

# The Herald

·OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH OF SRI LANKA·



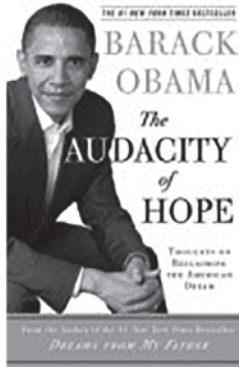
HE IS  
*Risen*

CELEBRATE THE RESURRECTION

**“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In His great mercy He has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” 1 Peter 1: 3. NIV.**

“EASTER HOPE IN DARK TIMES” - SEE INSIDE  
ALSO INSIDE - “THE RESURRECTION HOPE THAT MATTERS”

**THE AUDACITY OF HOPE!**



Some of you may recognize the title. This is the title of the second book written by President Barack Obama which became a best seller in 2006. He adapted this title from a Sermon preached by his Pastor, entitled “Audacity to Hope,” and changed it to “The Audacity of Hope.” It was basically about realizing the American dream. The emphasis was not on blind optimism but something more substantial. Hope in the face of difficulty. Hope in the face of uncertainty. Hope for all, no matter who or what their status in life. Interestingly, following just 20 minutes of his speech based on the ideas of this book, at the National Convention of the Democratic party, he was propelled into National prominence, won the Democratic Nomination and ultimately the Presidency.

The theme of this first quarter issue of “The Herald” is titled, “Resurrection Hope for Dark Times.” Easter is all about Hope...both to face life here inspite of the darkness that surrounds us and certainly to be to be confident of the life to come. As someone said, “hope is important to us as water is to fish!”

In that great passage on the Resurrection, 1 Corinthians 15, the Apostle Paul talks specifically about the Resurrection of Jesus and its hopeful consequences to those who believe in Him. Everything depends on the fact that Jesus who died is now risen from the dead. Our hope is based on Jesus’s resurrection and nothing else; not on wishful thinking about the future evolution of the human race, not on a general conviction about the immortality of the soul, not in the expectation that medical science will some day conquer death. We only have hope because Jesus died but is now alive forever and has promised to make us live too. It all comes down to Easter hope!

The hymn writer wrote about this hope so eloquently focusing both on this life and the life to come. Remember? Because He lives I can face tomorrow. This is not blind optimism. It’s built on fact. Our case rests on what God has actually done. And so we believe. We have a faith to live for and a hope to die by!

Vol CXIII Nos.01,02,03  
 January - February - March  
 2025

**The Herald**  
 Official Organ of the  
 Christian Reformed Church  
 of Sri Lanka.

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ANNUAL Subscription  
**Local - Rs. 250/-**  
**Overseas - U.S. \$ 10/-**

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The word “Audacity” in its positive sense brings with it ideas of “boldness” and “daring”. And so we are called upon with a boldness to believe in both the death and resurrection of Jesus, if “hope” is to take root in our hearts and lives. We cannot be like the two who travelled on the Emmaus road (St Luke 24: 13 ff), who only “had hoped” at one point until the “Stranger” revealed Himself to them. We must be like those two, after that revelation took place when they overflowed with hope.

So this Easter let us be audacious in the good sense of the word and let the basis of our hope for all times and places, rest in the finished work of Jesus on the Cross and from the grave! Let’s have the audacity to hope in Jesus. Not in anything or anyone else!



by Lisa Perera.

## Easter Hope in Dark Times

“For God so **loved** the world that he **gave** his one and only Son, that whoever **believes** in him **shall not** perish but **have** eternal life.” - John 3: 16

The story of Easter - deeply rooted in the experience of suffering, apparent defeat and the end of all hope. Yet, the resurrection turned all this despair on its head. It showed us that the darkest moments of our lives don't have the final say, that even death can be overcome, and that love, grace and hope have the final word. It gives us hope and the possibility of new life, even when everything seems broken and lost.

The world today is facing particularly dark and challenging times, and in such a world, Easter brings a message of profound hope. It is a reminder that even the most overwhelming struggles can lead to transformation and renewal.

Are you going through a time of personal crisis? A period of darkness? A time when all seems lost and there is no hope. Don't despair! We read in 1 Peter 1:6 “So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you must endure many trials for a little while”. Hold fast to the Easter story – one that doesn't deny the reality of suffering, but is more about hope and renewal, that seasons of sorrow can give way to seasons of joy. As 2 Corinthians 4: 8 and 9 states “We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.”

Easter is the day that Christians say: “God can. He will. And Your will be done.” God promises the impossible and makes it possible, and therefore we can believe and hold onto the hope of eternity.

Celebrate the resurrection – of life triumphing over death, of light driving away the darkness, and of new beginnings emerging from despair. Hold onto the hope of Easter in these dark times!

Endurance through faith  
 Attaining victory over darkness  
 Shared gift of hope  
 Transformation and renewal  
 Encouragement to hope beyond the present  
 Resurrection amid suffering

*(Lisa, is a Deaconess with the CRC Bambalapitiya Local Consistory.)*

# THE RESURRECTION HOPE THAT MATTERS!

by Roger Koch

Perhaps you have heard of the incident of the two men who were trying to convince each other of the validity of their different faiths? These men being brought up in two separate religious teachings debated their beliefs and were seemingly getting nowhere in trying to impose on one another. Finally, the one who believed in Jesus Christ, turned to his pal who was not a Christian and asked, "when you come to a cross-road and do not know whether to proceed on the right fork or the left fork, whom would you turn to for direction \_ to a man lying dead on the road or to a person who is very much alive on the road?" "Obviously, to the one who is alive," came the reply. "Then why are you pointing me to the dead one?", the Christian inquired!

