

# St. Thomas Mar Thoma Church, NY

34 Morris Street, Yonkers, NY 10705

<http://www.stthomasmtc.org>



*December*  
**2013**



Vicar / President:

**Rev K.K. Samuel**

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## WORSHIP SERVICE SCHEDULE

Date	Time	Worship
Sun, Dec 1	9:30 am 10 am	Praise & Worship ( <i>Malayalam</i> ) Bible Class Holy Communion Service, <u>English</u>
Sun, Dec 8	9:30 am 10:30 am	Praise & Worship ( <i>Malayalam</i> ), Bible Class Holy Communion Service, <u>English</u>
Sun, Dec 15	9:30 am 10:30 am	Praise & Worship ( <i>English</i> ), Bible Class Holy Communion Service, <u>Malayalam</u>
Sun, Dec 22	9:30 am 10:30 am	Praise & Worship ( <i>English</i> ), Bible Class Holy Communion Service, <u>Malayalam</u>
Tues, Dec 24	6:30pm	Christmas Eve Caroling Service
Wed, Dec 25	10am	Christmas Holy Communion Service, <u>English</u>
Sun, Dec 29	9:30am 10:30am	Divine Service, <u>English</u>
Tues, Dec 31	10pm	Night Watch; Midnight Holy Communion, <u>Malayalam</u>

## MAR THOMA SYRIAN CHURCH OF MALABAR LECTIONARY

Date	1st Lesson	2nd Lesson	Epistle	Gospel
Dec 1	Gen 18:1-6	2 Tim 4:9-18	2Cor 1:3-11	Luke 1:39-45
Dec 8	Isa 55:6-13	1 John 5:13-20	Gal 1:11-17	Luke 1:57-66
Dec 15	Isa 40:1-11	Acts 20:17-25	Phil 4:4-9	Mathew1:18-23
Dec 22	Isa 11:1-10	1John 5:1-12	Romans 1:8-16	Johns1:1-14
Dec 25	Micah 5:1-9	Col 1:15-20	1 Tim 1:14-17	Luke 2:1-20
Dec 29	Zech 14:1-5	Acts 1:6-11	1Thess 4:13-18	Johns 14::1-7
Dec 31	1 Sam 7:5-17	Heb 13:7-21	1 Peter5:6-11	Luke 13:6-9

## IMPORTANT DAYS IN SABHA/DIOCESAN CALENDAR

Date	Importance of the Day
Dec1	Beginning of Twenty-Five Days Lent
Dec 8	Birth of John the Baptist
Dec 15	Annunciation to Joseph
Dec 21	Mar Thoma Church Day
Dec 22	Sunday before Christmas
Dec 25	Yaldo—Feast of Nativity, Birth of Our Lord
Dec 29	Glorious Appearance of Lord
Dec 31	Year Ending - Night Watch Service



# Achens Corner

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Dearly Beloved in Christ,

In his Christmas Day sermon at Canterbury Cathedral, Archbishop Rowan Williams says that the coming of Christ still poses immense challenges to the way people understand their lives and the times they live in. The Gospels are still full of questions to us about who we are and how we respond to God's love - and early Christian writings are full of the faltering attempts to give voice in response.

“Very near the heart of Christian faith and practice is this encounter with God's questions, ‘who are you, where are you?’ Are you on the side of the life that lives in Jesus, the life of grace and truth, of unstinting generosity and unsparing honesty, the only life that *gives* life to others? Or are you on your own side, on the side of disconnection, rivalry, the hoarding of gifts, the obsession with control? ... What we say or do in our response to Jesus is our way of discovering for ourselves and showing to one another what is real in and for us ... the truth is still an uncompromising one: if you cannot or will not respond, you are walking away from reality into a realm of trackless fogbound falsehood.”

