



Mar Thoma Church Of San Francisco Bay Area

MTCSF Newsletter

April 2022

From the Vicar's Desk



My dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

Greetings in the name of the Holy Trinity! I am now wrapping up 4 years of ministry in this parish. Isaiah 55: 8-9 says: *“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.”* I believe that the ministry rendered here was part of God’s plan and purpose.

I joined the ministry of this parish in 2018. I cherish the great memories and experiences I have had over the years. Worship, sacraments, prayers, meetings, conferences, conversations, family/house visits, and campus visits were all important in this ministry, and I am thankful.

I was blessed through the ministry in this parish, even though it came with its challenges. The fellowship we experience brings us together as the body of Christ, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Whenever it came to anyone’s need, the youth, families and well-wishers of this parish stood together, shoulder to shoulder to help others in need. We have experienced joys and happiness together, but have also experienced sorrow and disappointments as a faith community.

I have a few thoughts considering the past four years, and bring this forward for your reflection:

- ***Lead a genuine Christian life as individuals, families, and as a faith community.***
The world cannot tolerate “untruth” or hypocrisy. Your life must be your witness. That was my emphasis during my sermons over the last 4 years. How are we presenting Jesus Christ to the world? The world is watching. Our children & youth are watching.

➤ ***Be connected to the wider Mar Thoma Church.***

Sometimes, amid the busyness of life, we tend to form 'islands.' Over the years, I am glad our churches in Northern California and also the Western Region were able to collaborate regularly whether it came to organizational meetings, prayer meetings, VBS, conferences, or even worship. Unity among the churches is vital for each church to grow. Being connected allows us to learn from each other, collaborate with each other, which leads to a deeper ecclesial identity formation. In return, we will have a greater sense of belonging as the body of Christ, and we will be able to further our ministry.

➤ ***Be loyal to Christ and the Mar Thoma Church.***

The holy church is the bride, and Christ is the groom. Many of us grew up in this church. Our church is growing and developing; have patience. We have challenges, but our church's history, heritage, tradition, and faith are unique. We have to learn to know more about the beauty of our spirituality, and learn to appreciate it. We need to own our church, its ministry, which includes the youth ministry and mission. But above all, remember that Christ is the foundation of our church. We cannot compromise the spiritual truths of scripture amid a world of compromises and conveniences.

➤ ***Have a deeper vision and concern about the future of the church.***

The Church is a family of families. We are a Diaspora faith community. We think about the here and now, but we forget that there is a future. *There is no point in being proud of the past and celebrating the present, if we don't have a future to look forward to.* Do not give up hope. Any prayer that is prayed, every tear that is shed through prayer will always be heard and seen by our Almighty God. We must have hope. Also, the ministry in this Diocese must grow. More youth need to answer God's call and commit themselves for the ordained ministry of the church. We already have 12 ordained clergy who are from the U.S., and 2 ordained clergy from the U.K.)

Maya Angelou once said:

“ People may forget what you said to them. People may forget what you did to them. But people will never forget how you made them feel.”

I am eternally grateful to all of you. I thank God for the privilege given to serve you all as your Vicar for the past 4 years. I want to thank H.G. the Mar Thoma Metropolitan, our Diocesan Bishop, and other fellow Achens who served alongside with me over the past four years. I also would like to thank the parish executive committees, prayer groups, organizations, and their respective committees over the years.

I also enjoyed the opportunity in communicating to you through the medium of this newsletter over the past 4 years.

God willing, on May 1st, I will be appointed as the new Vicar of the Austin Mar Thoma Church, Texas and the San Antonio Mar Thoma Congregation, Texas. I plan to leave from the San Francisco Bay Area by the last week of April.

I would like to thank you for your prayers and support during the past 4 years. Whenever you remember, please pause for a moment and remember me in prayers, and keep in touch. I also assure my prayers for you all.

God willing, Saji Thomas Achen (Mumbai) and family will be joining our parish ministry in May 2022. Do extend your prayers and support for Achen and family.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, I move forward from this ministry taking fresh, challenging, yet beautiful and profound memories. Though I do not consider this as a 'Farewell,' I would like to say: "God be with you till we meet again."

Let all glory, honor, and praise be given unto God the Father, Son, & the Holy Spirit, now and forever, AMEN.

Sincerely,

Dennis Achen (Vicar)

*...until we meet again,
may God hold you
in the palm of His hand*

Secretary's Note



Dearly Beloved in Christ,

“Wish you all a happy and blessed Easter”

April is an eventful month for our Parish. We are preparing to celebrate Holy week, our Vicar Rev. Dennis Abraham is leaving after Four years of service by the end of this month and getting ready to welcome our new Vicar Rev. Saji Thomas. Let's pray to God Almighty for his guidance and strength at this time.

