the well-known tales in the Bible lie remarkable stories of women whose courage, wisdom, and resilience shaped history? These often unsung heroines played pivotal roles in the narrative of faith, leaving an enduring legacy for generations to come. Let's delve into the captivating world of these extraordinary women:

Did you know that **Deborah**, a prophetess and judge in ancient Israel, led her people with unwavering determination? Despite living in a male-dominated society, she fearlessly guided the Israelites to victory in battle, earning her the title of a wise and formidable leader.

Did you know that **Miriam**, the sister of Moses, played a crucial role in the Exodus story? Her boldness and ingenuity saved her brother's life as a baby, and her leadership and musical prowess inspired the Israelites during their journey through the wilderness.

Did you know that **Esther**, a Jewish orphan who became queen of Persia, risked her life to save her people? With courage and cunning, she navigated the treacherous corridors of power, showcasing her resilience and faith in the face of adversity.

Did you know that **Ruth**, a Moabite woman, demonstrated loyalty and devotion beyond measure? Her unwavering commitment to her mother-in-law, Naomi, led her on a journey of selflessness and redemption, ultimately resulting in her becoming an ancestor of King David.

Did you know that **Mary Magdalene**, often misunderstood and misrepresented, was a devoted disciple of Jesus Christ? She bore witness to his crucifixion, burial, and resurrection, embodying the essence of faith and steadfastness in the midst of profound sorrow and uncertainty.

Did you know that **Lydia**, a businesswoman from Thyatira, was one of the first converts to Christianity in Europe? Her hospitality and generosity opened doors for the spread of the gospel in Philippi, demonstrating the profound impact of women in the early Christian community.

These remarkable women, among many others, exemplify strength, resilience, and faith in the face of adversity. Their stories serve as timeless reminders of the enduring power of women throughout history and the significant contributions they have made to the tapestry of faith and human experience. As we celebrate their legacies, may we draw inspiration from their courage and conviction to create a more just and equitable world for all.



Shania Shaji

Sevika Sangam Accomplished Initiatives

Inland Charity – Community Cafe Outreach Christmas Dinner

Sevika Sangam ladies assembled to support 'Christmas Dinner Service' hosted by Community Cafe Outreach Service (CCOS) on Tuesday, 19 December 2023 as part of inland charity support. The day was celebrated with serving people, singing, cleaning and donating food items to those in need. Our team experienced the privilege to contribute to the wellbeing of our community.



Christmas Carols

'Tharam vanil minnum raavil' joyful Malayalam carol song was sung by sevika sangam ladies during Christmas carols on 10 December 2023. This year our ladies played a skit 'Mariyamma Chettathiyude Niswasum' during the Christmas carol service.



Annual Food Sale

On 4 February 2024, Hills and Inner West Sevika Sangam members hosted the fundraiser sales where SS members brought home-cooked delicacies to sell at church. Variants of pickle, honey (home farmed) by Mrs. Anna Abraham (Lizamma Aunty) were available for sale on the same day as well. We convey our sincere thanks for all the generous support we received during the annual food sale.



Barbie Day

'Sevika Sangam Barbie day', a charity fundraiser initiative to support the education loan was held on 10 February 2024 at Lizard log, Western Sydney Parklands. The day was filled with laughter, fun, fellowship, and delicious BBQ.



Sevika Sangam Galleries

Last Day at Harris Park Church



At our new Church



Meet our new Borns



**Pre Delivery Prayer
InnerWest**



Eden Sajin Varghese
*Sajin Varghese, Priya Chandapillai
Jordan Sajin Varghese*



Nila Anil
*Anil Chacko, Christina Anil
Diya Anil*



**In Loving Memory of
our Beloved Saramma Joseph**



Behind the Scenes

Special mention & thanks to Inner West, Nepean and North Sydney
Sevika Sangham Prayer Groups
for volunteering to do this volume.

- Rev. Eapen Mathew
- Mrs Simi Jins
- Mrs. Annie Johnson
- Mrs. Ligy Eapen
- Mrs. Beena Saji
- Mrs. Sumitha Rachel Kurien
- Miss. Shreya Elizabeth Boby
- Mrs. Simi Jose
- Mrs. Elizabeth John
- Mrs. Thanu Bose
- Mrs. Annamma Varghese
- Mrs. Marin Abraham
- Mrs. Susie Abraham
- Mrs. Bindu George
- Mrs. Tinju Abraham
- Dr. Rebekah George
- Dr. Anuka Parapuram
- Miss. Tianka Parapuram
- Dr. Anila Jacob
- Mrs. Shania Shaji

Design Team

- Mrs. Bincy Mathew
- Mrs. Maneesha Jiju Kurian

HAPPY EASTER



This news letter is intended for internal circulation among
the members of Bethel Mar Thoma Church, Sydney