



St. James Marthoma Church Newsletter December 2023

Vicar's Message

IN THIS ISSUE

Beloved St. James Family Members,

"The celebration of Advent is possible only to those who are troubled in soul, who know themselves to be poor and imperfect, and who look forward to something greater to come." Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ who was born as the Light to the world in darkness. All denominations including the MarThoma Church, which follows the Eastern tradition, observe the Christmas season as the 25 Days of Lent period. It is a great time for renewal, rededication, and sanctification of our inner being to receive Jesus Christ. The note of advent is preparedness, not preparation for celebrating Christmas. Celebrating Advent typically involves a season of prayer, fasting, and repentance, followed by anticipation, hope, and joy. The word "Advent" is derived from the Latin word "adventus," meaning "coming," which translates to the Greek word "Parousia." But the "coming" they had in mind was not Christ's first coming in the manger in Bethlehem, but his second coming in the clouds as the judge of the world. The Advent season was not explicitly linked to Christ's first coming at Christmas until the Middle Ages. The promise for Israel and the church is Jesus Christ; The Lord has come to earth and will arrive again. This is the essence of Advent. The season of Advent in the Christian calendar anticipates the "coming of Christ" from three different perspectives: the physical nativity in Bethlehem, the reception of Christ in the heart of the believer, and the eschatological Second Coming.

The First Sunday of December is the Bible Sunday. Decorative blue and white ceramic tiles commonly found in Dutch households were originally made in the city of Delft. They often depict familiar scenes of the Netherlands. Charles Dickens wrote in his book "A Christmas Carol" how these tiles were used to illustrate the Scriptures. He described an old fireplace built by a Dutchman paved with these quaint Delft tiles: "There were Cains and Abels, Pharaohs' daughters, Queens of Sheba, ... and Apostles putting off to sea." Many households used these tiles as a teaching tool as the family gathered around the warmth of a fire and shared the stories of the Bible. They learned about God's character—His justice, compassion, and mercy. The truths of the Bible continue to be relevant today. Psalm 78 encourages us to teach the "hidden lessons from our past—stories we've heard and known, stories our ancestors handed down to us" (vv. 2–3). It goes on to instruct us to "tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power, and the wonders he has done" and "they in turn [can] tell their children" (vv. 4, 6). With God's help, we can find creative and effective ways to illustrate the truths of Scripture to each generation as we strive to give God the full honor and praise, He deserves.

We are also celebrating our Parish Day on December first Sunday of every year. We will celebrate our 33rd Parish Day on Sunday, December 3, 2023. For many people, parish is something close to their heart, a pattern of their daily life and it nourishes their soul. For us parish life centers around the celebration of the sacraments and the proclamation of the Word of God. Our parish life is enriched when everyone participates meaningfully in spiritual gatherings and organizational activities at different levels. Each person's love and interest in the parish is revealed in their devotion and loyalty to the Mother Church. Otherwise, it will be a mere social gathering and entertainment with certain assigned duties. Our active participation should contribute to the growth of the parish and our happiness. Wishing you and yours a merry Christmas and prosperity in the New Year 2024.

God Bless You All

Ajith Varghese Achen.

Church executive committee 2023

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	DATE	WORSHIP SERVICES: December, 2023	TIME
Sun	Dec 03	Holy communion service in English and Parish Day	10:15 AM
Sun	Dec 10	Holy communion service in Malayalam	10:15 AM
Sun	Dec 17	Holy communion service in English	10:15 AM
Sun	Dec 24	Holy communion service in Malayalam	10:15 AM

Mon	Dec 25	Holy communion service in English	08:30 AM
Sun	Dec 31	Divine worship service in Malayalam (Morning)	10:15 AM
Sun	Dec 31	Holy communion service in English (Evening)	10:00 PM

LECTIONARY- December - 2023					
Day	Date	Lesson: 1	Lesson: 2	Epistles	Gospels
Sun	Dec 03	Meeting of Virgin Mary and Elizabeth: The meeting that shares The Good news of salvation; Bible Sunday			
		Gen 33:1-15	2Cor 1:3-10	Rom 15:5-9	Luke 1:39-45
Sun	Dec 10	Birth of John the Baptist; John the Baptist: Greatest among those born of Women			
		Mal 3:1-4	Acts 13:17-26	1Cor 4:1-6	Luke 1:57-66
Sun	Dec 17	Annunciation to Joseph; Joseph: A Man of Higher Justice			
		Zeph 3:14-20	1Cor 13:1-13	Rom 14:13-19	Matt 1:18-23
Sun	Dec 24	Coming of the Saviour			
		Isa 11:1-9	1John 4:7-16	Acts 3:19-26	John 1:14-18
Sun	Dec 25	Birth of Our Saviour-Good News to all; End of Twenty five Days Lent			
		Mic 5:1-9	Phil 2:5-11	Gal 4:1-7	Luke 2:1-14
Sun	Dec 31	With Christ in to the New Year;			
		Deut 8:1-20	2Cor 9:10-15	1Thess 5:1-11	Luke 13:6-9



Birthday –December

Dates	Name	Town
Dec 01	Steven Tom	Congers, NY
Dec 16	Bindu Abraham	Nanuet, NY
Dec 17	Joel George Thomas	Spring Valley, NY
Dec 17	Jessy Cherian	Orangeburg
Dec 18	John Navaratnam	Orangeburg
Dec 20	Zachariah Abraham	Kerala, India
Dec 21	Stacy Sara Jacob	Nanuet, NY
Dec 23	Diya Varghese	Congers, NY
Dec 23	Christian Mathew Jose	Bardonia
Dec 27	Vincent Abraham	Bergenfield, NJ
Dec 30	Jisha Jacob	Tappan, NY



Wedding Anniversary – December

Date	Name	Town
Dec 01	Aleykutty & Eappen M.S.	Palisades, NY
Dec 08	Bindu & Linu Abraham	Nanuet, NY
Dec 27	Siji & Shaju Pappan	Spring valley, NY
Dec 31	Alice & Rajan Mathew	Nanuet, NY
Dec 31	Shiny & Shoji Kunjuchen	New City, NY

Upcoming Events - 2023

December 3 rd Sunday	Parish day.
December	House caroling – December 8,9,15,16 &17
December 24 th Sunday	Church Christmas carol service in the evening.
December 25 th Monday	Christmas day service – Holy communion in English at 8:30 AM.
December 31 st Sunday	Watch night service – Holy communion service in English at 10:00PM



**Christmas carol service on
December 24th Sunday at 6:00PM.
Christmas day service at 8:30AM on
December 25th Monday.**

Prayer Meetings.

Every alternate Friday's at 10:30 AM fasting prayer meeting via zoom.

St. James Marthoma Church
Newsletter
December 2023

42 Fourth Street
Hillburn, NY 10901

Isaiah:9:6

For to us a child is
born, to us a son is
given, and the
government will be
on his shoulders. And
he will be called
Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God,
Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace.