

# DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

## EBENEZER MAR THOMA CHURCH

### From Vicar's Desk

DECEMBER 2023

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"But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit" – Titus 3:4-5

Dearly Beloved in Christ,

Greetings to you all in the precious name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The month of December is the time and season for us to celebrate the festival of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ – the “greatest of birthdays.” The name ‘Jesus’ means “Jehovah God is salvation.” God sent His only Son into the world for our salvation & amp, redemption. This continuously reminds us of God’s eternal presence in our lives. (John 3:16). This message of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our experiences are stories that are meant to be told and proclaimed in a world that is longing for peace, justice, comfort, & hope. The Gospel message is about the greatest gift of all time—God gave us Jesus Christ, his Son, who brings great joy to everyone who receives him. The purpose of Christmas is to share this gift. He is worthy of all praise and glory and was born that we may live. As we celebrate His birthday, let us not forget the mercy, grace, peace, forgiveness, hope and victory we have because of Him.

We are celebrating Mar Thoma Church Day (Sabha Dinam) on December 21, 2023. Let us continue to uphold the Church, including our Metropolitan, Suffragan Metropolitans, Bishops, New Bishops, Priests, Deacons, Seminarians, Evangelists, and all serving the church in our prayers.

We are looking forward to celebrating Jesus Birthday with each one of you! I want to encourage you all to be with us on Christmas Day (Monday, 25-December), we will have English Holy Communion service, beginning at 8:00 AM. As decided our house to house caroling will be conducted on December 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 9th. Dec. 23rd (Saturday) at 7:00 PM is our Christmas Carols service. It's important that we are intentional and explicit in keeping Christ at the center of Christmas. Please make plans to come and celebrate the birthday of the King Jesus.

I am indeed happy about our Sevika Sanghom members for sharing the love of Christ with the needy through providing them necessary financial assistance. Please pray for the dear ones who are receiving the gifts.

We are also about to enter the year 2024. Before we start this New Year, let us reflect on how God has been with us this past year, throughout our lives. Let us remember and be mindful of those who are less fortunate and experiencing grief and despair during this time. Let us dedicate ourselves for the New Year, and reconcile with our family, loved ones, and the society.

We also fondly remember with gratitude the great leadership we received from our Diocesan Episcopa, Rt. Rev. Dr. Isaac Mar Philoxenos. As a parish we are blessed to have the presence and leadership of our beloved Thirumeni in our watch Night Service this year on December 31st 10pm, just before Thirumeni leaves this Diocese. Let us come together to thank God Almighty for the blessed leadership of Philoxenos Thirumeni, whose vision and guidance has deeply enriched our lives and furthered the expansion of God's kingdom.

In times like these, it is especially important to remember God's promise to be with us. He who made us and gave his own Son for the salvation of the world, will not leave his children in times of need. He is with us as he invites our prayers. Please reach out to each other and encourage one another, particularly as we may be tempted to give up hope. Never forget that we are blessed in order to be a blessing to others.

With all my heart I wish you many blessings and all the best for the New Year. I am thankful to God for each one of you. May God continue to Bless You All. Prayers for you All.

Yours in Christ's ministry,

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

## Message from Youth Chaplain

### DECEMBER 2023 MESSAGE

Dearly beloved in Christ,

Let us praise God we entered the month of December, the last month of the year 2023. We also entered the season of Advent. The word 'Advent' means coming. This season we are celebrating the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. 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. This year must have us all face seasons of joy and struggles, but despite all of that, one thing we can trust is that 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 in this Christmas season encourage one another to fully submit to God and rely on all that we are on Him and not on ourselves.

Our North-East Regional Youth Fellowship will have our youth retreat from February 16-18, 2024, at the Montrose Bible Conference, in Pennsylvania. Please encourage our youths 16 and older to participate.

Our Diocese will have our Diocesan Leadership Conference on the first weekend of January at the Epiphany Mar Thoma Church, NY. Let us pray for the conference and the delegates.

Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2024! God bless all of you.

