

AUGUST NEWSLETTER

EBENEZER MAR THOMA CHURCH

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From Vicar's Desk

August 2024

"And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm, and steadfast." -1 Peter 5:10

Dearly Beloved in Christ,

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

I hope you are having a blessed summer. We are living in turbulent times. Day by day, when we look at the news, the happenings worldwide cause us to be afraid, or observe a dismal world. Let us show solidarity in the pain and agony of our brothers and sisters at Wayanad and pray for the bereaved family members. Please continue to pray for the rescue and relief operations there. Please pray, support, and cooperate in the relief measures. When Jesus spoke to the disciples about their grief turning to joy, He said, "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." (St. John 16:33). Our faith and hope are grounded in the risen Lord. Let us not lose sight of God's plan for us and continue to toil for God's kingdom. Let us continue to pray for those who are struggling and pray for peace.

The church is a sign and instrument of the kingdom of God, a people united by faith in the gospel announcement of the crucified and risen King Jesus. The mission of the church is to go into the world in the power of the Spirit and make disciples by proclaiming this gospel, calling people to respond in ongoing repentance and faith, and demonstrating the truth and power of the gospel by living under the lordship of Christ for the glory of God and the good of the world. We are reminded to put our faith, hope, and trust in God who raised Jesus from the dead and gave him glory. We are indeed called to be the followers of Jesus sent in God's mission that God wants us and needs us to be at this time.

From August 1 to 15, the Holy Church has the 15-day Lenten season, whereby we remember with gratitude the life of the Virgin Mary. She responded to God's call and gave birth to God's son, Jesus Christ (incarnation). We are reminded about the need to be obedient to God's will. On August 18, we celebrate Reformation Sunday.

When we started our VBS this year, we asked Lord for the divine guidance and all of us can see what the Lord has done, we have finished well and want to praise God for the mercies. The music, the spoken word, and the prayers have all been magnificent. Let's pray that our children will know Christ and be able to do all things through Him. I want to take this opportunity to thank all of you who found time to come, contribute, and grace the occasion.

Our children and youth will be returning to schools and colleges this month. Sunday School will soon begin a new academic year. Let us pray for God's blessings on our Sunday school ministry, and the schools and universities of our land.

Many of our members are on vacation and traveling this month. May God Almighty be our guide and our protector in our journeys. May our plans reflect God's will for our life and may they be for God's glory. Please mark your calendar for our Parish Picnic on Saturday, August 3rd.

Please do join us for the Wednesday Bible study and Saturday Prayer meetings. Let us allow the Gospel to infiltrate more of our everyday life. Then we will have the foundation for an effective witness. 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 - August 2024

In the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit - One True God. Amen

Dearly Beloved,

In Luke 10:1-12, we encounter a profound portrayal of Christian mission as both a participatory and defenseless activity. Fundamentally, Christian mission entails participation in the divine mission aimed at realizing the Kingdom of God. The objective is to disentangle individuals from all forms of oppression, reflecting the redemptive work of God in Jesus Christ. In this passage, Jesus dispatches disciples to prepare the way for Him, offering a new strategic framework for mission.

Firstly, mission is portrayed as a participatory endeavor. Jesus commissions seventy disciples in addition to the already selected twelve. Scholars often highlight that the number seventy holds significant weight in Jewish tradition, symbolizing completeness or the representation of all nations. In verse 1, Jesus sends these seventy individuals in pairs, underscoring the importance of mutual support and collaborative mission work. This mission is inherently communal, requiring the collective effort of all participants without discrimination. The text underscores that there is no exclusion based on gender, caste, or other social divisions. Verse 2 emphasizes that "the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few," suggesting that the success of the mission relies on the cooperation and dedicated effort of the disciples.

Secondly, the mission is characterized by a nearly defenseless spirit. In verse 3, Jesus states, "I am sending you out like lambs into the midst of wolves." This metaphor illustrates a form of discipleship that is vulnerable and sent into potentially life-threatening and hostile environments. The wolf symbolizes entities that seek to undermine and challenge the faith of the disciples, representing a culture of violence and aggression. In contrast, the lamb symbolizes a counterculture that eschews defensive tactics. The lamb epitomizes a vulnerable missionary community committed to proclaiming liberation and enlightenment, even in the face of opposition. This requires immense courage and faith in God, inspiring us to confront challenges with the same spirit, knowing the great Shepherd is always with us.

As we reflect on this passage, we must consider: Are we engaging in God's mission activity with the vulnerability of lambs among wolves? Are we prepared to undertake a mission that necessitates reliance on divine protection and guidance? Let us remember that we are not alone in this mission. We have the Almighty's protection and guidance, which should reassure us and give us the strength to commit to a mission that is both participatory and defenseless.

God willing, in a couple of months, we will again embark on mission outreach projects with the Northeast Regional Youth Fellowship. I hope that all young adults, teens, and children will be able to attend and participate. By adopting the mission strategy delineated by Jesus, we can collaborate without discrimination and confront opposition with the courage and faith of a lamb among wolves.

Once again, I remind all that the Youth Chaplain's Parsonage is a place of warmth and hospitality, open to all Youth Fellowship (YF) and Young Family Fellowship (YFF). Whether your YF or YFF needs a listening ear, a moment of prayer, or just a friendly chat over coffee, please feel free to visit anytime. I believe in the importance of our responsible Christian fellowship and being there especially for all our youths. Please do call before you come, so I can possibly get some snacks in time. Thank you.

Yours in His Ministry,

JVarghese Achen

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Sunday Worship Schedule

Date	Time	Service
August 4 th – Sunday	10.00 AM	Holy Communion Service (Malayalam)
August 11 th – Sunday	10.00 AM	Holy Communion Service (English)
August 18 th – Sunday	10.00 AM	Holy Communion Service (Malayalam)
August 25 th – Sunday	10.00 AM	Holy Communion Service (English)

Lectionary

August 4 th – Mission Sunday: Mission - Proclamation and Acts of the Kingdom of God (11th Sunday after Pentecost)		
	1 st Lesson	Isa. 6:1-8
	2 nd Lesson	Acts 19:8-12
	Epistle	Rom. 1:8-17
	Gospel	St. Matt. 10:7-16
August 11 th – Freedom in Jesus Christ (12th Sunday after Pentecost)		
	1 st Lesson	Exod. 3:7-14
	2 nd Lesson	Gal. 5:1-14
	Epistle	Rom. 6:15-23
	Gospel	St. John 8:31-36
August 18 th – Reformation Sunday: Reformation based on the values of the Kingdom of God (13th Sunday after Pentecost)		
	1 st Lesson	II Kgs. 23:1-3
	2 nd Lesson	I Pet. 1:13-25
	Epistle	I Jn. 2:13-17
	Gospel	St. Matt. 23:23-28
August 25 th – Theological Education for faith nourishment (14th Sunday after Pentecost)		
	1 st Lesson	Deut. 6:1-9
	2 nd Lesson	Acts 28:23-30
	Epistle	II Tim. 3:10-17
	Gospel	St. Matt. 13:18-23



Wedding Anniversary

Mathew A Mathew	Sumana Mathew	8-Aug
John Samuel (Kochumon)	Dr. Minnie John	9-Aug
Tony Thomas Mathew	Sneha Anna Thomas	15-Aug
Abraham Oonnoonny	Leelamma Abraham	18-Aug
Kurian A Mathew	Susan Kurian	18-Aug
Abeyson C Jacob	Corimarie Jacob	18-Aug
Vipin T Kovoov	Merin Kovoov	18-Aug
Eapen Joseph (Jose)	Ancy Joseph	24-Aug



Birthday Wishes

Nithin Thomas	1-Aug
Teena Sara Mathew	4-Aug
Titus Samuel	9-Aug
Thomas Tharakan	11-Aug
Emelia Prasad	11-Aug
Gigo K Ninan	12-Aug
Akhaila T. Jacob	12-Aug
Ben George	19-Aug
Marissa Kevin Chacko	21-Aug
Sujith Mathews	23-Aug
Sosamma E Varughese	26-Aug
Rijo Ann Jose	27-Aug
Abraham Oonnoonny	30-Aug
Reena Mathew (CT)	31-Aug

Bible Reading



The family of....	Date
C.S. Chacko (Raju)	08/04/2024
Ashok Benjamin Jacob	08/11/2024
Chris John	08/18/2024
Eapen Joseph (Jose)	08/25/2024
Feby Idicula Varghese	09/01/2024
George Thomas	09/08/2024
Ivy John	09/15/2024
Jacob Mathew	09/22/2024
Jacob Varughese	09/29/2024

Upcoming Events

1. Wednesday Bible Studies and Saturday prayer meetings via zoom at 7:00pm.
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81243928868?pwd=TjdUODZQSnRiQkl2amlRaEdSNEo5dz09>
Dial 1 646-876-9923; Meeting ID: 812 4392 8868; Passcode:406406
2. August 3rd Saturday – Parish Picnic at Lyon’s Park
3. August 4th, 2024, Sunday – Harvest Festival Kick-off
4. August 18th, 2024, Sunday - Dedication for College going students.
5. August 31st Saturday – MTVEA Center B Conference at our Parish
6. September 1st, 2024, Sunday – Education Sunday
 - a. Dedication for School going students.
 - b. Dedication for Sunday School Students/ Teachers
 - c. Harvest Festival Finale (Conveners – Mr. Rahul Joseph & Mr. Vipin Kovoor)
7. September 15th, 2024, Sunday –
 - a. Senior Citizen Day
 - b. Sevika Sanghom Day
 - c. One day Income Offertory
 - d. Onam Festival