The point is very clear - there is no other religious leader or founder of a particular faith who claims to have life after death, other than Jesus Christ. He did not merely claim it but also proved it by rising from the dead. He is the only one who can give direction in Life - That's Resurrection Hope For Dark Times! We believe in the literal, physical resurrection of our Lord as an undeniable fact!

This very fact that Jesus rose from the dead puts us who believe in Him, in a right relationship with God, gives us new life and ensures a new life to come. So life beyond death is a guaranteed hope no matter how dark the times are. The Heidelberg Catechism in Question 45 asks, "What does the Resurrection of Christ profit us?" Answer: "First, by His resurrection He has overcome death, that he might make us partakers of the righteousness which He had purchased for us by His death; secondly, we are also by His power raised up to a new life; and lastly, the resurrection of Christ is a sure pledge of our blessed resurrection". What more do we need?

Romans 6 : 5-11, " If we have been united with Him in His death, we will certainly also be united with Him in His resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with Him, so that the body of sin might be rendered powerless, that we should no longer be slaves to sin \_ because anyone who had died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with Him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over Him. The death He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life He lives, He lives to God. In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus." When Christ died it looked as though he was de-

feated. Satan, the devil seemed to have won. All Satan's demons surely must have cheered when Christ died. But when Christ rose again from the dead, and came out triumphant from the tomb - Satan and his demons received a "knock-out" blow. It is they who were defeated. Our Lord Jesus Christ by the power of God had won a great victory as a man, on behalf of all humanity. This again is our Resurrection Hope For Dark Times!

The resurrection of Jesus is one of the most substantiated facts in history. Hundreds of eye-witnesses confirmed it. Leaders (some non-christian) in the world legal fraternity have asserted that there is enough evidence to prove the resurrection of Jesus in a court of law. Paul, writing in 1 Corinthians 15: 3-8 states, "For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to the scriptures, and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. Then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born". So actually, the dead body of Jesus received life again. He arose literally! He arose physically! It is absurd for unbelievers to come out with other nonsensical theories, trying to show that Christ did not rise from the dead.

It was the same physical body of Jesus that laid in the tomb, yet it was a miraculous body as well, with the ability to be anywhere at a given time and even enter in a closed/locked building. Further writings of Paul in the New Testament calls it a "spiritual body" and asserts that the physical bodies of believers, after being resurrected, will be like Christ's glorious body.

So for whoever trusts in Jesus Christ, there is joy and freedom to live because death is not the end. A new life has already begun, made available by the resurrection of Jesus. I urge you to accept this life. Simply believe it, take hold of it by faith. Then you too can share in the victory that Christ won over the devil. You too can experience the transition from being dead in sin to having a new life in the Spirit and also hold on to the guarantee of a glorious resurrection when Jesus comes again. This is indeed, Resurrection Hope for Dark Times. In closing, let me remind you, that the goal of the Christian faith is not death - but life - abundant life here and now and life that lasts forever.

*(Bro Roger Koch is an Elder with the Kohuwela Local Consistory and a Lay Preacher of many years.)*

## ***Easter Hope for Dark Times***

Life is full of ups and downs, and sometimes the downs feel overwhelming. Whether it's struggling with school, family problems, friendships, or just feeling lost, dark times can make us wonder if there's any hope at all. But Easter reminds us that even in the darkest moments, God's light shines the brightest.

### ***The Darkness Before the Dawn***

Imagine what Jesus' disciples must have felt after His crucifixion. They had given up everything to follow Him, believing He was the promised Savior. Then, suddenly, He was gone—betrayed, beaten, and buried. Their hopes were crushed, their faith shaken. Maybe you've felt like that before—like everything you counted on has fallen apart. But that wasn't the end of the story. Three days later, everything changed!

The Power of Resurrection

On Easter morning, Jesus rose from the dead, defeating sin, death, and darkness forever. His resurrection wasn't just a happy ending to a sad story; it was a declaration that no matter how hopeless things seem, God is still in control. Jesus' victory means that the darkness in our lives—our fears, failures, and struggles—will never have the final word.

### ***What Easter Means for Us Today***

Easter isn't just about an event that happened 2,000 years ago; it's about what that event means for us today.

- 1) **Hope in Hardship** - No matter what you're facing, Easter reminds us that God can bring life out of death and joy out of sorrow. Your struggles don't define you—God's love does.
- 2) **Forgiveness and New Beginnings** - Because of Jesus' sacrifice, we are offered complete forgiveness. No matter what mistakes you've made, Jesus offers you a fresh start.
- 3) **A Reason to Keep Going** - The resurrection proves that God's power is greater than anything this world throws at us. When life feels dark, we can trust that God's light is coming.

## ***Living in the Hope of Easter***

So how can we live out this Easter hope every day?

Pray and trust God - When struggles come, bring them to Jesus. He understands pain and wants to walk with you through it.

Encourage others - Share hope with those around you. Just like Jesus brought light to the world, we can reflect His love to others.

Keep your eyes on eternity - This life isn't all there is. Easter reminds us that something far greater is ahead for those who trust in Christ.

### ***Conclusion***

No matter what dark times you're going through, Easter is proof that God's love is bigger, stronger, and more powerful than any trouble you face. Jesus conquered the grave, and because of that, we can face tomorrow with hope!

