



# St Pauls' Eventide Home



**St Pauls' Eventide Home,**

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## Vicar's Message

Life is a gift of God and aging is a natural part of living; too often negative attitudes within our society place unnecessary restrictions upon the freedom of the elderly. Therefore, it is obvious that more positive attitudes towards the aging process are needed today and it is Biblical. I am delighted to say that St. Paul's Church has understood this need and affirmed this by another social ministry related to the elders by starting the Eventide home for the elders. This witnesses to God's unconditional love that embraces all. As St. Paul's celebrates its 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary, it is a great joy to see Eventide marks its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in its journey.

As Eventide celebrates its 10<sup>th</sup> year anniversary, it is very important for all of us to look back and thank God for all His mighty power and strength that revealed in our limited power and weakness in taking care of the elders of the home. Even though the number of the residents has been small from its inception, the home maintains the highest standards of health, safety and service and encourages the inmates in all their efforts by giving due respect to their spiritual, mental, emotional and physical wellbeing based on practical Christian values.

At this important juncture, we thankfully remember all God's children who have pioneered to start the home with vision and all who had been contributed enormously to sustain and continue the smooth running of the home and the welfare of the residents. I pray that the home will continue to provide a timely model for a community life of elders for all the residents and the staff where there is peace, sharing and that love may prevail.

I wish every resident of the home good health and a happy community life and the home staff and the managing board every success in its future endeavours.

May the reign of Christ rule in all our hearts.

*Shelton Daniel*

## Beginnings of the Elders' Home.

The idea of an Elders' Home was thought of at St Paul's as far back as the late 1990's and various proposals were put forward; as it was estimated that a new facility would cost around Rs 19 million at that time.

One idea was to build a new Vicarage on a smaller scale at the same premises and use the present Vicarage as a Home for the elders'. Again it was thought that the KII building at Thalwatte could be made use of for this purpose. It was even thought of jointly running Baptist church Elders' Home at Matale as they were contemplating to close it down or even lease a building from the City Mission at Bowalawatte. As time went by, the Vicar at that time Revd Udeni de Silva, thought that we ought to start raising funds and he encouraged the youth of the church to do a couple of musical concerts. In the year 2000, Mr Hiran Soysa organized the Christmas Breeze at the Hillwood Hall. All monies collected were placed in fixed deposits.

Also in the year 2000, a resolution was brought up at the church AGM by Mr Kirthi Bharetti and Mr Franklyn Jacob regarding the necessity of an Elders' Home. Soon after an Elders' Home Committee was formed with persons like Prof George Dissanaiké, Mr Hiran Soysa, Mr Kirthi Bharetti, Mr Rienze Lindsay, Ms Annathaie Abayasekera, Ms Prithiva Ranasinghe, Ms Dawn Arulanandan, Ms Dilky Talwatte, Mr Durand Goonathilake, Mr Daya Pieris and Mr Franklyn Jacob. What really transpired then was that we could not raise adequate funds to launch out to build a new Home and the other proposals too could not be implemented for various reasons.

It was in the later part of 2007 that Mr Herbert Fernando a Parishioner and one time Trustee: "After much thought and prayer", as he put it, offered his newly built up stair home at Kundasale with 45 perches of land, to the church, for the sole purpose of running an Elders' Home. This was a fine gesture on his part and a building which was valued at Rs 8 million was given to the church for Rs 3 million as he wanted to build a smaller house in close proximity for himself.

Revd Paul Watson was with us at



this time and his services were invaluable as he raised a fair sum of money from his church in Scotland and elsewhere. The church too had to withdraw its fixed deposits in the name of the Elders' Home and also borrow a certain amount of money to settle Mr Fernando and also use part of the money to partition the rooms and toilets, do necessary electrical wiring, painting and purchasing immediate necessities of furniture and home requirements. There were also Parishioners who gave various items for the use of the home. There was also a "Sing Along" done by Clifford Richards at the Trinity College hall to raise further funds.

As we were nearing the opening of the Home, a new committee was formed chaired by Revd Neil van Dort and assisted by Revd Paul Watson, Revd Jeffery Abayasekera and it was on the 8<sup>th</sup> of November, 2008, that the Eventide Home was opened with three inmates. Ms Laurinda Goonathileke, Ms Podimenike Alahakoon and Ms Mary Kumarasinghe were the first residents. Alas all three of them have gone to the nearer presence of the Lord. The building and the Home was consecrated by the then Bishop of Kurunegala, Rt Rev Kumara Illangasinghe. It was a joyous occasion.

We have now come along ten years, fulfilling a dream we had for St Paul's, for the Diocese and for many parishioners, who held on to this vision, some of whom are not with us now. We have had our ups and downs but feel that things have stabilized and could now afford a greater degree of comfort, care, and happiness to our residents in the eve of their lives.

