



ST. JOHN'S MAR THOMA CHURCH

NEWSLETTER | ISSUE VI | NOVEMBER 2022

*Happy  
Thanksgiving*

*"The Lord is my strength and my shield; in him my heart trusts, and I am helped; my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to him." - Psalm 28:7*

## 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!

The year is slowly coming to a close. It only seems like yesterday that we began the year 2022 yet here we are in the month of November. Let us thank and praise God for all the blessings we have received over the past months. We were able to come together and have a wonderful time in various programs of our parish, region, and Diocese. It was only by the grace of God and the cooperative effort of each and every family member that we were able to do so well. Our choir offered a beautiful rendition of "Kristunaamam aettu-kolnee" at the 27<sup>th</sup> Mar Thoma Choir Festival hosted by Detroit Mar Thoma Church. Many worked hard to make the Church Picnic and Cultural Fest a blessed time. This year, Evg. Kurian Thampy (Subi Pallikal) Parish Convention was our main speaker and spoke the reviving words of truth from the Scriptures. Our first Church Retreat, which took place in October, was a long-awaited event that finally came together. The conveners and others helped to arrange the beautiful facility at Covenant Hills Camp, Otisville. It was a time of fellowship and rest for our bodies and souls. The campus had many activities for young and old (and the "young-at-heart"). Looking on all this, I want to remind us that whatever we do should be for the glory of God, and then everything will work out magnificently. I thank God for His providence and also thank all who supported our parish and its programs through their time, finances, prayers, and all other services.

### **Kudosh Eetho: New Year in the Church**

In the liturgical terms, the month of November is especially important. We know that December and the Christmas season is especially important for us. But one thing that we learn from the way our feasts and festivals are arranged by the church is that the celebrations of festivals like "Feast of the Nativity of our Lord" (*Yeldo* meaning "Nativity" in Syriac; or *Christmas*, meaning "Christ's Mass" in Latin) involve a time of preparation of our bodies, minds, and hearts. It is not just of the Advent time that begins our preparation for this celebration. On October 30, we celebrate *Kudosh Eetho*, "Sanctification of the Church". This actually marks the beginning of the liturgical year. We are familiar with the new year celebration on January 1, or the new year each one of us celebrates during our birthdays, and maybe even the Chinese New Year or the Malayalam New year (First day of month of *Chingam*). But how many of us are familiar with the beginning of the liturgical year followed by the Mar Thoma Church? *Koodos Eetho* and *Hoodos Eetho* ("Renewal of the Church") are two celebrations in which we prepare ourselves for the remembrance of the incarnation of Jesus Christ on December 25<sup>th</sup>.



Rev. Dr. George Mathew Kuttyil writes, "The Church signifies here the time when the Church, the heavenly bride, sanctifies herself to receive the Lord, the heavenly bridegroom. (see *A Study of the Fasts and Feasts in the Church*)" Each of us must have an understanding of how our lives have to be reordered in the light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Yes, we must live and work in this world. But they must not live as the people of this world. Instead, we must recognize that every moment of our life has to focus on Jesus Christ. Let us sanctify our hearts and minds in order that we may be ready to welcome our Lord

### **God's Animation Project: Parish Retreat Theme Review**

I praise God once again for being able to be part of our first Parish Retreat. The objective of the meditations was to bring our bodies, hearts, and minds to the deliberative and conscious attention to the presence of God among us. Often we feel disconnected with God, even though we are so busy "doing things" for God. Meditating on Genesis 2:4-9, we learned about "**God's Animation Project**" which was in the creation of all things and then in the crown jewel of His creation, men and women. The whole world was made according to God's plan. In humans, God used the divine breath to give us life. All things were made for us and for our benefit. We also have a responsibility, whether in family, workplace, school, or church. But the progress of life can dull us. The next meditation was based on Ezekiel 37:1-14, titled, "**God's Re-Animation Project**". In Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones, we see God asking him if the bones can be made alive. Ezekiel answers, "O Lord, you know." And the Lord does revive the bones by the power of His breath, which is His Word. The Word of God is re-animating. That is why reading the Bible is so important in our lives today. In the last meditation, from John 11:38-44, titled "**God Reanimates: Calling by Name**", we see Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead. He called the dead man by name and he arose. Once again, we see the voice of God, the Creator of all things, calling His children by name and drawing them to Him. We see his tender love and care, calling each person by name and filling them with His Holy Spirit. God desires to be with us. He desires that we know Him. Let us seek him as He is seeking us. Let us return to him, as he calls us by name. The Bible and prayer fellowship with God and our worship together as a church bring revival into our hearts and souls. Let us move forward energized by His Spirit.

