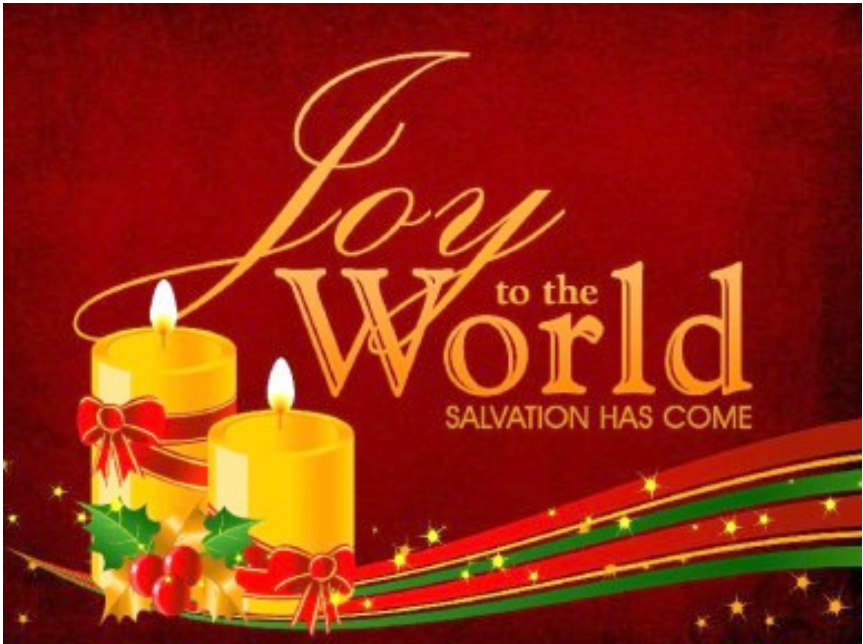


**The Mar Thoma Church of Dallas,
Carrollton**
1400 W Frankford Road, Carrollton, TX 75007

News Bulletin



December 2015



From the Vicar's Desk

Dearly beloved in Christ,

Greetings! The Christmas season has begun, as we spread the glad tidings of great joy during our Christmas caroling and celebrations, I would like to focus on Mary's song of praise known as "Mary's Magnificat," found in the gospel according to St. Luke (1:46-55). The words of Mary's hymn are divinely inspired, it is her composition, her work of praise and devotion, in response to the revelation of the angel. While Elizabeth spoke with 'a loud voice' (1:42), Mary is perhaps more sedate. Regardless these are some of the most beautiful words in all the word of god. Let us ponder them.

1. Mary's psalm of praise reveals a repeated use of the terminology and theology of the Old Testament.

The psalm of Mary is a magnificent masterpiece. It not only employs the terminology of the psalms, but the theology. Mary dwells on the character of god, particularly His grace, which is bestowed on the humble and the oppressed. There is also a distinct parallel with the praise of Hannah in 1 Samuel chapter 2.

2. Mary's praise begins with her grateful response to the grace God has shown to her, a humble servant of the Lord.

In verses 46 – 49, Mary praises God for His mercy as expressed toward her. She rejoices in god, who is her Savior (v. 47). God looked upon her humble estate with compassion; consequently she will be esteemed blessed by all future generations (v. 48). God's compassion on her has revealed both His power and his holiness ("Mighty One, Holy is His name", v. 49).

Mary does not view herself as better holier than anyone else. There is no hint that she thinks God has chosen her to be the mother of Messiah due to her blessedness, but rather that her blessedness is the result of God's sovereign and gracious choice to use her as His instrument. In verse 48 her blessedness is viewed as the result of God's grace.

3. In verse 50, Mary's praise broadens, viewing God's grace to her as the reflection of his gracious purposes for His chosen people, Israel.

Mary saw her blessing as but an illustration, one instance of god's grace, which leads her to praise God for His grace to all those who fear him, from one generation to generation. Mary thus presses from her personal benefits to the blessings which all of God's people (those who fear Him) experience.

4. In verses 51 -55, Mary's praise focuses on the faithfulness of god to His promises and His purposes, especially His covenant with Abraham and his descendants.

