

# Hermon Marthoma Church

## MIDLANDS

December 2008

[www.marthomamidlands.co.uk](http://www.marthomamidlands.co.uk)

Volume 2, Issue 8



### Next Service:

**13 Dec 08 -Holy Communion**  
At 3:00pm  
Followed by  
Christmas carols  
At 4:30pm

**27 Dec 08 -Holy Communion**  
From 4 – 6pm

At

**St. James Hill Church**  
Mere Green Road  
Four Oaks, West Midlands  
B75 5DD

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## From Achen's desk

Dearly Beloved in Christ,

As I write this month's newsletter, one of the main stories in the news is the attacks in Mumbai, India. According to the latest reports there are about 101 people dead, 314 people injured, and many people being held hostage. There are numerous reports of armed people attacking men, women, and children. This reminds me of Christmas.

One of the stories we associate with Christmas is the story of the wise men traveling to see Jesus. One part of the story that we never really discuss is the deaths of the children who were two and under.

A voice was heard in Ramah,  
Wailing and loud lamentation,  
Rachel weeping for her children;  
She refused to be consoled,  
Because they were no more.  
Matthew 2:18

A similar wailing, lamentation, and weeping can be heard today; Not only in Mumbai, or in India, but all throughout the world. Parents are weeping for their children because they are no more. They are no more because of war, terrorist attacks, drugs, violence, etc. People lamenting about losing their jobs, their homes, their money in the stock market.

It is in times like this that the true Christmas message needs to be given to the world. People need to understand that Emmanuel means "God is with us." Jesus (whose name means savior), came here to save us and to support us all the days of our lives. He was born in a manger because no one would give him space. He was wrapped in bands of cloth because his parents could not afford anything better. He and his family had to flee to another country to escape death. Jesus the Christ is able to save us and support us, because he has endured the worst situations that this world can give.

He has endured poverty, hunger, persecution, violence, and death.

But despite all that, he is still able to love other people, even those who committed these acts of oppression against him. Regardless of the way other people treat him, he still loves them and was willing to die for them.

His acts of love, compassion, and forgiveness are what the world needs today. The people of the world need to understand that violence begets violence. Further, some claim that they have a right to do certain things or demand that things be done a certain way, no matter who they hurt. Jesus gave up his rights for others, and he was constantly supporting others.

In Matthew 9:13, Jesus said to the Pharisees, "Go and Learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.'" This is a quote from Hosea 6:6 and this same theme is in most of the books of the prophets. What God truly desires is steadfast love which has to be demonstrated. The best way to demonstrate this is by showing mercy and compassion to those around us. This is the only real gift that God wants us to give to all those around us, not just to our family or friends, but to everyone including those we do not like. The gift of love, mercy, and compassion.

As we have freely received so much love, mercy, and compassion from the Lord, may the Holy Spirit enable all of us to show love, mercy, and compassion to all those we meet, all the days of our lives. May we always remember that God is with us, to help, comfort, and save us!

Merry Christmas

Yours in His Service,  
**Rev. Shibi Abraham**

## Recipe for the Kids – For Christmas



**Preparation Time: 15 minutes**

**Cook Time: 0 minutes**

**Ingredients:**

- 1 bag large marshmallows
- 1 container chow mien noodles
- 1 package orange tic-tacs
- 1 package multi-colored tic-tacs
- 2 ounces melted chocolate
- Assorted small candies of your choice

**Preparation:**

1. "Glue" two marshmallows together by placing a small blob of melted chocolate on top of one of the marshmallows, and placing another marshmallow on top of the chocolate.
2. Repeat this procedure with a third marshmallow, so that you end up with three stacked marshmallows, stuck together with chocolate. This is your snowman body.
3. Give the snowman arms by sticking two chow mein noodles in the sides of the middle marshmallow. Pretzels would also work for this purpose.
4. Make buttons by pushing tic-tacs into the front of the middle marshmallow in a vertical line.
5. Use an orange tic-tac to represent the carrot nose: dab a small amount of chocolate in the front of the top marshmallow, and push the tic-tac slightly into the chocolate to get it to stick.
6. Finish decorating the face and body with whatever candy or decorations you have. Try adding sprinkles, or M&Ms, or drawing on your snowmen with icing or melted chocolate. Hair can be created using shredded wheat cereal, or you can make a hat using wafer candies. Let your creativity run wild!



## Some thoughts for the Season

### Thought 1

1 Corinthians 16:14 (King James Version)

Let all your things be done with charity.

