



February 2023

CONTACT

Monthly Magazine of the Richmond Town Methodist Church
For Private Circulation Only



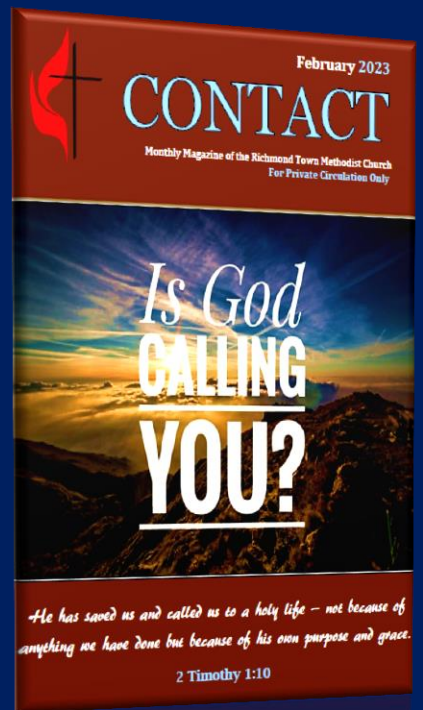
Is God
CALLING
YOU?

He has saved us and called us to a holy life – not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace.

2 Timothy 1:10

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Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment.

Matthew 22:37-38

PASTORAL TEAM

Rev. Sebastian Ravi Kumar
Senior Pastor *cum* D.S.
9480216971

Rev. Vivek A. Gundimi
Associate Pastor
9632729007

Rev. Ebenezer Isaac
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Dear Church,

Greetings in the mightiest name of all - Jesus Christ!

As we move forward in this year, it is our prayer and hope that you are joyful and excited in living your life for God's glory. We are in debt to God for all that He has done for us graciously as an individual and as a church.

As you continue to live your life this year, may we remind you from God's Word to be committed to excellence in all that you endeavor to do.

And as a matter of fact, some commitments are larger than other commitments. But when you strive for excellence in that 'commitment' – then you feel satisfied with a job well done!

In order to be committed to excellence in all matters of life may we realize the truth that we are to know Christ more and more every single day of our lives (Php. 3:13) through prayer and Bible study. To be committed to excellence, we are to also release our past accomplishments and hurts that could be holding us from experiencing a fresh anointing for today's victories. To be also committed to excellence in all matters of life we are to regain the Zeal of serving God and also resume the race of faithfulness, obedience, honesty. These are what Jesus would desire for you.

May we be therefore committed to excellence this month forward!

Together with the Lord,

Pastoral Team

NEWS ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHURCH TIMINGS

The family of RTMC comes together for the regular worship service on Sundays for all the three worship services at **8:15 a.m.**; **10:00 a.m.** and **6 p.m.** The congregation can come for the worship services while adhering to the health and safety protocols.

CHURCH ONLINE SERVICE

The Online LIVE streaming of our Sunday Worship Service (10:00 am) will be made available via RTMC Church **Website** and RTMC **YouTube** Channel.

Please visit our:



Website: www.rtmc.church



YouTube Channel: RTMC – Richmond Town Methodist Church



Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/rtmc2>

House Visits *and* Home Communion

Do get in touch with the Pastors-in-charge for House visits and Home Communion.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastoral Care *and* Counseling

Pastors are available for providing Pastoral care and Counseling and prayers during the week. Contact Pastors for Virtual Pastoral visits and home Communion.

WEDDING

Congratulations to the newly married couple:

PRANOY SAMUEL PRASAD *wed* SIMRAN PAL R

On 4th January 2023 at Richmond Town Methodist Church, Bangalore.

JAMES KIREN JOEL *wed* NEETHI ANNE DORAIRAJU

On 7th January 2023 at Loyola College Church, Chennai.

OBITUARY

Mr. K Y Prabhakar, aged 69, passed on to glory on 8th January 2023.

