

OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

EBENEZER MAR THOMA CHURCH

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From Vicar's Desk

October 2024

“But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.” (Joshua 24:15).

Dearly Beloved in Christ,

We have now entered the final quarter of the year 2024. It is a time for critical reflection, as we prepare for the remaining part of 2024. This should take place not only as individuals, but as families, and as a church. Let us thank God for all His blessings but remember that our blessings are given with the hope that we will always repent and turn to our Triune God, not when it is “convenient.” This month, we are celebrating Family Sunday, whereby we affirm God’s grace in the lives of all families and the sanctity of family life. Family life has its challenges, but it is a divine call of God, and an invitation to live in holiness. We need to understand that the root of humanity is the family. God not only created us but also our families. Therefore, it is sacramental and holy. The church is nourished and strengthened when there is a continuity of Christ-centered faith and commitment in the home. At the time of marriage, the bride and bridegroom have made a vow in the presence of our Triune God. This is to be fulfilled through family life, especially through the raising of children in the faith. Even as the world’s view on families continues to change, we are called to have a Christ-centered understanding of family life, which has been taught to us by our predecessors, and generations of faith.

These days, the various organizations of the church are celebrating their respective commemoration days. Let us continue to uphold them, their ministry, and their mission in prayers, and support them.

October first Sunday, we set apart to pray for our differently abled brothers and sisters. Many were born blind, lame, deaf, or dumb, never getting to enjoy the normal physical abilities of a human being. Let's pray that, Lord, make Your strength perfect in their weakness, and Your comfort perfect in their depression. May God Almighty Send His mighty power upon them all that it may rest upon them and unleash a special and unique ability in them. Let's remind them that they are more than loved by the One who makes all things possible.

October second Sunday has been set apart by our parish as Mar Thoma Voluntary Evangelistic Sunday. The object of this association is that every member of the Church should be a witness to Jesus Christ, whatever his/her occupation may be. Those who volunteer to be members of the Association meet in each parish at least once a week for fellowship, intercessory prayer, Bible study, and sharing experiences. Every member of the Church should be a missionary filled with such joy and assurance of salvation as to be Christ's witness to those who encounter him, irrespective of one's profession in secular life. The branch of the Mar Thoma Voluntary Evangelists' Association in the Parish is called Edavaka Mission.

This year's Family Dedication Sunday will be on Sunday, October 27th. We will be observing our Family dedication Sunday on October 20th. "But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15)' May our families be grateful for each member and to pray for one another continually. Our gratitude for one another will bind us together as a family, and our prayers for each other will further unify us in gratitude and love.

Please mark your calendar for our annual Parish Convention on October 18 & 19. Mr. Samuel T Chacko (Saji Ranny), Bangalore will be the main speaker this year. Let's pray that our faith will be stirred as we look at the biblical principle that faith comes from hearing.

October 27 Sunday has been set apart by our parish as Youth Sunday. The Mar Thoma Yuvajana Sakhyam and the Youth fellowship are organized with a view that all the young people in the Church should accept Jesus Christ as their savior and Lord, and bear witness to His saving power. There are many ways you can make a difference as a Christian youth. You can make a difference by living a Christian life every single day.

I would like to convey my sincere thanks to you all for making our harvest festival a success. I am happy about some of your generosity, spirit, hard work, and willingness to help our church. May God accept all your offerings and bless you in abundance for the years to come!

Thank you so much for your continued prayers, love, and support when I am recovering from some health issues these days. Please do continue to uphold us in your prayers. My special thanks to Dr. Johnson Mathew Achen for his prayerful leadership in our parish.

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 - October 2024

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

Dear family,

In a recent session with some of our younger members, it became very evident that interest in the landscape of worship has dramatically shifted in recent years. We are witnessing a rise in new trends, much like those seen in many modern churches, where worship is increasingly rooted in musical styles and individual experiences. While music and experiential worship certainly play important roles in our faith journey, there is a growing concern that worship is becoming more self-centered than God-centered. This transformation is troubling because it moves us away from worship that truly nourishes our spirits and draws us closer to God.

We must ask ourselves: Is God still the center of our worship, whether in Holy Qurbana or during our singing sessions? Are we shifting our focus away from Him? Is our worship more about "Lord, I need You," or should it be "Lord, I am Yours"? Unfortunately, it seems that our emphasis is often more on what we can gain from a worship rather than what we can offer to God. This is a serious issue in many of our worship practices. Whether during Holy Qurbana or in Praise and Worship, our lips should be moved by the truth found in the Holy and Glorious Trinity lived in and through us. Trends may come and go, but the core of worship should always be aligned with what God desires from us: worship in spirit and in truth.

As Jesus said in John 4:24, "God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." True worship is not just a series of moments spent in a church building; it is a life-long commitment to honoring God with every aspect of our being. It involves not only singing songs or participating in rituals but also praying for others, serving them in love, and living out our faith daily.

So, how can we ensure that our worship is in the right spirit?

- Reverence, Adoration, Humility, and Obedience: Our worship must be marked by a deep respect for God, adoration for His greatness, humility in His presence, and obedience to His will.
- Preparation of the Heart: Before we enter worship, we must take the time to prepare our hearts and emotions, making them ready to truly encounter God.
- Heartfelt Worship: God desires our hearts more than He desires the latest music or worship styles. Our worship should come from a place of genuine love and devotion.
- Glorifying God: Ultimately, our worship should be about bringing glory to God. As 1 Corinthians 6:20 reminds us, "For you were bought with a price. So, glorify God in your body."