The challenge, he says, is not simply to individuals but to society as a whole to find words to respond and he cites the Book of Common Prayer, which was at the time celebrating its 350th anniversary, as providing an example of how a society's response came to be articulated. It underlines, he says, notions of duty and common interest; speaking of and to a world in which the church, the state and the rich and powerful need continually to be aware of the immense obligations owed by those who have much to those who are poor and vulnerable. He says that, even though centuries old, the Prayer Book reflects far more than the social conventions of the day:

“ ... much of this language feels dated – we don't live in the unselfconscious world of social hierarchy that we meet here. But before we draw the easy and cynical conclusion that the Prayer Book is about social control by the ruling classes, we need to ponder the uncompromising way in which those same ruling classes are reminded of what their power is for, from the monarch downwards. And the almost forgotten words of the Long Exhortation in the Communion Service, telling people what questions they should ask themselves before coming to the Sacrament, show a keen critical awareness of the new economic order that, in the mid sixteenth century, was piling up assets of land and property in the hands of a smaller and smaller elite.’ The Prayer Book is a treasury of words and phrases that are still for countless English-speaking people the nearest you can come to an adequate language for the mysteries of faith.”

He quotes from the communion service as a pointer to a developing understanding of mutual obligation:



“If ye shall perceive your offences to be such as are not only against God but also against your neighbours; then ye shall reconcile yourselves unto them; being ready to make restitution.”

The need to learn these lessons is all the more important, he argues, in the wake of the events of the past few years:

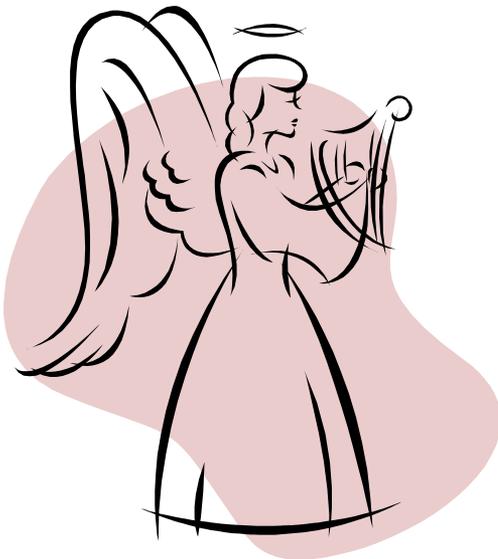
“The most pressing question we now face, we might well say, is who and where we are as a society. Bonds have been broken, trust abused and lost. Whether it is an urban rioter mindlessly burning down a small shop that serves his community, or a speculator turning his back on the question of who bears the ultimate cost for his acquisitive adventures in the virtual reality of today’s financial world, the picture is of atoms spinning apart in the dark.

And into that dark the Word of God has entered, in love and judgment, and has not been overcome; in the darkness the question sounds as clear as ever, to each of us and to our church and our society: ‘Where are you?’ Where are the words we can use to answer?’”

On that note, on behalf of my self and my family, we wish you all a very Happy and Merry Christmas and a Blessed and Prosperous New Year.

**Yours in His Service,**

***Rev K.K. Samuel***





# Caroling Schedule

Area	Date
Yonkers South (McLean Ave) /Bronx	Saturday, December 21
Queens/ Long Island	Saturday, December 21
Manhattan/ NJ	Sunday, December 8th
Upper Westchester/ CT	Sunday, December 8th
Yonkers East (Central Ave)	Saturday, December 7th
Rockland	Fri, Dec 13th & Sun, Dec 15th
Yonkers West (Church-Riverdale)	Friday, December 6th
Yonkers North (Broadway)	Friday, December 6th

## Monthly Fasting Prayer

Event	Date & Time	Location
Monthly Fasting Prayer	Sat, Dec 21 10am	Mr. & Mrs. N.J. Mathai 201 Shonnard Terrace Yonkers, NY 10701