If verse 50 spells out the principle that god blesses his people, from one generation to generation, verse 51 -55 give some specific ways in which this has and will be done. In His first coming, Messiah came to reveal God to men, and to accomplish eternal redemption for all who would believe. In his second coming, Messiah will come to "set things straight," to bring justice to the earth and judgment to the wicked. The book of revelation speaks much of these themes, and prophesies their fulfillment.

5. Mary's praise serves as an encouragement to Elizabeth, just as Elizabeth's praise was an encouragement to her.

The similarity of the magnificat to Hannah's praise has the effect of encouraging Elizabeth, whose personal praise focuses on Mary, and not her own joy in having a son in her old age. Thus there is a kind of criss-crossing effect in the praise of both women, for each expresses one's personal praise , but edifies the other.

6. Mary's praise does not focus on the child she will bear, but on Father who is sending His Messiah

Mary's praise does not focus on the immediate blessedness of her having this child, but on the ultimate outcome of the messiah. She views this event in terms of the distant past, in terms of the covenant promises of God, when at his second coming Messiah will set things straight. The social order at that time will be under a radical and violent reversal. The lofty will be put down and the humble will be exalted (Vs. 51, 52). The poor will be helped and the rich will be sent away (v. 53).

7. Mary focused more on the results of Christ's second coming than she did the first.

When you ponder the specific results of messiah's incarnation as outlined in Mary's Magnificat, they have to do with what we know of as Christ's second coming more than with his first coming. Even this is a manifestation of god's grace, for at this early point in time such knowledge (That the redemptive purpose of Christ's first coming would be accomplished by His death on a cross, death at the hands of wicked men), would only have caused Mary unnecessary and premature pain. Simeon's words in chapter 2(v.35) allude to this pain, but do not explain what its cause will be. How gracious god is in what he does not tell us, as well in what He does.

8. Mary's theology, as reflected in her Magnificat is superior to that of the scribes and Pharisees, who would become the arch enemies of the Lord.

Mary understood that Israel's hope was rooted in the Abrahamic Covenant, not in the Mosaic. The scribes and Pharisees seemed as though they could only think and talk in terms of the Law of Moses, the Mosaic covenant. Mary viewed all of God's dealings in the light of His grace; the religious leaders only thought in terms of human works. Mary understood the great themes of the Old Testament, such as God's mercy and compassion, god's concern for the poor and helpless. These were the themes of the Old Testament prophets. They were not however the themes of the scribes and Pharisees. Mary also understood the purposes of god as a plan which He had been carrying out through Israel's history. She viewed history in the light of this plan. The scribes and Pharisees, however seemed only to grasp a few of the particulars, but missed the plan.

May a proper understanding of the truths about Mary's song of praise enable us to celebrate Christmas in a more meaningful way and to praise and glorify God through our lives.

“Wishing you all a Blessed Christmas and a happy New Year.”

Sam Achen

SCHEDULED FELLOWSHIP CALENDAR

Sunday School

Sunday School will begin at 9:15AM

English Choir

English Choir practice sessions will be held from **1:00PM** on alternate Sunday after Holy Communion service

Fasting Prayer

Fasting prayer will be held at Parsonage every Friday from **10 AM – 1 PM**

Bible study

Every Sunday from **10:00 – 10.20 AM**

Christmas Caroling Schedule

Sunday, December 6 th – Carrollton Area
Saturday, December 12 th – Garland / Mesquite Area
Sunday, December 13 th – Arlington / Fort-Worth Area
Friday, December 18 th – Irving Area
Saturday, December 19 th – Carrollton Area
Sunday, December 20 th – Carrollton Area

December Wedding Anniversaries

DATE	NAME	AREA
17	Mr. & Mrs. Binu Mathew	MES
17	Mr. & Mrs. P K John	IRV
20	Mr. & Mrs. Nibu K Thomas	CAR
26	Mr. & Mrs. Jacob Mathew	MES
27	Mr. & Mrs. Binu Kurian	AFW
27	Mr. & Mrs. Mathew Madappallil Paulose	CAR
27	Mr. & Mrs. Rejish Rajan Abraham	CAR
27	Mr. & Mrs. Renni Eappen	CAR
27	Mr. & Mrs. Shelly Jacob	CAR
27	Mr. & Mrs. Sunil Abraham Chacko	CAR
28	Mr. & Mrs. Eapen Varghese	CAR
28	Mr. & Mrs. P. M. Jacob	CAR
29	Mr. & Mrs. James Abraham	CAR
29	Mr. & Mrs. Philji P Johns	OTH
30	Mr. & Mrs. Giby Abraham Jacob	AFW