"I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die." - John 11:25

# **Youth Page**

**Edited By: Joshua Aldons**





## Dig Deeper

Just like the disciples who experienced the resurrection of Jesus & couldn't keep the news to themselves, we're also called to share God's love & Good News with others. Think of a friend or family member who could use some hope and encouragement. Maybe pay them a visit or call them over the phone.



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## Just For Laughs

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**Why don't you tell Easter jokes on Good Friday?**

Because they might crack up too soon!

**Why did Jesus not need a GPS after His resurrection?**

Because He is the way, the truth, and the life!

**It's Easter Sunday!**

Just saying... if Jesus came back on a Monday we could have had a long weekend.



A Christian university student was working on his thesis late one night, praying that Jesus would watch over him and make sure he wasn't doing anything stupid. Around 2:00 AM, he got really tired, so he immediately powered off his computer and went to bed. When he woke up in the morning, he thought he'd lost everything he had written the night before. So when he turned on his computer and opened his work back up, he was both surprised and grateful. Thankfully, Jesus saves.

HAPPY  
EASTER

# Children's Page

Edited by Amanda Fraser.



Hi Boys and Girls,

Can I share a secret? I don't like the dark. I like to sleep with a night light on so I can see if I wake up in the middle of the night.

Being in the dark can be a bit scary sometimes huh? You're not sure what's around you...every sound can be a bit creepy. Yep, count me out for being in the dark!

But you know that's one of the reasons I love being a follower of Jesus. You see, at Easter we celebrate how Jesus died on the cross to save us from our sin or our 'darkness'. When Jesus died, he defeated darkness and when he came back to life again after 3 days he gave us a special gift of hope.

The bible tells us that,

## **JESUS IS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD!**

Because we believe in him, we can always walk in his perfect light. Phew! That's great news to me!

I hope you have a wonderful Easter!

Lots of love,  
Aunty Mandy.

# Can you read the story of Easter using the symbols?

## The First Easter



friends



tomb









stone















soldiers



angel

When Jesus died his  were sad. They put him in a . A large  was placed in front of the .  stood nearby to see that no one rolled the  away.

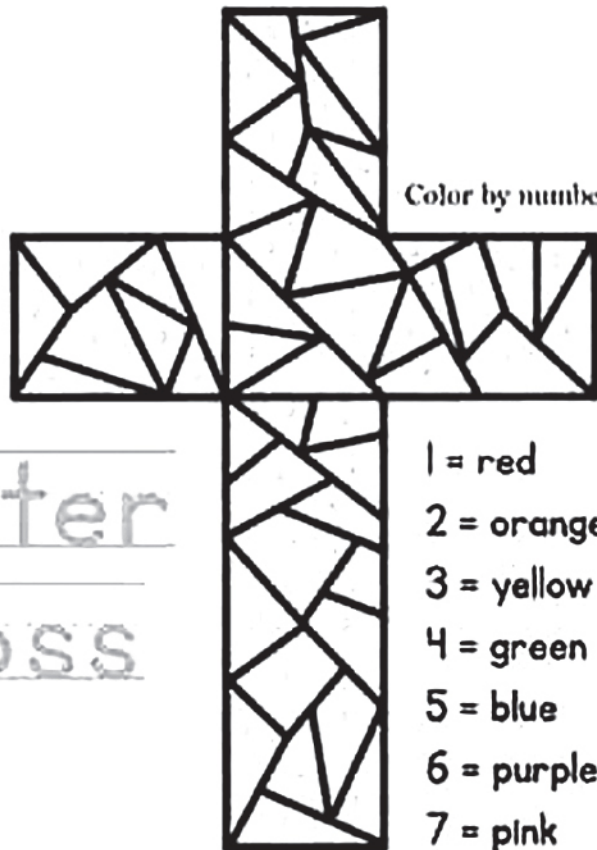
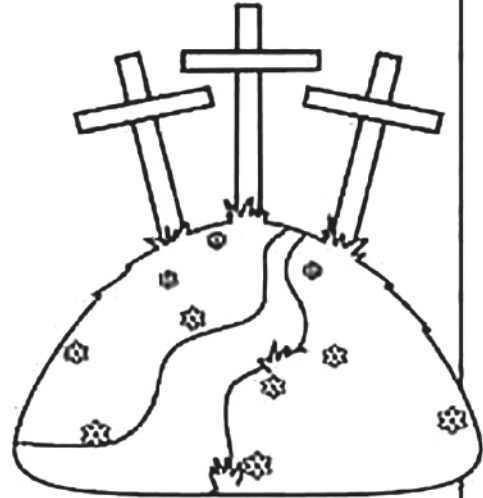
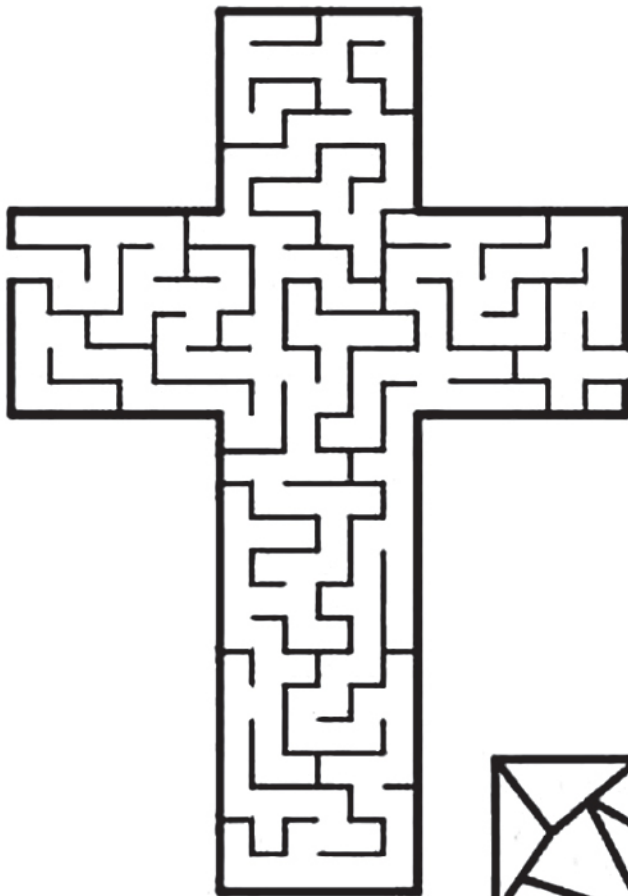
For  days Jesus' body lay in the . Then in the morning of the third day, an  came and rolled the  away. When the  saw the , they were afraid.

That day Jesus'  came to the . They saw that the  had been rolled away. There was an  in the . The  said, "He is not here: for he is risen."

Jesus died so that we can all live again after we die. We have Easter to remind everyone of the day Jesus arose from the dead.

Here's a Puzzle and a colouring page for you to enjoy!

# Easter Cross Maze



Easter  
cross

# Five Love Languages of Children

by Marsha Navamanie

As I am writing this article, it is Valentine's Day in the United States. It was interesting to me that several news programs talked about "love languages", a concept started by a Christian author and speaker, Gary Chapman. He stresses that your spouse and your children need to feel loved and accepted for who they are in the ways that fit their personality and needs. Without this at the early stages of development, many people suffer from poor self-esteem which can cause them to have various problems throughout life.

Love is the foundation to building healthy, happy kids. Do our children know that we love them? How do they know? Do we say it? Is that enough?

Everyone has an emotional tank that needs constant refilling. No matter how well we take care of their physical and mental and social needs, we have to make sure their emotional tank is full. How do we do that?

1. We do this by showing them in various ways that we love them unconditionally. They need to know that our love is not conditional on their obedience or satisfying our own needs.

2. Children need healthy self-esteem, to understand they are special, without being superior to others.

3. They need security and safety; to know we will always love them. If they are secure in their knowledge of our love, they can explore the world around them with confidence.

4. They need to develop relational skills in order to be happy in the future. They need to learn to make friends, respect authority, and control their emotions.

How do we show them we love them? The verbal affirmation, "I love you" is not enough. We have to show it in our behavior. Sometimes when we don't feel loving, we can still be loving in our behavior.

Gary Chapman found five different ways that we show love to others and writes about them in his book, *The Five Love Languages of Children*. The languages he talks about are: physical touch, quality time, gifts, acts of service and words of affirmation.

Everyone will relate more to one than the others, although all of them together show our children that we love them. We must practice using all of them to determine which of them relate to each of our children.

## 1. Physical Touch

Babies need a lot of physical touch. Cuddling, playing with them, patty cake, sitting in your lap reading a book, etc. As they get older, touch can happen in play, wrestling matches with



dad on the floor, hugs and kisses. Even an arm around the shoulder, or pat on the back will help them feel loved.

Don't stop as they get older, especially with boys, just don't do it in front of their peers. Playing games is one way. Be sure to use touch when they are sick or sad.

It is important for fathers to show affection to preadolescent daughters, don't pull back as they mature. Honor their feelings. Look for opportunities to talk about changes in the way they respond to touch.

If this is your child's primary love language you need to find ways to give them physical touch, even if you are uncomfortable with it. Negative touch, such as a spanking or a slap would also be more harmful to a child who has this as their love language.

## 2. Words of Affirmation

Affirmative words are powerful, cutting words are even more powerful, but in a negative way.

a. *You need words of affection and endearment*, "I Love You" should be said often to children. Words of praise for who they are, their abilities and character, rather than what the child does. Be careful it doesn't lose its meaning.

b. *Words of encouragement* help them have courage to do more or improve what they have done.

c. *Words of guidance*. Parents have the primary responsibility for socializing children, teaching ethical and moral development. If we don't they will get guidance elsewhere: school, peers, television! It needs to be positive and loving guidance, "Do", not "Don't". Parenting is not a matter of "doing what comes naturally", because every child is different. What worked for us, won't necessarily work for our kids.

**Suggestion:** Write down words of affirmation you hear. Look through articles on child rearing, and record the positive words you find. Practice saying those words in front of a mirror. Apologize to your child when you are negative or critical. Ask for their help.

## 3. Quality time

a. *The gift of presence*. It says you are important to me, more than anything else. It makes your child feel like they are the most important person in the world. A lot of misbehavior happens when children seek this type of attention.

b. Quality time is *focused attention*. As children grow we need to sacrifice more of our time and interests in



the interest of the child's needs. It is not the event itself, but the act of doing something together, and being together that is important.

c. You need time with each child, look for times when you can be alone with each one.

d. We need to make eye contact with each child. Full focused attention is the key. Most people use eye contact only when they are trying to correct their children. We need to make it positive.

e. We can use that time to get to know our children better. Through positive conversations we can find out about how they are feeling, and what interests them. We can help them develop to the best of their abilities. The earlier you start this process the longer you will be able to communicate with your children.