WORSHIP DECORUM

Before the Worship Service begins, kindly keep your **MOBILE PHONES** in silent mode or do switch off to avoid disturbing the decorum of worshipping God.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OFFERTORY SUPPORT

"Give Thanks by Giving Online." We have much to be thankful for! Give to make a special "Thanksgiving Gift." Even when you can't make it on a Sunday, you can fulfil your **Offertory support!**

You can use the **RTMC Online feature** to give your offerings and funds. This creates a safer flow of cash for RTMC because we know when we can expect your support, and it allows you to participate in giving even when you can't make it here.

QR CODE: You could also scan the QR Code below to make your offerings towards the ministry of RTMC.



You could also set aside your offerings and tithes and bring together when you visit the Church Office and also when you come for the Church Services in the forthcoming months in 2023. Do continue to pray that we will return to a more favourable situation by His grace – till then stay safe.

RECEIPTS

We want to express our sincere thanks to you for your financial support towards the ministry of our Church through Tithes and contributions. Kindly collect your receipts from the Church office during Weekdays.

E- TRANSFER

As an added convenience, the Church offers the facility of e-transfer for tithes and contributes to the ministry of the Church. Kindly note the bank details and transfer intimation for the purpose.

BANK DETAILS

Name of the Bank: South Indian Bank / Saving Bank A/c

Account Name: Richmond Town Methodist Church

Account No.: 0108053000025806

Address: South India Bank, Brigade Road.

IFSC Code: SIBL0000108

Kindly email the details of transfer to:

bangaloretmc@gmail.com or **contact@rtmc.church** in order to prepare receipts for the same.

Prayer Focus

FEBRUARY 2023

I will instruct you and teach you the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you.

Psalm 32:8

February 1 Praise God for the new month, another day of life added to our lives. Thank him for His gift of salvation, His faithfulness, His whispers in our lives.

February 2 Praise God for the Church, chosen by the Lord, being sanctified through His word. Pray that the church would stand armed and watchful in prayer alert to the needs of all who cross our pathway.

February 3 Pray for those preparing for marriage, for wise and practical counselling, for arrangements, for good weather, for peaceful and joyous celebration.

February 4 Reflection on our devotional life: *There is a great market for religious experience in our world; there is little enthusiasm for the patient acquisition of virtue, little inclination to sign up for a long apprenticeship in what earlier generations of Christians called holiness.* **Eugene Peterson.**

February 5 Pray for resolutions made at the start of the year, for self-examination praising God for areas of growth and seeking His help where needed.

February 6 Pray for God's blessings on those celebrating Birthdays, Anniversaries, and other special occasions.

February 7 Pray For family Life of our congregation. That families would be preserved, would face the realities of Life together and grow together to be kingdom pockets.

February 8 Pray for our State for good governance and the preservation of democratic principles. Pray for those who stand for these, for strength, favour and protection.

February 9 Pray for our country. For the protection of our borders, for our economy, for peace and justice.

February 10 Pray for those who are working for the protection of persecuted Christians, for their protection, for wisdom and discernment, for success in their endeavours.

February 11 Pray for workplaces to be safe and less stressful, for skill and integrity, for favour and equity.

February 12 Pray for those seeking jobs, for God to open doors and grant favour to find right and fulfilling positions, for patience and calmness during the waiting time.

February 13 Pray for the ministry of the church the Word that goes out would edify and transform, the activities would unify and reflect God's nature, that the ministry would be enlarged under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to bring salvation to our city.

February 14 Pray for Women to find their identity and purpose in Christ, to be set free to learn, obey and find their place in God's Will and so guide their families to serve and please God.

February 15 Pray for our national leaders – President, Prime Minister, Cabinet ministers and all decision makers – for the fear of God and the wisdom to work towards the well-being of the citizens.

February 16 Pray for the sick and those recovering from illness – remember them by name Pray for complete recovery and for joy in the Lord to sustain them through this time, for patience, persistence and co-operation with medical staff and caregivers.

February 17 Pray for those suffering from chronic minor ailments like allergies, chronic pain, asthma etc. Pray for deliverance from prolonged suffering-complete healing and wholeness.