Originally we had six rooms with separate toilets and on a sharing basis, we could accommodate 12 residents. As time went by, the residents requested more privacy and we did accede to their request. We built an additional room away from the main building and now could accommodate eight elders. There is also an adjacent block of land that we hope to expand on it if we could raise adequate funds. As we started, we did take in both male and females but later confined ourselves to housing only females mainly because it was difficult to find and house careers to look after male residents.

We remember with gratitude all priests and committee members who have been with us from the inception, who did much of the spade work; Revd Paul Watson, Revd Jeffrey Abayasekera, Revd Neil van Dort, Ms Annathai Abayasekera, Ms Sumi Ratnayake, Ms Rupica Jayawickrema, Mr Edison Kumarage, Mr Russel Ebert, Mr Rupert Navamani and Mr

Franklin Jacob and the present committee, many of whom have been with us from the year 2007. We also remember Ms Paulina Grace; a trained person in elder care from the USA, who had two spells with us, spanning about one and a half years. She gave good advice and was able to train our staff and Mr Derrick Talwatte, who was the Trustee secretary at the time of the taking over of the building.

The present committee:

Revd Shelton Daniel

Mr Keerthi Bahretti

Ms Dilky Talwatte

Mr Lalantha Jayasinghe

Ms Gayani Ranaweera

Ms Innocent Ratwatte

Mr Lasantha Ranasinghe

Mr Prasanna Welgolle

Ms Andrea John

We have had four Matrons so far, without whose services we would not have come thus far, sometimes working through most difficult times.

Matrons:

Ms Indrani Karunathileke

Ms W.M. Sriyalatha

Ms Cynthia Wijesinghe

Ms Princy Fernando ( present matron )

We value their services as well as all our helpers, of whom Kusumawatie is with us for eight years.

In the past ten years 29 elders have found shelter in this Home, under great love and care. Fifteen of them spent their last days here.

We loved and cared for them in life:

Ms Lokumenike Alahakoon

Ms Rose Fernando

Mr Mike Fontaine

Ms Faith Moses

Ms Violet Dias

Ms Jennjifer Samadanam

Ms Esther Panditharathne.

Ms Tara Gilespie

Ms Laurinda Goonathileke

Ms Mary Kelly

Mr Terry De Joodt

Ms Rani Kemps

Ms Matilda Urala Dissanayake

Ms Mary Kumarasinghe

Sis Sylvia Perera

Ten years have gone by and we continue our journey, looking after and caring for the elderly, leaving our future in His care.

Message by Revd Neil van Dort ( canon )

The need for an Eventide home for elders was conceived in the minds of a few parishioners of St Paul's church in the latter part of the 1990's , some of whom have moved on to the nearer presence of God and others continue their pilgrimage of life.

Many proposals were made, a certain amount of money was found and the basic question was as to where it should be situated.

At this point Mr Herbert Fernando, a parishioner, offered to the church, his recently built house at Kundasale, for the purpose of an Elders' Home, for a very reasonable price, worth many times over than the amount the church paid for it. His gesture is remembered with a deep sense of thankfulness.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of November 2008, the Home was blessed and dedicated and began with three elderly ladies. Revd Paul Watson is remembered for his enthusiasm and also for the financial assistance afforded the Home through church's and friends in Scotland.

Since then many have travelled through the portals of this Home and we are thankful that they had the opportunity of spending the evening of their lives in this gracious and tranquil environment. We also note with gratitude the many who have given of their best in the administration of the Home.

What of the next ten years? We need to plan our strategy for the future. The first ten years saw us through many challengers that we did not envisage but by the grace of God we were able to face up to them and learn from these experiences. The Home would now offer a few more facilities to the residents and this is of help to them to spend the evening of their lives with greater ease.

I pray that the Home will continue the ministry for which it was established and move from strength to strength. With the hymn writer, let our prayer be –

“The distant scene I do not ask to see, one step is enough for me.”

*Neil van Dort.*



*Opening Ceremony*



*Few Residents...*



*Christmas 2009*



*St Pauls Youth  
visit 2017*

*Bishop's visit  
2018*



*Few Residents*



*A Room*



## Message by Revd Paul

We are overjoyed that the St Paul's Eventide Home has reached its 10th anniversary! Such a significant milestone and a testimony to the hard work of so many over the years, often unseen by man, yet seen and honoured by God. In the early days the committee chaired by Franklin Jacob were looking at options in Matale and elsewhere and slowly building up funds, then gradually a groundswell of support and interest grew as people realised that this was an idea and vision whose time had finally come. The youth enjoyed stewarding the musical events we had and throwing their weight behind this cause for their elders, Clifford Richards gave us of his time, KII printed prayer cards and people from all generations in Sri Lanka and abroad got behind this much needed and long overdue goal of an eventide home primarily (but not exclusively) for the Christian community. Such energy and partnership, but still we were a long way short and started to look at options to build between the Parsonage and Vicarage. Then Lasantha told us that there was a possibility that Mr Herbert Fernando would be happy to help us, and within a short space of time Herbie's generosity made possible what we had longed and prayed for. The tireless work of the committee and Fr Neil made so much possible and down through the years since then taking services, visiting of the sick and elderly the spiritual welfare of the residents has been cared for alongside their physical and emotional wellbeing. We remember with gratitude the Matrons and staff, who put in a lot of hard work to make the Home to what it is today. It is truly remarkable that a single congregation is able to establish and maintain an Eventide Home, to God be the glory and may he honour your labour.