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)**

## Worship Schedule

Date	Time	Service
Dec 3 <sup>rd</sup> – Sunday	10.00 AM	Holy Communion Service (Malayalam)
Dec 10 <sup>th</sup> – Sunday	10.00 AM	Holy Communion Service (Malayalam) Rev. Thomas Alexander (Former Vicar)
Dec 17 <sup>th</sup> – Sunday	10.00 AM	Holy Communion Service (English)
Dec 24 <sup>th</sup> – Sunday	10.00 AM	Divine Service (Malayalam)
Dec 25 <sup>th</sup> - Monday	8:00AM	Holy Communion Service (English)
Dec 31 <sup>st</sup> – Sunday – New Year's Eve Diocesan Bishop's Farewell Meeting	10:00PM	Holy Communion Service (Malayalam) Rt Rev. Dr. Isaac Mar Philoxenos

## Lectionary

Dec 3 <sup>rd</sup> – Sunday: Meeting of Virgin Mary and Elizabeth; The meeting that shares the Good News of Salvation; Bible Sunday.		
	1 <sup>st</sup> Lesson	Gen. 33:1-15
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Lesson	2Cor. 1:3-10
	Epistle	Rom. 15:5-9
	Gospel	Luke. 1:39-45
Dec 10 <sup>th</sup> – Sunday: Birth of John the Baptist; John the Baptist: Greatest among those born of Women.		
	1 <sup>st</sup> Lesson	Mal. 3:1-4
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Lesson	Acts. 13:17-26
	Epistle	1Cor. 4:1-6
	Gospel	Luke. 1:57-66
Dec 17 <sup>th</sup> – Sunday: Annunciation to Joseph; Joseph: A Man of Higher Justice.		
	1 <sup>st</sup> Lesson	Zeph. 3:14-20
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Lesson	1Cor. 13:1-13
	Epistle	Rom. 14:13-19
	Gospel	Matt. 1:18-23
Dec 24 <sup>th</sup> – Sunday: Coming of the Savior.		
	1 <sup>st</sup> Lesson	Isa. 11:1-9
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Lesson	1 John. 4:7-16
	Epistle	Acts. 3:19-26
	Gospel	John. 1:14-18
Dec 25 <sup>th</sup> – Monday: Birth of Our Savior – Good News to all; End of Twenty-Five Days of Lent.		
	1 <sup>st</sup> Lesson	Mic. 5:1-9
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Lesson	Phil. 2:5-11
	Epistle	Gal. 4:1-7
	Gospel	Luke. 2:1-14
Dec 31 <sup>st</sup> – Sunday – New Year's Eve; With Christ into the New Year.		
	1 <sup>st</sup> Lesson	1 Sam. 7:1-12
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Lesson	Rev. 21:1-8
	Epistle	Rom. 8:31-39
	Gospel	Matt. 5:1-12



## Wedding Anniversary

Feby Varghese	Sunitha Jacob	27-Dec
Jerry John Chacko	Rini Clement	28-Dec



## Birthday Wishes

Aleyamma Chacko	1-Dec
Jerry Chacko	2-Dec
Marykutty Varughese	6-Dec
Joel Johnson Mathew	11-Dec
Titus Kurian	12-Dec
Chris John	15-Dec
Alexi Isaac	24-Dec
Seba Samuel John	24-Dec
Ryan J Mathew	24-Dec
Christine Miriam Samuel	25-Dec
Roopa Anna Nihal Easow	27-Dec
Aisha Samuel	31-Dec

## Bible Reading



The family of...	Date
Rachel George	12/03/2023
Ryan K. Varghese	12/10/2023
Saji Thomas	12/17/2023
Assigned people for Carol Service - TBD	12/23/2023
Thomas K Mathai	12/24/2023
Thomas K. Mathew	12/25/2023
Assigned people for New Year's Eve Service - TBD	12/31/2023
Titus Samuel	1/7/2024
Viju V Varghese	1/14/2024
Vipin T Kovoor	1/21/2024
Abraham Jacob	1/28/2024

## Upcoming Events

1. December 1st, 2nd, 3rd & 9th - Christmas Carol House Visits (Conveners: Mr. C.S. Chacko/Eapen Joseph/Rahul Joseph)
2. December 10<sup>TH</sup> Sunday – Our former Vicar, Rev. Thomas Alexander, and Usha Kochamma (Dr. Annamma Alexander) are visiting our Parish.
3. December 23rd, Saturday - Christmas Carol Service at church at 6:30pm.
4. December 25th, 2023, Monday – Christmas Day - English Holy Communion Service at 8:00am
5. December 31st, 2023, Sunday, 10:00pm- Watchnight Service; Diocesan Bishop Rt. Rev. Dr. Isaac Mar Philoxenos visit/Farewell meeting.
6. No Morning Service on December 31<sup>st</sup>.
7. Wednesday Bible Study and Saturday Prayer Meeting 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





**WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS.....**

**&**

**A HAPPY NEW YEAR**

