



ST. JOHN'S MAR THOMA CHURCH, MICHIGAN

Newsletter
Issue, 1
01/02/2022

Greeting to you all in the name of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ. Praising Lord for his abundant blessings in the past year. Great joy to present to you all the last edition of 2021 STJMTC newsletter. As we welcome the new year 2022, wish you all abundant mercies, grace and favor of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ. So, let us ask ourselves "Are we ready to welcome Christ?"

"And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn" Luke 2: 7

In this world filled with darkness and no room for Christ let us all welcome Him to our homes, hearts and lives. May we be able to make room for our savior in our midst, in our daily activities, in our conversations with one another, and in every walks of our lives. May we bring the best of ours to prepare Him room.

What an exciting and blessed way to begin a new year. Our new vicar Rev. Jeswin John has taken in charge since November 1, 2021 and leading our parish in the right direction, enriching us spiritually. May his service be a blessing to all of us, and may he feel blessed too.

Also, the STJMTC carol service held on 12/18/21 was another memorable event of the year. The celebrations of Jesus birth by STJMTC was a blessed event filled with music, hymns, and scriptures. The magical performance by our choir and Sunday school children, decked the halls and filled our hearts. Lets continue to grow together and be strong on the rock of faith in our Christ. May our focus never change from the real reason of this season, Christ the Lord.

Finally, many thanks to the strong leadership team of 2021, who worked tirelessly in the midst of this pandemic and many challenges a church faces. Also, warm welcome to the 2022 STJMTC executive committee, and organizational leaders. True leaders are stars that make others shine brighter with their light. May they all be able to spread that light of love around and grow strong in spirit and truth.

Thank you for the opportunity to help with 2021 news letters. Special gratitude to our Secretary Mr. John Varghese for all his support and help.

Wishing everyone a healthy and prosperous new year 2022.

Siby Binu





From the Vicar's Desk

To the faithful believers of St. John's Mar Thoma Church, Michigan

Dearly beloved in Christ,

Greetings to you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

It brings me great joy to be with you all, the community of St. John's Mar Thoma Church, Michigan. I give thanks to God for the opportunity I have received to serve as the vicar, minister, pastor, and leader of this parish. I humbly request your prayers in order that I may be able to carry out the responsibilities entrusted to me. It is my prayer that God strengthens you all as we work together to firmly establish ourselves within Troy, Michigan. Being a new parish, we have many challenges. The beginning years will definitely be difficult yet I see commitment, dedication, and cooperation that will help us to overcome whatever we may face.

Remember that the Church is the body of Christ. It is an example used by St. Paul to show that a community will always have people with different skills, desires, and perspectives. In a small parish, the full cooperation and sharing of resources, including talent, time, and wealth, is extremely important for its smooth functioning. The Christian Church is community of believers in Jesus Christ the Savior. Its central element is the worship. Out of the worship flow all other activities such as mission-work, fellowship, and other events. Every person, every organization, and every activity in the parish revolves around our worship of God. Whatever we do must be for the glory of God. If our worship and prayers are God-oriented, then we will see changes in our own life and personality.

As we enter the new year, we must ask ourselves: Where is God in my life? Is Jesus Christ forgotten? Do we ignore the sound of Christ knocking on the door of our heart? There is no better time to think of these questions than at the beginning of the year. It is a fresh start. In the song, "Ask Him In" by the band *Petra*, it says: *You could probably think of a reason, to wait until another day; But the spirit is speaking, telling you, today is the day.* Now is the time for us to truly think where God is in our life. Being a Christian is not easy; often we are criticized for being hypocrites because our actions do not reflect Jesus Christ. In the new year, by the grace of God and through a deep personal desire to love God, let us put away the "old man" (Eph 4:22–24). It is a process of discipleship and growing to be like Christ. Only we alone know which areas in our life, personality, character, and relationships need to be developed into the likeness of Christ. Let us pray for God's grace and let us work towards being the fragrance of Christ in all areas of our life (2 Cor 2:15). May God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Living Holy Spirit strengthen each one of us and as a parish throughout the year 2022.

Martyrdom of St. Thomas
Mar Thoma Sabha Dinam
December 21, 2021

Rev. Jeswin S. John
Chicago, Illinois

From Secretary...