Let us be mindful in our worship, ensuring that He receives the honor, praise, and devotion that is due to Him. May our worship be a true reflection of our love for God, centered on His truth and filled with His Spirit.

Youth Fellowship House Keeping

1. Twice-a-Month Youth Fellowship Bible Study will be on Wednesday, October 9, 2024, and Wednesday, October 23, 2024, starting at 7:00 pm and concluding by 8:30 pm. We will also have light snacks. I encourage you to join us and be a part of this enriching experience!
2. Additionally, do not forget that your Parish Youth Fellowship Meetings are happening every month. For more details, please reach out to your Parish Youth Fellowship Secretary, who will have all the information you need.
3. NERYF Fall One-Day Retreat: Mark your calendars for November 30, 2024, at Long Island Mar Thoma Church. It is going to be a day full of spiritual renewal and fellowship—more details to follow.

I look forward to seeing you at these events and growing together in faith!

Prayers,

JVarghese Achen

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Sunday Worship Schedule

Date	Time	Service
October 6 th – Sunday Day of the Differently abled (Observed)	10.00 AM	Holy Communion Service (English)
October 13 th – Sunday MTVEA Sunday Observed	10.00 AM	Holy Communion Service (Malayalam)
October 20 th – Sunday Family Dedication Sunday Observed (Special Offertory) Last day of Parish Convention	10.00 AM	Holy Communion Service (Malayalam)
October 27 th – Sunday Youth Sunday Observed	10.00 AM	Holy Communion Service (English)

Lectionary

October 6th – Day of the Differently abled (Observed): All are created in the image of God (21st Sunday after Pentecost)		
	1 st Lesson	Gen. 1:24-31
	2 nd Lesson	II Cor. 12:1-10
	Epistle	Phil. 2:25-30
	Gospel	St. Mark 3:1-5
October 13th – Voluntary Evangelists' Association Sunday (Observed): Every Marthomites is a witness to the Kingdom of God (20th Sunday after Pentecost)		
	1 st Lesson	II Kgs. 7:3-11
	2 nd Lesson	I Thess. 2:1-12
	Epistle	II Tim. 2:1-13
	Gospel	St. Luke 9:1-6
October 20th – Christian Family Dedication Day (Observed); Family: Celebration of Relationships (23rd Sunday after Pentecost)		
	1 st Lesson	Gen. 45:1-15
	2 nd Lesson	Acts 16:19-34
	Epistle	Col. 3:18-25
	Gospel	St. Luke 2:41-52
October 27th – Youth Sunday (Observed): Youth - Period of Life with meaningful vision (22nd Sunday after Pentecost)		
	1 st Lesson	Dan. 1:1-21
	2 nd Lesson	Eph. 6:10-18
	Epistle	Phil. 3:7-14
	Gospel	St. Luke 19:1-10

Wedding Anniversary

None

Birthday Wishes

Kevin Joe Chacko	7-Oct
Ava Sarah Titus	8-Oct
Ancy Joseph	13-Oct
Thomas Kovoor	14-Oct
Varghese C Abraham	15-Oct
Joshua Johnson Mathew	17-Oct
Jincy Varghese	21-Oct
Beena Annie Mathew	22-Oct
Justin John	23-Oct
Sanil Abraham	26-Oct
Kurian A Mathew	28-Oct
Abeyson C. Jacob	30-Oct



Bible Reading

The family of....	Date
Jerry Chacko	10/06/2024
John C Mathai (Raju)	10/13/2024
John Samuel (Kochumon)	10/20/2024
Rev. Johnson Mathew	10/27/2024
Jose Cherian	11/03/2024
Justin Kurian Oommen	11/10/2024
Kurian A Mathew	11/17/2024
Nihal Joseph Easow	11/24/2024

Upcoming Events

1. Wednesday Bible Studies and Saturday prayer meetings via zoom at 7:00pm.
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81243928868?pwd=TjdUODZQSndiQkI2amlRaEdSNEo5dz09>
Dial 1 646-876-9923; Meeting ID: 812 4392 8868; Passcode:406406
2. October 4th (Fri), October 5th (Sat), October 6th, 2024 (Sun) – 21st Diocesan Sevika Sanghom Conference at Carmel Mar Thoma Center.
3. October 6th – Day of the Differently abled (Observed)
4. October 12th, Saturday 6:30pm – Cottage Prayer at Mr. Eapen Joseph’s residence.
5. October 13th, 2024, Sunday - M.T. Voluntary Evangelists Association Day (Observed)
6. October 18th, 19th, & 20th Parish Convention & October 20th Family Sunday: Special Offertory)

LIGHTED TO LIGHTEN

Ebenezer Mar Thoma Church
New York 406 King Street, Port Chester, NY

2024 Parish Convention

Leaders

MAIN SPEAKER

EVG. SAMUEL T. CHACKO
(SAJI RANNY), BANGALORE

REV. GEORGE ABRAHAM

REV. DR. JOHNSON MATHEW

Theme:
"Rejoice in the Lord"
(Philippians 4:4)

2024
October 18 & 19
7.00 pm

2024
October 20
10.00 am

Family Sunday

All Are Welcome

7. October 27th, 2024, Sunday (Observed)- Youth Sunday - English Holy Communion
8. November 3rd, 2024, Sunday- World Sunday School Day (English HQ)
9. November 28th Thursday – Thanksgiving Day
10. NERYF Fall One-Day Retreat: Mark your calendars for November 30, 2024, at Long Island Mar Thoma Church. It is going to be a day full of spiritual renewal and fellowship—more details to follow.