December Birthdays

DATE	NAME	AREA	DATE	NAME	AREA
1	Mrs. Annamma P John	AFW	19	Mr. Arron Chacko	IRV
1	Mrs. Jessy Varghese	CAR	19	Mr. Cherian Punnoose Varghese	CAR
1	Mr. Lalu T Mathew	MES	19	Mr. Jerold Varghese	CAR
1	Mrs. Saramma John		19	Mrs. Shirley Thomas	MES
2	Mr. John Samuel	IRV	20	Mrs. Mariyamma Mathew	CAR
3	Ms. Christine Saji	CAR	21	Mr. Saji George	CAR
6	Mrs. Annie Abraham	CAR	21	Ms. Sophia E Koshy	CAR
8	Mrs. Libi Varghese	CAR	23	Ms. Jeeni Unni	MES
8	Mrs. Roji Mary Ninan	CAR	25	Mr. Noel Dasari	GAR
9	Ms. Alyssa Chacko	CAR	25	Mrs. Sosamma Abraham	CAR
9	Mr. Aniamma Jospheh	IRV	26	Mr. John Mathew	AFW
10	Mrs. Nisha K Thomas	CAR	26	Ms. Julie Andrews	AFW
10	Mr. Raju Abraham	CAR	28	Mr. Biji Simon	IRV
11	Ms. Sarah George	AFW	28	Mr. Eapen Varghese	CAR
11	Mr. Sean Samuel Mathew	IRV	29	Mr. Johnson Yohannan	CAR
14	Ms. Alisha Sarah Varghese	CAR	29	Mr. Sam K John	CAR
14	Mrs. Ruby John	CAR	29	Ms. Sophia Sara Varughese	CAR
15	Ms. Rachel Simon	IRV	30	Mr. Alex Thomas	AFW
16	Mr. Vaidyan T Jacob	GAR	30	Mr. Jothy Jacob	CAR
17	Ms. Hannah Johns	CAR	30	Mr. P J George	OTH
18	Ms. Chirstina Thomas	OTH	31	Mr. Jacob John	IRV
18	Mr. Ethan Alexander Abraham	CAR	31	Mr. Michael Leon Stephens	OTH
18	Dr. Sanil John	IRV	31	Mr. Santhosh Chacko	MES

December Lectionary

Date	Lessons	Epistle-Gospels
6 Sunday	Holy Communion Service [English] @ 10:30AM	
	Birth Of John The Baptist (Bible Sunday)	
CH.77	1 King. 19:1-21	Gal.1:11-17
	Rev. 10:1-11	St.Luke.1:57-66
13 Sunday	Contemporary Worship @ 8:30 AM Holy Communion Service [Malayalam] @ 10:30AM	
	Annunciation to Joseph	
CH.240	Isa. 40:1-11	Phil.4:4-9
	Acts. 20:17-25	St.Mat.1:18-23
20 Sunday	Holy Communion Service [English] @ 10:30AM	
	Sunday before Christmas – Our Lord Comes	
CH.115	Isa.11:1-10	Rom. 1:8-16
	1 John 5:1-12	St.John.1:1-14
25 Friday	Holy Communion Service [English] @ 8:00AM	
	Yaldo-Feast of Nativity-A new dawn	
CH.119	Micah.5:1-9	1 Tim. 1:14-17
	Col.1:15-20	St.Luke.2:1-20
27 Sunday	Contemporary Worship @ 8:30 AM Holy Communion Service [Malayalam] @ 10:30AM	
	Our Lord is Coming Again	
CH.393	Zech. 14:1-5	1Thes.4:13-8
	Col.1:6-11	St.John.14:1-7
31 Thursday	Holy Communion Service [Malayalam] @ 9:30PM	
	Year Ending – Watch Night Service	
CH.265	1 Sam.7:5-17	1 Pet. 5:6-11
	Heb. 13:7-21	St.Luke.13:6-9

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