

Hermon Marthoma Church

MIDLANDS

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Next Service:

13th Oct 2007 (Malayalam)

(Starts at 2pm by
Rev Jose Varghese)

27th Oct 2007 (English)

At

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

Highlights

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Just a reminder to all

Our Funds are in deficit.

Only if all of us pay our subscriptions of a minimum of £20 per month will we be able to proceed as a Church.

Please pay accordingly.

God gives in plentiful.

Something to ponder

From the Achen's desk

“Every member of the Mar Thoma Church is supposed to be well educated in Christian truths and teachings. We need to have a firm understanding of what the Bible teaches us and what is expected of us as Christians. Over the next few months I would like us to spend some time, studying the different aspects of the Mar Thoma Christians' faith and I would like to begin by looking at the special clothes that a priest wears.

Throughout the Bible, clothing is used in a symbolic manner or to help consecrate individuals. Exodus 28:1-43 describes God telling Moses to have sacred vestments for Aaron and his sons to function as priests. According to verse four there was: a breastplate, an ephod, a robe, a checkered tunic, a turban, and a sash. These clothes were to be used help consecrate the priests and to be used in religious functions.

Ephesians 6:10-17 describes the 'armor of God', which helps us 'be able to stand against the wiles of the devil (Ephesians 6:11).' This passage describes the belt of truth and the breastplate of righteousness. When the prophet Isaiah wrote about the coming Messiah, he wrote that 'Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins.' (Isaiah 11:5).

Like the priests of old, Mar Thomite priests also have special clothes (from *Roots and Wings*: compiled and edited by Koshy Mathew Karinjappally):

The vestments signify the dignity and righteousness with which the priest is clothed in order that he may stand worthily in the presence of God, representing the people.

The cassock (white robe) is symbolic of the dress of ancient slaves. White represents purity and holiness.

Kappa - The vestments that the priest wear during the Holy Qurbana (and some other services.) This consists of:

- The Stole (Uroro) – A broad strip of material worn over the neck and hanging down in front. It represents the breast-plate of justice against the power of spiritual enemies.
- The girdle (zunnoro) worn around the waist signifies divine strength with which the priest is girded as

the representative of Christ.

- The cuffs (zendo) on each hand, going up to the elbow, shows that the hands are prepared for action in the service of God.
- The chasuble (phains) which is shaped like a cape, open in the front, and usually made of rich silk, signifies the dignity and justice with which the priest is clothed in order that he may stand worthy in the presence of God.

In addition to that, bishops use during communion service:

- Special Shoes – signifying the preparation to spread the Gospel of peace.
- A hood (schema) - embroidered with thirteen crosses, representing Jesus Christ and the twelve disciples.
- A pastoral staff (murneetha) – Bishops are considered as the shepherds of the flock, who follow Jesus, the Good Shepherd. The staff is to lead the sheep and help drive away the wolves. Also in the Eastern Churches, it is used as a symbol of authority.

We as Christians should have a firm understanding of what we believe in and how and why we do our services. We should also realize why it is important that we continue to meet for services. The Church has always been a group that has gotten together for worship. It is through worship that the community is maintained and built up. Our worship also is a witness of our faith. In today's world, we need to continue to come together for worship. And we need to encourage others to come and join our worship.

(From *Roots and Wings*: compiled and edited by Koshy Mathew Karinjappally):

-“The liturgy is not just a text or a set of prayers, but an act of the congregation. No true liturgy can be performed with words alone. Only by full and repeated participation nurtured in the liturgical tradition can one come to know of their spiritual needs. The gestures of the priest and the laity, the kiss of peace, the bowing of the heads, the reverence paid to the Eucharistic elements, making the sign of the Cross, all these are integral parts of the liturgical act.”

May the Good Lord enable all of us to properly understand our services, increase our participation in the services, and strengthen our faith.

Rev. Shibi Abraham

The Church – what is it?

