

Hermon Marthoma Church

MIDLANDS

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Next Service:

14th July 2007 (Malayalam)
28th July 2007 (English)

At

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

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Just a reminder to all

Please pay your initial contribution and monthly subscriptions in time to be able for this Church to function efficiently.

Something to ponder

From the Achen's desk

Dearly beloved in Christ,

Warm Greetings!

And Thomas answered and said unto him, "My Lord and My God." John 20:28

July 3rd is celebrated as St. Thomas Day, in remembrance of the apostle Thomas who brought Christianity to India in AD 52. This great disciple traveled thousands of miles to bring the GOOD NEWS to the citizens of India. This disciple had to endure a great deal of hardships, and it is even believed that he gave his life for the Gospel. The millions of Christians who originated from India owe a lot to this man.

Studying the life of Thomas reveals how there are many lessons that we can learn and apply to life today.

1) Even though Thomas lacked faith, Jesus still came to him, to help him develop a strong faith.

Thomas may have doubted that Jesus rose from the dead, but Jesus was not willing to give up on Thomas. He was willing to come to Thomas to help him develop the right kind of faith and to help him become the right kind of person. In the same way, even if there are times when we lack faith or when we doubt, Jesus is still willing to come to us and help us overcome our doubts.

2) Thomas was willing to sacrifice everything for the Glory of God.

How many of us are willing to sacrifice everything like Thomas to spread the GOOD NEWS? How many of us are willing to sacrifice our lives to tell others



about Jesus? We should remember and pray for the thousands of Christians who, here in the UK and throughout the world, have left everything to follow Jesus. We should especially pray for those who are doing missionary work in areas of the world (ex. certain parts of India) knowing full well that their very lives are in danger. Even today there are still many attacks against Christians in all parts of India. Let us uphold these people in our prayers and do our part to support them.

3) The life of Thomas also shows what one person can do in the service of God.

The Bible and secular history demonstrates the impact that one person can make. The millions of Christians from India show that one person can make a huge difference in the world. If there are times when you doubt what you can do, just remember the difference that Thomas made in this world and the world to come. By the Grace of God, we too can make a huge difference, helping to spread the Kingdom of God.

I hope and pray that this St. Thomas day does not go by like the others. I hope that each and every one of you will be transformed and like Thomas go out into the world and help spread the GOOD NEWS about "OUR LORD AND OUR GOD."

Yours in Christ
Shibi Achen

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Onam

Onam is an annual harvest festival, celebrated mainly in the Indian state of Kerala. It is the foremost festival among the cultural repertoire of Malayalees, and falls during the month of Chingam (August-September as per the Gregorian calendar), the first month of the Malayalam Calendar and lasts for ten days. Though it is essentially a harvest festival of Malayalees, mythological it is linked to Malayalee-Hindu folktales. Like many other religious festivals in India, Onam is celebrated by people across all castes and faiths.

Significance

Onam has been part of Malayalee psyche for centuries. There are records of Onam being celebrated during the Sangam Age. The earliest record of Onam is found during time of Kulasekhara Perumals around A.D. [800], soon after the Kalabhra Interregnum of Kerala History. Until the eighth century the political history is mostly unknown and is usually known as the



Onam is the biggest festival in the Indian State of Kerala

Kalabhra Interregnum. Kalabhras were supposed to have been ruling Kerala until at least the sixth century. Kalabhras probably refers to Keralaputras. Who were they? It was most probably the people of Mahabali.

Onam has two specific significances. First it is the communal memory and celebration of past history as enunciated in the Mahabali Legend. A story of how paradise was lost. Second it is the celebration of the harvest tied with the memory of the golden age of prosperity. It is believed that during those days the whole of Chingam was celebrated as Onam season. After the rain-drenched month of Karkidakam with its privations, Chingam is a welcome month for people in the state of Kerala. The festival is the harbinger of spring — signalling the start of the harvest season. Onam epitomizes the newfound vigour and enthusiasm of the season, and is celebrated with traditional fervour with visit to temples, family get-togethers, gifting each other clothes called Onakkodi and lots of merry making.

Our Celebrations

The Hermon Marthoma church, midlands celebrates its 1st ever Onam celebrations on Saturday, 1st of September 2007. The programme kicks off with **Onam Games** being conducted at Sutton Park, Sutton Coldfield at 9 am, followed by a traditional **Onasadhya** at the St. James Church hall, Mere Green, and subsequently a **Cultural programme** at the same venue.

At Sutton Park, there will be a variety of traditional Kerala Onam games on the cards, such as **Uriyadi**, **pappadamkadi**, **muttayiperukkal**, **vadamvali**, etc and will be catered for both kids as well as adults.

A traditional **Onasadhya** with all onam dishes including adapradhan will be served at St. James Hill Church Hall at 1 pm.

Brain teasers

I REFUSE TO TAKE OUT THE GARBAGE! I HAVE THE RIGHT TO DO WHATEVER I WANT, ALL THE TIME!



