

# St. John's Mar Thoma Church Newsletter



Issue 2  
April, 2021

**Let Faith be your Strength!**

**For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. (Romans 10:13).**

*The Journey....* The Journey of St. John's Mar Thoma church (STJMTC) as a parish status continued to be a blessing for its members and the community.



St. John's Mar Thoma Church Status Celebration on 01/05/2020

*we have*  
**GREAT NEWS**

***Romans 12:12 "Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer"***

STJMTC is a faith-based organization, and the fundamental part of our ministry is ceaseless prayers for all. The COVID era has enriched our spiritual wellbeing through continuous prayers. Upholding each other, and worshipping our Almighty for his divine armor of protection on each and every member of His church family has been our core mission. This edition of STJMTC newsletter brings you all the good news of "**Resurrection**", filled with hope, joy and peace in the name of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ.

## *Resurrection: Celebration of new life in Christ...*

***So that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the father, so, we too might walk in newness of life Romans 6:4b***

Greetings of joy, love, and peace to all of you in the name of our Risen Lord!

The Good News of the Resurrection is, in fact, the core or center of the Gospel: Jesus Christ has died and now lives! And all of this was made possible because of the love, mercy, and grace of God. The power of the resurrection of Jesus brings victory and new life to all who believe.

Our Lenten journey culminates in observing Christ's passion and death and also in celebrating His resurrection. Through our Passion Week services, we were reminded of the great love Christ has for each of us – a love forever faithful and enduring. Christ's love is a triumphant love because He has triumphed over sin and death and gives us newness of life. Our celebration of His Resurrection Day pulsates with this gift of radical newness. Nothing is the same again! Neither sin nor death will ever have the final victory!

This newness of life, the result of Christ's love, is made visible for us through many symbols used in our worship and sacraments. The lighted candles on the altar symbolize the light of Christ. Christ is our light – going before us to lead us on our pilgrimage through life, dispelling the darkness of sin and death, warming us in our loneliness and difficulties, and guiding us in our uncertainty and fears.

This newness of life is likewise made visible through the symbol of water. Water is used in the sacrament of Holy Baptism to symbolize Christ as the source and sustainer of our life. It is He who strengthens us to live daily according to His Gospel and the teachings of the Church, His Body, of which we are members.

This newness of life is also made visible in the reality of Holy Communion. It is through the sacrament of Holy Communion that we faithfully commemorate the crucifixion of Christ and joyfully celebrate His resurrection. In the Holy Communion, we acknowledge that Christ is truly present with us and that His real presence continues to bless and strengthen us in and through the sacramental elements of bread and wine. In the Holy Communion, Christ's love is revealed in a unique way as He remains to be our nourishment throughout the journey of life.

As we continue to celebrate new life in Christ's resurrection, let us wholeheartedly remember that He was born in order to become, by His dying and rising, the one, true Savior of the world, our Savior! Let us renew our commitment to live in close union with the Risen Lord Jesus. Let us ask the Lord to deepen His life within us and to make us His witnesses of the joy and hope of the Resurrection. Let us promise our Risen Savior and Lord that we will follow Him, our Light and our Life, every day and invite others to come to Him by the witness of our lives. With Christ, the Risen One, let us experience all things new! May all of your hearts be filled with joy, hope, and peace as we receive the gift of newness from Jesus Christ, our Risen Lord!

## A Fond Farewell to All

We are eternally thankful to God for having received the distinguished honor and privilege to serve as the first Vicar of St. John's Mar Thoma Church, Michigan, for the past two years (2019-2021). It was indeed a blessed experience to be a part of a newly formed congregation and to be a part of this delightful and often challenging journey. We are also extremely grateful to all of you for your love, prayers, encouragement, and support. It is hard to leave you all, but this farewell is not forever.

As the past two years have gone by, we look back fondly on our time together. We are humbled by the prayerful encouragement that all of you have provided. We praise God for the commitment and dedication of the St. John's MTC Family. We cherish our relationship with all members of the parish and thank God that we were able to connect with so many of you. Together we have experienced much joy and even times of deep sorrow, but through it all, we have bonded and grown in wonderful ways while experiencing a great deal of God's mercy, grace, and love.