Ideas: ***The secret is to plan for quality time.*** Let me share just three everyday opportunities:

1. *Mealtimes* are natural events around which to plan. Turn off the T.V. Try to be home for at least one meal together each day.

2. *When they come home from school.* This is a good time to decompress and find out how the day went, if there were any problems....

3. *Bed time* is a good time for conversation, as part of the bedtime ritual. This is time to slow down from the rush of the day. Use stories to help them understand different feelings and how to control them.

Prepare yourself for quality time with your kids. Leave your work baggage at the door. Beyond daily activities, make sure you spend larger blocks of time together. Take vacations or trips together, camping is excellent. Walks together on the beach. Date nights.

#### 4. Gifts

Giving and receiving gifts as a way to express love is universal. The Greek word for gift, "charis" is the word our Bibles translate as "grace", an undeserved gift. A deserved gift is a payment, and offering a gift for doing things is a type of bribe. A love gift should not be based on what someone has done. Make common things gifts by wrapping them up and making a big deal about giving them. Gifts should serve a positive purpose in our child's life.

Don't make gift giving a substitute for time. It will only make our children materialistic. Gifts should be a genuine expression of love. Sometimes you can let your children help you decide what the gift should be, especially clothes and things they will use in public.

If this is your child's love language they will want to open the gift in your presence, they will make a fuss about it, and thank you profusely. They will put it in a



special place in their room. It shows them that you thought about them.

#### 5. Acts of Service

Parenting is a service-oriented vocation. Full time service for a minimum of 18 years. It is important that we first serve our spouse, to keep our partners love tank full by doing what pleases him/her. This is an important model of being a servant for our children to watch. Our primary motivation in serving our children is to do what is best for them.



We start out by doing for them what they cannot do for themselves. As they grow we show them how to do certain acts for themselves. We serve them but as they are ready, we teach them how to serve themselves and then others. We don't force them to be replicas of us, or fulfill the dreams we were not able to accomplish. but help them develop their own skills, to be the best they can be in serving others.

It is important to remember that the mundane acts we do as parents in serving our children are acts of love. If we do them with a loving attitude, as a gift, freely, not under coercion or grudgingly, it meets the love needs of our family. Check if you are communicating love when you serve your family.

The ultimate purpose of acts of service to children is to help them emerge as unselfish adults who are able to give love to others through acts of service. Ways to do this: hospitality, service projects to orphanages, schools for handicapped children, helping the elderly.

If this is your child's primary love language, be sensitive to their requests and recognize that your response will either fill their love tank or puncture it. Ask yourself why they are asking. Is their tank a little dry? How can I best fill it today.

The next question is; How do I know which of these is my child's love language? Unfortunately, we have run out of space and will have to answer that question in the next issue. In the meantime, you can look for information on love languages on the internet. There are plenty of sites to help you find your love language or those of your spouse and children. Try Dr.

Chapmans link below

<https://5lovelanguages.com/quizzes/love-language>

Or watch a video or read the book:

***The Five Love Languages of Children***, Gary Chapman and Ross Campbell, Northfield Publishing, Chicago, 1997.

*Written by Marsha Navamanie, from the books on the 5 love languages. Marsha and her husband Ron served with the Christian Reformed Church in Sri Lanka for over 20 years. They are currently residing in the U.S.*

## +++ CHURCH NEWS+++



### ❖ The Seasonal Worship Services...

As in the past years, Christmas day worship services were held in all our local Churches with good attendances, also with many visitors from other parts of the World. The Traditional Carol Services took place on the Sunday before Christmas and the New Year Worship services followed. The Watchnight service on the 31st of Dec took place at the CRC Dehiwela with an extended time of Praise and Worship. Breakfast and a time of fellowship followed.

The Annual Carol Service of the CRC SL Women's Federation involving the participation of the local congregations as well as Women's fellowships took place on Saturday 7th December at Makandura.

The Annual Christmas Get together and Dinner for Ministry workers, Denominational staff and families took place on Friday the 13th at the Omega Regency, Wellawatte. A creative programme of games involving all, the visit of Santa, the traditional Christmas sing along and a buffet of good food was all part of the evening into the night.

The Community Outreach Christmas event of the CRC Dehiwela took place on Saturday the 14th of December, 2024. Dry rations were distributed to 154 families of the Community, whilst the children were given School books. A Magic show for the children as also part of the programme, whilst a film of the Christmas story and a message by Revd: Stanley Nelson on the significance of the Christmas event was part of this extended morning.

### ❖ Independence Day Worship - The anniversary of Independence was commemorated on

the 4th of February, 2025, with two Trilingual Services. One was held at Dehiwela at which Revd: Shirley Faber gave the message, whilst the other was held at Wolvendhal with Pastor Pepchal Rickson as the Preacher.

### ❖ Revd and Mrs Winston Gauder

This particular time of the year also saw the visit of Winston and Marie Gauder who spent their initial days touching base with those of the CRC who had in different ways been part of their lives when they pastored congregations here. They also met with Denominational leaders for discussions involving building a relationship with their Church Organisation in Sydney. The highlight of their stay was a visit to the Church at Makandura, where they ministered, prior to their departure to Australia. A meaningful worship service was planned at which Revd; Gauder ministered the Word and an extended time of fellowship followed. Many of the children and grand children of the members who were part of the Church in their time met and reminisced with them with much joy.



