

DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

EBENEZER MAR THOMA CHURCH

Inside This Issue

Vicar Desk 1, 2
Youth Corner 3, 4,
Worship Schedule 5
Lectionary 5, 6
Wedding Anniversary 6
Birthday 6, 7
Bible Reading 7
Upcoming Events 7

From Vicar's Desk

December 2024

“The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him...”
– John 1:9-10

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.” God sent His only begotten Son to this world to redeem us from our sins and save us. He became the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world. This saving experience of Jesus Christ needs to be remembered, especially as we celebrate Christmas. We need to move from selfishness to selflessness. Just as Christ broke Himself for us, we need to break ourselves out to the world. This is the true meaning of celebrating Christmas. Let us offer the saving gift of Christ Jesus to this world. What message do we have to offer in a world in pain and distress in light of disease, war, violence, and turmoil? Let us take the opportunity to share Christ’s joy, peace, and hope with the world that is in dire need. Let us prepare ourselves for the birth of the Lord. Let us permit Christ to re-enter our lives and our hearts. Let us enter the new year 2025 in true faith and hope.

We are celebrating Mar Thoma Church Day (Sabha Dinam) on December 21, 2024. Let us continue to uphold the Church, including our Metropolitan, Suffragan Metropolitans, 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 an English Holy Communion service, beginning at 8:00 AM. As decided our house-to-house caroling will be conducted on December 6, 7, 8 and 14. Dec. 21st (Saturday) at 7:00 PM is our Christmas Carols service. We must be intentional and explicit in keeping Christ at the center of Christmas. Please make plans to come and celebrate the birthday of King Jesus.

We are also about to enter the year 2025. 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 society. Please join in our watch Night Service this year on December 31st at 10 pm

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 to be a blessing to others.

I am indeed happy about our Parish's Good Samaritan fund for sharing the love of Christ with the needy by providing them with necessary financial assistance. Please pray for the dear ones who are receiving the gifts.

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.

YOUTH CORNER

Message from Youth Chaplain - December 2024

Glory be to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit - One true God!

Greetings in the precious name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

As we approach Christmas, our hearts are filled with joy and anticipation, celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ, who came into the world to bring salvation and hope. The Apostle Paul, in his letter to the Philippians (2:5-11), provides profound insight into the true significance of Christmas through the concept of kenosis, which means self-emptying.

St. Paul reminds us that Jesus did not cling to His equality with God but humbled Himself, becoming a servant. His ultimate act of humility and obedience led Him to the cross, where He died for the redemption of humanity. This divine act of humility, love, and selflessness is the cornerstone of our faith and the essence of the Christmas message.

During the Christmas season, we are often caught up in celebrations, decorations, and traditions. While these are meaningful expressions of joy, St. Paul's words challenge us to look deeper. The season calls us to adopt the attitude of Christ—to reflect His humility, love, and obedience in our lives. It is a time to grow into His likeness, not seeking status or recognition but serving others selflessly and living for God's purpose.

May this Christmas be a season of transformation, where we embody the spirit of kenosis and reflect the light of Christ in our families, communities, and beyond. Let us serve with humility, love with sincerity, and live in obedience to God's will, so that Christ is glorified in all we do.

Wishing you all a blessed and meaningful Christmas & Happy New Year!

Prayers and Best Wishes,

JVarghese Achen

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Youth Fellowship House Keeping

Monthly Parish Youth Fellowship Meetings

Monthly Parish Youth Fellowship Meetings are happening, and they're filled with activities to deepen our faith and friendships. For more information, please reach out to your Parish Youth Fellowship Secretary, who will have all the details. Let's make the most of these gatherings!

Combined Youth Fellowship Bible Study

When: Wednesday, December 11, 2024, at 7:00-8:30 pm

Where: Youth Chaplain's Parsonage

Come ready for a night of spiritual growth, connection, and deep discussion! All are invited, and we'd love for you to join us as we dive into God's Word together.

December College Visits – Let's Fellowship in Christ!

Students! Join in on an opportunity to grow together, share life, and encourage one another on campus! Your Youth Chaplain is excited to join you for fellowship, support, and prayer. Whether you need a break, a boost, or a few moments of community, we're here for you. Here's where you can join us:

University of Buffalo:

Date: December 10, 2024

Time: 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

University of Connecticut (UConn):

Date: December 3, 2024


Time: 4:00 pm - 5:00 pm

University at Albany:

Date: December 2, 2024

Time: 3:30 pm - 5:00 pm

NERYF Fifth Sunday Combined Holy Qurbana and Christmas Celebration

Join us on December 25, 2024, at Epiphany Mar Thoma Church in Ozone Park. Rev. Christopher Daniel, (President of Center B YF) will be the main celebrant, and Ms. Melanie John, member of Jerusalem Mar Thoma Church, Connecticut, will share the message. Let us make this a special time of worship and fellowship. We encourage everyone to carpool  and make this event a blessing for all involved. More details to follow. Parents, please remember to carpool and send your youngsters to this wonderful event!