We want all of you to know and remember that you will always be a part of our lives, and we hope we will remain as a part of yours. Thank you for your patience, kindness, generosity, and love that you have shown to us. We are so very thankful to each of you for opening up your hearts and homes to us. To have known you and to have worked alongside you has enriched our lives beyond measure. St. John's MTC is a wonderful parish with a bright future, and we prayerfully wish you all the best in this new season that you are about to begin. As our tenure comes to an end, we hope that you, our dear brothers and sisters in Christ, would continue to be steadfast in your faith and commitment to God. As we say farewell to all of you, we entrust you all into the care of God Almighty. We pray that the Lord will grant you all happiness and joy, wisdom and guidance, and grace and peace.

We express our sincere gratitude to the Office Bearers, Executive Committee Members, and all organization leaders for your tireless efforts in providing leadership for the parish. In addition, we would like to thank our beloved Rev. Philip Varughese Achen and Elsy Kochamma for their constant support and enriching fellowship. We also wish that God's blessing and mercies be upon the new Vicar, Rev. Ajith K. Thomas, and family as they begin their ministry here. We hope and pray that Ajith Achen and family will be a blessing to the new parishes and communities that they will be serving.

As you all may know, we are being transferred to New York to serve as the Program Manager of the Diocese and to also serve as the Vicar of the Connecticut Jerusalem Mar Thoma Church. Please do remember us in prayers as we take up these new responsibilities. Please also do feel free to visit us when you travel to New York (our contact information is given below). Our prayers will continue to be with all of you. May all of you continue to grow in faith, hope and love, and love, and may you all continue to do everything for the glory of God!

May God be with us all until we meet again!

With love, prayers, and much gratitude,

*Chris Achen and Neethi*

Rev. Christopher Phil Daniel and Mrs. Neethi Prasad

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*“Like good Stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received” 1 Peter 4:10*

We are extremely delighted to publish our Newsletter for the year 2021. We are hopeful that we can communicate church activities to the members more effectively through this media. Newsletter will be published every 3 months; each edition will be published based on different themes. We expect full support from all our members.

In this edition our theme is Resurrection: celebration of the Life

There are two ways we can live that life:

1. Learn to surrender to the lord

- That means you surrender your ways so that you can take up the ways of Jesus. When you give up something that’s when you can let God be in charge of your life. When you give then you can receive. Try it and see how different you will be.

2. Learn to serve

- We have all been given specific gifts of the Holy Spirit that means we have to use them. Ask God what he is calling you to do. For Example, serving your fellow believers or community service. Do not delay using them. You will experience more happiness than you can imagine.

Last quarter was packed with various events and activities including Passion Week. Thank God for all the enthusiasm and passion shown by our members.

On May 1<sup>st</sup> Rev. Ajith k Thomas is taking charge of our parish as the new Vicar. Hearty welcome to Ajith achen, Binu Kochamma and children’s Anina and Anugraha to our church.

Our Next quarter will be even busier than the current none. Sunday school Diocesan Exam will be held on May 16<sup>th</sup> and our VBS on June 23-27. Our Malayalam and English Choir are participating this year’s virtual choir festival on April 10<sup>th</sup>. Organization Events, Prayer lines and Bible studies are taking place during this quarter. Please continue to support the committee and the needs of the church in the coming Months.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude towards our dearest Rev. Christopher Daniel Achen and Neethi Kochamma for serving our church for the last 2 years. We are blessed to have Achen as our 1<sup>st</sup> vicar of St. John’s MT Church. Achen provided his strong leadership towards our parish. We cannot be grateful enough for the tireless efforts put forth by Achen and Kochamma. We pray the God continues to bless Achen and Kochamma.

Thank you,

*John Varughese, Secretary*

# WELCOME!!!



OUR NEW VICAR REV. AJITH K THOMAS, BINU AJITH KOCHAMMA, AND THEIR LOVELY DAUGHTERS ANINA MARY AJITH AND ANUGRAHA MARY AJITH.



