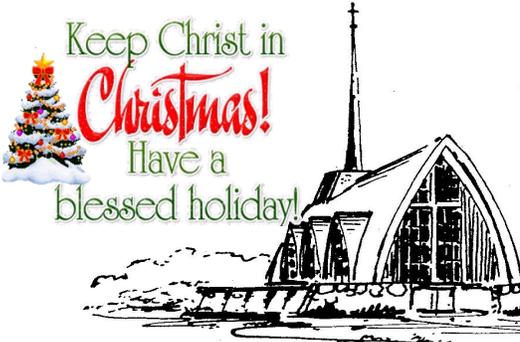


Keep Christ in
Christmas!
Have a
blessed holiday!



CORNERSTONE

Jesus Christ, the living cornerstone
... and you are also living stones,
built into a dwelling place of God
in the Spirit.
- Eph. 2:20-22 I Peter 2:4,5

Irvington Presbyterian Church

Fremont, CA

December, 2018

Sundays

Bible study 11:30 a.m.

Worship 10:00 a.m.

*(Nursery and Children
Sunday School During
Service)*

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At Christmastide we celebrate the central event in the history of the earth. What happened at Bethlehem altered the universe forever. Something really new took place when God became a human being: not an interpretation but an event.

This was far more than learning something new about the way the world is. When Pythagoras discovered that the square on the hypotenuse is equal to the sum of the squares on the other two sides, he found something that was just as true the day before, though no one knew it. But in 50 B. C. to say, "God is Man" would not have been true in the same way in which it was true in 10 A. D. This changes everything.

While Mary was pregnant, the angel told Joseph about the child soon to be born, "You shall call him Jesus, because he shall save his people from their sins." (Matthew 1:21) This is why he came, not to break the yoke of Caesar and to bring in the kingdom of David, but to break the yoke of sin and set up the kingdom of God. In His great love for us, He made the long cross-cultural journey from eternal glory to the conflict-ridden Middle East.

The heart of the problem is the problem of the heart. Jesus came to change people's hearts, not just to free us from the penalty of sin and leave the bitter cause. He came to free us from the power of evil in our lives. He came to give new life, to heal us of sin within, to set us free to desire the right things in the right way.

Jesus fully represents our fallen race. The genealogy in Matthew 1:2-16 lists men and women who were notorious for their evil character. "David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been Uriah's wife." (Matthew 1:6) A sorry tale of adultery and murder lies behind that brief verse. No one can be ashamed to claim His help. No matter how far you have fallen, no matter how well you think you have done, Jesus is fully adequate to bring new life. Jesus became a human being so that we can become truly and fully human for the first time.

DEACONS' CORNER

The Ministry of Compassion and Service

Poinsettias for Christmas

In keeping with the Deacons' annual tradition of celebrating the birth of Christ, poinsettias to decorate the sanctuary will again be available for purchase. You may sign up with Jenni Pellot during fellowship hour in the Social Hall. You may also place your order by calling the office.

Poinsettias can be dedicated to a loved one, in memory of someone dear to you, a sick friend or any other occasion. The plants will be placed in the sanctuary on December 16, and may be picked up after worship service on December 24.

The goal is to decorate the sanctuary with 30 plants this year.



Help Our Deacons

Deacons are an important part of the body of IPC. As their name suggests, the Deacons are leaders who serve. They are like the hands and feet and take care of the nitty-gritty work that keeps IPC



alive and well. With the decreased number of Deacons, your Deacon Board needs your help. If you feel that the Lord is leading you to be of service to the congregation as a Deacon, please contact any member of the Nominating

Committee. Deacons also need your help to prepare coffee and snacks for fellowship hour. If you can help, contact:

Gillian Carson, Russ Pennelly or Jenni Pellot to volunteer.

Archived Deacons News

In reviewing the Deacons' archives we found that seven years ago the late Mary Wolfe announced that "Let the Bell Ring Again Fund" had met its goal of \$3,904 and the bell was installed. The same bell that once called the congregation to worship prior to 1959 when the Little White Church was razed, was re-installed in the new church in 1964. After church renovations were completed in 2000, the bell was put into storage. In December 2011, it was again reinstalled. Our own Peter Mock built new electronics that now allows the bell to ring by turning on a switch.

