

# ST. THOMAS INDIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

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## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2025

VOLUME XXIX ISSUE 2

### Vicar's Message

#### 1996 - 2025 With STIOC: Years of Gratitude

Glory to God! Thanks be to God!

Looking back 29 years ago, on February 18<sup>th</sup> we had the first Holy Qurbana and General Body meeting reviving the parish. I was 49 years old at that time. Of the 36 years of my priestly ministry in the USA, 29 years were spent with the St. Thomas Indian Orthodox Church. I cannot thank God enough for the enormous grace showered on me and the parish and the unconditional love I experienced.

It is again a matter of gratitude to the Lord that our parish stands as the largest parish with the most spiritual organizations functional. The help I received from Rev. Fr. Sujit Thomas and Rev. Dn. Predeep Chacko are innumerable. All credit should go to the divine guidance and the volunteers and leaders, both young and old, who took the tasks in several areas. Sometimes it may be physical labor, sometimes it may be financial help or sometimes it may be a help at the worship; in any event we are all enjoying the goodwill of many. May the good Lord reward



all those who serve our community! Thank you all for your support and love for the parish.

On this Reorganization Anniversary, let us lift up our hearts with thanks to the good Lord who brought us to this point in our church life, enriching us and helping us grow to the future. We are making all attempts to be a Christian family with much tolerance, understanding and cooperation. We continued our Christian witness by helping the needy across religions and denominations. We do have differences of opinion, but our common goal is the same. And we are aware of our connectivity to the loving God, not to any political system. Our true worship and dedication to our community is giving fruits in the growth of our next

generation. Therefore, let us continue in the same spirit.

We are entering into a new season of spiritual uplift beginning on March 2 with the Great Lent. Our daily evening worship at the church has been a huge solace for many people who came to it without fail. It was always an enriching feeling to attend the Lenten prayers. In addition to that we also engage in several charity initiatives and special days of observances. All these activities are amounting to the fact that we are once again enjoying the company of our Lord whose life is remembered

throughout the Lenten time. That is the only way we can continue to keep our connectivity with Him. Hope and pray that we all will take this opportunity for renewal through repentance, confession, and Holy Eucharist.

Once again, I thank you all for the ardent support and love that you have given me. God bless you!

Lovingly,

Fr. M. K. Kuriakose, Vicar

## Parish Highlights from January

- January 8<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> – Winter Summit was held at the Holy Transfiguration Retreat Center. Main speaker was Rev. Fr. Shawn Thomas.
- January 18<sup>th</sup> – Philadelphia Area MGOCSM held their New Year's Conference at St. George Fairless Hills, PA. Main speaker was Rev. Fr. Gheevarghese John.

## Events and Announcements

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### Church Reminders

**Dip Jar:** We regret to inform you that Dip Jar has been discontinued, and the device has been removed from the church premises. Those who are interested in submitting their offertory electronically may use digital payment via the QR code posted by the Meditation Room.

**Digital Payment:** All donations can be made by Apple Pay / GPay / Venmo - members can scan QR codes affixed on the glass wall outside the Church office.

**Lost and Found:** Many small items such as jewelry and watches have been submitted to the office “Lost and Found”. Please see the Secretary if you believe you may be missing one of these items.

## Events

**February 2<sup>nd</sup>** - the Blessed Feast of the Entry of Our Lord into the Temple. Inauguration of Housing Charity for 2025.

**February 10<sup>th</sup>** – 3-day Nineveh Lent begins.

**February 16<sup>th</sup>** – Ecumenical Fellowship Bible Quiz at Christos Marthoma Church.

**February 23<sup>rd</sup>** - Sunday School Virtual Game Night.

## Congratulations to our Ecumenical Fellowship Bible Quiz Teams



Group 1 (Treena Jossy, Delwin Thomas, Anushka Abraham & Gregory Abraham) won 1<sup>st</sup> Prize.  
 Group 2 (Divya Thomason, Lisa John & Lins John) won 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize.

## Spiritual Organization Updates

### Men’s Forum

- Men’s Forum has weekly meetings after the Holy Qurbana every Sunday.

### OCYM

- OCYM has weekly meetings after Holy Qurbana every Sunday.

### MMVS

- February 8<sup>th</sup> – Fasting prayer for the sick
- February 16<sup>th</sup> - Pickle Sale
- MMVS has weekly meetings after the Holy Qurbana every Sunday.

### FOCUS

- Monthly meetings are conducted by FOCUS.

### MGOCSM

- Monthly Meeting will be held on February 22<sup>nd</sup> at church.

