

MARCH NEWSLETTER

EBENEZER MAR THOMA CHURCH

From Vicar's Desk

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Dearly beloved in Christ,

Many of us have heard the saying that God is a refuge. We may have heard it in sermons, songs, or speeches. Some of us may have seen an aesthetically pleasing social media post with some statement about God being a refuge pasted over a picture of a raging sea. But how many of us have actually stopped to consider what that means? We all feel the storms of life beat down on us. For some of us, it may seem like we never have a moment's peace; it's just one thing after another. Some of us may be asking, "Will I ever get a break?" The answer may lie in that post we scrolled past or the sermon we've long forgotten. Maybe the answer is in that idea we've heard a hundred times: God is our refuge. What does it mean?

Safety – Security or rest. A place to flee to when storms and enemies surround us. This is the idea of refuge. It is a place where we feel protected from anything that might try to destroy us. In the case of soldiers, a refuge might be a base, a bunker, or friendly territory. For a child, refuge may be the arms of a parent or guardian. Whatever the case, the person finds shelter and protection from danger.

When we see or say that God is our refuge, it means that God is where we flee to when trouble comes. Many of us tend to run anywhere but to God when things get hard. Instead, we run to family or friends, hobbies, work, or sins for relief from the pressures around us. We have somehow convinced ourselves that these temporal things can provide us rest and protection.

In reality, these things merely distract us from our troubles; they do not give us rest. True rest from danger, pressure, and hardship can only be found in God.

Lent invites us to experience divine love and mercy as God accompanies us in our struggles. Our creator created us to worship him and honor him. But we choose to eat and drink instead and have more excuses not to honor the Lord. We'd rather amass wealth than turn to the Lord in prayer. We'd rather entertain our eyes with sensual images than conform to the commandments. But it does require that we repent. Repentance is often misunderstood but repent simply means to change our minds' involving a turning away from sin and a turning towards God. Acts 3:19. explains: 'Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord. The promise for you and me is that if we repent, turning to God, that our sins will not be counted against us and we will receive Life. I pray that all of you have a meaningful lent and May the God of Grace and Glory be with you and your families as you follow this Lenten path.

Yours in Christ,
Rev. Aju Abraham

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

Message from Youth Chaplain

March 2022 Message

Dearly Beloved in Christ,

We are in the season of Great Lent, let us continue to use this time to humble ourselves in a journey that enables us to realize God's perfection and our imperfections and despite all of that, how much God loves us through His perfect love that redeems us. The redeeming love of God is a reminder for us to put down our pride and ego and live a life Christ taught us to live. Throughout the lectionary, we can see that we are going through a journey of understanding the selfless love of God in Christ through His teaching, healing, and all of what He did that showed us that He is life-giving. This was the journey He took to the cross. In this Lenten period, we must check within ourselves and see if our life is also available to give to God. Lent is a time for us to check our intentions in life; whether we eat, drink, breathe, work, speak, etc. The question that we should ask ourselves is if our existence points others to who we are, or rather who God is. Let us together as the faithful go on this Lenten journey to sharpen one another to live our lives fully for God. We should pray that this journey guides us to deny ourselves and live purposefully for God.

The North-East Youth Fellowship will host a stress and Anxiety workshop via ZOOM on March 5, 2022, with the theme: From Rain to Rainbow: Resilience during COVID. The workshop will be led by the MSW students at the University of Toronto: Jennifer Downie, Jessica Syrette, Brandee Albert, and Anne Cherian. I humbly encourage all of you to participate in this workshop as it is a great resource for stress and our mental wellbeing.

Campus visits are going on and I am excited through the opportunities to meet with our college-going youths, let us continue to pray for our youths throughout their academic journey and the pressures they face so that God can use and equip them for His mighty purpose.

As usual, our Men's Bible Study is on Tuesday, and Women's Bible Study is on Wednesdays at 8 pm respectively on our ZOOM platform. As a Diocesan youth fellowship, every Wednesday as part of lent we will have evening prayers, I encourage all our youths to participate, each week our youths will deliver the message from the Word of God.

I wish everyone a blessed Lenten Period and a happy month of March.

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
March 6 th -Diocesan Sunday	10:00 AM	HQ Service (Malayalam)
March 13 th	10.00 AM	Divine Service (Malayalam)
March 20 th	10.00 AM	HQ Service (English)
March 27 th	10.00 AM	Divine Service (Malayalam)

Lectionary

Gives Healing that Comfort		2 nd Sunday in Lent
March 6 th	1 st Lesson	2Kgs 5:1-14
	2 nd Lesson	Phlm 1:8-21
	Epistle	Phil 2:21-30
	Gospel	Mark 1:40-45
Healing through Forgiveness of Sins		
March 13 th	1 st Lesson	2Sam 12:1-13
	2 nd Lesson	Acts 8: 9-17
	Epistle	1 Pet 2: 21-25
	Gospel	Mark 2: 1-12
Universal Salvation in Christ		4 th Sunday in Lent
March 20 th	1 st Lesson	Isa 45:1-8
	2 nd Lesson	Acts. 10:34-43
	Epistle	1 Cor. 1:18-25
	Gospel	Matt 15:21-28
Worship – which gives Perfection to Personhood		5 th Sunday in Lent
March 27 th	1 st Lesson	Isa 66: 19-24
	2 nd Lesson	Acts 2:22-36
	Epistle	Rom. 8:31-39
	Gospel	Luke 13: 10-17



None



Reshma M Joseph	3-Mar
Thomas George	3-Mar
Renoj K Varughese	8-Mar
Pearl Varghese	8-Mar
Thomas K. Mathew	10-Mar
Johannah Parayil	17-Mar
John C Mathai (Raju)	18-Mar
Roshan.T.Samuel	18-Mar
Sneha Anna Thomas	19-Mar

Bible Reading



The family of....	Date
Benjamin Jacob	03/06/2022
C.S. Chacko (Raju)	03/13/2022
Eapen Joseph (Jose)	03/20/2022
George Thomas	03/27/2022
Jacob Mathew	04/03/2022
Jacob Varughese	04/10/2022
John C Mathai (Raju)	04/17/2022
John Samuel (Kochumon)	04/24/2022

Upcoming Events

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=TjdUODZQSndiQkl2amlRaEdSNEo5dz09>

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