# Organizational Meetings

## Sevika Sangham

**Bible Study - 3rd Sunday at Church**

**Friday Prayer Meeting**

<b>Sevika Sangham</b>	<b>Date &amp; Time</b>	<b>Location</b>
Friday Prayer	Fri, Dec 6 10am	Mrs. Sherly Vaidyan Hartsdale, NY
Friday Prayer	Fri, Dec 13 10am	Mrs. Aleyamma Kurian Spring Valley NY
Friday Prayer	Fri, Dec 20 10am	Mrs. Mary Varghese Yonkers, NY
Friday Prayer	Fri, Dec 27 10am	Mrs. Densy Johnson Yonkers, NY

## Edavaka Mission

**Prayer Meeting** in the parsonage basement every **Wednesday** at **7:00 PM** unless otherwise scheduled elsewhere.

<b>Event</b>	<b>Date &amp; Time</b>	<b>Location</b>
Edavaka Mission	Wed, 4th 7pm	Mr. Abraham Koshy Pelham, NY
Edavaka Mission	Wed, Dec 11th & Dec 18th	At Church @ 7pm.
Edavaka Mission	Wed, Dec 25th	No Prayer (Christmas Day)

## **Youth Fellowship**

<b>Event</b>	<b>Date &amp; Time</b>	<b>Location</b>
Weekly Meeting	Every Sunday After service	Held in the Chapel
Bible Study	→	See Youth Secretary for Info.

“THEREFORE I TELL YOU, WHATEVER YOU ASK FOR  
IN PRAYER, BELIEVE THAT YOU HAVE RECEIVED IT,  
AND IT WILL BE YOURS.” MARK 11:24

## **Young Family Fellowship**

<b>Event</b>	<b>Date &amp; Time/Location</b>
Fellowship Meeting	Contact Young Family Fellowship Secy for Info.

## **Yuvajana Sakhyam**

<b>Event</b>	<b>Date &amp; Time/Location</b>
Cottage Prayer	Please contact Yuvajana Secretary for information.

## *Excerpt to Christmas Sermon of the Archbishop of Canterbury*

When the first Christians read – or more probably heard – the opening words of John's gospel, they would have understood straight away quite a lot more than we do. They would have remembered, many of them, that in Hebrew 'word' and 'thing' are the same, and they would all have known that in Greek the word used has a huge range of meaning – at the simplest level, just something said; but also a pattern, a rationale, as we might say, even the entire structure of the universe seen as something that makes sense to us, the structure that holds things together and makes it possible for us to think. Against this background, we can get a glimpse of just what is being said about Jesus. His life is what God says and what God does; it is the life in which things hold together; it is because of the life that lives in him that we can think. Jesus is the place where all reality is focused, brought to a point. Here is where we can see as nowhere else what connects all reality – all human experience and all natural laws. Edward Elgar famously said about his Enigma Variations that they were all based on a tune that everyone knew – and no-one has ever worked out what he meant. But John's gospel declares that the almost infinite variety of the life we encounter is all variations on the theme that is stated in one single clear musical line, one melody, in the life of Jesus of Nazareth. 'In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

But this shouldn't make us forget entirely the underlying image. The life that lives in Jesus, the everlasting divine agency that is uniquely embodied in him, is like something that is said – a word addressed to us. Because, like any word addressed to us, it demands a response. And the gospel goes on at once to tell us that the expected response was not forthcoming. Before we have even got to Christmas in the words of the gospel we are taken to Good Friday, and to the painful truth that the coming of Jesus splits the world into those who respond and those who don't. Once the word is spoken in the world, there is no way back. Your response to it, says the gospel again and again, is what shows who and what you really are, what is deepest in you, what means most. What we say or do in our response to Jesus is our way of discovering for ourselves and showing to one another what is real in and for us. Like the other gospel writers, John hints very strongly that some people respond deeply and truthfully to Jesus without fully knowing who he is or what exactly they are doing in responding to him; this is not a recipe for tight religious exclusivism. But the truth is still an uncompromising one: if you cannot or will not respond, you are walking away from reality into a realm of trackless fogbound falsehood.

