

MAR THOMA CHURCH OF SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA



NEWSLETTER - JANUARY 2015

www.marthomasf.org

FROM THE VICAR'S DESK

Dearly beloved in Christ,

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

I want to wish you all a Happy New Year 2015. God's grace alone allowed us to see another year in our lives. In the month of January the church observes *Epiphany*. Epiphany means shining forth or manifestation, which means the shining forth and manifestation of God. Epiphany emphasizes on the present day celebration in the appearance of Jesus as the human Messiah of Israel and the divine Son of God, One of the Holy Trinity with the Father and the Holy Spirit. God's glory was revealed to us through his son's birth, now it's our time to witness God's glory in this world. Scripture reminds us that, "In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being." (Heb.1:2). In the book of Isaiah we read, "Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you." (Isa.60:1). After Christmas when the angels' song became quiet, the star disappeared, shepherds went back to their jobs, the real work has begun. How are we witnessing Christ in this world? Christians must witness in this world by sharing God's message of salvation, love, and mercy. On a different note, I thank all the parish members for their participation and involvement in the Christmas House to House carol singing and Christmas carol service at Church and participation in the midnight watch night Holy Communion. Many of you shared your testimonies which was inspiring and challenging in our faith journey. May God bless you all.

With love and prayers,
Yours in Christ,
Rev. Biju Simon Achen

Worship Schedule

Jan 4	- Holy Communion Service in Malayalam (10:00 am)
Jan 11	- Holy Communion Service in Malayalam (10:00 am)
Jan 18	- Holy Communion Service in English (10:00 am)
Jan 25	- Holy Communion Service in English (10:00 am)

Ministry Meetings Schedule

All Sundays	- Sunday School (9:00am) - Weekly Bible Study (9:15am)
Jan 3	- Edavaka Mission Fasting Prayer Meeting (10:30am) - Sevika Sangham Meeting (2:00pm)
Jan 11	- Choir Fellowship Meeting (After Church) - Yuvajana Sakhyam Meeting (After Church)
Jan 17	- MTVEA Mens Bible Study (8:00am) - Sacramento Area Prayer Meeting (4:00pm) - Central Valley Area Prayer Meeting (7:00pm)
Jan 25	- Fremont Area Prayer Meeting (6:00pm)
Jan 30	- San Ramon Area Prayer Meeting (8:00pm)
Jan 31	- San Francisco Area Prayer Meeting (6:00pm)

Significant Liturgical Dates

Jan 1	Circumcision of Our Lord
Jan 6	Danaha (Baptism of Jesus / Epiphany)
Jan 8	St Stephens Day

Sunday Service Assisting & Cleaning Schedule

Jan 4	Fremont / San Francisco
Jan 11	San Ramon
Jan 18	Central Valley / Sacramento
Jan 25	San Jose

LECTIONARY

Date	Gospel	Epistle	1st Lesson	2nd Lesson
Jan 4	Luke 4:16-21	Acts 27:18-26	Isa 61:1-11	Rev 5:1-10
Jan 11	Math 7:15-23	Gal 5:16-24	Prov 20:1-11	Rom 6:12-21
Jan 18	John 10:7-18	Eph 4:1-10	Num 11:23-30	1 John 3:1-11
Jan 25	Math 6:1-9	Jam 5:13-18	Gen 18:19-33	1 Pet 4:7-15

Birthdays

1 Juby Kuriakose	13 Leela Mathew	22 Silpa Kuruvilla
3 Kalpana Jacob	14 Ivana John	22 Anoop Johnson
4 Mathew Simon	14 Samuel John	22 Priju Thomas
6 Aaron Simon	16 Anila Thomas	23 Renji Puthenpurukal
6 Deepak Cherian	17 Eban Shabu	23 Mammen Thomas
8 Vinsu Thomas	17 Jeremiah Kenny	23 Dr. P.T. Mammen
8 Shany Thomas	18 Anne George	24 Aiden George
8 Reuben John	19 Joel Mathew	26 Binoj Isaac
9 Taji Abraham	19 Jacob Philip	28 Aparajita Bhatnagar
9 George Thomas	19 Nikhil George	29 Kenny Mathews
10 Usha Johnson	19 Rintu Sajan	29 Amy Kurian
11 Elizabeth Joseph	20 Babu Ipe	30 Cissy Abraham
11 Joel Johnson	20 Rekha George	31 Sony Jacob
13 Sabu George	22 Shawn Mathew	31 Libin Kurian

Wedding Anniversaries

1	Boby Alex & Elizabeth Varghese
1	P.T Thomas & Rosamma Thomas
2	John Samuel & Dolly Samuel
2	Biju Abraham & Suju Abraham
2	Roby Thomas & Sajini Thomas
4	Mathew P. Samuel & Susan Mathew
8	George Abraham & Julie Abraham
9	Rev: Biju P Simon & Mereen Zachariah
9	George David & Smitha David
9	Rajiv Kochumman & Tina Mathew
11	Prasad Kuruvilla & Anila Thomas
11	Reuben S. John & Sheena Palachuvatil
12	Biju Varughese & Rekha George
16	Varghese Chandy & Sheila Chandy
24	Bincy Skaria & Bindhu Skaria
26	Raji Abraham & Ann Thomas
26	Thomas Geevarghese & Aleyamma Thomas
27	Mathew George & Priya Mathew
31	Philip Roy & Thankam Roy



**WISHING YOU ALL A
HAPPY NEW YEAR!**



SECRETARY'S NOTE

Dear Beloved in Christ,

"Year's end is neither an end nor a beginning but a going on, with all the wisdom that experience can instill in us". As we begin a new year, let us pray to God to enable us to live fully in the present as we gain wisdom from the past and face the future with courage and walk boldly in a new year. Let's seek to make 2015 the best year of our lives and use it for the glory of God! Wishing you a very Happy and blessed New Year.