### **Upcoming Events**

We now approach the end of the calendar year. The Thanksgiving and Christmas season will be with us shortly. Let us work together to plan our Christmas Carol Service and the Caroling Rounds so that they are a time of happiness and celebration of the Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. We also have to prayerfully gather to select parishioners for different leadership positions. Let us understand our needs and let each one take on the necessary responsibilities for the strengthening of our parish. We also have the task of closing the administrative year so let us all do that in a smooth and timely manner. May the Holy Spirit strengthen us to carry out our responsibilities, for His glory. Amen.

**Rev. Jeswin S. John**

Lombard, IL

October 27, 2022



## The Unchanging Changing God

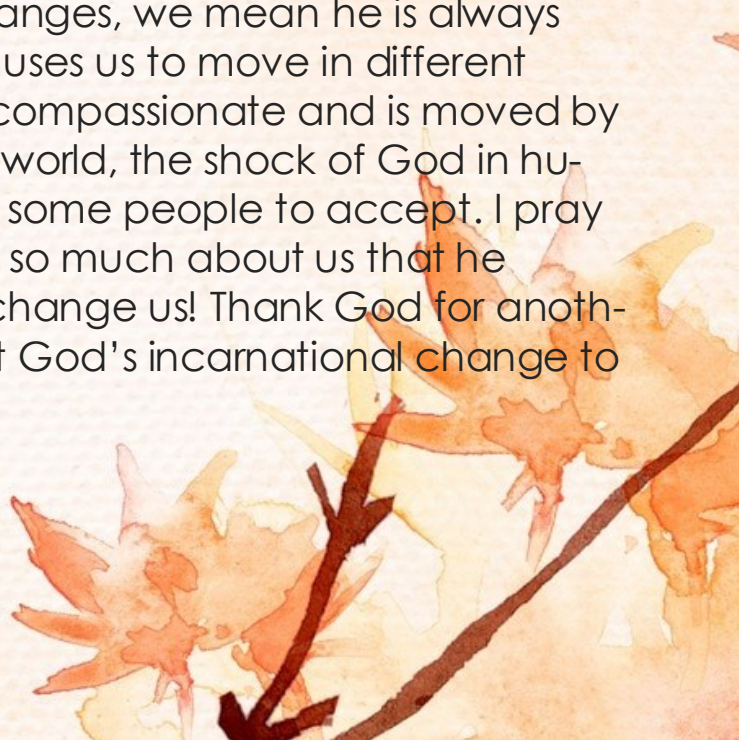
*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. – Heb 13:8*  
*For I the Lord do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, have not perished. – Malachi 3:6.*

We are all creatures of habit. When we find a good seat in the church, then next Sunday, if possible, we will aim for that same area. If we find a good restaurant, we are more likely to return there than try something brand new. We enjoy the comfort of the familiar. We find peace in the predictable. On the other hand, change is often a disturbance. Change may take away from the joy we currently experience. Our sense of reliability and trust is questioned when things change.

As Christians, we talk about our unchanging God as our anchor in this ever-changing world. But we must also remember that the Bible teaches us that in some ways God changes too! For example, God regretted making humans (Gen 6:6) after seeing how wicked they act. A more positive example is when God changed his mind about Nineveh's destruction (Jonah 3:10) after they repented. Another, the prophet Joel preaches that if the people turn back, then they can have hope that God would change and relent from punishing the people (Joel 2:13-14).

Christmas is a time to realize just how much he changed for our sake. The theological word for that change is "incarnation". Jesus became human for our sake. When we say God never changes, we mean he is always love. And as every parent knows, love causes us to move in different ways for the sake of our children. God is compassionate and is moved by his love for us. When Jesus came into this world, the shock of God in human form was too much of a change for some people to accept. I pray that we learn to seek the God who cares so much about us that he would change himself, so that he could change us! Thank God for another Advent season in which we can reflect God's incarnational change to a world in need of transformation.

**Rev. Larry Varghese**  
**Study leave: Emory University**







# PAST EVENTS

**First Fruit Auction was held on Sunday August 14, 2022  
Convener: Mr. Chacko Varghese**

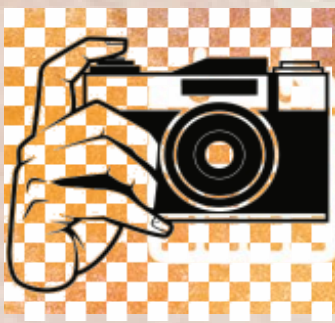
**CHEVRA was held on Saturday August 20, 2022  
Conveners: Ms. Sneha Mathew & Mr. Nirmal Mathews**

**Parish Convention was held Saturday Sep 17, 2022 & Sunday Sep 18, 2022. Convention Subcommittee: Mr. Binu Jacob (Convener), Mr. Manoj Thomas, & Mrs. Saumya Kuriakose**