MR. CHACKO VARCHESE (VIJU)



Thy so loved us, came to save us,  
Not as a King and proud, but as human so humble.

By sermons and miracles, Thy reached our hearts,  
Still we are deaf, to sin we acted blind.

Accused and tortured, Thy was crucified,  
Without vengeance, you suffered and died.

Washed our sins, clean from stain,  
Won the death, rose to heaven.

Not worthy enough, to boast your victory,  
Nor fit to talk, your divine ministry.

Thy still love us, We felt as we exist,  
praying with thief, not us to forget.

Living or dead, will wait for your Arrival,  
Covenant of yours, our only retrieval.

HUMAN ASPIRATION...

## WHEN OUR WORLD HAS TURNED TO CELEBRATIONS THAT ARE TAKEN OVER BY EGGS AND RABBITS, WE TEND TO FORGET THE TRUE MEANING OF RESURRECTION!



*Mrs. Sunitha Varughese*

Eggs and rabbits for Easter? How did that come about? Pagan philosophies had great interest in new life, in renewed life and fertility, visible in and symbolized by the fertility and life of nature and the seasons. They used symbols such as eggs and rabbits to represent that new life. This interest in new life was recognized by early Christians as something God had given them that might help pagans understand the concept of new life offered through the gospel. Easter is a time of hope, of new life, and of new beginnings. Jesus, the savior of the world came, so that we who believe can have eternal life. Scripture says, He died for everyone so that those who receive his new life will no longer live for themselves. Instead they will live for Christ who died and was raised for them, the life that started with him and goes on till eternity. The minute you believe in Jesus and ask him to be your personal savior, you are born again. Now the question is what do we do with this new life? Or why is it that we say we have a new life, but we behave the same as we behaved before we were saved?

Just like God is trinitarian- God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, we have the body, soul and spirit. When we believe in Jesus Christ something amazing happens and our spirit becomes one with the Holy Spirit. But our body and soul need to be conditioned to our new life.

For example, speaking in medical terms- when a patient has a procedure called amputation of his leg, due to any condition like severe diabetes, even after a few days after the surgery, the patient will feel pain in his leg as though the leg is still attached to his body. It is called Phantom limb sensation. Women who have had hysterectomy( removal of uterus ) also get abdominal cramps as though their uterus was still in their abdomen, which is called Phantom uterine contractions. This is because it takes a while for our body to learn that a particular body part is missing. Just like that if we are a new creation, our spirit is new but we have to condition our body and soul to the new life . We basically have to teach ourselves who we are in Christ. That is possible only through the Bible. We have to first understand who God says we are in Christ. The Bible says "But— When God our Savior revealed his kindness and love, he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit. He generously poured out the Spirit upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior." Titus 3:4-6 "But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much, that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God's grace that you have been saved!)" Ephesians 2:4-5

As Paul says in Colossians 3, since we have a new life we have to set our minds on the realities of heaven, put on our new nature and be renewed as we learn to know our creator and become like him. In Ephesians 4, Paul reminds us to throw off our old sinful nature which is corrupted by lust and deception. We need to let our Spirit renew our thoughts. We have to clothe ourselves with compassion and mercy, reminding ourselves constantly not to bring sorrow to God's Holy Spirit. Since we have a new life now we need to live in such a way that we are called to be his very own people. Live a life and let our conversations be seasoned with salt as Apostle Paul calls it. Each day of our new life is a celebration! We are citizens of a new kingdom- the kingdom of God. He is our king. When we live in this world, we should set our minds on the things of heaven. We should train our thoughts to not get entangled in the worldly things, and not get easily frustrated by hurtful words. Learn to live our life for our King, celebrating each day because each day is a gift from him. We are saved by grace through faith. Forget the past and move on. Look ahead and follow your heart. Don't look back, keep your eyes on the reward in heaven. Move on with your life, your new life in Jesus Christ, the most precious life he died to give you. He purchased it with his own blood, that is a lot to pay for.

