

**Bethel Mar Thoma Church  
Philadelphia**



JESUS IS *Alive!*

Forever may You be  
HONORED, GLORIFIED,  
and EXALTED!

*Be exalted, O God, above the heavens;  
let Your glory be over all the earth.*

PSALM 108:5 (NIV)



**BETHEL MAR THOMA CHURCH  
532 LEVICK STREET  
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19111**

*He is Risen*

**2020  
MARCH & APRIL  
BULLETIN**

<i>Diocesan Bishop</i>	Rt. Rev. Dr. Issac Mar Pheloxenos Episcopa Sinai Mar Thoma Center 2320 S. Merrick Avenue Merrick, NY 11566 Tel: (516) 377-3311	
<i>Vicar</i>	Rev. Saju Chacko 6329 Palmetto Street Philadelphia, PA 19111 Tel: (215) 725-9774, (215) 480-3752 Email: <a href="mailto:revsajuchacko@gmail.com">revsajuchacko@gmail.com</a>	
<i>Youth Chaplain</i>	Rev. Thomas K Mathew 9712 Laramie Road Philadelphia, PA 19115 Tel: (215) 698-1023, (516) 661-7844 Email: <a href="mailto:thomasachen@gmail.com">thomasachen@gmail.com</a>	
<b>EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE</b>		
Vice President	Thomas Mathew	267-270-7974
Secretary	Libu Mathew	267-968-2229
Treasurer	Shaji Joseph	267-372-2521
Accountant	Abraham M. Varghese	215-919-5249
Lay Leaders	Varkey Koshy Mathew K. George	215-480-8045 267-349-8337
Mandalam Member	Deenamma Thomas Joseph Kuruvila (Apr 1)	215-342-0237 215-743-9359
Assembly Member	Kuriyan Kunchandy Cherian Chacko (Apr 1)	215-412-2252 267-303-9167
Yuvajana Sakhyam	Jinu J. Varghese	215-909-1155
Church Choir	Varughese Abraham	267-968-3185
Sunday School	Tina Joseph	215-301-7297
Edavaka Mission	Paulose Philipose	215-464-2187
Sevika Sanghom	Annamma Joseph	215-301-7298
Youth Fellowship	Rosemary Thomas	215-537-0630
Church Building Convener	Rijil Rajan	215-900-5559
<b>PRAYER GROUP REPRESENTATIVES</b>		
Bethany	Jose P. Thomas Deepa Thomas	267-686-1014 215-722-8372
Ebenezer	Varghese Philip Varghese Abraham (Viji)	267-231-6004 267-443-0222
Emmanuel	K.V. George Sheela Rajan	215-464-3250 267-237-0789
Salem	Varughese N. Mathew Binu Sunny	215-275-9688 267-969-0151

<b>SUNDAY SCHOOL</b>		
Superintendent	Janice James	215-475-2391
Vice President	Usha Joseph	267-240-6395
Secretary	Tina Joseph	215-301-7292
Joint Secretary	Juby Skariah	215-260-4995
Treasurer	Reshma Abraham	267-234-1725
<b>YUVAJANA SAKHYAM</b>		
Vice President	Suraj Mathew Thomas	267-250-8676
Secretaries	Jinu J. Varghese / Susan Kurian	215-909-1155 / 215-904-2212
Treasurer	Rony Abraham	267-506-3444
<b>SEVIKA SANGHOM</b>		
Vice President	Bindu Jose	267-686-1014
Secretary	Annamma Joseph	215-301-7298
Treasurer	Laila Alex	215-688-7103
<b>EDAVAKA MISSION</b>		
Vice President	M.K. Samuel	215-464-5213
Secretary	Paulose Philipose	215-464-2187
Treasurer	P.J. Varghese	215-694-4074
<b>CHURCH CHOIR</b>		
Vice President	Jose P. Thomas	267-686-1014
Malayalam Director	Varughese Abraham	267-968-3185
Secretary	Rony Abraham	267-506-3444
Treasurer	Jincy George	267-997-4445
English Director	George Jacob	717-561-2260
English Secretary	Joel Abraham	215-969-2097
<b>YOUTH FELLOWSHIP</b>		
Vice President	Celena George	215-847-2937
Secretary	Rosemary Thomas	215-537-0630
Treasurer	Jebby Varghese	240-253-3545
<b>AUDITORS</b>		
Auditor 1	P.J. Varghese	215-694-4074
Auditor 2	Riji George	215-745-3062
<b>ECUMENICAL REPRESENTATIVES</b>		
Rep. 1	Joseph Kuruvilla	267-939-9359
Rep. 2	Rony Abraham	267-506-3444
Rep. 3	Jossey Joseph	215-464-0418
Rep. 4	Suraj Thomas	267-250-8676
Rep. 5	Mathew George	215-609-4112
Rep. 6	Deepa James	215-722-8372
Rep. 7	Marykutty Varghese	215-856-9241

