

Hermon Marthoma Church

MIDLANDS

January 2008

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Next Service:

12 Jan 2008 (Malayalam)

26 Jan 2008 (English)

At

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

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Happy New Year

Something to ponder

*For You are my rock and my fortress;
Therefore, for Your name's sake,
Lead me and guide me. Ps 31:3 NKJV*

Dear Brothers and Sisters In Christ:

With the arrival of a New Year, we are thankful to God for His divine love and protection, because it is only by His mercies and blessings that we were guided through 2007, and able to see the dawn of a New Year. He is the one who created us, sustains us, and leads us.

Each New Year represents a time of reflection and renewal. It is a moment when we must contemplate on the past year and prepare for the one ahead. It is a time to consider the mistakes of the past, so that we will not repeat them. This is also a moment when we reflect on our successes so they could be sustained and even enhanced in the future, because there is always room for improvement.

The New Year represents an opportunity for us to resolve to be better not only as individuals, but as families, a church, and a community. It is a chance to reconcile divisions wherever they might exist and promote love and understanding.

This New Year we will have to work not only to overcome the "external forces" that impede the Kingdom of God, but we will also have overcome "internal forces" as well. We will have to change our perception of ourselves

and others. We will have to be more humble in how we view ourselves and our accomplishments. We also need to adopt a more positive attitude in letting God use us to help establish His Kingdom here on earth. We need to make God our "rock and fortress." We need to be confident that He is guiding us in the path that we should go.

We will also have to be more loving and forgiving of the people around us. We have to remember that each and every person around us is a child of God and is worthy of respect and dignity. We have to remember that Jesus died for them, just as He died for us. They are our brothers and sisters.

By working together there is no limit to what we can achieve as a community. At this time I would like to wish all of you a prosperous New Year. Let us go into this year with trust and faith in God, knowing that He will enable us to overcome all challenges and guide us in the path that we should go.

May the good Lord bless all of you this New Year so that you will have the health, courage, and strength to continue our struggle in this temporary life, so one day all of us will reach our eternal homeland with our Lord Jesus Christ in Heaven.

Rev. Shibi Abraham

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Christmas

What Christians believe about Christmas

Christmas, celebrated annually on the 25th December and lasting for twelve days, commemorates the birth of Jesus Christ. Orthodox Christians celebrate the festival on the 6th January. Christians believe that on this day the infant Jesus, born of a virgin mother Mary, was incarnated as God, the Son, adopting the nature of a human being. God became Man in Jesus Christ to display his Divine Nature and great love for human kind. From conception Jesus was special, Christians understand that being born in a lowly stable and visited simply by shepherds, the Universal Nature of Jesus is portrayed, showing how Jesus looks to us and loves us equally. The birth of Jesus is important to Christians as they trust in Jesus as an example to all human beings, wishing to follow in his footsteps.

How is Christmas celebrated?

Christmas is celebrated in many Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches with a service often consisting of a Midnight Mass beginning on Christmas Eve at half past eleven. This continues past midnight whilst prayers are read and hymns are sung. Relevant Bible readings are shared, usually telling of the conception and birth of Jesus. Later, during the service, the first Communion takes place in which the wine, representing the blood of Christ, and bread, representing the body of Christ, which he sacrificed for us is consecrated. The service brings all people together who sing many praises to God for the arrival of his Son. It is a joyous occasion; the decoration of the Church highlights this, with many exhibiting a crib scene

signifying that Jesus was not born in luxury, yet in a lowly manger. For all Christians, Christmas is a time of celebration: giving and sharing gifts, just as the Magi did: 'opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh' (Matthew 2:1-12) is customary. Putting their faith into actions is a common way of celebrating this festival. Other customs can include sharing a traditional family meal, exchanging cards and carol singing.

How may celebrating Christmas, affect the behaviour and lifestyle of a Christian?

During Christmas, Christians may alter their attitudes to accommodate the demands of those in need. As the festival is a time of giving and sharing, believers wish for everyone to take part in the Christmas experience, regardless of their health or social situation. Therefore, families may decide to donate money to charities or local Churches, supporting those in need. It does not matter how much is given, as Jesus told with the story of the Widow's Mite: Jesus said, 'I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything - all she had to live on.' (Mark 12:43-44). At schools, for example, students may choose to participate in such programmes as 'Operation Christmas Child' where they see an opportunity in making a difference in a fellow student's life. The scheme incorporates the idea of sending gift filled shoe boxes, bringing joy and relief to children in desperate situations across the world. Many see it as a way of spreading God's love for human kind.