# BIRTHDAYS

## APRIL

4/2	George K. Thomas
4/3	Saramma Shaji
4/3	Simi Varghese
4/3	Hannah Edwin
4/6	Carol Maria Pius
4/7	Reba Abraham
4/9	Mathew Cherian
4/9	Thomas Panamootil Jacob
4/10	Thomson Scaria
4/12	Ashwin Kurian Mathews
4/22	Bindu Edwin
4/22	Jeremiah Aby Thomas
4/25	Manaloor Eapen Abraham
4/25	Kaithackal Varghese Varghese
4/25	Norah Anna Thomas
4/27	Thankamma Abraham
4/29	Nathan Varughese

## JUNE

6/1	Sheeba Joseph
6/1	Sunitha Mathew
6/2	Jonah Charls Thomas
6/18	Achsah Ann John
6/24	Solomon Varughese Abraham
6/26	Sarah Maria Binu
6/27	Sneha Thomas
6/28	Robin Abraham

## MAY

5/3	Sherin Rajumon
5/4	Anil Sam
5/6	Saumya Kuriakose
5/7	Gracy Rajumon
5/7	Sona Susan Mathews
5/8	Annamma Thomas
5/14	Laly Mathew
5/17	Sarah Rejeesh
5/18	Samuel Kozhichira Rappai
5/18	Lilly Samuel
5/18	Scaria Nambumadathil Thomas
5/18	Siby Binu
5/18	Jacob John Binu
5/20	Annamma Scaria
5/20	Sheeba Eapen
5/23	Roy Mathews
5/24	Aleyamma Mathew
5/25	Abraham G. Kattunilathu
5/25	Rohan Eapen
5/27	Shaji Edwin
5/27	Nathan A. Sam
5/29	Ashely Abraham
5/30	Jolly Mathews

# WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

## APRIL

4/22	Mr. Robin Abraham & Mrs. Carol Maria Pius
4/28	Mr. Steephen Abraham & Mrs. Sajani Steephen

## MAY

5/3	Mr. Poovakulathu Jorge Abraham & Mrs. Mariamma Abraham
5/8	Mr. Binu Mathew Jacob & Mrs. Siby Binu
5/15	Mr. Bino Tom Varghese & Mrs. Jyothi Varghese
5/17	Mr. Anil Sam & Mrs. Simi Varghese
5/23	Mr. Jossy Mathai & Mrs. Jaya Mary Mathai
5/26	Mr. Cherry Thomas & Mrs. Elizabeth Cherry
5/31	Mr. John Varughese & Mrs. Sunitha Varughese
5/31	Mr. Samuel Kozhichira Rappai & Mrs. Lilly Samuel

## JUNE

6/3	Mr. Thomas Abraham & Mrs. Mariamma Thomas
6/6	Mr. Abraham Thomas & Mrs. Rachael John
6/12	Mr. Rajumon George & Mrs. Gracy Rajumon

# PARISH CALENDAR

April	
04/01/21 (Thu)	Maundy Thursday Service (Mal) 7:00 PM
04/02/21 (Fri)	Good Friday Service 9:00 AM
04/04/21 (Sun)	Easter Service 8.30 AM
04/10/21 (Sat)	Choir Festival
May	
05/09/21 (Sun)	Mother's Day
05/16/21 (Sun)	Sunday School Diocese Exam
05/23/21 (Sun)	Choir Sunday
June	
06/06/21 (Sun)	Graduation Sunday
06/23/21 (Wed)	VBS
06/24/21 (Thu)	VBS
06/25/21 (Fri)	VBS
06/26/21 (Sat)	VBS
06/27/21 (Sun)	VBS
06/20/21 (Sun)	Father's Day
July	
07/01/21 (Thu)	Diocesan Family Conference
07/02/21 (Fri)	Diocesan Family Conference
07/03/21 (Sat)	Diocesan Family Conference
07/04/21 (Sun)	Diocesan Family Conference
07/17/21 (Sat)	Church Picnic
07/25/21 (Sun)	Sunday School Fund Raising Event

# Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar Lectionary for Christian Year 2021 (with Additional passages for USA, Canada, & U.K.)