So, on this day of great thanksgiving Ina and I send you our love and prayers and continued care and interest in this remarkable endeavour.

*Rev. Paul Watson,*  
St James Rectory,  
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Message by a Resident.....

“Eventide” became my home on the 14th March 2016. It was the last room available. There was Matron Sriya and Nurse Sumudu, along with Magilin Ranasinghe, Violet Dias, Nalini Kiridena and myself, upstairs. Downstairs there was Esther Panditharatne in a room and Matilda Dissanayake and her daughter Ms Manel Perera in the other room.

From the sitting room upstairs I could see GOD’s wonderful creation – the morning sunrise, the river flowing gently, birds, cattle, goats and dogs too. In the evening, the twilight sky – orange, purple, grey and finally the twinkling stars. I was quite satisfied to live at “Eventide”.

I decided to help when I was free. In the morning I would walk to the gate to buy the bread. The baker comes playing the tune, in his “bakery on wheels”. Matron Sriya may be in the kitchen when the baker arrives. I put on my cloth hat or use the shawl from the Holy land to cover my head as the morning is misty. Having bought the bread, I return to my room, happily eating a roll or a bun.

October 1st 2016 Violet Dias wanted me to buy her some sugar biscuits from the baker. I organized a simple “Elders’ Day” programme – each elder had to give something to the others.

1. Magilin who was called “Podi” by me, had to collect flowers from the garden, to give each of us.
2. Violet – a sugar biscuit each
3. Nalini – Bread pudding. She got the ingredients and matron, Manel and I baked the pudding in Violet’s oven.
4. Myself – coloured paper serviettes.
5. Manel – Kiss and wished us
6. Esther & Matilda – I gave them cards with scripture text.

Each of us completed our work and sat down happily to breakfast with bread pudding too.

I opened the lever in order to fill the water tank in the morning and closed it when the tank was full. I chose to switch off the night lights upstairs at six am each morning. From my note book: 2nd August 2017 at 10.25 PM I noticed that a light close to the staircase had not been switched off. As the switch was downstairs I went down quietly and put it off. In the morning when I mentioned this to matron Sriya, she was not pleased that I went down alone. So I gave up being “ True Detective!”.

I love blowing bubbles to make others smile. I have done this on some occasions, to receive guests coming to “Eventide”.

One day we had bitter gourd or karawila cooked for lunch. I said “ThiththaThiththang, thiththanggediya, Lena nokanathiththanggediya “What is it? I have written in my note book. 15 therawili or riddles, just to make others guess and laugh.

It was my joy to sit by Esther and get her to draw. Matron bought me a white drawing book and a box of pastels. The drawing book is in Esther’s room on her cupboard.

“Ikebana” – arranging flowers the Japanese way was one of my hobbies. I was happy to walk in the garden. Pick some flowers and leaves arrange my vase on the round table upstairs. Seeing me doing this, my friend Podi would bring some flowers and keep them on the round table. I used the flowers she brought and went to the garden only to bring some leaves. The pin-holder and vase downstairs for anyone to trim it the way they desired.

Mary E Maxwell

“Channels only, blessed Master,  
But with all Thy wondrous power  
flowing through us, Thou canst use us  
Every day and every hour.”  
( from the A.O.G Hymn book)

2 years 4 months gone by, and I am still content and happy to remain at “Eventide”.

I take this opportunity to invite two more ladies to join the “happy band of pilgrims.”

*RosabelleJayanthiJayasundara*

## Needs of the Home

- Your prayers are required for our home, our residents, our staff and all our donors.
  - Alms offerings on a regular basis. If two weeks notice is given the priest's services will be available.
  - Regular visits to the Home by family and friends.
  - Volunteers who will do any tasks that are needed from time to time.
  - A stretcher
  - Supplies of gloves, pampers, wipes, hospital bags and detergents.
  - Pillow cases, bed sheets, bed covers.
  - Clothing cupboards, Dust bins for each room. ( 8 )
-

Bank Account Details

Bank Account : **St Paul's Church Elders' Home.**

Bank : Commercial Bank

KotugodellaVeediya, Kandy, Sri Lanka.

Account Number : Ac No: 1040029549

Swift code : CCEYLKLX

Please do keep us informed about your generous donations sent directly to the bank, so that we could acknowledge same.

Donations

Name : .....

Address : .....

.....

Contact Number : .....

Amount : .....

Date : .....