February 18 Reflection: Social media is here to stay. It's a dangerous thing in terms of authority, exposure, communication and stewardship of time. But it can be a beautiful thing. It can be the widest platform to attach the truths of the gospel to the everyday things of life. Are we plundering the Egyptians – taking what the world has created and using it for growing gods kingdom?

February 19 Pray for the salvation of family members, relatives and friends that we would present the gospel in love and not in self-righteousness.

February 20 Pray for Children to attend Sunday School, to develop a tender sensitivity to sin in all its shades and to desire the holiness and will of God in their lives.

February 21 Pray for the Youth, to find their best friend and confidante in Jesus and would share their confusions, burdens, desires with Him and in trust walk in His guidance.

February 22 As we begin Lent Pray for the anointing of the Holy Spirit to focus on the Cross of Christ in the midst of the confusion, corruption and fear that pervade the world in which we live. Pray for greater obedience through this period over and above penance and sacrifice.

February 23 Pray for the different wings of the church – the MMF, the WSCS, the MYF, the SS, the Senior Citizens Fellowship, the Choir, for their Lenten programs / services, for the Word to come clearly through God-chosen speakers.

February 24 Pray for those in various bondages – substance abuse, spiritual deceit, occult, false teachings, etc. to be released by the power of the Blood of Jesus and of His Word, bringing healing, comfort and restoration.

February 25 Pray for the Sunday worship service, the music, the Word, the giving – through all of it we would surrender ourselves to the ownership and leadership of the Holy Spirit.

February 26 Pray for our pastors and their families to enjoy rich fellowship, health and joy, even as they live not as unwise but as wise making the most of every opportunity to present the gospel and to model the Love of Christ.

February 27 Pray for the staff of the church, for health and strength, for initiative and zeal, for sensitivity and attention to detail knowing that their labour in the Lord is not in vain for the Lord is no man's debtor.

February 28 Praise God that he is the ruler over all the nations, the Holy one of Israel, who daily bears our burdens and in whom we live and move and have our being. Let us enumerate our blessings and gratefully praise God for each of them.

Lent is...

...a time for self-discovery of the parts of ourselves we don't want to discover, through prayer, fasting and actively choosing what is right over what is wrong.

What is Ash Wednesday? 22nd February, 2023

Lent is intended to be a time of self-denial, moderation, fasting, and the forsaking of sinful activities and habits. Ash Wednesday commences this period of spiritual discipline. Ash Wednesday and Lent are observed by most Catholics and some Protestant denominations. The Eastern Orthodox Church does not observe Ash Wednesday; instead, they start Lent on “Clean Monday.”

While the Bible does not mention Ash Wednesday, it does record accounts of people in the Old Testament using dust and ashes as symbols of repentance and/or mourning (2 Samuel 13:19; Esther 4:1; Job 2:8; Daniel 9:3). The modern tradition of rubbing a cross on a person’s forehead supposedly identifies that person with Jesus Christ.