1. The chief priests shouted to Pilate that 'we have only one king. Whom did they consider as their only king?
2. How much water filled in the jars which can hold from twenty to thirty gallons?
3. In John's gospel, the crucifixion of Jesus is compared to which incident of the Old Testament?
4. By hearing the request, 'to stay with them', Jesus stayed there for two days. With whom Jesus stayed?
5. About whom Jesus says 'he will testify about me'?
6. Which epistle in the Bible used the word 'rejoice' 16 times?
7. "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" This is quoted from which portion of the Bible?
8. In St Luke 16, we read the story of a man who owed 'thousand bushels of wheat' from Master. The manager told to take his bill and make it ..... The manager told him to correct the bill to which amount?
9. "You will have a son who will be a man of peace and rest." About whom God said this?
10. "You were like a burning stick snatched from the fire" About whom God said this ?

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Last Month Answers: 1. Peter ( 21:21) 2. John the Baptist ( 1:31) 3. Where the people had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks (6:23) 4. One who does not love Jesus ( 14:24) 5. Winter ( 10:22) 6. Our friend (11:11) 7. Spirit ( 7:39) 8. Because they have not known the Father or me (Jesus) ( 16:3) 9. This man claimed to be king of the Jews ( 19:21) 10. Peter ( 20:6,7)

Bible Quiz Winners :Rose Paulose, Deepa James, SheelaRajan, Thankamma Samuel, Binu Sunny.

**Deadline for Answers: March 29<sup>th</sup>**

My Dear Bethel family members,

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

We are in the season of Great Lent. Mar Thoma Syrian Church shares the Eastern Reformed liturgical tradition. The church believes the fifty days before the period of Easter, ten days before Easter and Twenty-five days before Christmas are fast days, over against the western church. The church observes fifty days as the Great Lent, which includes the forty days fast, symbolizing the forty days fast of Jesus Christ in the desert and ten days fast, signifying the betrayal, passion and crucifixion of Jesus Christ. The Mar Thoma Syrian church, along with other churches, which claim Eastern liturgical heritage, considers Fast days are for fast and contemplation. Lent is a season observed by our church as a time set apart for fasting and prayer and also a time of introspection. Observing silence is a great help during these days to have transcendence of mind. In the life of the community of the faithful, lent provides a time for spiritual discipline regularly. It is the practice of a life of denial, taking up the cross and following Jesus Christ. Here we recognize that permissiveness is not the principle of life. Freedom in life is a restricted and responsible freedom. Lent is based on the spiritual practice of fasting and prayer-both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament. Jesus began His public ministry with forty days of fasting and communion with God (Matt. 4:2, Mk 1:13, Lk 4:2). Here the mind is not kept idle but will be very active in communion with God. Fasting and prayer remain as an undeniable character of the Church from the early days (Acts 13:2, 14:23). We wait upon the Lord in fellowship for renewal and strength.