We're entering another Holy week, but for many of us this Holy Week feels more real than ever before. Our world these past two years has certainly undergone pain and suffering. From the pain of illness and financial instability to the emotional pain of isolation and missing the sacraments, we have truly been given our own crosses to bear. Let us thank our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for the relief we are given from the Covid19 Pandemic. Let us celebrate and remember the Crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus which Jesus willingly went to the Cross. He did this to pay for our sins - the sins of Mankind. We see the passion Jesus lived and the passion Jesus that he died. We can share in Jesus' passion through our worship of him and in our proclamation of his gospel.

We are thankful to our dear Dennis Achen for your leadership and service in the past 4 years, you came in as our Vicar at a very difficult time. The service you have done for this Parish has truly been a blessing. I am praising God to be so blessed as to have a Shepherd who loves his flock this much. Thank you for being such a great example of living a life of faith. Thank you for all you have done to make our parish the encouraging and faith building place it is. We are thankful for your leadership with Youth that helped bring them together and helped them learn more about Christian life. You guided them in the path of church ministry because of how well you can relate to their generation.

As you move forward with Christ's ministry you will continue to be in our prayers and remember you always. You came and touched our Hearts, now you leave; it's hard to see. But wish you happy days ahead and a blessed ministry. On behalf of the Parish Executive committee, prayer groups, organizations and members of San Francisco Mar Thoma Church I wish you all success in your future journey.

Sincerely,
Philip Roy, Secretary

Worship Schedule

3-Apr	10:00 AM	Holy Qurbana (Malayalam) In-Person & via Zoom	Rev. Dennis Abraham
8-Apr	7:00 PM	<i>40th Friday (In-Person & via Zoom)</i> <i>Holy Qurbana (Malayalam)</i>	<i>Rev. Dennis Abraham</i> <i>Rev. M.P. Yohannan</i>
10-Apr	10:00 AM	Holy Qurbana (Malayalam) Palm Sunday (In-Person & via Zoom)	Rev. Dennis Abraham
11-Apr	7:30PM	<i>Sandhya Namaskaram (ZOOM only)</i>	<i>Rev. Dennis Abraham</i> <i>Rev. M.P. Yohannan</i>
12-Apr	7:30PM	Sandhya Namaskaram(ZOOM only)	Rev. Dennis Abraham Rev. M.P. Yohannan
13-Apr	7:30PM	<i>Sandhya Namaskaram (ZOOM only)</i>	<i>Rev. M.P. Yohannan</i>
14-Apr	7:00PM	Maundy Thursday Holy Qurbana (Malayalam)	Rev. Dennis Abraham
15-Apr	10:00AM	<i>Good Friday (Parts 1 & 2 Malayalam, Part 3 English)</i>	<i>Rev. Dennis Abraham</i>
17-Apr	7:00 AM	Holy Qurbana (English) In-Person & via Zoom Feast of Resurrection (Easter)	Rev. M.P. Yohannan Rev. Dennis Abraham
24-Apr	10:00 AM	<i>Holy Qurbana (English) & Farewell</i>	<i>Rev. Dennis Abraham</i>

Area Prayer Groups / Organizations Meetings Events (via Zoom)

Friday, April 1, 8PM	Tri-Valley Area Prayer Group Meeting
<i>Saturday, April 2, 10:00AM</i>	<i>Edavaka Mission Fasting Prayer meeting</i>
Saturday, April 2, 6PM	Fremont Area prayer meeting
<i>Monday, April 4, 5:30PM</i>	<i>Diocesan Edavaka Mission prayer meeting</i>
Thursday, April 7, 8PM	Western Regional Sevika Sanghom Meeting
<i>Saturday, April 9, 11AM</i>	<i>Choir fellowship</i>
Saturday, April 9, 5PM	Central Valley prayer group meeting
<i>Saturday, April 16, 11AM</i>	<i>Sevika Sanghom Meeting</i>
Saturday, April 16, 4PM	Yuvajana Sakhyam Meeting
<i>Saturday, April 16, 7PM</i>	<i>South Bay Area prayer meeting</i>
Saturday, April 23, 7PM	San Francisco Area prayer meeting

Recurring Events

Every Sunday, 9:15AM	Edavaka Mission Bible Study
<i>Every Tuesday, 9PM</i>	<i>Youth Fellowship Prayer call</i>
Every Wednesday, 7:30PM	Western Regional Edavaka Mission
<i>Every 1st Thursday, 8PM</i>	<i>Western Regional Sevika Sanghom</i>
Every 4 th Sunday, 4PM	Senior Fellowship

Liturgical Church Calendar

8-Apr	Fortieth (40th) Friday	15-Apr	Good Friday
10-Apr	<i>Palm Sunday</i>	16-Apr	<i>Holy Saturday</i>
14-Apr	Maundy Thursday	17-Apr	Feast of Resurrection (Easter)
		24-Apr	<i>New Sunday</i>

happy birthday!