By Nisha Abraham Thomas

"God made man in Jesus Christ"

A little girl asked her mother for ten cents to give to an old lady in the park. Her mother was touched by the child's kindness and gave her the required sum. "There you are, my dear," said the mother. "But, tell me, isn't the lady able to work any more?" "Oh yes," came the reply. "She sells sweets"

Humour

"A merry heart does good like a medicine"
Proverbs 17:22

Good humor truly is medicine to the soul. Humor can ease tension, relieve uncomfortable or embarrassing situations, change attitudes, generate love and understanding. Humor adds sparkle to life. A properly developed sense of humor is sensitive to others' feelings and is flavored with kindness and understanding.

How does Humor Helps Us Face Problems

Pressures and problems can build up in all of us until we feel like exploding in anger or tears. We know the safety valve of a pressure cooker releases the excess steam thru a safety valve, which keeps the pressure cooker from exploding. Likewise one safety valve the Lord has given us is a sense of humor. Use that sense and release your tensions before an explosion!!!
A Turkish man was shouting

"A DOG NEVER BITES A MAN WHO SMOKES; THIEF WILL NEVER COME TO A SMOKERS' HOUSE; THOSE WHO SMOKES NEVER GROW OLD." at the market to sell cigarettes. There was much crowd before his shop and the cigarettes sold fast.

A young man approached and asked him, "Sir why you deceive the people with blunt lies?"

The Turkish -vendor very casually replied "A dog never bites a smoker because he will have a walking stick in his hand for a support without which he cannot walk."

"A thief never comes to a smoker's house because he will be coughing continuously in the nights

Which will make the thief think that somebody is awake."

"A smoker never grows old because even before he is old, he will die."

"Then how dare you say I am a liar." The young man disappeared immediately
Further reading suggested- (Romans 12:1)

A Prayer

Another year has just ended and the door to the next year is being opened for all of us, whether we like it or not! Our planet earth has completed another revolution around the sun, meticulously and precisely as designed by the Creator. The majesty and beauty of the heavens declare the glory of the living God who is the architect of the entire universe, known and unknown, visible and invisible, earthly and heavenly worlds alike.

In the beginning of the New Year, let us ask our loving and living God to de-clutter all the sins and addictions of our lives for which our Savior paid a price on Calvary. Let our prayers and petitions be sent in the name of Jesus Christ who is our one and only mediator before God. God's grace is enough for us to lead and experience an abundant life through out the New Year and every year thereafter. In Jesus Christ, we have all the resources and treasury of blessings to lead a life that is acceptable to our God. The Lord wants us to be joyful, peaceful and loving people in the midst of all the good and bad times of our earthly life. In the name of the mighty and living God, a blessed New Year is wished and prayed for to every person who happens to read this. Amen.

Church Mice

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Useful contacts

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Sevika Sangam
Marykutty Thomas
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Sunday school
Susan Abraham
0247 632 7334

Special Greetings this month

Birthday greetings to

Akshay John, Shyji Joseph , Anthea Susy Abraham, Thomas K Thomas
Marykutty Thomas

Congratulations on the Wedding Anniversaries of

Alex Kochora Joy & Neetha Alex, Shiju J Mathew & Annu Mathew
Thomaskutty Onnoony & Shyni Thomas, Sabu George & Ancy Sabu

Sunday school

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



New Year's Resolution

Many of us start the New Year by taking resolutions. A few examples of such might be to cut down on chocolate, eat healthier, watch less TV etc... Nevertheless, some of us can never completely manage to stick to these resolutions. But one thing we must always remember is that whatever plans and resolutions we make or break, we must never forget to put god first in our lives. So as we start this New Year, every one of us must take the extra effort not to break this one resolution.

By Reshma Mary Koshy

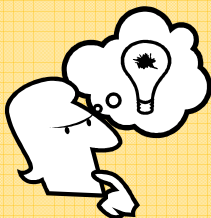
Other announcements

General body

There will be a general body on the 9th February 08, Attendance is important.

Thirumei's visit

Coorlis Thirumeni plans to visit us on the 22nd March 08. Attendance is important.



Please scroll with me in your computer
Bibles to Luke, chapter 4...