There is the question we cannot ignore. It's been well said that the first question we hear in the Bible is not humanity's question to God but God's question to us, God walking in the cool of the evening in the Garden of Eden, looking for Adam and Eve who are trying to hide from him. 'Adam, where are you?' The life of Jesus is that question translated into an actual human life, into the conversations and encounters of a flesh and blood human being like all others – except that when people meet him they will say, like the woman who talks with him at the well of Samaria, 'Here is a man who told me everything I ever did.' Very near the heart of Christian faith and practice is this encounter with God's questions, 'who are you, where are you?' Are you on the side of the life that lives in Jesus, the life of grace and truth, of unstinting generosity and unsparing honesty, the only life that gives life to others? Or are you on your own side, on the side of disconnection, rivalry, the hoarding of gifts, the obsession with control? To answer that you're on the side of life doesn't mean for a moment that you can now relax into a fuzzy philosophy of 'life-affirming' comfort. On the contrary: it means you are willing to face everything within you that is cheap, fearful, untruthful and evasive, and let the light shine on it. Like Peter in the very last chapter of John's gospel, we can only say that we are trying to love the truth that is in Jesus, even as we acknowledge all we have done that is contrary to his spirit. And we say this because we trust that we are loved by this unfathomable mystery who comes to us in the shape of a newborn child, 'full of grace and truth'.

Finding words to respond to the Word made flesh is and has always been one of the most demanding things human beings can do. Don't believe for a moment that religious language is easier or vaguer than the rest of our language. It's more like the exact opposite: think of St John writing his gospel, crafting the slow, sometimes repetitive pace of a narrative that allows Jesus to change the perspective inch by inch as a conversation unfolds. Or of St Paul, losing his way in his sentences, floundering in metaphors as he struggles to find the words for something so new that there are no precedents for talking about it. Or any number of the great poets and contemplatives of the Christian centuries. It isn't surprising if we need other people's words a lot of the time; and it's of great importance that we have words to hand that have been used by others in lives that obviously have depth and integrity. That's where the language of our shared worship becomes so important. - **Sermon Titled: Don't build lives on Fear and Selfishness. 12/25/11**

# **Regional Youth Fellowship Retreat**

Date: December 27 6pm – December 29 12 pm

Venue: Vocationist Fathers  
90 Brooklake Rd, Florham Park, NJ 07932

Speakers: **Dr. Shaun Rajan & Prijo Thomas**

## **Theme: Break Free**

“Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress. He brought them out of darkness, the utter darkness, and broke away their chains.”  
- Psalm 107:13-14.

Who can register: All youths who are 12<sup>th</sup> grade and above.

Registration Fee: \$120

Register: <http://goo.gl/kXjvCU>

Registration due by December 15th

Checks should be written to:

"North East Regional Marthoma Youth Fellowship"

# **Come and experience a new life**



## *Christmas Eve Caroling Service*

Date: Tuesday, December 24th

Time: 6:30pm

Venue: Church

Come one and all to celebrate as one big family the  
birth of OUR SAVIOUR!!!

Skits, Songs and much, much, more!!

Don't forget Santa and his bag of candy will be there  
as well...so bring your lil' ones and your cameras.

Come with joy, prayer and peace of heart.



## Youth Chaplain Corner - The Star of Christmas

To become a 'star' in this modern world is a big deal. People are looking up to different stars like film stars, pop stars and sports stars with admiration and adoration. We live in a world of 'stars' who become the icons in our society as the trend setters and crowd pullers. A Star should be the one which shows light and gives directions in life. But often the so called stars are producing the opposite results. I was researching through the life stories of the 'stars' of this part of the world who lived during the last few years and I came across the following sad stories. These are few examples from a long list of 'stars' who ended their lives due to various reasons. Don Cornelius (2012), American television show host and producer, best known as the creator and host of the nationally syndicated dance/music franchise *Soul Train*, Brad Delp (2007), American rock musician (Boston), Freddy E (2013), American hip-hop music artist known for his comedy and spoken-word pieces, Martin Manley (2013), American sportswriter, Kenny McKinley (2010), American football player, Junior Seau (2012), American football All-Pro player.