Month/Date	1 <sup>st</sup> Lesson	Epistle	Evening Reading
Hymn	2 <sup>nd</sup> Lesson	Gospel	Evening Reading

1 Saturday May Day (India & United Kingdom): Responsibilities and Duties

C.H. 347	Exo. 1:8-14		1 Tim. 6:1-10
	Jam. 5:1-6		St. Mat. 11:28-30

2 Sunday The Compassion which leads to the Experience of the Kingdom

C.H. 351 of God (4th Sunday after Easter) Metropolitan Fund

	Ezek. 34:15-24	2 Cor. 8:1-9	Eccl. 9:1-10
	Acts. 4:32-37	St. Mat. 25:31-40	Jam. 2:1-13

8 Saturday St. John the Apostle's Day

C.H. 354	Isa. 41:1-14	1 John. 5:1-12	
	Rev. 1:1-20	St. John. 19:25-27	

9 Sunday The Faith which sustains the risen

C.H. 359 (5th Sunday after Easter)

	2 King. 4:8-17	2 Cor. 5:1-10	
	1 Cor. 15:12-19	St. John. 20:11-18	

9 Sunday Mothers' Day

	2 Kings. 4. 8-19	1 Cor. 13:1-7	Luke 1:46-48
	Eph. 6: 1-4	John 19:25-27	

13 Thursday Ascension of our Lord - *Suloko*

C.H. 161	2 King. 2:1-16	Acts. 1:1-11	
	Eph. 4:1-16	St. Luke. 24:36-53	

16 Sunday The Conscious Waiting for Holy Spirit

C.H. 189	Ezek. 37:1-14	Gal. 5:22-26	Num. 11:16-17
	Acts. 1:12-14	St. John. 14:15-21	1 Cor. 12:1-11

23 Sunday The Feast of Pentacost: "The Holy Spirit who Renews

C.H. 192 Everything" 50th Day after Easter - DSMC Sunday

	Joel. 2:28-32	Rom. 8:12-17	Ezek. 36:25-30
	Acts. 2:1-13	St. John. 16:1-15	1 Cor. 2:10-16

30 Sunday Trinity Sunday: "We Believe in Holy Trinity"

C.H. 16 (1st Sunday after Pentecost)

	Exo. 19:17-25	2 Cor. 13:11-14	Isa. 44:1-8
	Gal. 4:1-7	St. John. 1:1-18	1 John. 2:18-25

31 Memorial Day (USA)

	Joshua. 4. 1-9	Colossians . 1. 1 – 14	
	Rev. 20.1-15	Luke. 15.1-7	

MAY

# Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar Lectionary for Christian Year 2021 (with Additional passages for USA, Canada, & U.K.)

Month/Date Hymn	1 <sup>st</sup> Lesson 2 <sup>nd</sup> Lesson	Epistle Gospel	Evening Reading Evening Reading
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6 Sunday Student Sunday: "Growing in Grace and Wisdom"

C.H. 263 (Clergy Sunday Offertory) 2nd Sunday after Pentecost

1 King. 3:4-15

Jam. 1:5-8

Prov. 3:15-26

Col. 1:3-14

St. Luke 2:41-52

Rom. 11:25-36

13 Sunday Environment Sunday: Creation Praising the Glory of God

C.H. 432 (3rd Sunday after Pentecost)

Job. 38:1-41

Col. 1:15-20

Ps. 104

Rev. 21:1-8

St. Mat. 6:25-30

Eph. 1:3-12

16 Wednesday Beginning of the Fast of the Apostles:

C.H. 224 Calling and Selection of Disciples

Jer. 1:1-12

1 Cor. 12:27-31

Heb. 10:32-39

St. Luke. 6:12-17

20 Sunday Worship in Spirit and Truth (4th Sunday after Pentecost)

C.H. 229 Isa. 6:1-8

2 Thess. 2:13-17

Exo. 32:7-14

1 John. 5:1-12

St. John. 4:13-26

Rev. 14:1-7

20 Sunday Fathers' Day

Deut. 6: 4-12

Eph. 6. 1-4 2

Cor. 4: 1 – 12

Luke 15. 17 - 32

27 Sunday The Cost of Discipleship (5th Sunday after Pentecost)

C.H. 231 Dan. 6:10-23

Titus. 2:1-10

Isa. 56:1-8

Col. 3:12-17

St. John. 10:11-18

2 Cor. 11:23-33

29 Tuesday End of the Fast of the Apostles - St. Peter's and St. Paul's Day

C.H. 235 Josh. 1:1-9

Gal. 2:1-10

JUNE

# Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar Lectionary for Christian Year 2021 (with Additional passages for USA, Canada, & U.K.)