The great lent or Valiya Noyambu is specifically set apart as a time of fast, prayer and meditation wherein we remember the person and work of Jesus Christ and ultimately connect ourselves to His passion and death on the cross. These fifty days should help every member of the church to have an experience of abiding in Christ in a realistic way (Jn15). After the resurrection of Jesus, the local news agency went to interview Joseph of Arimathea. The interviewer asked Joseph, "Now the grave you had lent to Jesus is yours again. What are you planning to do with that?" Joseph took a long look at him and confided, "When I heard that He had risen, naturally I raced to the tomb. He was not there. He had given my tomb back to me. So what I did after that was: I placed a comfortable bench under the trees just opposite the opening to the tomb. In the evening when the sun was going down, I go and sit there and say to myself, 'Jesus of Nazareth has slept in this tomb and God raised Him from death. Joseph of Arimathea will also lie in this tomb and what will God do with him?' Jesus had said, 'I live, and you shall live.' I can depend on that word. St. Paul tells us in 1 Cor 15: 17, 'If Christ has not been raised from death our faith is futile; we are still in our sins.' The resurrection of Jesus gives meaning to the Christian faith and Christian life. Life does not end on Good Friday. At the foot of the Cross it just begins. Its roots start growing, and it blooms on the day of resurrection. It instills a new hope and a new outlook to life. For us Christians Easter is a feast of joy when the defeat of the Good Friday is converted into victory. Jesus Christ overcame death and entered into a new life, a new existence, signifying that death is not the end of life, but only an entry into a new existence. Resurrection of Jesus is the guarantee of the resurrection of all those who believe in him. Faith in the resurrection of Jesus gives his followers the strength and courage to face any crisis in life, including death. Resurrection of Jesus is not an event in history that happened once upon a time in the life of a Master called Jesus.



## FROM THE DESK OF VICAR

It has been an experience that transformed the whole life of his disciples. It is an experience that changed the track of human history forever. A tremendous experience, the disciples of Jesus experienced. We read of different encounters of resurrected Jesus with his disciples in the Gospels. They meet him in the closed rooms, on the way, on the seashore! In different ways! In different forms! He strengthens their faith. He provides them a new way of looking at realities which they were not able to do till then. Their life gets transformed by an experience which had no physical proof available. Two things are worth considering:

First of all, **the disciples experienced a new level of freedom in their life which until then they were not able to do.** The bondages of the body, the chains that bind one to this world, the relations, the fears and aspirations of the mind are broken into pieces. A new level of existence slowly begins to reveal itself to the disciples and through them to the human existence. How is one going to achieve this new level of existence? The real freedom comes through opening up of the doors of one's existence to unselfish love and unconditional forgiveness. When the doors of one's heart and soul are kept open to the unencumbered embrace of even the enemy; then that is the point of flight heavenward. That is the moment of resurrection. That is the realm of the resurrected life.

Secondly, **the proof of resurrection is the transformed life.** The transformed life of the disciples is the only proof of the resurrection of Jesus. The courage and conviction they manifest in later days speak volumes of the reality of resurrection. One divine touch is waiting for us to transform us into new creations. In Johannine version of Resurrection apparition, Jesus calls out to Mary Magdalene, "Mary". Immediately Mary turns around and calls, "Rabooni (Master)". She has been talking to the same person for quite some time. But the right moment of transformation came when the call came from the master. It was an immediate "turning around" for Mary. The doors of realization open wide on her face. She runs fast to others to convey the new experience she started experiencing before its warmth subsides. This is resurrection experience. On the day of Easter, we, the followers of Jesus, declare to the world, "An amazing man, Jesus who is the epitome of God lived an incredible life and was cruelly put to death. Afterwards - something amazing happened- he rose from the dead and lives among us". The celebration of Easter should reaffirm our faith in Jesus in such a way that we will be able to say along with St. Paul, "Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? (Rom 8:35)

Let the celebration of Easter deepen our faith in the resurrected Jesus who is always with us, calling us and inspiring us to lead a life of resurrection, characterized by joy, peace and compassion.

I express my heartfelt gratitude to Mr. P.J Varughese(Vice President), Mr. Varghese N. Mathew(Secretary), Mr. Thomas Mathai, Mr. Ginu Jacob Varghese(Lay Leaders) and all the executive committee members those who participated with me for the growth of our parish for the last year. From March 1<sup>st</sup> onwards the new committee will activate. I request all of you to give your continuous support to them and all the activities of our parish.

Lovingly Your Vicar,  
Saju Chacko Achen

## ANNIVERSARIES

Happy Anniversary to .....