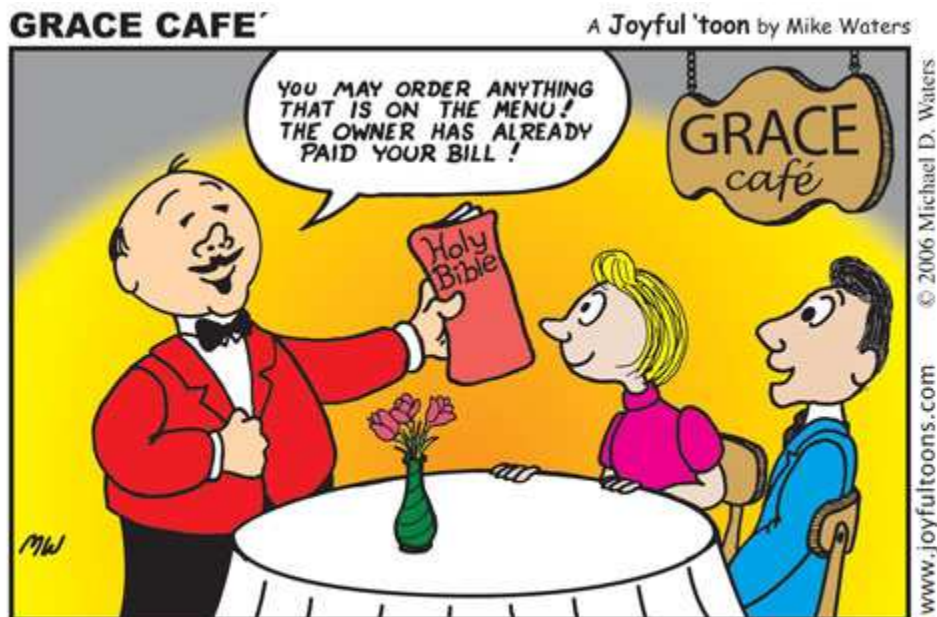
I am the church! You are the church! We are the church together. All who follow Jesus, all around the world! Yes we are the church together. The church is not a building, the church is not a steeple, the church is not a resting place, and the church is the people.

The Church Defined: The New Testament Church refers to body of believers associated by common faith in Jesus Christ.

For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. (1 Corinthians: 12:12-14)

Though we are many, we are one body in Christ! God gives every believer unique gifts to help build the body of Christ. What can you do? Join up! Explore your gifts and see how you can use them to help accomplish His purpose.

The Church is the community of believers. The Church community offers many of the things that help you get along as a Christian – fellowship, corporate worship, and Bible teaching. Each member of the body is unique and special, and adds immeasurably to the community...



For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.- II CORINTHIANS 1:20

What does 'desperate times call for desperate measures' mean?

It means that when you're in a serious situation, you have to consider doing things that you might otherwise think are unacceptable.



Literary Structure of the Bible

Old Testament

The Historical Books: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles

The first 17 books of the Bible trace the history of man from creation through the inception and destruction of the nation of Israel. In the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible), Israel is chosen, redeemed, and prepared to enter a promised homeland. The remaining 12 historical books record the conquest of that land, a transition period in which judges ruled over the nation, the formation of the kingdom, and the division of that kingdom into northern (Israel) and southern (Judah) kingdoms, and finally the destruction and captivity of both kingdoms.

The Poetic Books: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon

The 17 historical books which comprise the first portion of the Old Testament are concluded. They gave the history of civilization from creation to the time of the Persian Empire. They record the history of the Jewish nation from its inception through its days of glory and deportation, and finally, to its days of survival as a small, insignificant nation surrounded by enemies intent on destroying it.

Now comes a different set of books, which are known as the poetic books of the Bible: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon. They don't relate historical experiences. Rather they relate the experiences of the human heart. They do not advance the story of the nation of Israel. Instead, through the use of Hebrew poetry, they delve into the questions of suffering, wisdom, life, love, and most importantly, the character and nature of God. And finally, they have another important function—they serve as a hinge linking the history of the past with the prophetic books of the future.

The Prophetic Books: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

The next 17 books of the Bible comprise about one-fourth of the Scriptures and make up the last division in the Old Testament—the Prophets. The office of prophet was instituted the days of Samuel, and those who were prophets stood along with the priests as God's special representatives. The men who wrote these books were called or appointed to "speak for" God Himself. God communicated His messages to them through a variety of means, including dreams, visions, angels, nature, miracles, and an audible voice. Unfortunately, the messages they shared from God were often rejected and their lives endangered. The prophetic books have four major themes and purposes:

1. To expose the sinful practices of the people
2. To call the people back to the moral, civil, and ceremonial law of God
3. To warn the people of coming judgment
4. To anticipate the coming of Messiah

New Testament

The Historical Books: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts

Like the Old Testament, the New Testament is not one book, but a collection of 27 individual books that reflect a wide range of themes, literary forms, and purposes. The first five books in the New Testament—Matthew, Mark, Luke, John (called the Gospels), and Acts—are entirely narrative and the only historical books in the New Testament. The first four books, or the Gospels, are a historical account of the life and times of Jesus Christ, the Messiah, whose birth, life, death, and resurrection were prophesied throughout the Old Testament. The book of Acts provides a factual report of the period from Christ's final words to His followers and His ascension into heaven to the travels and trials of the apostle Paul. Acts describes some of the key events in the spread of the "good news" from Judea to the far reaches of the Roman Empire.