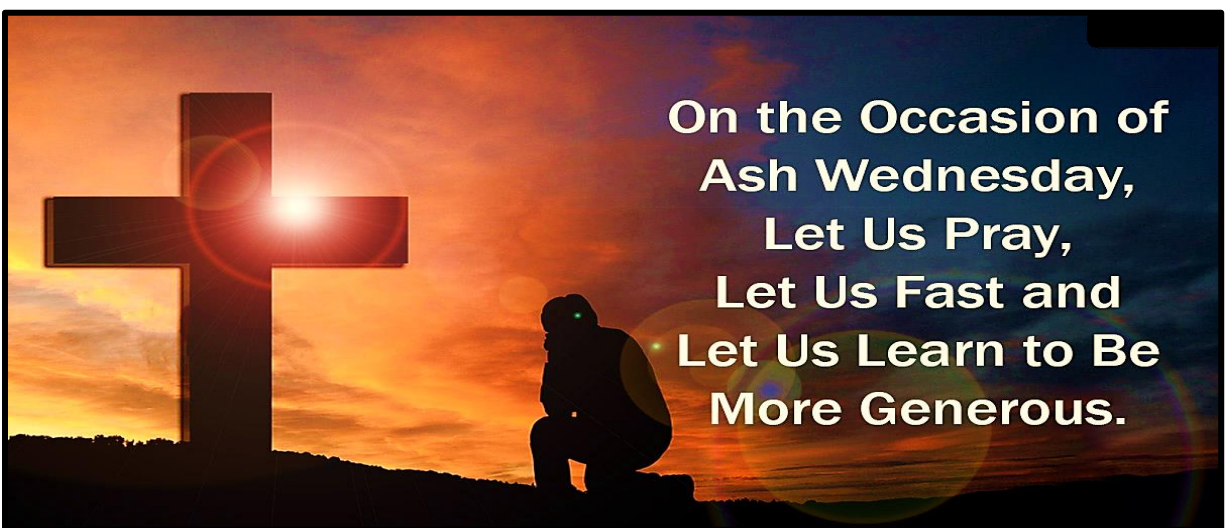


Should a Christian observe Ash Wednesday? Since the Bible nowhere explicitly commands or condemns such a practice, Christians are at liberty to prayerfully decide whether or not to observe Ash Wednesday.

If a Christian decides to observe Ash Wednesday and/or Lent, it is important to have a biblical perspective. Jesus warned us against making a show of our fasting: “When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen” (Matthew 6:16-18). We must not allow spiritual discipline to become spiritual pride.

It is a good thing to repent of sinful activities, but that’s something Christians should do every day, not just during Lent. It’s a good thing to clearly identify oneself as a Christian, but, again, this should be an everyday identification. And it is good to remember that no ritual can make one’s heart right with God.

Source: *Got Questions Ministries* © Copyright 2002-2023

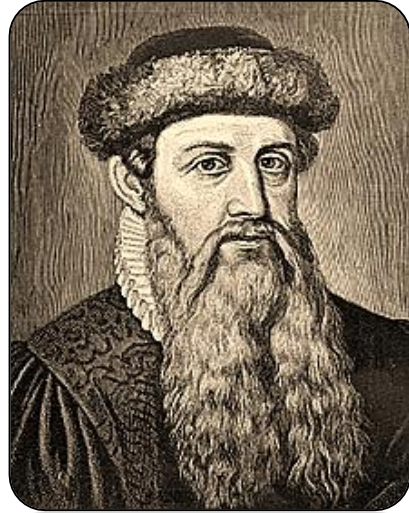


**On the Occasion of
Ash Wednesday,
Let Us Pray,
Let Us Fast and
Let Us Learn to Be
More Generous.**

Johannes Gutenberg *Father of Printing*

The grand old book th BIBLE has come to us because many great men and women of God sacrificed themselves in examining, copying, and translating ancient texts into modern languages. One among many such men was Johannes Gutenberg.

Johannes Gutenberg was a German blacksmith, printer, and publisher who invented the world's first printing press in 1450. He was born in Mainz, Germany.



Johannes Gutenberg Printed Bibles

He enjoyed reading the manuscripts that his parents and their wealthy friends had. He felt pity that only rich people could own books. So, he determined to develop an easy and quick way of printing. He rented a ruined building in Strausberg and experimented on several unique ideas to develop a printing press. When he ran out of money, he borrowed money from another goldsmith Joahann Fust.

Birth	1398
Death	1468
Country	Germany
Place of Vision	World

Gutenberg's invention of the printing press catalyzed the production of Bibles and the propagation of the gospel. Not only the Bible, but the machine also helped the likes of Martin Luther and John Calvin to launch the Protestant Reformation through their writings.

The printing of the Bible for the masses encouraged each believer to read God's Word, implying that everyone is responsible for their own salvation. Gutenberg's efforts ensured that Christianity did not end at the church door, rather made every believer's house a training ground.

Footnote: Tyson Paul <https://onewaytheonlyway.com>

Johannes Gutenberg



It is a press, certainly, but a press from which shall flow in inexhaustible streams Through it, God will spread His Word. A spring of truth shall flow from it: like a new star it shall scatter the darkness of ignorance, and cause a light heretofore unknown to shine amongst men.