### ❖ Little Lambs Montessori.



The Little Lambs Montessori of the CRC Dehiwela commemorated Forty years of ministry to the Community with a Thanksgiving Service on 30th January, 2025, with the participation of Revd: Jansz, Pastor Sunil Gunasekera and Bro. Steve Schubert. Special items from the children, a word from the Principal Mrs Sajana Pinto and the cutting of the Birthday cake and singing of the birthday song was all part of the program. Pastor Sunil Gunasekera preached the Sermon.

The “Little Lambs” was the initiative of Revd: and Mrs. Crosbie de Kretser and has been sustained through the years by many, dedicated Staff and others who have given of their time and resources. Former Principals, Dawn Rowland, Dorothy Viswasam, Nipunika Jayasekera were joined by many devoted teachers through the years. We also cannot forget the service of the late Primrose Ingram. At present Sajana Pinto functions as Principal with Rosemary Nelson and Kanthi as part of the Staff. Menik Perera continues to give exemplary leadership in a voluntary capacity, whilst Steve Schubert, Lindsay Melder and Pastor Sunil Gunasekera have through their commitment work and advice contributed immensely to its progress. In recent years, Revd Michael and Jenny de Kretser have also extended great support by way of diverse resources and tangible encouragement continuing the legacy of Revd: and Mrs. Crosbie de Kretser.



❖ **COMBINED YOUTH GET TOGETHER**

With the objective to revamp the English Youth Fellowships and the Youth Federation that existed in the years gone by, the GCMC decided to have a combined Youth Get Together on 12th February, 2025 in the premises of the CRC Dehiwela.

It was a well attended event that involved a time of Praise and Worship, a Message from Pas Rickson and the appointment of Youth Representatives to a General Committee that would continue to take this effort forward. The programme ended with many out door games and light refreshments.

❖ **General Consistory Office bearers 2025**

The following were elected to Office to serve through this year:- President: Pas Lakmal Wijeratne.

Vice-Presidents: Pas Rickson Anthony (Ministry), Bro. Dinesh Kanagaratnam (Admin)

Secretary- Sis Tamara Rebeira.

Asst. Sec: - Bro. Steve Schubert.

Treasurer: - Bro. Alex Duckworth.

Asst Treas: - Bro. Richard Fernando.

Book Keeper: - Bro Marlon Jansz.

Convenors

Missions: Pas Sunil Gunasekera.

Diaconate: Pas Chaminda Ratnayake.

Teaching and Training: Revd: Charles Jansz.

❖ **LOCAL CONSISTORY OFFICE BEARERS 2025**

❖ **Wolvendhal**

President – Pastor Rickson Anthony.

Secretary – Bro. Andrew Selvarajah.

Treasurer – Sis Hepsibah Wilson.

Presbytery Elder – Bro David Peter.

GCEC representative - Bro. Dinesh Kanagaratnam.

Auditors – Bro. Richard Thomas/Sis Winifreda Fernando.

❖ **Regent-Street**

President – Pastor M. Shashikumar.

Secretary – Bro. David Labrooy.

Asst Sec – Bro. Yohan Andrew.

Treasurer – Bro. Aubrey Peiris, Bro M. Arulkumar Bro M. Rajeswaran.

Auditors – Bro. Yohan Andrew, Bro Aubrey Peiris, Bro. M.G. Moorthy.

Wardens – Bros Paschal Herft/ S. Yasodaran.

GCEC Representative – Bro. M. Arulkumar.

Presbytery Elder – Bro. David Labrooy.

❖ **Bambalapitiya.**

President – Bro; Keith Modder.

Vice-President – Bro; Thulitha Piyasena.

Secretary – Sis Leah de Lile.

Asst Sec: - Sis Lisa Perera.

Treasurer – Sis Lana Foenander.

Asst. Treas – Bro. B Nandakumar.

GCEC Representative – Bro Keith Modder/ Bro Thulitha Piyasena.



- ❖ **Wellawatte.**  
 President- Revd: Shirley Faber.  
 Secretary – Sis. Ruba Weerasinghe (by invitation only).  
 Treasurer (E) Bro Alex Duckworth (T) Bro Sudharshan Cruz  
 Presbytery Elder – Bro Alex Duckworth.  
 GCEC Representative – Bro. T Regan.  
 Warden – Pastor Suresh Karmegam.  
 WMU Rep Sis Gayathrie Duckworth.  
 Auditors – Bros Austen Mascranghe, Sudharshan Cruz

- ❖ **Dehiwela**  
 President: Revd: Charles Jansz.  
 Secretary – Sis. Tamara Rebeira.  
 Treasurer – Bro. Shane Ingram.  
 Warden – Bro. Jerome Marianayagam.  
 Asst. Warden – Sis Rohini Perera.  
 Presbytery Elder – Bro. Steve Schubert.  
 GCEC Representative – Pas. Clement Yogarajah.  
 Missions Fund/Diaconal Fund Treasurer – Bro. Marlon Jansz.  
 Diaconal Coordinator – Bro. Lindsay Melder.  
 Teaching and Training Cord – Revd: Stanley Nelson.  
 LC Rep on RYM – Sis Roshni Foenander.  
 LC Rep on Little Lambs – Bro. Lindsay Melder.  
 LC Rep on Sunday School – Bro. Marlon Jansz.  
 LC Rep on WMU – Vacant.  
 Auditors –Bros. Steve Schubert, Bevin Mack, Marlon Jansz, Sis Roshni Foenander.