Month/Date Hymn	1 <sup>st</sup> Lesson 2 <sup>nd</sup> Lesson	Epistle Gospel	Evening Reading Evening Reading
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## 1 Thursday Canada Day

Ex. 23. 1-9	Gal. 5. 1- 6
Acts. 15. 1-11	Luke. 6. 20 – 26

## 3 Saturday St. Thomas the Apostle's Day

C.H. 238	Isa. 52:7-15	2 Tim. 3:10-17
	1 Thes. 1:2-9	St. John. 20:24-29

## 4 Sunday Christian Stewardship - Tithe Offering

### C.H. 245 (6th Sunday after Pentecost)

1 Chro. 29:1-9	Phi. 4:10-20	Mal. 3:6-10
Acts. 5:1-11	St. Luke. 19:11-26	1 Tim. 6:17-22

## 4 Sunday Independence Day (USA)

Ex. 23. 1-9	Gal. 5. 1- 6
Acts. 15. 1-11	Luke. 6. 20 – 26

## 11 Sunday Priests: Called to be Imitators of Christ

### C.H. 255 (7th Sunday after Pentecost)

Mal 1:6-14	Gal. 6:11-18	Lev. 8:1-15
2 Tim. 2:1-13	St. John. 21:15-19	1 Cor. 9:23-27

## 18 Sunday God's People to be prepared for Witness

### C.H. 312 (8th Sunday after Pentecost)

Deut. 6:1-12	Rom. 13:11-14	Zep. 3:17-20
Eph. 5:1-21	St. Mat. 5:13-16	2 John. 1-13

## 25 Sunday The Gift of the Holy Spirit - Given for Common Wellbeing

### C.H. 300 (9th Sunday after Pentecost) St. James the Apostle's Day

Exo. 36:1-7	1 Cor. 12:1-11	Hag 2:1-7
Eph. 4:7-13	St. John. 20:19-23	Acts. 13:1-12

## 25 Sunday Parents' Day

Pro. 23. 1-22	Ephesians 6:1-5
1 Tim. 5. 1-8	Mark 7:1-13

JULY

# FROM THE TRUSTEES...

Dear Brothers and sisters In Christ

We take this opportunity to thank the God Almighty for his abundant blessings and mercies He has showered upon St John's Mar Thoma Church, Michigan over the years. Even amongst the continued pandemic times, we are blessed to have the tremendous support of our dear members who continue to help us meet the commitments of our church and has been able to be without deficit for this year. Our latest initiative for the growth of our church was to add a building fund based on special collection scheduled for parish day and wedding anniversary offertory. We would like to thank all our members who committed our needs during our latest search for a permanent home. It was encouraging to see that we were able to meet the offer with the promissory commitments.

We set up an online money transfer option last year for the convenience of our members in addition to the traditional contribution methods. Our members continue to utilize the option to provide the financial support we need even when we cannot meet in person. We encourage all our members to continue to avail the online option for all contributions especially when you are unable to attend the Service on a particular Sunday. Please add a note during the contributions to indicate what it is for. The Zelle/Chase Pay ID for the church is [TREAS@STJMTC.ORG](mailto:TREAS@STJMTC.ORG).

We thank every one of you for your continued support as we get into our summer months of the year. We pray that our Lord keeps us all safe during these trying times and continue to lead us in glorifying His Kingdom.

Please feel free to contact one of us if you need assistance.

Nirmal Mathews Ph:586-662-5247

Anil Sam Ph:586-601-4075