AZ QUOTES

Cantata - 2022 and Outreach Report

God had blessed our 2021 Christmas Cantata – ‘The Promise’, where various wings of the church were able to join with the choir to praise God for all His promises through the ages. It was a rightful step to take, as the church had started meeting offline, after the terrible pandemic, and hearts of the people needed to hear God’s promise, be strengthened individually and as a church.

Hence, in 2022, there was excitement simmering in our hearts even before we started to think about the theme. We were starting to pray about the theme in August 2022. But God had already started the guiding process in our hearts much before that. Probably in the month of April, we had come across the Bible study material of Late Mr. Reginald (granduncle), who had mentioned that the ingredients vital to a church fellowship is like a three-legged stool. He said that even if one of the supports is not proper, the group will not progress well. The three legs were – Spiritual growth, Fellowship and Mission Outreach. That seed which God placed grew in time to press on our hearts about the urgency pertaining to mission – the extension of His kingdom. Outreach was going to be the theme of this Cantata. We were planning to sing 10 songs - 5 songs about the Christmas message which is God reaching out to us, the second set of 5 songs about the church as the body of Christ to reach out!

We knew that the theme was from God. We even informed the choir, announced for people to join the choir. Yet, we had only one or two songs by then! After searching for songs for few days and not being convinced of any, doubts started to come in. Would we be able to find good songs, going well with the theme, fitting for our church, not too difficult, having some musical variety amidst them? The first five songs also had to have simple words for friends from other faiths to be able to understand. The second five songs had to be on great commission,

possibly with some multi-lingual aspects, or something specific to our country. After searching and not getting songs, we prayed or rather remarked, ‘unless God brings us the songs, like he brought the animals to Noah, we wouldn’t be having any songs for this cantata’. Well! God heard it! God responded in a manner that only He can. Quite immediately after the remark, we started getting songs, and guess what! We got songs in pairs – one song for the first half, another for the second half. By this, God had showed us that He wanted us to take both the messages (to those outside, and to those inside the church) seriously. I also believe that it was His sense of humour to give the songs in pairs! We had got 8 songs. All the songs fit in so well to the theme, and the variety was amazing.

At times, even after getting several signs, doubts come in. We were concerned whether the choir would be able to learn the song ‘Love moved first’; Whether ‘I have decided’ could be performed with Indian accompaniment and *swarams*; of when God will give us two more songs to make it 10 songs like yester years. But God in His divine wisdom knew all that we needed. Choir picked up all the songs and enjoyed learning the *swarams*. God had given us only 8 songs, because that is all we needed, and could practice.

We had a little more than 22 rigorous practices, which began from 3rd September. Usually, people start to come in slowly, weeks after the first practice, and that used to be quite disruptive. Yet, this time, by God’s grace, 35 people came in for the very first practice, and it was almost 50% men and boys, and 50% women and girls. Within the next two weeks we had a total of 50 people come in, and we closed entry for others who wanted to join later. Interestingly, we had few kids who were less than 10 years of age join the choir. Few of them had presumed that there would be a separate kids choir like last time, but

since that was not how this cantata was planned, we took them for the main choir. We had people from ages ranging 6 to over 70. It was pure joy to see families come together, and people from different generations relate with each other. While practicing for ‘I have decided’ we also realized that there is linguistic diversity also. There were people who spoke Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Marathi, and Hindi.

We knew that we needed a lot of prayer to reach out. The religious climate of our country in the current times is quite sensitive. In the month of September and October we had no idea where we were going to go for outreach. We didn’t know how many in the choir would be interested in such a mission. We were just getting ready by learning songs. We used to pray together as a choir after practices. We encouraged the choir regarding outreach. As leaders, we set aside one day to fast and pray for Cantata, Outreach and individually naming each choir member. We still believe that a lot more prayer should have been done. But our God looks past our insufficiencies and blesses us generously.