*When most people think of the word "charity" they think of something given to help the needy. Another definition of charity is benevolence or generosity toward others or toward humanity. For Christians, charity has a different meaning again. Charity is love directed first toward God but also toward oneself and one's neighbors as objects of God's love. So this little word ... charity ... has many meanings*

### Thought2

Psalms 56:10-12 (New Life Version)

I praise the Word of God. I praise the Word of the Lord.

In God I have put my trust. I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?

I am under an agreement with You, O God. I will give You gifts of thanks.

*Let us thank and praise the Lord for what we have. Let us thank and praise the Lord for the Hermon Mar Thoma Church. The Church has brought together all the mar thomites in the Midlands Area. We have our shortfalls, but this Christmas is the time for us all to get back together and praise & thank the Lord.*

### Thought 3

Luke 2:11 (English Standard Version)

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

*God blesses us every day through the gift of His son.*

Christmas brings remembrance  
Of family and friends,  
And the importance of our sharing  
A love without end.

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## Did You Know – some facts

### UK CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS



#### Christmas pudding

Christmas pudding, also called plum pudding although it contains no plums at all, is traditionally steamed-cooked in a cloth on "stir-up Sunday" at the beginning of advent.

The pudding is traditionally stirred from east to west in honour of the 3 wise men and each family member gives the pudding a stir and makes a secret wish.

Sometimes a clean shilling or six penny piece is stirred into the pudding bringing luck to the finder on Christmas day - as long as its not swallowed.

#### Mince Pies

Mince pies were originally made from mince meat and were shaped like a crib and decorated into a tiny baby Jesus. Nowadays, mince pies are similar in shape but contain a sweet fruit filling.

#### Christmas Dinner

The majority of families (90%) around the UK will serve up a succulent roast turkey as the centre piece of their festive meal this Christmas. Turkey is a relative newcomer to the Yuletide table - it was a luxury right up until the 1950's when refrigerators and freezers became more widely available.

It was first brought over to the British Isles in 1526 by Yorkshire man William Strickland who acquired six birds from American Indian traders on his travels and sold them for a tuppence each in Bristol.

Prior to the turkey tradition Christmas fare included roast swan, pheasants and peacocks. A special treat was a roast boars head decorated with holly and fruit.

#### Christmas Cards & Stockings

The first known Christmas card was created by JC Horsley in 1843 in America but was not printed until 1946.

The concept of sending cards at Christmas only started to catch on in the 1860's.

The tradition of filling a stocking with presents was also started in America at about the same time and was first mentioned in the Oxford Dictionary in 1954.

## The Purpose of Christmas

Just one week before Christmas  
Once prayers had been heard,  
The people were scurrying  
To get out God's Word.

The hymns were being sung  
To Holy God above,  
In thanks for Him sending,  
Jesus Christ and His love.

Christmas brings remembrance  
Of family and friends,  
And the importance of our sharing  
A love without end.

Our blessings are too numerous,  
Our hearts filled with joy,  
Yet our eyes have often drifted  
Away from our Lord!

The Christmas season brings forth  
The best in most souls,  
To help those less fortunate  
And lighten their load.

Salvation was offered  
For all to receive,  
If only each person  
Would listen, heed and believe.

So if you don't know Him  
Down deep in your heart,  
Ask Him to save you now  
You'll be changed on the spot.

#### A poem by Anon





### **Useful contacts**

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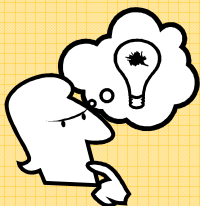
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## **Special Greetings this month**

### **Birthday greetings to**

Abraham Renji John, Alfin Alex Jo, Isabel Mathew, Annu Mathew, Sivin Viji Georg, Annie Alex

### **Congratulations on the Wedding Anniversaries of**

Abraham Renji John & Monisha Susan Kurian, V.V.Abraham & Susan Abraham, Suraj Isaac & Indu Isaac

## **Sunday school**

At 3:30pm every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturdays at the Church.

## **Other announcements**

### **Forthcoming Events:**

Christmas Carol Service : 13<sup>th</sup> Dec 08

Watch night service : 31<sup>st</sup> Dec08

## **Season Greetings**

The managing committee of the Hermon Mar Thoma Church wishes every one a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Let us all with gladsome voice  
Praise the God of heaven,  
Who, to bid our hearts rejoice,  
His own Son hath given.  
O Lord Christ, our Saviour dear,  
Be Thou ever near us;  
Grant us now a glad New Year.  
Amen



"You sound like a bunch of cats! The growl has to be deeper and the barks crisper. Okay, let's take it again from the first howl."