Thank you Deacons for the sweet, nostalgic peals that call us to worship each Sunday morning.

Medical Equipment and Supplies

IPC maintains a limited supply of medical equipment and some supplies including walkers, wheel chairs, shower seats, hand exercisers, stool height extenders, portable toilet seats and stand, rolling walker/seat combo, crutches, and canes. These are available for members and their families. If you need to use any of these items, please contact a Deacon!

Gillian Carson, Russ Pennelly or Jenni Pellot.



SESSION NEWS & NOTES

Session Meeting on Tuesday November 12, was opened in prayer by Pastor Larry followed by a sharing of scripture, Acts 11:1-18 and communion. Session prayed for many in the congregation who are hurting, relatives and friends and those affected by the disastrous fires in CA.

At this meeting, Session unanimously voted to postpone the Annual Elections for Deacons and Elders to February 12, 2019. This was necessary since Pastor Larry is retiring at the end of this year and beginning January there will be a Transitional Pastor who would provide guidance during the transition. With Elder Dave Wegener relocation closer to his daughter, Session appointed Elder Mustapha Baksh to fill the role of B&G Elder for the remainder of this term.

Elder Elaine Enling has decided to pursue the Ordination Track and Jonathan Jiang the Common Lay Pastor path. Both are from the Fule Church and are IPC Members. Clerk was requested to contact Presbytery and schedule a meeting for either November 26 or December 3, where CPM and COM representatives would provide an orientation for IPC Session explaining what is needed have Elaine and Jonathan under care.

Buildings and Grounds reported that paper towels in the bathrooms were clogging the toilets and recommended that these be replaced with hand dryers. This will be addressed with TCFBP at their next steering committee meeting.

Personnel will investigate posting the pianist position on Google "Hire" that will provide expanded visibility on other sites as well. Both Personnel and Pastor are working to have staff performance evaluations completed before the end of this year.

Finance reported that although envelope offering was slightly down for October, giving was up for the year due to some large one-time gifts. All Ministries were requested to have their 2019 budgets in so that a first pass can be readied for the December meeting. Finance indicated that there will be no further negotiations with Child Leap Preschool because the organization did not provide the required status on their application for non-profit status with the CA Secretary of State.

Stewardship reported that 24 members attended the two stewardship meetings that were held this year. Total pledges will be announced in January. In addition this year, IPC donated \$415 to the "One Great Hour of Sharing", exceeding last year's total of \$386.

Following this scheduled meeting, Session held a special meeting moderated by Presbytery Engagement Team Member, Rev. Gregory Chan to begin formulating a plan for a Transitional Pastor. Session was asked to poll the congregation to help determine the five most important requirements for a Transitional Pastor. The responses will be summarized and included in the selection process.

With three members of Session termed out this year, the Session Board needs your help. If you feel that the Lord is leading you to be of service to the congregation as an Elder, you may contact any member of the Nominating Committee.

FAMILY MINISTRY UPDATE

Christmas, for young families, is a season filled with activities and excitement. Lessons about the birth of Jesus are essential to ensure that the real reason for the celebration is not lost in shopping and busyness. Here at Irvington Presbyterian Church, we are striving to keep Jesus at the center of our celebration.

Saturday December 1, Family Ministries hosted the annual "Hanging of the Greens" where families and friends made Christmas wreaths that were used in decorating the sanctuary. This activity was followed by a light dinner of soups, cookies, hot chocolate and Bible trivia.

The sanctuary is now adorned with colorful wreaths, the Christmas tree, the advent table with the wreath and candles, the banners on the walls, and a nativity scene. In addition to the sanctuary, there is a Christmas tree and decorations in the Social Hall. *We cherish the opportunity, as a family, to help prepare God's house and our own hearts for His birthday celebration.*



Saturday, December 15th, families and teachers will be attending the Christmas Performance, "Forever Christmas" at 3 Crosses Neighborhood Church in Castro Valley at 2:30 pm. Tickets are \$5 and available at www.3crosses.org. Get in the holiday spirit as we enjoy a celebration of Christ's birth, and join us!

The children and youth will be participating in the Christmas program during the worship service on Sunday morning, December 23th.

Celebrating the Tradition of Advent at IPC

While the Advent wreath with its four candles did bring light to churches, it was not to illuminate the interior as much as to symbolize the coming of Christ. On each Sunday of the Advent season we invite families to light the advent wreath. We have watched and waited:

in **Hope** as we light the 1st candle;

for **Love** we light the 2nd candle;

in **Joy** we light the 3rd;

with **Peace** we light the 4th;

as our redemption draws near, on Christmas Eve, The Christ candle is lit.

*Bade
family
lighting
candle of
hope*



CONGREGATION NEWS



- Pat Hughes Minh Khuc
- Don Hammack Pastor Michael
- Leila Kalin Irene Quek
- Daniel Khuc Vijey Solomon

- Jeanne Stachowiak



- Kamron and Mustapha Baksh
- Nichole and Justin Chaikin
- Kathy and Pat Jeffries
- Judith and Vijey Solomon
- Pastors Larry and Martha Thorson

A Report on Stewardship 2018-19

We are eternally grateful to the Irvington Presbyterian Church members and friends who have made pledges to sustain the church home that now nurtures us. We had 25 members attend our two stewardship meetings. The many questions that were asked during the meetings will be summarized and addressed by Session at the annual congregation meeting in January.

Thank you for financially supporting our church so that we can continue to do God’s work. Your Mission Team is especially thankful that your pledges will help fund our projects and Missionaries next year. If you have not completed your pledge, and are thinking:

Should I submit a pledge? The answer is yes.

Does my Pledge Matter? Your pledge does matter.

Need a Pledge Card? These are on the narthex table.

You may mark your pledge confidential; place in the offering plate or mail to the church office.

Know Your Missionaries

On Sunday, January 20, 2019, Elizabeth Prasad will present an update of the work being done in India through Witnessing Ministries of Christ (WMC). WMC is a Presbyterian sponsorship program for changing the lives of the Dalit through nurturing and education.

WMC has ben rebuilding the broken lives of Dalit Children for over 25 years. Your generosity in giving to the IPC Mission Fund has helped support this ministry for two decades. There will be a short introduction during Minute for Missions. Following worship, we will retreat to the Social Hall for lunch and a more in-depth presentation of the work WMC is doing in India.

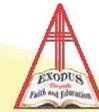
MISSIONS: THE HEART OF THE CHURCH



**Witnessing
Ministries
of Christ**

December 2018 Prayer Letter

From Elizabeth Prasad

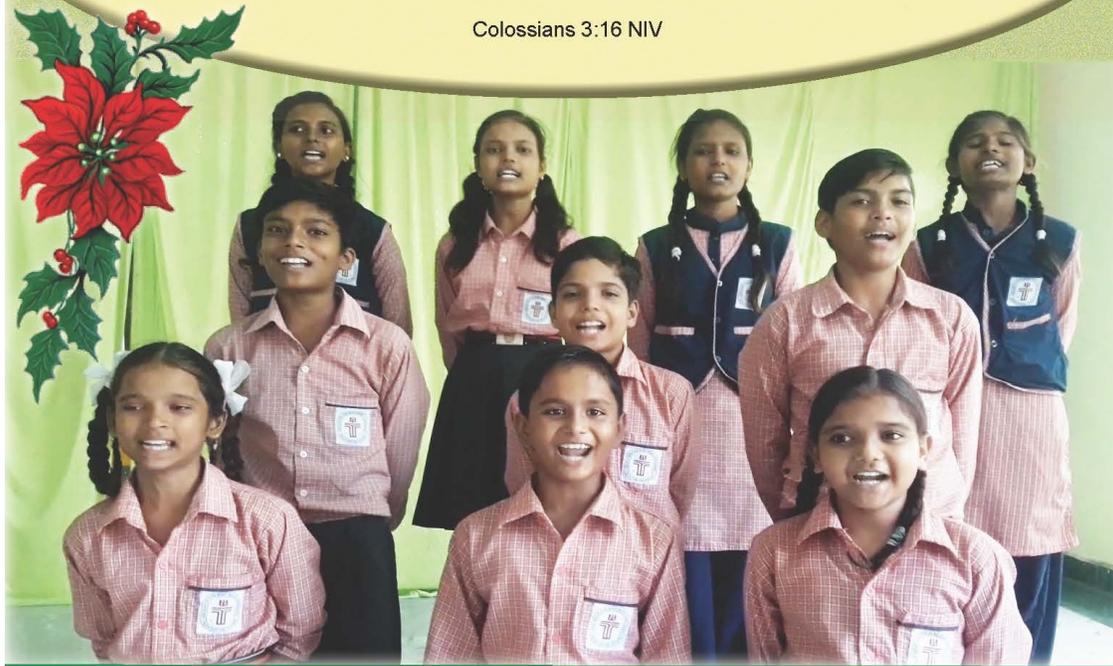


Exodus
Presbyterian
Church - India

Sing to God in Gratitude

Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.

