

DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

EBENEZER MAR THOMA CHURCH

From Vicar's Desk

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Beloved Parish members,

Once again, we are entering another Christmas season as well as preparing to say goodbye to one more year. Let us thank God for the ways in which God had been guiding us all through the year. Let us continue our faith journey bearing in mind that we are a witnessing community in an immigrant context.

Let us hold on to the Christian values that have been handed over to us by our forefathers and mothers. Since we are part of a global Mar Thoma church, let us continue to hold on to our faith and practices that define our identity. I am so thankful to you all for helping us to conduct a blessed GBM and to elect the new office-bearers for the next year.

December is a blessed month we all look forward to celebrating the birth of baby Jesus, a blessed period to reflect upon the divine incarnation. St Paul describes this divine incarnation in his letter to Philippians. He writes, "Christ Jesus, ... emptied Himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross." Christmas is a story of God's love for humanity, a story of divine becoming human and a story of God acknowledging the brokenness of human life. But many times, we get lost in the dominating factors of the celebrations like cakes, cookies, parties, decorations, and gifts. Once again let us be reminded about the seriousness of this festive season and let us prepare ourselves to receive baby Jesus into our lives.

It is a fact that the meaning of Christmas has been changing over the years and for the larger world it has become a time of selling more goods and a time of merry making. Christmas is not just an event that comes as usual in December and which is forgotten after the celebrations are over. But for us it should be an everyday experience where we experience Jesus as our Immanuel (God with us). Because of Christ's incarnation human life has a new meaning. God regained the worth and value of human life and restored eternity to those who accept Jesus as God and savior.

The child in the manger represents all those who are deprived, the homeless, the orphans and the poor. By entering human history in this way, God identified with the powerless, the poor and the homeless. Christmas always challenges us to love those who are already loved by God. 'The shepherds' small world was changed; they went back to where they came from apparently back to fields and to flocks. But not back to business as usual. Their old world was gone, replaced by a new world. Their world is now centered in praising and glorifying God. The nights in the field will never be the same. We should pray for such a change in our lives as we celebrate Christmas this year. I appreciate the preparations that are being done by our Sunday school children and teachers, the youth, and the Choir for a blessed Christmas celebration during this month.

Wish you all a Happy Christmas & A blessed New Year.

**Rev. Aju Abraham, Vicar
Ebenezer Mar Thoma Church,
New York**

[Message from Youth Chaplain](#)

December 2021 Message

Dearly beloved in Christ,

As we face the last month of the year 2021 let us be thankful to God for His faithfulness. Even as we went through uncertain and tough times, God has been always faithful, and He is always good. Let us continue to praise His name and uphold in prayer for the new year 2021.

From November after we meditated on Hudos Eetho, the renewal of the church, we as a church community were preparing for the advent season with the annunciations of Zechariah, then Mary, then the visitation of Mary to Elizabeth we see the fast of advent. This month, we as a church are commemorating the 25-day Lenten period leading up to the feast of the Church known as the Feast of Nativity (Christmas Day). Luke 2:11 says "Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; He is the Messiah, the Lord." During Christmas time, we usually see a few words and even use them as Christmas decorations, words such as Noel, Joy, Emmanuel. All these words point to the truth of the source of joy and happiness as we reflect on Jesus as Emmanuel: God with us. As we close this year recognized by the challenges of the pandemic, let us reflect on the truth that at the end of the month, God is still with us, he will never leave us, nor forsake us. God incarnate as man is the reality of hope, love, and purpose instilled in us. C.S. Lewis once said: "Once in our world, a stable had something in it that was bigger than our whole world." God is much bigger than this world, and all that this world consists

of, including its problems and challenges. Let us on this Christmas season encourage one another to fully submit to God and rely on all that we are on Him and not on ourselves.

As a diocese, our Youth Fellowship will have the Leadership Conference from January 6-9, 2022 hosted by the Redeemer Mar Thoma Church, it is planned to be in person. I encourage all who are 21 and up to register.

Wishing all of you a Merry Christmas and a blessed and happy New year 2022!