As we face the first month of the year 2022 let us be thankful to God for His faithfulness. Even as we went through uncertain and tough times, God has been always faithful, and He is always good. Let us continue to praise His name and uphold in prayer for the New Year 2022. In this edition our theme is Welcoming Christ Today. The second coming is the return of Jesus in glory at the end of time. That's why the Bible says, "Stay awake and be prepared because at an hour you do not expect, the son of Man will come." This could seem gloomy or nerve-wrecking, but in reality, it is meant to fill us with encouragement and hope. Jesus is motivating us not to wait till tomorrow or the next day but to, start living the life we want to live today and not in some distant future. He urges us not to delay in being good to one another, actively caring for the poor, praying a little more and living more positively. Jesus doesn't just want us to live as God wants tomorrow. He wants us to live God's dream for our lives TODAY. This is where the third coming of Jesus happens: today. Between His first coming as a baby in Bethlehem and His second coming in glory at the end of time is His third coming, gently, peacefully, but truly and surely, in our midst every day. Jesus comes to us in our friend in the hospital, in our annoying coworker, in our noisy neighbor, in our demanding boss. Jesus also comes to us in the love of our family, an act of kindness towards a stranger, the comfort of a Christmas Carol, the thoughtfulness of gift-giving, and the joy of coming together. So Jesus wants to come to us in this third coming that we can so often miss: here and now, in the busyness and in the stillness of our everyday lives. Jesus is coming to see you.

ഒരുവർഷം കൂടി നമ്മെ വിട്ടുപിരിയുകയായി.. പ്രതീക്ഷയുടെ ഒരു
പൊൻപൂലരി നമ്മെ വരവേൽക്കുകയായി, കഴിഞ്ഞ വർഷത്തെ
ജീവിതാനുഭവങ്ങളെ സ്മരിക്കുമ്പോൾ എത്രയെത്ര സങ്കീർണ്ണമായ
അനുഭവങ്ങളിലൂടെ നാം കടന്നുപോയി.. പുതു വർഷത്തിൽ പ്രഭാത
സൂര്യനറെ കീരണങ്ങൾ നമ്മിൽ പതിക്കുമ്പോൾ ദൈവത്തിനു
നന്ദിയല്ലാതെ മറ്റൊരു പറയാൻ. കഴിഞ്ഞ ഒരു വർഷക്കാലം
ഇടവുകയായി ഒരുമിച്ചു പ്രവർത്തിക്കുവാൻ ദൈവം നമ്മെ
സഹായിച്ചു. പോരായ്മകൾ ഒത്തിരി ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നിട്ടും പലതും
ചെയ്യുവാൻ പ്രതികൂലങ്ങളുടെ മധ്യത്തിലും സാധിച്ചു. നന്ദി മാത്രം..
മുൻപിൽ ധാരാളം കാര്യങ്ങൾ നടക്കുവാനായിട്ടുണ്ട് നമുക്ക്,
വഴിയെല്ലാം അവ്യക്തം തന്നെ. പക്ഷെ നമുക്ക് ഒരു വഴികാട്ടി ഉണ്ട്.
ഒരു പ്രാർത്ഥന മാത്രം മതി പൊൻപൂലരിയിലേക്കു
കാലുകളുന്നുമ്പോൾ ദൈവമേ ഞാൻ നിന്നോടൊപ്പം നടക്കും
അധികംവേഗതയിലുമല്ല തിരേ സാവധാനത്തിലുമല്ല പിന്നയോ... നീ
നടക്കുന്ന വേഗത്തിൽ ഒപ്പം നടക്കാൻ എന്നെ സഹായിക്കണമേ...!!

വിശ്വസ്തതയോടെ
ജോൺ വറുഗീസ് (ജോജി)
സെക്രട്ടറി

From the Trustees...

THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

Mathew 13: 1-23, Mark 4: 1-20, Luke 8: 1-25

The Sower who is God

The Seed represent the Word of God

The Soil types represent our Heart

This story has implications that are potent today.

Isaiah 6: 9-10

In which the Prophet foretold God's Judgement on Israel for failing to repent. He said "Go and tell this people be ever hearing never understanding be ever seeing but never perceiving".

The way we respond to the Lord's word has significant impact on our lives. In total four types of soil are mentioned in this parable each of these soil types represent our heart.

The seed on the path: The soil represents those who have hardened the heart to the gospel and refuse to listen. They simply rejected without ever giving it a second thought. Seeds cannot germinate in compacted soil, similarly gospel cannot be taken in a hardened heart.

The seed on the rocky places: This represent a person who is enthusiastic at first. Their faith never penetrated beneath the surface and cannot withstand life's, trials and tribulations. Christians require deep roots that renew and refresh their faith on a regular basis.

The seed that fell between the thorns: When we do not guard our hearts and certain thing take root it would directly oppose the word of God. So, it is important to guard our heart constantly looking out for things that want to attach to life.