As time passed by, God was guiding us regarding creative ways of outreach also. We thought that instead of tracts which might be sensitive in today’s context, we could make greeting cards with one clear message given in a humorous or relatable manner, also re-iterating the message of the songs. We thought that in addition to the possibility of giving Bibles, we could have bookmarks with QR code of Bible app, with a blessing written on the bookmark, having calendar on the other side. We also made T-shirts with logos that weren’t too straight forward which will be conversation starters and a way to share the gospel.

As we shared about the vision of the Cantata, about outreach and God’s heart, many in the choir were eager to participate. When we didn’t

know where we were going, we were concerned about whether a non-English audience would enjoy the songs, and were looking for places where English was well understood. God then showed us that outreach was going to be two-fold: Home outreach and Big gathering outreach. We asked the choir if any of them were willing to open their home and invite their friends of other faith, to have a Christmas program where the gospel message of God reaching out to us was shared through the songs we practiced. God opened doors of five homes. The hosts were to invite their friends, and take care of hospitality. Depending on the size of the home, the number of choir members was decided. For big gathering outreaches, we had openings in/ through hospitals, college, citizen welfare association, and a transgender home. We totally went out to nine places. We sang four songs with narration of the lost son interweaved between them. We know by faith that God blessed our efforts.

As a choir, we relished the time from September to December. Yes, there was attendance taken, and yes, there were guidelines and diet restrictions. Thanks to the accommodative choir members, we grew in being disciplined, and had fun! We knew that such a rigour was required to glorify the Lord with our best. We thank our God who ministered to each of us in the choir through the lyrics of the songs. As a choir we grew in our understanding of the loving Father that we have. We also grew in our understanding of God's heart for the lost, the importance of mission, and the urgency of it. We also were urged to think about outreach as more of a lifestyle that happens steadily throughout the year, than just one-time Christmas or Easter event.

Our learning/s pertaining to Outreach:

(i) The common response at home outreaches: At almost every home outreach, we had at least one of the friends of the host telling us, 'We

are hearing this for the first time.’ Many a time, we wrongly assume that in urban setting, our friends know about Jesus and about God’s love. Hosting friends, colleagues, and neighbours at our homes for an evening snack or dinner, and sharing God’s love will prove to be fruitful.

(ii) Communicating the Gospel through stories: Telling stories (as Jesus sometimes Communicated) helped communicating the message better. The audience were almost always keenly listening to the message. The songs that were sandwiched between the different parts of the story reiterated the emotion in the story and created an air of anticipation as audience waited for the remaining unheard parts of the story. Also, we only communicated one major point: about the love of God the Father who wanted to restore His relationship with all. Since, this did not contain the cost of following Christ or the exclusive nature of Christianity or calling any other religion as false, the message was received positively.

(iii) The need for redundancies and backup: When we do God’s mission, we are sure to run into some obstacles. In many outreaches we got into some unexpected equipment failure, travel mess up, delays and so on. Having backup plans, activities for interim time, redundant setups help overcome these challenges.

(iv) Diversified leadership: These outreaches were possible because of the coordination and cooperation of many. The support from the church and Lay activities committee, the support from choir members and their families, the responsibilities taken up by the hosts, the responsibilities taken up by various choir members pertaining to travel, hospitality and so on, helped in sharing the burden.

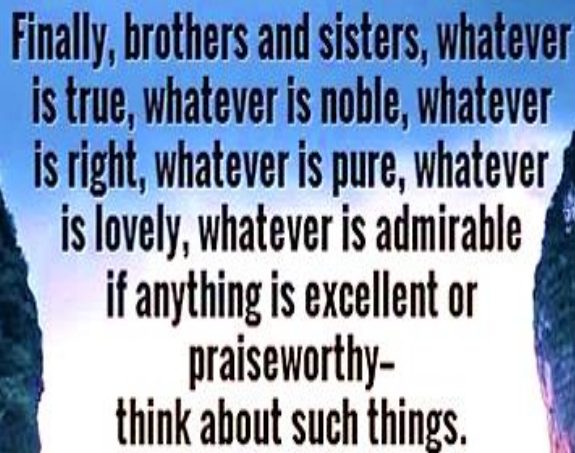
(v) Creative evangelism: There was quite a positive response pertaining to the greeting cards and bookmarks from many. We found it easier to give the card with a personalized message, and those who received it also were able to understand the message and appreciate the gesture. More such creative endeavours are to be taken up for better communicating the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ!