The Doctrinal Books: Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1, 2 & 3 John, Jude, Revelation

With the end of Acts and the historical books of the New Testament, the Bible moves to 22 letters (called epistles are letters of doctrine—teaching and instruction in Christian truth and practice.

The first nine epistles (Romans through 2 Thessalonians) are penned by the same human author, the apostle Paul, and contain many of the doctrines or essentials of the Christian faith. They are all addressed to Christian assemblies, or churches.

The four that follow (1 Timothy through Philemon) are also written by Paul, but are addressed to individuals. Their contents center on personal relationships.

The final nine letters of the New Testament (Hebrews through Revelation) are addressed to groups scattered throughout the world. Their messages address the issues of persecution, false teachers, the superiority of Christ, and His soon return. Even though the book of Revelation focuses largely on God's prophetic plan for the future, it is also a letter of Jesus Christ, transmitted through the apostle John, affirming Christ's authority and His concern for the church. Revelation closes with a wonderful glimpse of the church's future home in heaven.



Special Greetings this month

Useful contacts

Rev: Shibi Abraham:
07943818819
01612232199

Dr Sunny Thomas
0121 308 1200

Mr V V Abraham
0773 721 6172
0247 632 7334

Dr Simon Idiculla
01902 380 363

Sevika Sangam
Marykutty Thomas
0121 772 8697

Sunday school
Susan Abraham
0247 632 7334

Birthday greetings to

Syma Sunny, Nahum P Isaac, Indu Isaac, Shweta Rachel Abraham

Congratulations on the Wedding Anniversaries of

Giboy George & Annamma Giboy, Sam and Boby Thomas, Mathew and Reggina

Condolence to

Jinu and Sanu Varghese at the demise of Jinu's father in Kerala.

Sunday school

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

There will be no Sunday school on the 13th September 2007

Other announcements

Harvest Festival

(13th Sept from 3:30pm to 8pm at St James Hall, Mere Green Road, Sutton Coldfield.)

This is the time of year when all the crops have been harvested. Harvest Festival is a celebration of the food grown on the land.

Thanksgiving ceremonies and celebrations for a successful harvest are both worldwide and very ancient. In England, we have given thanks for successful harvests since pagan times. We celebrate this day by singing, praying and decorating our churches with baskets of fruit and food in a festival known as 'Harvest Festival', usually during the month of September.

Harvest festivals are traditionally held on or near the Sunday of the Harvest Moon. This is the full Moon that occurs closest to the autumn equinox (about Sept. 23). In two years out of three, the Harvest Moon comes in September, but in some years it occurs in October.

Harvest Festival reminds Christians of all the good things God gives them. This makes them want to share with others who are not so fortunate. In schools and in Churches, people bring food from home to a Harvest Festival Service. After the service, the food that has been put on display is usually made into parcels and given to people in need.

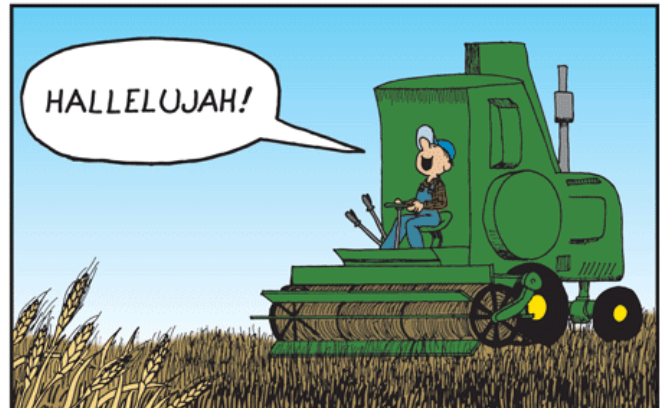
Onam is the South Indian Harvest Festival and Hermon Marthoma Church celebrated it, an account of which is attached.

Sevika Sangam is taking the initiative and all proceeds go to the church Fund that is in a deficit. Please attend and contribute generously. There will be lots to eat & to buy, games for the kids, tambola, etc.... We are hoping to raise £2000/- to enable us to survive as a Church. Our Rep is Marykutty Thomas Tel: 01217728697 for details.



PRAISE HARVESTER

A Joyful 'toon by Mike Waters



May the peoples praise you, O God; may all the peoples praise you.
Then the land will yield its harvest, and God, our God, will bless us.

- PSALM 67:5&6