The seed on the good soil: This soil is symbolic of those who hear the gospel and follow Jesus. Their roots are deep and can withstand life's adversities. They have guarded their heart to prevent thorns from suffocating them. They have primed and are ready to grow. Their lives yield for more than they could have imagined. All the soil is essentially the same. What differentiate the soils, what has been added to it and how it has been cultivated. We all are cultivators of our own soil (Our own Hearts). The life we live will be determined by how we care and nurture our heart.

We thank God who gave us the opportunity to serve as Trustees of our church, we extended our sincere and heartfelt thanks to all our family members whose support helped us to work faithfully along with all of you for the Kingdom of God.

Nirmal Mathews
Anil Sam
Trustee
Accountant

Welcoming Christ Today

As the Christmas season is behind us, are we different as a result of the Advent season? After the gifts are opened, Christmas tree taken down and the breaking of the Advent Lent, have we also packed up the baby Jesus until next Christmas?

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us... John 1:14

Through the incarnation, Jesus lived amongst us. In the Greek, it is actually understood as the phrase “tabernacled amongst us.” This is reminiscent of how God manifested His presence to His people through the tabernacle and the temple. God now resides among His people through His Son, Emmanuel (“God with us”). By virtue of the Holy Spirit, Christ makes both the Church (1 Cor 3:17) and the Christian believer (1 Cor 6:19) His temple. Have we welcomed Christ so that he takes residence in our lives and not just a visit on Christmas?

It will become evident to the rest of the community that Christ has been welcomed in our midst when the Word becomes flesh in our lives. When we feed the five thousand, heal the sick and bring the dead to life in the name of Jesus Christ, those around us will see Christ living and working in us and in the Church.

We need to move beyond reading Scripture and start living the Gospel. This will require a new imagination that can only happen through the working of the Holy Spirit so that the prisoners can be unshackled, blind can see, and oppressed be freed (Luke 4:18). Let us pray that Christ finds residence in our hearts and that He uses us for the glory of God’s Kingdom. May we welcome Christ today so that He finds a permanent home in us, the church.

Wishing you all a blessed New Year.

In Christ,

Tom Philip

Lay Chaplain, NY/NJ Region

Diocese of North America and Europe



വന്നിടണേ നാമാ, വേഗം, എൻ ഭവനെ

നാമാ, സർവശക്തനെ,
നിന്നെ വരവേൽക്കുവാൻ
ഞാൻ ഒരുങ്ങിടുന്നു.

വന്നിടണേ വേഗം എന്നോട് ചേരുവാൻ,
ആശയോടെ ഞാൻ കാത്തിടുന്നു, - നിത്യം
ആശയോടെ ഞാൻ കാത്തിടുന്നു.

യേശുവേ നിൻ മഹാ സ്നേഹത്താൽ,
ഞാൻ നിറഞ്ഞിടുന്നു അനുദിനവും.

നീ തന്ന നന്മകൾ എത്രയോ അധികമേ,
പ്രത്യാശയോടെ ഞാൻ ജീവിക്കും
നാൾതോറും.

വന്നിടണേ നാമാ, വേഗം, എൻ ഭവനെ,
ആശയോടെ ഞാൻ കാത്തിടുന്നു, - നിത്യം
ആശയോടെ ഞാൻ കാത്തിടുന്നു.

By
Ani George

Welcoming Christ Today!

7th Grade – Ms. Eliana Varughese & Christina Sam

Eliana: Hi Christina its holiday, can you come for sleep over.

Christina: Yes, Sure! My mom said she will drop me at your home.

It was around 3 PM and its windy and snowy outside. Both heard knock on the door.

Christina Lil bit frightened said, Eliana don't open the door, some stranger may be.

Eliana: Let me check through glass window. Eliana Screaming: Christina come over, see who it is.

Both look surprised, angel like person standing out, glowing brighter than snow.

Eliana: Its Jesus,

Christina: Yes, Its Jesus.

Eliana: Let me open the door.

Jesus enters the house, Whole places glowing, amazed and silent both went near Jesus and hugged him. Both in one voice said, we are pleased to see you Jesus, don't know what to offer you.

Jesus: Bless you my beloved children. you already accepted me in. I visited many in many ways, most didn't know me, some hid from me, some rejected me. Your acceptance is more than enough for me. With a smile, Jesus disappeared.

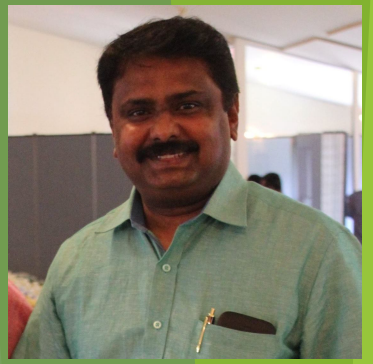
Luke 18:16

But Jesus called the children to him and said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.