An Onam Recipe

Banana Halwa

Ingredients

Bananas (ripe, peeled & mashed) 3 medium
Nutmeg (ground) ½ tsp
Pure ghee 1 tablespoon
Sugar 1 cup

Method

Heat ghee in a heavy pan. Add bananas and cook over low heat, stirring to prevent the mixture from sticking. Cook for 10 minutes, or until bananas have browned and resemble soft toffee. Add more ghee as necessary.

Add sugar and continue stirring until dissolved. Add nutmeg and cardamom; remove from heat.

Spread halwa into a deep, large plate. Allow it to cool and cut into squares



Queries

Obituary

Our church was saddened to learn this week of the death of one of our most valued members, **Someone Else**.

Someone's passing creates a vacancy that will be difficult to fill. Else has been with us for many years and for every one of those years, Someone did far more than a normal person's share of the work.

Whenever there was a job to do, a class to teach, or a meeting to attend, one name was on everyone's list, "Let Someone Else do it." Whenever leadership was mentioned, this wonderful person was looked to for inspiration as well as results; **"Someone Else can work with that group."**

A story – sent in by BIJI

A man checked into a hotel. There was a computer in his room, so he decided to send an e-mail to his wife. However, he accidentally typed wrong e-mail address, and without realizing his error, he sent the e-mail.

Meanwhile.....

Somewhere, a widow had just returned home from her husband's funeral. The widow decided to check her e-mail, expecting messages from relatives and friends. After reading the first message, she fainted. The widow's son rushed into the room, found his mother on the floor, and saw the computer screen which read:

To: My Loving Wife
Subject: I've reached Safely
Date: 2nd July, 2007

I know you're surprised to hear from me. They have computers here now, and we are allowed to send e-mails to our loved ones. I've just reached safely and have been checked in. I see that everything has been prepared for your arrival tomorrow. Looking forward to seeing you then! Hope your journey is as uneventful as mine was.



"How come you have given me only a name but no password?"

Acting Up In Church

One Sunday in a Midwest City, a young child was "acting up" during the morning worship hour. The parents did their best to maintain some sense of order in the pew but were losing the battle.

Finally, the father picked the little fellow up and walked sternly up the aisle on his way out. Just before reaching the safety of the foyer, the little one called loudly to the congregation,

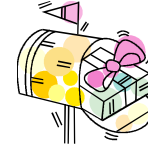
"Pray for me! Pray for me!"

It was common knowledge that Someone Else was among the most liberal givers in our church. Whenever there was a financial need, everyone just assumed Someone Else would make up the difference. Someone Else was a wonderful person; sometimes appearing superhuman.

Were the truth known, everybody expected too much of Someone Else.

Now Someone Else is gone! We wonder what we are going to do. Someone Else left a wonderful example to follow, but who is going to follow it? Who is going to do the things Someone Else did?

When you are asked to help this year, remember -- **we can't depend on Someone Else anymore**



Special Greetings this month

Birthday greetings to the following

Sowmya Simon, V.V.Abraham (Biji), Ardra Giboy, Anu Shaji, Ajay John, Rebekah E Thomas, Elizabeth Thomas (Sajini), Reggina Mathew, Christine Mathew, Mini Thomas, and Elizabeth Abraham (Reena)

No Wedding Anniversary this month

Sunday school starts

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

Please encourage all children to attend.



For our Kids

Listen little children

The minister taught a class of very young children and decided to see how well they had paid attention to his talks. He asked three boys what they remembered of the story of the crucifixion. One boy said, "Well, the cross was heavy – a man had to help." Another boy said, "It got dark as night and thundered." The third boy said, "Well, He came out the third day, saw his shadow and went back in and they had six more weeks of winter."

Remarkable achievement

The headmistress was talking to a parent who was trying to impress her with the child's academic prowess so that she would be accepted into the school.

"Your daughter's only five and she can spell her name backwards? Why, that is remarkable."

"Yes, we're very proud of her," said the mother.

"And what is your daughter's name?"

"Anna!"

Did you Know?

What do diligent hands bring? – Wealth (Proverbs 10.4)

All hard work brings a profit, but what does all talk bring? – Poverty (Proverbs 14:23)

The tree of the knowledge of good and evil was the downfall of Adam and eve, as we well know. What was the name of the other symbolic tree in Eden? – The tree of Life (Genesis 2:9)

Other announcements

Our Committee 2007/08

PRESIDENT	Rev Shibi Abraham	SUNDAY SCHOOL	
VICE PRESIDENT	Dr Sunny Thomas	REP	Mrs Susan Abraham
SECRETARY	Mr V.V.Abraham	SEVIKA SANGAM	
TRUSTEE	Dr Simon Idiculla	REP	Mrs Marykutty Thomas
ACCOUNTANT	Mr Sam Thomas	AUDITORS	Mr Thomas Mathew
LAY LEADERS	Mr Thomas Koshy(Saji) & Mr Joji Philip		Mr Thomas Abraham (Sajeev)

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Please send in your comments so that the newsletter can be improved and contain articles you wish to read.