Date	Name	Date	Name
3/8	Rosamma Suresh & Suresh Thomas	4/23	Kunjamma Aleyamma Roy & Roy Jacob
3/6	Rekha S Thomas & Shaji Thomas	4/11	Laila Alex & Alex Abraham
3/12	Laly Thomas & T.V. Thomas	4/12	Sibi Mary Joseph & Joseph Kuruvilla
<b>APRIL</b>			
4/17	Mariamamma John & P.J. John	4/21	Sara J. Varghese & Jebby S. Varghese
4/10	Leelamma Thomas & Thomas Mathew	4/22	Asha Susan Varghese & Varghese Abraham

## LECTIONARY

Date	Lesson	Epistle	Gospel	Theme
Mar.08	Gen.4:8-16 Acts.16:11-18	Rom.5:6-11	Mark 2:1-12	The forgiving Christ
Mar.15	Hos.2:14-23 Phlm.1:1-21	Gal.6:1-5	Matthew 15:21-28	The accepting Christ
Mar.22	Exod.3:1-10 Rom.8:31-39	Gal.5:1-12	Luke 13:10-17	The redeeming Christ
Mar.29	Job.42:10-17 Phil.2:5-11	Eph.2:1-10	Mark 10:46-52	The restoring Christ
Apr.03	Num.21:1-9 Heb.12:1-13	1 Peter 1:13-22	Matthew 4:1-11	40 <sup>th</sup> Friday: Spirituality of Lent that overcomes the Temptation
Apr.05	Zech.9:1-12 Heb.5:1-10	Col.1:15-23	Mark 11:1-11	Hosana: Christ the Lord of peace
Apr.09	Gen.22:1-14 Heb.5:1-14	1 Cori.11:23-34	Matthew 26:31-46	Passover Thursday: Jesus Christ; the bread of life
Apr.12	Isa.60:12-21 1 Cori.15:42-58	1 Cori.15:20-28	Luke 24:1-12	Resurrection: Celebration of new life in Christ
Apr.19	Gen.3:13-17 Col.3:1-11	Heb.13:1-8	John 20:24-19	Christ: Lord and God to us
Apr.26	Gen.18:1-10 Rom.12:9-16	Heb.13:1-8	John 21:1-14	Invitation to Christ's hospitality

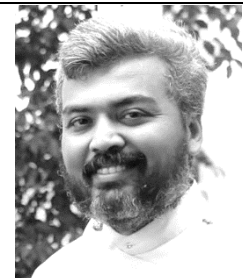
## LESSON READING & OFFERTORY COLLECTIONS

03/08/20	Bethany Prayer group	04/05/20	Emmanuel Prayer group
03/15/20	Sunday School & Youth	04/12/20	Sunday School & Youth
03/22/20	Ebenezer Prayer group	04/19/20	Sunday school & Youth
03/29/20	Sunday School & Youth	04/26/20	Salem Prayer group
03/08/20	Bethany Prayer group	04/05/20	Emmanuel Prayer group

Happy Birthdays to ....

Date	Name	Date	Name
3/1	Mary C. Mathew	4/4	Nevin George John
3/1	Suraj M. Thomas	4/5	Elizabeth Ittyipe
3/2	Riji A. George	4/5	April Joseph
3/3	Marykutty James	4/6	T.V. Thomas
3/4	Premji Oommen	4/9	P. M. Philip
3/5	Licykutty Skariah	4/9	P.J. Varghese
3/5	Cherian Kunjachen	4/9	Paulose Philipose
3/5	Rekha S Thomas	4/9	Ashwin Mathew
3/6	Jocelyn Kuryan	4/12	Annie Samuel
3/7	Elizabeth George	4/13	Sonia Stanley
3/9	Shaji M Philip	4/15	Rincymol Korah Philip
3/9	Reuben Jacob George	4/15	Tina Joseph
3/10	Deenamamma Thomas	4/16	Asha Susan Varghese
3/10	Gia Roseann Phillip	4/16	Christian Skariah
3/13	Anuj Varughese	4/17	Kevin M Rajan
3/16	Jency John	4/18	Valliath T. George
3/17	Mariamamma George	4/18	George Thomas
3/17	Shirley Mathew	4/18	Daan Abraham Varghese
3/20	Varghese Abraham	4/19	Mathew Philip
3/22	Ajini Varughese	4/19	Thomas Abraham
3/23	Jerry T Koshy	4/19	Sini shelby Philip
3/23	Maju Mary Mathew	4/19	Steffi K Skaria
3/23	Angelina Abraham	4/20	Marykutty Varghese
3/23	Aiden Mathew	4/20	Valsamma Jacob
3/24	Annamamma Koshy	4/21	Jessy Samuel
3/26	Alphi Tom Jose	4/21	Julie Amith
3/27	Previn Koshy John	4/23	Edicheria Skariah
3/28	George George	4/23	Sojel Abraham Sunny
3/29	Jiji Thomas	4/24	Mathew George
3/31	Divya Mariam Joseph	4/26	Amminiamma Varghese
	<b>APRIL</b>	4/26	Larissa Joseph
4/1	Nicholas Shajil Philip	4/27	Jacob Philip
4/1	Aleena Thomas	4/27	Rajan Philip
4/3	Joel Jacob Koshy	4/27	Justin Thomas