I am not trying to make a judgement to say that all the 'stars' are not the 'real stars' looking at these examples. But we should not close our eyes to these realities. We are entering a season where we are going to discuss on the 'Star'. Star is one of the few symbols that Christmas presents in front of us to tell us what is Christmas all about. The star in Christmas was a guiding light to the real star of Christmas and. When we follow many stars of this world we often forget the real star of Christmas.

A star is always a source of light and it gives light to many others. The star is always a way to remove the darkness. Isaiah 9:2 says "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned." The star of Christmas was a light to the people who walked in the darkness. If a star is not a light in this world of darkness then why do we call them a star?. Christmas is presenting a light that gives a light that remove the darkness from our lives.

The Christmas star was a source of guidance that the wise men could follow to reach their destination. It was a guiding light and gave the directions how to go forward. A star should be something we could follow and imitate. There was only one man in the whole history who challenged His disciples to follow and imitate Him to lead a wonderful life. That is the star that Christmas is presenting in front of us.

The Star of Christmas directed the people to the real star of Christmas; that was Jesus. The only one star who can give light, direction and meaning to each one of our lives. Let this Christmas help us to reach this one real star of the world. Let us receive the light to remove the darkness we have in our lives and let us follow the real star to become a star to many others.

We wish you a blessed Christmas!!!

**Rev. V.M. Mathew - Youth Chaplain**

# **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE - 2013**

<b><u>Position</u></b>	<b><u>Full Name</u></b>	<b><u>Phone Number</u></b>
<b>OFFICE BEARERS</b>		
Vicar/President	Rev. K.K. Samuel	(914) 376-6530
Vice President	Mr. Geevarghese Kochumman	(914) 948-2363
Secretary	Mrs. Bindu S. Mathew	(917) 257-4602
Treasurer	Mr. Thomas Varghese	(914) 968-3531
Accountant	Mr. Sunil M. Varughese	(845) 268-3647
Lay Leader - Malayalam	Mr. John P. Varghese	(914) 939-0064
Lay Leader - English	Mr. John C. Thomas	(914) 457-8197

## **AREA PRAYER GROUP REPRESENTATIVES**

Manhattan/NJ	Mr. Samuel Ninan	(201) 692-0649
Queens/LI	Mr. Varghese C. Baby	(516) 781-7513
Rockland (Spring Valley)	Mr. M. C. Chacko	(845) 356-1848
Rockland (Outside Spring Valley)	Mr. Sabu George	(845) 570-2005
Upper Westchester/CT	Mr. Cheruthone Mathai	(203) 797-1076
Upper Westchester/CT	Mr. Daniel P.K. Vaidyan	(914) 761-9872
Yonkers East	Mr. Jacob Vaidian	(914) 337-2470
Yonkers North	Mr. Abraham George	(914) 560-4106
Yonkers South/Bronx	Mr. Thomas P. John	(914) 965-3979
Yonkers West	Mr. Yohannan Yohannan	(914) 476-0217

## **MANDALAM & DIOCESAN REPRESENTATIVES**

Sabha Mandalam	Mr. John K. Mathew	(732) 412-7318
Diocesan Representatives	Mr. John Abraham	(845) 634-9319
	Mr. Sunny P. Ninan	(845)634-4925

## **ORGANIZATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES**

Choir	Mrs Elizabeth Abraham	(845) 634-9319
Edavaka Mission	Mr. Varghese A. Thomas	(914) 969-0206
Sevika Sangham	Mrs. Aleyamma Thomas	(914) 968-3531
Sunday School	Mr. T. P. Jacob	(516) 365-3750
Youth Fellowship	Mr. Benjie Varghese	(914) 963-0514
Young Family Fellowship	Mr. Ullas P. Thannickal	(845) 638-8075
Yuvajana Sakhyam	Mr. Aju P. Daniel	(914) 255-8478

## **AUDITORS**

Mr. Thankachen Geevarghese	(914) 939-0282
Mr. Cheriyan Varghese	(914) 965-0969