Ashwathy Issac (1)	Roji Roy (8)	Rohan Kuruvilla (15)	Deepak Parashar (23)
<i>Sindhu Mathew (1)</i>	<i>Hannah Abraham (9)</i>	<i>Evan Alex (16)</i>	<i>David Cherian (24)</i>
Sheryl Cherian (2)	Justis George (9)	Diana Sam (17)	Joshua Cherian (24)
<i>Jerril Jacob (2)</i>	<i>Ann Philip (9)</i>	<i>Philip Mathew (18)</i>	<i>Joel George (24)</i>
Sapna Cherian (3)	Matthew Tharakan (9)	Vivek Cherian (19)	Zachariah Jacob (24)
<i>Hanah Edwin (3)</i>	<i>Pothen Joseph (10)</i>	<i>Nyla Mathew (19)</i>	<i>Devin Thomas (24)</i>
Anil Jacob (3)	Andrew Kurian (11)	Bejoy Oomman (19)	Rachel George (25)
<i>Neil Johnson (3)</i>	<i>Chacko Samuel (11)</i>	<i>Rachel Varghese (20)</i>	<i>Jijoe Vurghese (25)</i>
Jose Mathai (3)	Philip Thomas (11)	Marykutty John (21)	Ryan Abraham (26)
<i>Dinil Joy (4)</i>	<i>Mathews George (12)</i>	<i>Siju Oonnunny (21)</i>	<i>Susan George (26)</i>

Lisha Paul (5)	Meena George (12)	Nisha Roy (21)	James Thomas (27)
<i>Anjali Abraham (6)</i>	<i>Mathai Mathews (12)</i>	<i>Raymond Roy (21)</i>	<i>Rebecca Abraham (28)</i>
Nathan George (6)	Sujit Isaac (13)	Jacob Varghis (21)	Naveen George (28)
<i>Jessica Samuel (6)</i>	<i>Rebecca Abraham (14)</i>	<i>Sareena Cherian (22)</i>	<i>Roy Philip (28)</i>
Boby Alex (7)	Anu George (14)	Rachel Eapen (22)	Jaison Thomas (28)
<i>Regan Abraham (8)</i>	<i>Manish George (14)</i>	<i>Bindu Edwin (22)</i>	<i>Johnson Mathews (29)</i>
Mathew Jacob (8)	Valsa Isaac (14)	Rachel Jacob (23)	Sagith George (30)
<i>Chacko Kuruvilla (8)</i>	<i>Julia John (14)</i>	<i>Annie Jobny (23)</i>	<i>Rency Roy (30)</i>

Happy Anniversary

Anju & Soby Oommen (9)

Sally & Babu Philip (21)

Ancy & Jijo John (9)

Renu & George Konapozhil (23)

Sajan & Annie Thariyan Jacob (10)

Anu & Achen Kunju Samuel (25)

Kenny & Susan Mathews (16)