Sunday Worship Schedule

Date	Time	Service
December 1 st – Sunday	10.00 AM	Holy Communion Service (Malayalam)
December 8 th – Sunday	10.00 AM	Holy Communion Service (English)
December 15 th – Sunday	10.00 AM	Holy Communion Service (Malayalam)
December 22 nd – Sunday	10.00 AM	Holy Communion Service (Malayalam)
December 25 th - Wednesday	08.00AM	Holy Communion Service (English)
December 29 th - Sunday	10.00AM	Divine Service
December 31 st - Tuesday	10.00PM	Holy Communion Service (Malayalam)

Lectionary

December 1 st – Beginning of 25 Days Lent; Meeting of Virgin Mary and Elizabeth – Mutual acceptance of two partners in God’s salvation plan; (Bible Sunday)		
	1 st Lesson	Exod. 7:1-7
	2 nd Lesson	Acts 9:26-31
	Epistle	Rom. 15:5-9
	Gospel	St. Luke 1:39-45
December 8 th – Birth of John the Baptist: the child set apart for the divine plan and the family that nurtures him accordingly		
	1 st Lesson	Mal. 3:1-4
	2 nd Lesson	Acts 16:1-5
	Epistle	II Tim. 1:3-10
	Gospel	St. Luke 1:57-66
December 15 th – Annunciation to Joseph: Joseph – the Model of discipleship for the People of God		
	1 st Lesson	Isa. 7:10-17
	2 nd Lesson	I Thess. 5:12-22
	Epistle	II Pet. 1:5-11
	Gospel	St. Matt. 1:18-23
December 22 nd – Arrival of the Savior of the World		
	1 st Lesson	Isa. 11:1-10
	2 nd Lesson	Acts 3:19-26
	Epistle	Heb. 1:1-12
	Gospel	St. John 1:9-18

December 25th - Yaldo - Feast of Nativity Birth of Jesus Christ: Peace on Earth; (End of the 25-days Lent)

	1 st Lesson	Micah 5:1-9
	2 nd Lesson	Gal. 4:1-7
	Epistle	Phil. 2:5-11
	Gospel	St. Luke 2:1-14

December 29th - God who led us till now

	1 st Lesson	I Sam. 7:1-12
	2 nd Lesson	Rom. 8:31-39
	Epistle	II Thess. 2:13-15
	Gospel	St. Matt. 11:25-30

December 31st - Into the New Year with the God of Hope

	1 st Lesson	Jer. 29:8-14
	2 nd Lesson	Jude 20-25
	Epistle	Eph. 4:17-24
	Gospel	St. Matt. 7:7-12

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
Nihal Joseph Easow	12/01/2024
Prasad Thomas	12/08/2024
Rachel George	12/15/2024
Ryan K. Varghese	12/22/2014
Saji Thomas	12/25/2024
Thomas K Mathai	12/29/2024
Thomas K. Mathew	12/31/2024
Thomas T Samuel	01/05/2025
Tibu C Tharakan	01/12/2025
Titus Samuel	01/19/2025
Viju V Varughese	01/26/2025

Upcoming Events

- Wednesday Bible Studies and Saturday prayer meetings via zoom at 7:00pm.
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81243928868?pwd=TjdUODZQSnRiQkI2amlRaEdSNEo5dz09Dial1646-876-9923>; Meeting ID: 812 4392 8868; Passcode:406406
- December 6th, 7th, 8th & 14th - Christmas Carol House Visits
 (Convener: Mr. Eapen Joseph)

*Final route for Christmas Carol House Visit:

- *Day 1- 12/6: Port Chester, Tarrytown
- *Day 2- 12/7: Bronxville, New Rochelle, New Jersey and Long-Island
- *Day 3- 12/8: Connecticut
- *Day 4 - 12/14: Rye Brook, Bronx, Scarsdale, Yonkers, White Plains area, Cortland Manor and Rockland

- December 21st, 2024, Saturday – Christmas Carol Service at our Church at 6:00pm
- December 25th, Wednesday - Christmas Day - English Holy Communion at 8:00am
- December 31st, 2024, Tuesday, 10:00pm- Watch-night Service