**His Grace the Most Rev. Dr. Theodosius Marthoma Metropolitan visited our Parish on Saturday October 1, 2022. Congratulations to our five First Communicants who have entered into the full communal membership in our Church on Saturday October 1, 2022.**

**Church Retreat was held from October 21, 2022 – October 23, 2022 in Covenant Hills, Otisville MI. Retreat Subcommittee: Mr. Kurian Jacob (convener), Mr. Bino Varghese (convener), Mr. Manaloor Eapen, Mr. Manaloor Abraham, & Mr. Abraham Abraham**





# PAST EVENTS





## NEW MEMBERS:

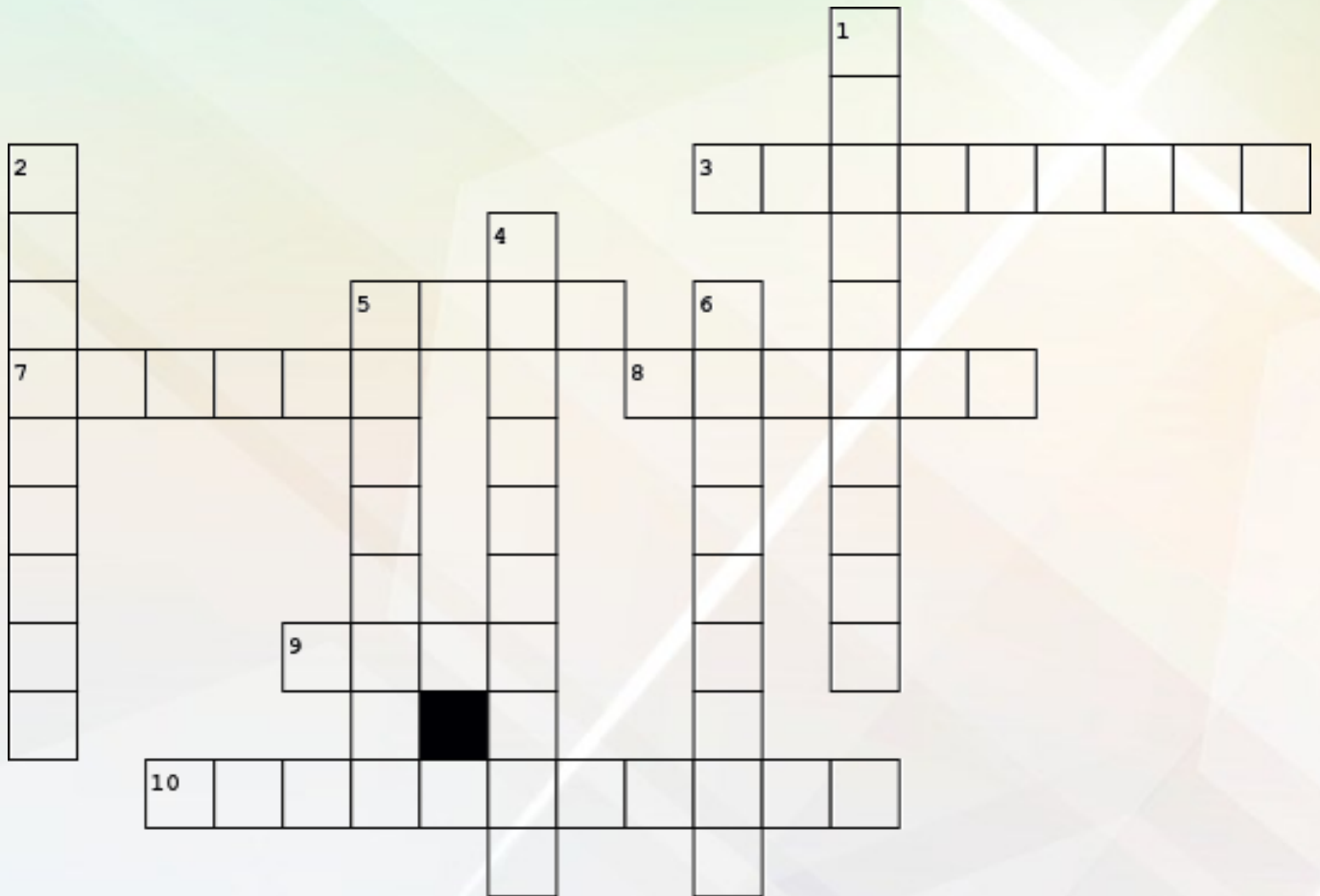
Mr. Bibin Panicker & Mrs. Merlin Panicker