We truly have a God who reaches out. Praise His holy name.

Republic Day @ RTMC



Bible verses on Excellence



Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

Philippians 4:8 NIV



NEVER BE LACKING IN ZEAL,
BUT KEEP YOUR SPIRITUAL
FERVOR, SERVING THE LORD.

Romans 12:11 NIV



<https://www.knowing-jesus.com>

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run
but only one receives the prize?

so **RUN** that
you may
obtain it.

1 Corinthians 9:24



Knowing-Jesus.com

Monthly Activities



R T Nagar Area Bible Study

Austin Town Area Bible Study

Lent Theme: A Call to Return and Renewal

ASH WEDNESDAY

22nd February, 2023

6:00 p.m.

@ RT/MC

Also Telecasted LIVE via

Church **YouTube** channel & **Website**



5 Minute Meditation Suggestions For Lent

	Scripture Passage	Prayer Suggestion	Obedience Suggestion
Feb 22	Joel 2:12	Pray for a sensitivity to the Holy Spirit, for conviction and repentance	<i>Keep a journal of your Lent Journey</i>
Feb 23	Deut. 30:19	Pray for strength of mind and spirit to Keep to the commitment you have made - you and your household.	<i>Spend a few minutes with one or more members of your household, praising God for your family.</i>
Feb 24	Isaiah 58:7	Pray for truth in the inward parts, to break free from ritual and habit.	<i>Check out your ambitions. Give credit to someone you have withheld it from.</i>
Feb 25	Isaiah 58:10	Pray for a deep compassion for those in need	<i>Prepare a meal for a senior or a single you know.</i>
Feb 27	Matt. 4:4	Pray for a greater hunger for God's word.	<i>Join a Bible study or start one with your friend during your lunch break. Try an online 15 minute study for starters.</i>
Feb 28	Matt. 25:35	Pray for an honest appraisal of your relationships.	<i>Find a stranger in need, share a word, a smile and try to meet their need.</i>
Mar 1	Matt. 6:13	Pray for a righteous hatred of evil and the discernment to know how to fight it.	<i>Identify a group that is fighting for justice, support / join them or sign a petition.</i>
Mar 2	Jonah 11:32	Pray for a repentant spirit, to examine yourself and keep short accounts with God	<i>Find a way to make amends to someone you have offended.</i>
Mar 3	Matt. 7:7	Pray for a surrendered life, where knowledge and skill are surrendered for the Lord's use	<i>Teach someone at work a skill you have acquired, with no strings attached.</i>



RICHMOND TOWN METHODIST CHURCH

Pulpit Calendar

February 2023

Theme: *Is God Calling You?*

CONTACT - FEBRUARY 2023

Is God
CALLING
YOU?

1st Sunday **05/02/2023**

The Bush, the Fire & the Call **Exodus 3:1-10**

8:15 am & 10:00 am – Rev. Vivek Gundimi *

6pm – Rev. Vivek Gundimi *

2nd Sunday **12/02/2023**

God's Call to Service **1 Corinthians 16:5-12**

8:15 am & 10:00 am – Rev. Ebenezer Isaac

6pm – Rev. Ebenezer Isaac

3rd Sunday **19/02/2023**

God's Call to Holiness **1 Peter 1:14-16**

8:15 am & 10:00 am – Rev. Sebastian Ravi Kumar

6pm – Rev. Vivek Gundimi*

4th Sunday **26/02/2023**

God's Call to Work **2 Thessalonians 3:10**

8:15 am & 10:00 am – Dr. Sunny Philip

6pm – Rev. Ebenezer Isaac

*** Holy Communion**

Dawn Communion Service is on 1st March at 6 a.m.