Colossians 3:16 NIV



I received a gift this year. Without my knowledge or suggestion, children's choirs began to spring up in our schools. To my delight, videos of children singing began to stream into my computer. I recently sent out a video of the Etmadpur Children's Choir (above) sharing the praise song "10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord)".

Before the children were Christian, their destiny was chasing pigs' tails at best, enduring lives of disrespect and abuse that would repeat the cycle of poverty and oppression . . . their history of more than 3,500 years.

This grass-roots ministry at the heart of their problem shows them the way to walk a new path of faith where they can find exodus from this deadly cycle and use their God-given talents to form a Christian community and reach out to others.

It is your gift as well to pray for and support a ministry where outcaste people discover a transformed life of walking in the Way of Jesus.

These children are grateful. They are learning to live in discipline that includes worship, education and respect for others. As village children, they live directly with the trees, plants and animals. When their teachers show them how the tree lives, they are fascinated to learn the importance of sunlight, water, and clean air and how all of these things work together to allow them to live in a beautiful world.



Rohit John Gyani

Rohit John Gyani has been a student in our elementary school in Awagarh from 4th grade. After passing 10th, he continued his education as an eleventh-grade student in our residential school for older boys. Etmadpur Principal, Arvind Gyan, interviewed him at the nighttime study period where he related about his life and how it had changed.

In sharing about his village life compared to his first year in residential school, Rohit said, “When I was in my village, there was no schedule during each day. I would always get up late and just bring grass for my buffalo. I spent the whole day without educational goals.

“At residential school, I get up early in the morning, do exercises, and go to special prayer meetings. My meals are on time and I have learned the behavior of studying independently.

“By the grace of God and His blessings, I received the opportunity to go to residential school. First of all, I learned to be disciplined and this taught me to do daily routine activities.

“Now, I am learning to lead the prayer service and sing new songs. I got the opportunity to know about the Creation, how God created the world. My faith is increasing in Jesus day by day and I am very happy to be here.”

NOTE: *One of the daily activities is Shramdan, a reverent act of cleaning the campuses done out of gratitude for faith and respect to God. It makes this work an honor shared equally by all, erasing the stigma of having only people considered outcaste do menial tasks considered polluting.*

Rohit (7th person in the back row) stands with residential boys and teachers after sharing a happy time of Shramdan. In gratitude to God, they do this work joyfully and without disgrace. In this way, the boys show that they respect everyone. No untouchable comes to clean their school. Attitudes and thoughts determine the purity of the soul. There is nothing impure about this work.



Rohit John Gyani loves residential school in Etmadpur where he is learning more about his faith and developing good character.



Ministry representatives are ready to share the progress of this life-changing Exodus Journey. It is a valuable account of trust in God, courage, Christian mission, and justice.

PRAYERS FOR THE YOUTH

1. Young boys and girls, demoralized through outcaste circumstances of their birth, find new life in following Jesus Christ. Pray for them today and for their life's journey in faith.
2. Pray for their parents to allow them to continue their education.
3. Pray for those they meet - that their gratitude to God will be visible and sincere, leading others to join their joy.

MAY YOUR CHRISTMAS JOY ABOUND IN GRATITUDE!



WORSHIP MINISTRY UPDATE



IPC Worship Ministry team is dedicated to glorifying God with our music and allowing the Holy Spirit to move freely in our congregation as we worship Him in spirit and in truth. We believe that praise and worship expressed through joyful song can move God to break-through and bring Heaven to this Earth. We look forward to welcoming the New Year with thankful hearts for God's many blessings. Judy Lam, Artistic Director of the Fremont Youth Symphony and an accomplished flautist and pianist, has accepted the position of piano accompanist for Sunday worship. Judy brings many musical talents that will affect many aspects of worship and is inclusive of everyone, including youth and children. Our vocalists will be volunteers from the congregation and the community who will make a commitment to donate their talents, leading the congregation in song.