Dearly Beloved in Christ,  
Lenten Greetings. We have entered into the Great Lent 2020 and this is a time set apart by the Church for all of us to remember the redemptive passion of our Lord Jesus Christ who came down to this earth and slain on the cross as the sacrificial lamb for our sin so that we could be restored in our relationship with God.



The Lenten season is also a time of repentance because the sinful nature within us is to be recognized and dealt with. We may be able to hide it from the world, but the Lord sees our hearts and knows our thoughts. The sinfulness in the human nature that we have needs to cleanse regularly and there is no point in our earthly life we can claim that we got ridded of it completely.

The Lenten season is also a time for renewal of our commitment and mission that the Lord has placed upon each one of us to share this good news with others. Our lives should be the gospel that people around us reads every day. We may not be able to make an evaluation of how efficient our mission was or how well the gospel that we shared through our life has impacted others because its ultimately, God’s redemptive act and we are only messengers in this whole process. Yet we are called to be faithful in our role so that when God sees how we have used the opportunity of life given to us we will be called “good and faithful servant”.

Let me also take this opportunity to thank and Praise God for the life and ministry of Rev. Saju Chacko, Teena Kochamma, Hanna and Manna in the last 3 years of their service here in Bethel MTC, Philadelphia. The leadership that he gave to the parish enabled us as a faith community to renovate the sanctuary by adding beauty and comfort so that our worship and gatherings in this place will be enriched. Also, the faith and prayer in his life which has been a blessing to us as a parish, as families and individuals will be remembered. May their ministry in the coming years continue to be a blessing to many more people in all the places that they will be posted.

Our ministry here in Philadelphia has been a blessing thus far with the prayers and support from all of you. We do hope more youths will join us in the Youth Fellowship meetings and also, we will be able to come and visit you so that we could be connected to your life and needs. We do appreciate all who made time for us and invited us, and we hope to do more houses in the coming months. Our college ministry is also progressing, we have been able to visit students at Temple and U Science and we hope to start of a College fellowship by the second week of March in the Temple area. Do keep us and our ministry in your prayers.

May the Almighty Lord keep us all closer to the Cross during this Lenten season and also enable us to see more clearly the love of God for us which led Christ to the Cross and it was not a political killing or a religious ritual, but plainly and clearly God’s Love for you and me.

God Bless

Yours in Christ Service,  
Rev. Thomas K. Mathew, Neenu, Ananya, Ansh and Ahana  
Call/ Text/ Whatsapp: 516-661-7844; email: [thomasachen@gmail.com](mailto:thomasachen@gmail.com)