Bless and be blessed,

Much love,

Jess M. George Achen

Rev. Jess M. George
Youth Chaplain North-East Region
Diocese of North America and Europe of the Mar Thoma Church
(516)532-6115 (Cell)

Sunday Worship Schedule

Date	Time	Service
December 5 th	10:00 AM	HQ Service (English)
December 12 th	10.00 AM	Divine Service (Malayalam)
December 19 th	10.00 AM	HQ Service (Malayalam)
December 25 th	8.00 AM	HQ Service (Malayalam)
December 26 th	10.00 AM	Divine Service (Malayalam)
December 31 st	10.30 PM	HQ Service (Malayalam)

Lectionary

Lectionary Theme Birth of John the Baptist - Bible Sunday		
05 Sunday	First Lesson	Malachi 3: 1-6
	Second Lesson	Hebrews 4: 12-16
	Epistle	Galatians 1: 11-17
	Gospel	Luke 1: 57-66
Lectionary Theme Annunciation to Joseph		
12 Sunday	First Lesson	Isaiah 7: 10-17
	Second Lesson	Acts 3: 19-26
	Epistle	Romans 4: 13-22
	Gospel	Matthew 1: 18-23
Lectionary Theme Our Lord is Coming -Sunday before Christmas		
19 Sunday	First Lesson	Isaiah 11: 1-10
	Second Lesson	Revelation 19: 1-10
	Epistle	Hebrews 1: 1-12
	Gospel	John 1: 1-14
Lectionary Theme Feast of Nativity-Birth of the Saviour		
25 Christmas	First Lesson	Micah 5: 1-9
	Second Lesson	Colossians 1: 15-23
	Epistle	1 Timothy 1: 14-17
	Gospel	Luke 2: 1-20
Lectionary Theme The Glorious Coming of our Lord		
26 Sunday	First Lesson	Jeremiah 3: 6-22
	Second Lesson	Acts 1: 6-11
	Epistle	1 Thessalonians 4: 13-18
	Gospel	Matthew 24: 42-51
Lectionary Theme Watch Night Service-Thank God for the Indescribable Gift		
31 Friday	First Lesson	Deuteronomy 8: 1-20
	Second Lesson	2 Corinthians 9: 10-15
	Epistle	2 Corinthians 2: 12-17
	Gospel	Luke 13: 6-9



Feby Varghese	Sunitha Jacob	27-Dec
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Aleyamma Chacko	1-Dec
Marykutty Varughese	6-Dec
Joel Johnson Mathew	11-Dec
Titus Kurian	12-Dec
Chris John	15-Dec
Diya Abraham	17-Dec
Alexi Isaac	24-Dec
Seba Samuel John	24-Dec
Ryan J Mathew	24-Dec
Christine Miriam Samuel	25-Dec
Baby Cintuja Robin	31-Dec

Bible Reading



The family of....	Date
Philip Parayil	12/05/2021
Rachel George	12/12/2021
Ryan K. Varghese	12/19/2021
Saji Thomas	12/25/2021
Thomas K Mathai	12/26/2021
Thomas K. Mathew	12/31/2021
Thomas T Samuel	01/02/2022
Thomas. K.C	01/09/2022
Tibu C Tharakan	01/16/2022
Titus Samuel	01/23/2022
Viju V Varghese	01/30/2022

Upcoming Events

1. **Christmas Carol House Visits:** December 3rd, 4th, and 5th - Friday, Saturday, and Sunday
2. **Christmas Caroling at Church:** December 18th Saturday at 6:00pm
3. **Christmas Holy Communion Service:** at 8:00am on Saturday the 25th
4. **Watchnight Service:** at 10:30pm on 12/31 Friday

Bible Study: Every Wednesday at 7:00pm via ZOOM

Prayer Meeting: Every Saturday at 7:00pm via ZOOM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81243928868?pwd=TjdUODZQSnRiQkl2amlRaEdSNEo5dz09>

Dial 1 646-876-9923; Meeting ID: 812 4392 8868; Passcode:406406