- ❖ **Kohuwela**  
 Presidents – Bros Roger Koch/Conrad Van Twest.  
 Secretary – Bro. Romesh Anthony.  
 Treasurer –Sis Nilanee Tissaaratchy.  
 Poor Fund Treasurer – Bro. Adrian Corea.  
 Warden – Bro. Charley Anthony.  
 G C Representative – Vacant.  
 Presbytery Elder – Bro Roger Koch.

- ❖ **CRC Women’s Federation Office Bearers 2025.**  
 President – Rochelle Kulasena.  
 Secretary – Pushpa Murugiah.  
 Treasurer – Winifreda Fernando.  
 Vice-Presidents – Krishanthini Fernando (T), Gayathri Duckworth (E)  
 Asst Secs - Rohini Perera (S) Vino Schubert (E)  
 Asst Treas: Darsanie Fernando.

❖ **Church Register**

❖ **Deaths**

*“For ever with the Lord”*

**RITA REBEIRA** – on Saturday 14th December, 2024, of the Dehiwela Congregation

**ALOMA PATTERNOT** - on Monday 24th February, 2025, of the Regent-Street Congregation.

**DOREEN HERFT** – on Tuesday 18th March, 2025, of the Regent-Street Congregation.

❖ **Adult Baptism.**

*“As you have received Christ, so walk...”*

**SIVALINGAM SIVAKUMAR**, on Sunday 5th January, 2025, at the CRC Wellawatte.

❖ **In Memoriam.**

❖ **ALOMA PATTERNOTT**

Aloma Patternott passed away on Monday the 24th of February bringing a great sense of grief to her family, the Church family to many who knew and loved her.

Aloma was part of the Patternott and Schwallie families who were very much part of the CRC Churches initially of Maligkande and then of Regent-Street through many decades. She was particularly involved with the Regent-Street Congregation where she was a larger than life personality, with her cheerful demeanour, a voice that always had something to say and her involvement with many areas of Church life and ministry. Always fashionably dress – some of it her own creations, she had to be noticed! She was a live wire in the WMU at Regent-Street and was also involved with the CRCSL Womens Federation and it was good to see many of the Federation Leadership at her funeral service.

For many years she was the Matron of the Brohier Memorial Home, where she tended the Elderly with much love and compassion.

Facing many challenges through life, she was sustained by a living faith in the Lord and great loyalty to the Church which was part of the legacy her forefathers (and mothers) had left behind.

It was to the Regent-Street congregation that she gave the best years of her life with a great sense of loyalty. By-passing many a CRC local Church she travelled to Regent-Street faithfully for Sunday worship and involved herself with the ministry with great enthusiasm, doing whatever was needed to be done.

We do thank God for the memories of her life and service, even though in recent years, some health concerns came in the way of a full and vibrant life.

At a time when people change churches mostly for self enhancement that has nothing to do with the Lord and His Word, we do thank God that people like Aloma held on to a denomination and a congregation, that had been part of her life from the day she was born. And now she enjoys the fullness of Joy in the presence of her Lord Whom she loved and served so cheerfully.

*(The "News" in these pages is gathered from the Bulletins published by the respective local churches and available in the Church office. Any other news of events or involving the membership could be sent directly to the Editor of "The Herald," for publication according to the established criteria. – Ed.)*



**“ A Church can be united in one of two ways - You can freeze together as the Church of the frozen chosen or you can melt together with the fire of the Holy Spirit.”**

*- John Hagee.*



# 9 Words That Can Cause Division (and How to Approach Them)

By Todd Pheifer

**L**anguage is an imperfect means of human communication, and societies are constantly assessing or adding words to convey complex ideas. Suggesting that words can be ambiguous or have multiple interpretations might be an understatement. Some ambiguities are humorous, while others can cause deep hurt if used without contextual awareness. Many are familiar with the rhyme “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never hurt me.” Unfortunately, words can cause great pain and contribute to division in the church.

Some might believe that segments of society have become sensitive. Others believe people should consistently research the origins and impacts of certain words. Similarly, we should routinely engage in apologetics so that we are well-versed in the origin of our beliefs. Sometimes words are deemed unacceptable because of cultural sensitivities; other times a shift in acceptability stems from a broader understanding that a word was a poor descriptor from the beginning. Here are some words that can cause strife in the church and some recommendations for how people can approach them.

## Left/Right

This two-for-one pairing is common in political discussions and loosely associated with particular parties. But this pairing is inherently positioned to cause division, which does not make it desirable for use in the church. We can think of the left/right spectrum like a game of tug-of-war in which each group is trying to drag the other toward their own ideological side. Today it is common for people to lament *the left* or *the right* even though neither is a measurable group. *Recommendation:* Consider removing this pairing from your vocabulary. No one is asking you to compromise your beliefs, but keep your evaluative focus on issues, individuals, or defined groups. Avoid referencing an abstract ideology that has no membership, website, or published creed (Rom. 16:17-18).

## Liberal/Conservative

This pairing has ideological similarities to left/right but differences in application. Both words are associated loosely with political parties, but the dictionary definitions are far less divisive. All of us have some openness to new ideas while at the same time experiencing thoughtful contentment with other beliefs or practices that do not

need constant revisiting. Therefore, it is fair to suggest that we are all both liberal and conservative. If we evaluate our thoughts and behaviors over time, it is likely that we will discover that we are hybrids of these two words. *Recommendation:* Before using these words, consider whether they move the conversation forward or merely entrench people on a particular side. Are these words definable enough to promote dialogue and seek harmony, or are they used as weapons?

## Evangelical

The word “evangelical” is admittedly a tough one. We don’t want to feel like we have to surrender this word with theological origins because it has been sufficiently tainted or confused by society (Rom. 12:2). But the word “evangelical,” at least in the U.S., has become associated with particular views on political and social issues. These days, perhaps there might be value in self-labeling instead as a “Christ follower.” Make it about Jesus alone—*solus Christus*. We might be part of a denomination or support a particular theological system, but that is not our core identity as children of God. *Recommendation:* Consider whether “evangelical” is the best word for personal identification and for

labeling the church. When it comes to faith, how do you most want to be described?

### **Church**

We know the church is not a building; neither is it limited to weekly corporate worship. That hasn't stopped us from consistently describing the bride of Christ as an event or as a structure that will eventually need a new roof. We encourage people to go to church rather than striving to *be* church. Is that how we want the church to be known? Another challenge is that the church does not always have a reputation for extending love, grace, and forgiveness. We cannot build our faith and practices merely around the criticisms of an unbelieving world, and we must be aware that the church has in many instances not mirrored Christ. *Recommendation:* Boldly invite people to join your congregation, but recognize and understand the baggage that may come with the word "church." Ask people to describe their encounters with the church, and do not be shocked if their perceptions are different from your own.

### **Truth**

God is truth, and truthfully our spoken language fails to adequately capture the sheer magnitude of that statement. We try to find truth in other parts of life with various degrees of failure. We seek truth in theology, politics, our particular interpretations of science, societal leaders, or the consensus of a voting body. Divisions can arise when we put our faith in these human constructs rather than reserving the powerful word "truth" for God. *Recommendation:* Be careful with the word "truth" and evaluate whether its use is a sign that we are seeking comfort or security in something other than God.

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### **Biblical**

As with "truth," the problem with "biblical" is not the word itself but some of the ways it's used. The Bible is the inspired Word of God, useful for teaching, rebuking, and training in righteousness (2 Tim. 3:16). As we read Scripture, we interpret and apply. This should be done prayerfully, through thoughtful discussion, and in consultation with scholarly commentaries. The challenge is that we are sinners, so we must be wary of our own self-assurance. Sometimes we seek to compensate for doubt with consensus. Though like-mindedness can have value, it can also cause division and the weaponization of the word "biblical," especially when it would be more accurate to say "my preferred interpretation." *Recommendation:* Evaluate your use of "biblical" and prayerfully reflect on whether you use Scripture as a standalone authority or as a means to justify other beliefs.

### **Justice**

"Justice" is one of those words that tends to get a positive response from a broad audience. When someone says, "Justice must prevail," everyone nods, but "justice" can be an incredibly ambiguous word. Justice for whom? Through what means or system? Our sinful nature means we most often look to our own benefit, and our

perspective on what is fair or equitable is inherently biased. Justice might be served at times, but not everyone gets an equal share. *Recommendation:* When speaking about justice, provide qualifiers and frameworks while admitting limitations in knowledge of history, context, and culture.

Some of this analysis might feel like an attempt to make the gospel more palatable to a skeptical and sensitive society. That is not the case. Jesus reminds us in Matthew 10 and Luke 12 that division will always follow us, but we must ask ourselves whether our words contribute to conflict. We should never be ashamed of the gospel, but each day and through every interaction, we must ask whether we are moving people closer to Jesus. Do our words divide, or are they an invitation to talk and listen to one another more?

Move forward in boldness with the knowledge that if we consistently meditate on Scripture and constantly focus on Jesus, God will always give us the words to say. **B**



Todd Pheifer teaches in the School of Business and Management at Azusa Pacific University and is director of development at Kingdom Causes Bellflower. He lives in southern California and attends Bethany Christian Reformed Church in Bellflower.

(Reprinted from "The Banner," Publication of the Christian Reformed Church of North America, November 2024)

# TAIL LIGHTS

BY C.N.J

## GIVE ME A FIVE !!



Perhaps many of us have heard of this expression and even had a reason to give a five! This is an informal idiom and it involves hitting someone's hand with yours to celebrate some achievement – especially in Sports.

I thought of this the other day, when someone sent me a post entitled “Control your 5 M's your **M**outh, **M**ind, **M**ood, **M**anner and **M**oney.” You can give me a five for that!!

After that five and paging through some quotes, I found Rick Warren doing it with Five P's! He said that God created the **Church** to meet our deepest needs, which he stated as a **Purpose** to live for, **People** to live with, **Principles** to live by, a **Profession** to live out, a **Purpose** to live on! You can give me a five for that as well!

And in keeping with this issue I thought about Five Resurrection truths!

Jesus had a **bodily** Resurrection, He had a **justifying** Resurrection, a **Trinitarian** Resurrection, a **first fruits** Resurrection and His Resurrection **guarantees ours!** I am sure we can give each other a five on this! Actually we can and must give a five for all these but even if we cannot hit someone else's hand – let us let all these “Fives” hit our hearts!

### THE HERALD

of the

CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH OF SRI LANKA

No. 363, Galle Road, Colombo 6.

Registered as a Newspaper at G.P.O.