Ministry meetings will reconvene Sunday, January 6, at 11:30 am in McKowen Room. All are welcomed and encouraged to donate their talents to God's glory. You may sign up for:

- Vocalist in the praise group
- Scripture Reader
- Usher
- Greeter
- Audio/Visual operator
- Communion server (present or former Elders and Deacons)
- Preparation of the sanctuary before worship
- Proof-read the Sunday Bulletin

If God is leading you in the direction to serve in any of the above areas, contact the Worship Elder at 510-579-3694 or email at kandmbaksh@gmail.com. A rotational schedule will be used to ensure that all who wish to serve will be given the opportunity. Training will be provided, as needed.

"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving." Colossians 3:23-24 NIV

Christmas Joy Offering: Supporting Past, Present and Future Leaders

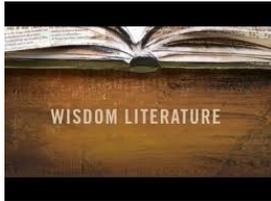
Each year during the Advent and Christmas season, we turn our eyes to Bethlehem and celebrate the wondrous gift of Jesus Christ, our Savior. By giving to the Christmas Joy Offering, you honor this gift by providing assistance to current and retired church workers in their time of need and developing our future leaders at Presbyterian-related racial ethnic schools and colleges.

This year you may place your donations in the offering plate on December 9 or anytime in December
Mark your envelope "Christmas Joy Offering".

ACTIVITIES UPDATE

Pastor Ken Jacobsen's Life Group

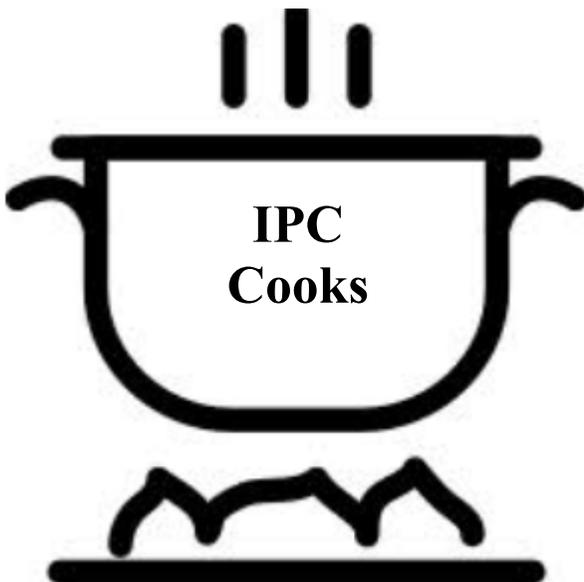
Christian Education should never end. Real Bible study is important. For the last year we have had serious Bible study by two trained theologians on Wednesday nights. That class has been moved to



Sundays after church. A light lunch is served. This class is on the Wisdom Literature in the Old Testament including Job, Ecclesiastes, and the other books in this category. After an introduction we will look in detail at the Book of Job.

You are requested to bring your Bible and writing pad. The class focuses on the practical wisdom offered in Scripture for daily living.

Join Ken Jacobsen and Terry Haynie as they explore God's Word.



Thanksgiving Leftovers:

What to do with all the uneaten food after Thanksgiving dinner? You can use them to whip up many leftover turkey recipes. Join the group on Saturday January 12 as our own IPC Chef, Pastor Ken Jacobsen, demonstrate how to use those delicious morsels to create quick and easy meals for one or two. This is a great time to share some wonderful Thanksgiving stories, sample Pastor Ken's creations and share your favorite recipe for leftover turkey.

Upcoming Attraction:

On Saturday March 16, the day before St. Patrick's Day, the entire congregation is invited to participate in preparing a traditional corned beef and cabbage dinner. Participants will also include our Fule Church congregation, some of whom have never eaten corned beef and cabbage.

National Corned Beef and Cabbage Day will be observed on March 17, 2019, the same as St. Patrick's Day.

Ladies out to Lunch

Enjoy the company of IPC ladies and friends :

Date: Tuesday, December 18th.

Time: 11:30 AM

Location: Olive Garden Restaurant - 39145 Farwell Dr., Fremont, CA 94538.