## Address Change:

Mr. Bino Varghese & Mrs. Jyothi Varghese

6088 Meadowlark Drive, Troy, MI 48085

## Advent: Joy in Christ's Birth



### Across

- 3. Jesus' Birthplace
- 5. Sunday School children's Christmas \_\_\_\_
- 7. Who is weeping?
- 8. Carol \_\_\_\_
- 9. Men from East
- 10. Fourteen

### Down

- 1. Dec 31
- 2. Governor
- 4. Mary's Song
- 5. Kerala Christmas dessert
- 6. Wonderful \_\_\_\_

HAPPY  
Birthday

## NOVEMBER

11/5	Mariamamma Abraham (w/o PJ Abraham)
11/6	Elizabeth Thomas (wife)
11/6	Kevin Tom George
11/8	Nirmal Mathews
11/10	Chacko Thundil Varghese
11/14	Binu Mathew Jacob
11/15	Abraham Maniparambil Eapen
11/18	Bincy Joshwa (wife)
11/24	George Chacko
11/28	Sosamma Sakhariah (mother)
11/29	Krista Eapen (daughter)

## DECEMBER

12/1	Merril Mathew (son)
12/8	Sunitha Varughese (wife)
12/9	Aleyamma Thomas (wife)
12/11	Sanu T. Thomas
12/12	Annamma Chacko (wife)
12/12	Joshua John Mathai (son)
12/18	George Koshy Vilanilam
12/23	Christina Annette Sam (daughter)
12/27	Biju Varughese
12/29	Sajani Steephon (wife)
12/31	Philip Mathew



# HAPPY Wedding Anniversary

November	
Mr. Kevin Tom George & Mrs. Naomi Liza Issac	11/7
Micha Mathews	11/11
Mr. Shaji Mathew Mannoorethu & Mrs. Saramma Shaji	11/22
Mr. P. V. Cherian & Mrs. Aleyamma Cherian	11/28
December	
Mr. Sanu T. Thomas & Mrs. Ashely Abraham	12/8
Mr. Abraham Abraham & Mrs. Mariamma Abraham	12/13
Mr. Abraham Maniparambil Eapen & Mrs. Sheeba Eapen	12/27
Mr. John Abraham & Mrs. Sunitha Mathew	12/29
Mrs. Alisa Susan Abraham	12/29





## **THE JOY OF CHRIST'S BIRTH!**

Every year in December we celebrate Christmas. Thinking about Santa and presents but this isn't the only important thing in December. Jesus was born on Christmas day. Jesus's birth is a joyful event because he saved us from our sins. Jesus's birth is a very special event that we should celebrate in a special way!

## **WHY IS IT AN IMPORTANT EVENT?**

Why is this an important event? Jesus's birth is a great occasion in Christianity. Without Jesus we would live a sinful life! Before Jesus was born the world was covered in sin! God knew that the people needed a savior. That person was Jesus Christ! When the time came Jesus was born in a stable. Imagine the King of the world born in a stable with livestock! Not the best place to be born but it was the only place available at the time!

## **WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?**

In the bible it says in LUKE 2:11: For unto you is born this day in the City of David a Savior, who is Christ the lord. This talks about the birth of Jesus Christ the Messiah! The birth of Christ Is a joyful event!

*ARTICLE BY JAYDEN EAPEN*





## Trustees Desk

Dear Parish Members,

Blessings to all my fellow members in the name of our Triune God. As we are approaching the end of the fiscal year and the need is to close the financial accounts in the black.

We express our thanks to all those who took the time and effort to make this year's First Fruit auction, and Food festival a great success.

Overdue (membership) dues and any other payments can be made through Zillow to our church account. ID for the church is TREAS@STJMTC.ORG.

The need for a worship place to call our own is becoming more urgent. So, I am requesting our memberships to commit on the following two fronts.

1. Prayer commitment from our memberships.
2. Financial support and commitment from our memberships.

Sincere thanks to everyone from the bottom of my heart. May the almighty God bless and keep you all safe and healthy in the coming year.

Best Regards,

Nirmal Mathews  
586-662-5247

Kurian Jacob  
586-645-6653

# UPCOMING EVENTS

Fasting Prayer	Friday November 4, 2022
Prayer Meeting (via webex)	Sunday November 6, 2022
World Sunday School Day	Sunday November 6, 2022
Annual General Body	Sunday November 20, 2022
Carol Rounding	Sunday November 27, 2022
Carol Rounding	Saturday December 3, 2022 Sunday December 4, 2022 Saturday December 10, 2022 Sunday December 11, 2022
Fasting Prayer	Friday December 2, 2022
Carol service	Saturday December 17, 2022
Christmas day service	Sunday December 25, 2022
Regional Youth Conference	Monday December 26, 2022 to Thursday December 29, 2022
Watch Night Service	Saturday December 31, 2022