We conducted Christmas Carol service last month. It was wonderful to see our Choir and Sunday School Children come together singing carols. I would like to thank Ajit Zachariah for his leadership and the Sunday school teachers for doing an excellent job organizing such a wonderful event. I also would like to thank Satish Abraham and Babu Iype for coordinating the house-to-house carol rounds. A special thanks goes to Pushpa Cherian and the Sevika Sangham members for arranging the cakes for Christmas and New Year.

As per our General Body decision and approval from Diocesan Bishop, Mar Thoma Congregation of Silicon Valley is starting their activities this new year. I would like to congratulate them and offer our support and prayers as a sister congregation. I would also like to thank the families who are leaving our church to join the new congregation, for their contributions and leadership for the development of our church.

I would like to thank our 2014 trustees Deepak Cherian and Biju Abraham for doing an excellent job in managing the financial matters of this church. Let me take this opportunity to congratulate the new Trustees – Sujit Isaac and Kurian Idiculla and wish them all success in the new year.

Thank you for your support and participation to all church and organization activities. Once again wishing you all a Wonderful and Blessed New Year.

- Soney Jones, Secretary

Down

1. The family heads of Judah and ___ and the priests and Levites went to Jerusalem to build the house of the Lord.
2. The priests recorded in chapter-2 were the descendants of Aaron, namely Eleazar and ___.
4. When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, the priests with trumpets and the Levites with cymbals praise the Lord, as prescribed by ___.
5. Ezra was a priest and a ___. Neh.8:1-2
6. King Cyrus brought out the articles belonging to the temple of the Lord, which ___ had carried away and he gave it to Zerubabel. It was carefully preserved in Babylon till God's timing.

January Crossword—Ezra Ch 1-3

Across

3. Jeshua and his fellow priests and Zerubabel and his associates built the altar to sacrifice burnt offerings according to the law of ___.
7. In the second month of the ___ year after the Israelites arrival at Jerusalem, they began to rebuild the temple.
8. Food, drink, and oil were given to the people of Sidon and Tyre so that they would bring cedar logs by sea for rebuilding the temple as ___ by Cyrus king of Persia
10. How long was the Babylon captivity? Jer. 25:11
12. Zerubabel was the grandson of ___, who was taken as a captive to Babylon. He was the King of Judah. 1 Chron.3:17-19
13. Ezra was a descendant of ___, son of Aaron the Chief priest. Ezra 7:1-5
16. The first feast that the Israelites observed after their return from exile was the feast of ___.
17. Some of the priests couldn't prove they belonged to the lineage of Aaron, probably a man had married a daughter of ___ the Gileadite and was called by that name. David before his death charged Solomon to show kindness unto the children of him. 2 Sam. 17:27, 1Kin.2:7
18. " He is my shepherd and will accomplish all that I please." This prophecy regarding cyrus was given by ___, 175 years before he was born. Isa. 44:28
19. In the first year of Cyrus King of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the Lord spoken by ___, he issued the decree, which permitted the Jews to return and rebuild their temple at Jerusalem.

Down

9. Once the Israelites settled down in their towns in the seventh month, the people assembled as one man in ___.
11. Some of the priests who returned from the exile couldn't find their family record[1Chron. 24], so they were ordered not to eat any of the most sacred food(Lev.2:3,10) until there was a priest ministering with the Urim and ___.
14. The return from the exile occurred in three stages. ___ was the leader for the first group (536 B.C) and his team began to build the temple. Hag.2:21&23. Ezra arrived at Jerusalem in the second group (458B.C.)80 years after the first group.
15. In 539 B.C. Babylon fell to the invading armies of the Medes and Persians, led by Cyrus the great. Cyrus then placed his able general, ___ the Mede as king over the city of Babylon. Dan. 5:30

LIVING OUT LOVE



Embrace new beginnings and relationships. When we get hurt by words, circumstances or deeds, we shrink away from the world the Lord gave us to enjoy. We have a choice; to become bitter or better. People deal differently with pain. Often we try to save ourselves from hurt by shielding ourselves from relationships.

On the contrary, Jesus taught us to lay down our lives for our brothers (John 15:13).

We can do this by standing firm in our faith (1 Peter 5:9) remembering we are not alone and seeking help from God, who is gracious to answer our prayers.

Isaiah 61:7-8 promises a rich reward to those who persevere and rely on God.

Refrain from isolation, wear the armor of God to help you do His work and fight the evil forces. (Genesis 4:7; Ephesians 6:11)

— M&M