Contact: Jeane Garrett at 510-796-8873



Do note that restaurants are quite full at this time of the year. So please contact Jeane early if you plan on attending.

Fremont Youth Symphony Concert, Saturday December 15:



Fremont Youth Symphony Orchestra

A Festive Celebration Concert

Featuring works by Mozart, Tchaikovsky, Bach, Elgar, Handel, Schubert & More

Sat 12/15/2018 3PM
Irvington Presbyterian Church
4181 Irvington Ave, Fremont, CA 94538

Judy Lam, Artistic Director
Grace Lai, Associate Director
Merna Morse, String Coach

Free Admission

<https://www.thefremontsymphony.org/youth>



Church Directory

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Larry Thorson
Family Ministries Director : Stephanie Yamada
Bookkeeper: Jeanette Ollison
Office Manager: Marissa Hughes
Parish Associate: Rev. Dr. Martha Thorson

Address: 4181 Irvington Avenue
P.O. Box 1336,
Fremont, CA 94538
Phone: (510) 657 3133
Fax: (510) 657 7040

email: info@irvingtonpres.org

Bible Studies

Sunday Bible Study - at 11:30 AM in the McKowen Room following worship.
Contact Ken Jacobsen for details.

Women's Bible Study - Women meet Mondays in the McKowen Room at 9:30 AM.
Contact Helen Jorgensen for details.

Mandarin Bible Study - Mandarin speaking students meet in room 6 Tuesdays at 7:00 PM.
Contact Elaine Enling for details.

Dear IPC Family,

During the whole month of December, we have planned family-friendly events that are a perfect opportunity for you to invite your friends, neighbors and co-workers to come experience the benefits of being a part of a church family.

Your friends and family are more likely to accept your invitation to church at Christmas than any other time of year. So, don't miss out on this opportunity, when the people you know are most likely to take one more step closer to Jesus. We are so thankful for you and grateful for what God is doing in your life.

Check out happenings this Christmas Season:

December 1st – Hanging of the greens 3-5:00pm.

December 2rd – 1st Sunday of Advent; we light the candle of Hope.

December 9th – 2nd Sunday of Advent; we light the candle of Love.

December 9th – Annual Birthday Party for Jesus. Unwrapped gifts will be distributed during the Tri-City Volunteers annual Christmas party to those in the community who would not otherwise receive gifts.

December 15th – Fremont Youth Symphony presents “A Festive Celebration Concert” in the sanctuary at 3:00 pm. Admission is free.

December 15th - Young families and teachers attend the Christmas performance, at 3 Crosses Church, Castro Valley at 2:30pm.

December 16th – 3rd Sunday of Advent; we light the candle of Joy. Pre-worship carols in the narthex by the Fremont Virtuoso International Flute Ensemble at 9:30 am.

December 22nd – Bethel Pentecostal Assembly Community Outreach.

December 23th – 4th Sunday of Advent; we light the candle of Peace. Youth and children will join adults in the sanctuary as we worship together with the Fule Church.

December 24th - Christmas Eve Candlelight Evening Service at 6:00 pm. We light the Christ candle.

December 25th – Gujarati families Christmas Day Service in the Social Hall at 1 to 4 pm – cheer, scripture reading and carols.

December 30th – Close out the year with our 10 am service and goodbyes to Pastor Larry.

We are excited to celebrate the season of our Savior with you!

IRVINGTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

4181 Irvington Avenue

P.O. Box 1366

Fremont, CA 94538-0133

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Please Note: December 27 is the deadline for our January issue.

All articles are to be delivered by email to: kandmbaksh@gmail.com.
Cornerstone is the medium to keep your current and past congregation members informed of all activities at IPC.

Your timely submissions are important to everyone.

Acknowledgements

We appreciate the time and dedication of all who submitted articles and provided information for the December issue.

This month's Cornerstone pictures were provided courtesy of: Prem Kumar, Daxesh and Sonal Patelia

As this calendar year ends, our deep gratitude is extended to all who make Cornerstone possible. Cornerstone requires many gifts and much energy. We could not continue to publish without the prayers, help and encouragement from our readers. We look with excitement and anticipation to 2019 and trust that God has a plan and a blessed future for each of us.

Your editors: Kamroon and Mustapha Baksh