Mark 9:37

"Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me."





Welcoming Christ Today

King of the universe, born so humble
Lived a life, with people so simple.

Born to die, to wash our sins,
Like a lamb, destined for sacrifice.

Grieving heart of Father in heaven,
Knowing his son, is to die and chosen.

As a criminal, accused and punished,
for our sin, Lamb was crucified.

Death that redeems whole race of humans,
Loving Father fulfilling His old covenants.

Risen and winning death, here he comes,
Eager to see us singing hosanna songs.

Will He be received with same delight?
or run away denying, fleeing in plight.

Prayers, confessions, Christmas and Easter,
feast and merry but selfish in nature.

Lighted to Lighten, Christians of Sunday,
Are we ready to welcome Christ today?



WELCOMING JESUS TODAY

By

Jayden Eapen

We should welcome Jesus in our lives.

We should forgive others for their mistake

We should believe in our lord Jesus Christ.

We should share God's love with others.

We should respect other people in our lives.

We all as a church should invite God to our heart.

We all as a church should also give thanks to God.

We should all praise God.

We should also rejoice when he comes.

We should all be ready when he comes a second time.

Birthdays...

JANUARY	
1/7	Jayden Eapen (son)
1/8	Stanley Chacko (son)
1/11	Mary Varughese (wife)
1/15	Bino Tom Varghese
1/18	Steephen Abraham
1/18	Soonu Thomas (daughter)
1/19	Renu Elizabeth Thomas (wife)
1/21	Abraham Thomas
1/23	Thomas Abraham
1/31	Jaya Mary Mathai (wife)
1/31	Sneha Cherian (wife)
FEBRUARY	
2/1	Lia Sophiya Babu (daughter)
2/2	Aleyamma Varghese (mother)
2/4	Sharon Rajumon (daughter)
2/5	V. Denny Abraham Cherry (son)
2/17	Amanda Nicole Clayton
2/20	David Vergis Mathai (son)
2/20	Jiya Eapen (daughter)
2/22	Laiju Thomas (son-in-law)
2/25	Tobin T. Kovoov (son)
2/25	Sarah Kurian
MARCH	
3/1	Naomi Ann Steephen (daughter)
3/7	Sophiya Mathews (wife)
3/7	Sheena Leela Joy (wife)
3/8	Shinu Kuriakose (wife)
3/10	Philipose K. Mathew
3/15	Sruthi Thomas (daughter)
3/18	Jossy Mathai
3/19	Elizabeth Cherry (wife)
3/19	Manoj Thomas (son)
3/20	Sunil Koshy Babu
3/22	Andrew Tom Varghese (son)
3/26	John Abraham (Sajan)
3/27	Eliana Varughese (daughter)
APRIL	
4/2	George K. Thomas
4/3	Saramma Shaji (wife)
4/3	Simi Varghese (wife)
4/3	Hanah Edwin (daughter)
4/6	Carol Maria Pius (wife)
4/7	Reba Abraham (daughter)
4/9	Mathew Cherian
4/9	Thomas Panamootil Jacob (Lalu)
4/10	Thomson Scaria (son)
4/12	Ashwin Kurian Mathews
4/22	Bindu Edwin (wife)
4/22	Jeremiah Aby Thomas (son)
4/25	Manaloor Eapen Abraham
4/25	Kaithackal Varghese Varghese (father)
4/25	Norah Anna Thomas (daughter)
4/27	Thankamma Abraham (wife)
4/29	Nathan Varughese (son)

Wedding Aniversarys...

January	
Mr. Solomon Varughese Abraham & Mrs. Sneha Cherian	1/12
Mr. Philipose K. Mathew & Mrs. Mary Mathew	1/20
Mr. Scaria Nambumadathil Thomas & Mrs. Annamma Scaria	1/21
Mr. Chacko Thundil Varghese & Mrs. Sheeba Joseph	1/27
February	
Mr. Biju Varughese & Mrs. Mary Varughese	2/1
Dr. Gladson Scaria & Mrs. Aquino Dominic	2/4
Mr. George K. Thomas & Mrs. Aleyamma Thomas	2/7
Mr. Ashwin Kurian Mathews & Mrs. Brandy Lee Goebel	2/10
Mr. Manaloor Eapen Abraham & Mrs. Thankamma Abraham	2/15
Mr. Biju Thomas & Mrs. Lincy Thomas	2/24
March	
Mr. Shine M. Eapen & Mrs. Sheena Leela Joy	3/28
April	
Mr. Robin Abraham & Mrs. Carol Maria Pius	4/22
Mr. Steephen Abraham & Mrs. Sajani Steephen	4/28