**PARISH PROGRAM SCHEDULE**

<b>Program Schedule of the Parish for March-April 2020</b>			
<b>Date 2020</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Venue</b>
Mar 08(Sun)	09.00 am	Sunday School	Church
Mar.08 (Sun)	10:30 am	Holy Communion	Church
Mar.11(Wed)	10.00 am	Parish Mission	Church
Mar.13 (Fri)	10.00 am	Fasting Prayer	Church
Mar.14 (Sat)	10.00 am	SevikaSangham meeting at the residence of Bindhu Jose	8502 Verree Road, 19111
Mar.15 (Sun)	09.00 am	Sunday School	Church
Mar.15 (Sun)	10.30 am	Holy Communion (Eng.)	Church
Mar.18(Wed)	6.30 pm	Lent Prayer begins	Church
Mar.19(Thu)	6.30 pm	Lent Prayer	Church
Mar.20(Fri)	6.30 pm	Lent Prayer-Varughese Abraham	9714 Portis Rd,19115
Mar.21(Sat)	6.30 pm	Lent Prayer –Varkey Koshy	206 Hidden Creek Dr. Hatboro 19040
Mar.22 (Sun)	9.00 am	Sunday School	Church
Mar.22 (Sun)	10.30 am	Holy Communion (Mal.)	Church
Mar.22 (Sun)	6.30 pm	Lent Prayer –Thomas Mathew	1137 Alton Pl,19115
Mar.23(Mon)	6.30 pm	Lent Prayer	Church
Mar.24(Tue)	6.30 pm	Lent prayer-M. K. Samuel	55 Country Ln. Dr, 19115
Mar.25(Wed)	6.30 pm	Lent Prayer-Rajan T. Philip	9964 Woodfern Rd. 19115
Mar.26(Thu)	6.30 pm	Lent Prayer – Jose P. Thomas	8502 Verree Rd. 19111
Mar.27(Fri)	06.30 pm	Lent Prayer –Varughese N. Mathew	123 Pocasset Rd. 19115
Mar.28(Sat)	6.30 pm	Lent Prayer –Stanley George	9815 Ferndale St. 19115
Mar.29 (Sun)	9.00 am	Sunday School	Church
Mar.29(Sun)	10.30 am	Holy Communion (Eng.)	Church

**PARISH PROGRAM SCHEDULE**

<b>Program Schedule of the Parish for March-April 2020</b>			
<b>Date 2020</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Venue</b>
Mar.29(Sun)	6.30 pm	Lent Prayer –John Philip	9601 Clark St. 19115
Mar.30(Mon)	6.30 pm	Lent Prayer –George A. George	9808 Bridle Rd. 19115
Mar.31(Tue)	6.30 pm	Lent Prayer –P.J Varughese	1934 King Arthur Rd. 19116
Apr.01(wed)	6.30 pm	Lent Prayer – Binu Sunny	9672 Sandanne Rd.19115
Apr.02(Thu)	6.30 pm	Lent Prayer –Daniel Mathew	1233 Grant Ave.19115
Apr.03(Fri)	6.30 pm	40 <sup>th</sup> Friday Combined Holy Communion	Church
Apr.04 (Sat)	10.00am	SevikaSangham meeting at the residence of Saji John	120 Grenville Circle, Churchville, 18966
Apr.05(Sun)	9.00 am	Sunday School	Church
Apr.05(Sun)	10.30 am	Hosanna Sunday Holy Communion (Mal.)	Church
Apr.06(Mon)	6.30 pm	Sandhya Namaskaram	Church
Apr.07(Tue)	6.30 pm	Sandhya Namaskaram	Church
Apr.08(Wed)	6.30 pm	Sandhya Namaskaram	Church
Apr.09(Thu)	6.30 pm	Maundy Thursday Holy Communion (Mal.)	Church
Apr.10 (Fri)	09.00 am	Good Friday Service (Mal. & Eng.)	Church
Apr.12 (Sun)	09.00 am	Easter Holy Communion (Eng.) Rev. Thomas K. Mathew	Church
Apr.17 (Fri)	10.00 am	Combined Fasting Prayer	Church
Apr.18 (Sat)	6.00 pm	Salem Area Prayer at the residence of Varghese N. Mathew	123 Pocasset Rd.19115
Apr.19 (Sun)	9.00 am	Sunday School	Church
Apr.19 (Sun)	10.30 am	Holy Communion (Eng.)	Church
Apr.24 & 25		Diocesan Clergy and Assembly	Long Island
Apr.26 (Sun)	9.00 am	Sunday School	Church
Apr.26 (Sun)	10.30 am	Holy Communion (Mal.)	Church