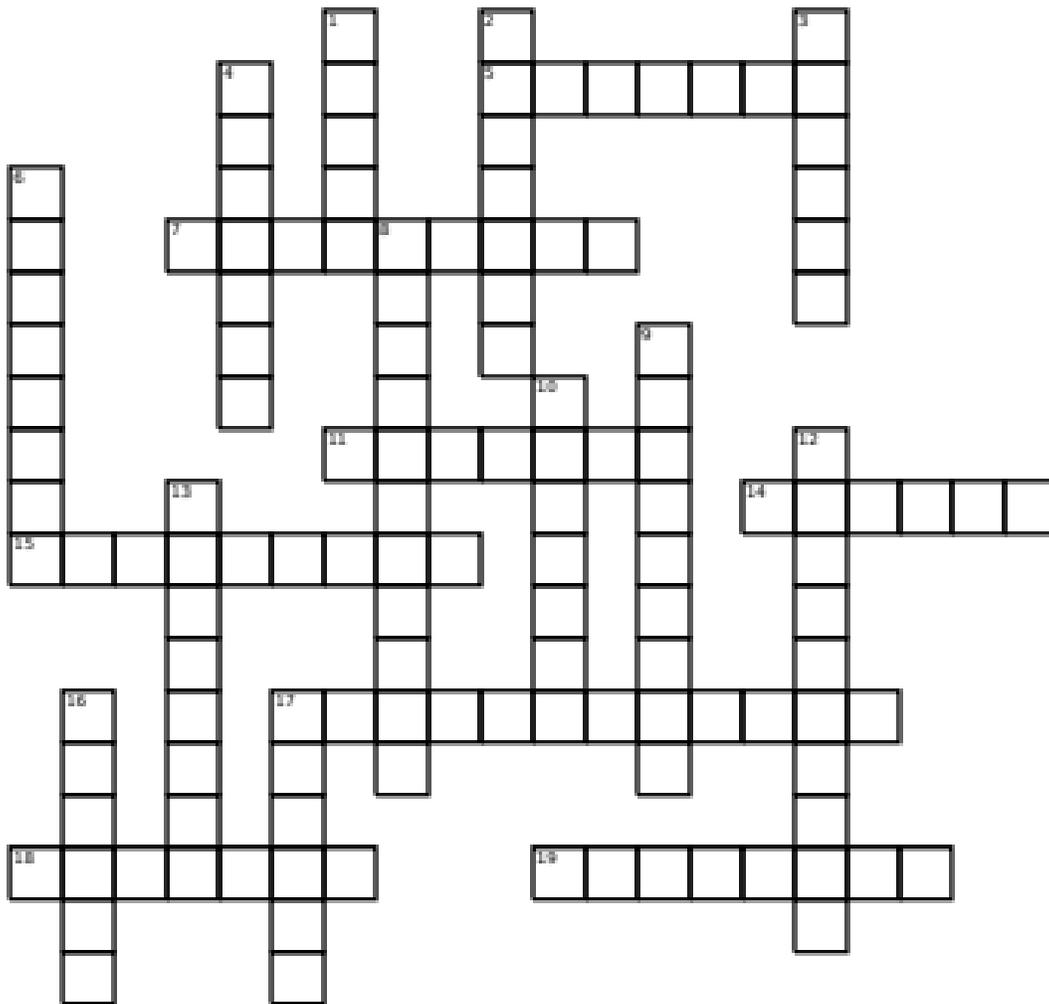
Juli & Santhosh Tharakan (26)

Christine & Viji Thomas (18)

Sally & Kochumon Idiculla (28)

Crossword

Hosea 4-6



Across

5. Israelites are stubborn like a stubborn heifer. They would not submit to the yoke of the Law of God, How then can the Lord ___ them like lambs (little or no self-defense, exposed to dangers) in a meadow?

7. Israel's arrogance testifies against them, they stumble in their sin. When they seek the Lord they will not find Him, He has ___ himself from them

11. Like People, like ___.

14. Priests and royal houses have been a snare at ___, a net spread out on Tabor. [There are few interpretations of how they were a snare(idols) at these places]. Jud. 19 -21; 1Sam. 7:3-12

15. God desires mercy, not ___.

17. Israelites sacrificed on the ___, and burned offerings on the hills under oak, where the shade is pleasant. They worshiped at their convenience!

18. Israelites encouraged each other to ___ to the Lord so that he could restore them.

19. Because Israelites have rejected the law of God, He will ignore their ___.

Down

1. Leaders of ___ are like those who move their boundary stones(physical & spiritual boundaries). Benjamin was bordered by the territory of Ephraim(Northern Kingdom) and Judah. Judah annexed some of the Benjaminite territories after the fall of the Northern Kingdom

2. ___ was the last tribe of the Northern Kingdom to be captured by their enemy and that one also abandoned her shepherd for idols. In 722 BC they also got completely destroyed.

3. ___ means house of God; Beth Aven means house of wickedness. Amos 5:5 These places had become places of idolatry in Israel since the time of Jeroboam. Jos.7:2

4. Jeroboam appointed priests from all sorts of people even though they were not ___. 1Ki.12:31;13:33

6. "You stumble day and night and the ___ stumble with you."

8. Israelites exchanged their glorious God for something ___.

9. Hosea was the last prophet to the Northern Kingdom(Israel). During his ministry, the Northern kingdom was completely captured by ___.

10. Ephraim and Judah sought the help of ___ (instead of God), but he was not able to help them. 2Kings15:19-20;16:5-9

12. In despair, God asked Ephraim and Judah what can He do with them because their love toward him is short-lived like the early dew that ___

13. Sounding the ___ in cities announced the coming of an invader.

16. ___ is a territory in Benjamin; Ramah is a territory in Ephraim.

17. The Lord brought charges against Israelites for breaking His commandments and because of this the land ___ and all who live in it were wasted away.