## Save the Dates

World Day of Prayer – March 1<sup>st</sup>



GROW Annual Conference- March 8<sup>th</sup>.

OVBS – July 17<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup>

G.R.O.W. G.R.O.W. ANNUAL ONE-DAY CONFERENCE

*Rising Above Every Season*

"Cast all your anxieties on Him, because He cares for you."  
~ 1 Peter 5:7

**SATURDAY, MARCH 8TH, 2025 | 9AM - 3:30PM**

St. Stephen's Orthodox Church | 497 Godwin Ave, Midland Park, NJ 07432

Registration  
 • \$15 (Now - Jan 31)  
 • \$25 (Feb 1 - Mar 4)  
 • \$30 (Same Day)

Speaker: Dr. Annah Kuriakose

Register today!  
[www.thegrowministry.com](http://www.thegrowministry.com)

GROWMINISTRIES2012@GMAIL.COM GROWMINISTRY GROW.MINISTRIES GROW MINISTRIES

Join us  
 Save The Date

**OVBS 2025**

Date : July 17 to 19 - 2025  
 Location : St.Thomas  
 Indian Orthodox Church, Unruh Ave.

Theme *Walk in Purity*  
 Psalm 119:9

Family & Youth Conference 2025 – July 9 – 12

Family and Youth Conference of the Northeast American Diocese

**FAMILY & YOUTH CONFERENCE 2025**  
 OF THE NORTHEAST AMERICAN DIOCESE OF  
 MALANKARA ORTHODOX SYRIAN CHURCH

THE WAY OF THE PILGRIM  
*"But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ" -  
 Philippians 3:20*

LOCATION  
**HILTON STAMFORD HOTEL & EXECUTIVE MEETING CENTER**  
 1 FIRST STAMFORD PL, STAMFORD, CT 06902

DATE  
**JULY 9 - 12, 2025**

## Member Announcements

### First Temple Entry

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- ❖ February 2<sup>nd</sup> - **Aiden Kurian**, son of Jino Jacob and Gilu Kurian, grandson of Jacob Thekkekuttu and Susy Jacob.

### Obituaries

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- ❖ January 31<sup>st</sup> – **Mrs. Annamma Mathew**, wife of Mr. Mathew Varghese (#106) passed away. The funeral took place on February 4<sup>th</sup> at our church.
- ❖ February 2<sup>nd</sup> – **Mrs. Chinnamma Varghese**, mother of Mr. Achen Varghese, Babu Varghese, Biju Varghese and Saji Varghese passed away in Kerala. The funeral took place on February 6<sup>th</sup>.
- ❖ **Sarala Abraham** – Aunt of Paul C. John.
- ❖ **Leelamma Abraham** – Aunt of Paul C. John.
- ❖ February 9<sup>th</sup> – **Mr. George Abraham**, brother of Mrs. Jolly Reji Varghese (#334) passed away. The funeral took place on February 15<sup>th</sup>.

*On behalf of the parish, we express our deepest condolences to the bereaving families. Let us pray for the departed souls and for the bereaving families. May our heavenly Father grant peace and comfort that surpasses human wisdom and understanding.*

#### **Memorial Prayer List**

As you know, members can submit names of departed loved ones that need to be included on the Memorial Prayer List. You probably have given the names of your departed ones in the past. However, please note that our church doesn't have a system to save such names with dates or automatically track and decide on which Sunday the name should be included on the prayer list. You need to enter the name on the Memorial Prayer list kept in the church office. Note: We do have a master list of departed faithful that we keep for remembering them on the Sunday of the departed faithful, which is a week before the Holy Lent begins. This list has only names, no dates.

#### **Life Events Announcements**

Do you have a special day that you would like to announce, like a milestone wedding anniversary (25<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup> etc.) or a birthday (50<sup>th</sup>, 60<sup>th</sup>, 70<sup>th</sup>, 80<sup>th</sup> etc.)? If you would like to, please inform the Secretary in advance. Please remember that even though our parish database includes birthday and wedding day, it doesn't include the year of birth or marriage. Unless you notify the Secretary or Clergy, they wouldn't know milestone events.

## FEBRUARY WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

Mr. & Mrs. Paul C John	Feb 1	Mr. & Mrs. Jiju Alex	Feb 12
Mr. & Mrs. Koshy Daniel	Feb 1	Mr. & Mrs. Praveen P. Geevarghese	Feb 13
Mr. & Mrs. Thankachan P Daniel	Feb 1	Mr. & Mrs. Mathew A.P George	Feb 15
Mr. & Mrs. Philip Mathai	Feb 2	Mr. & Mrs. Aji P Abraham	Feb 15
Mr. & Mrs. Nelson O Panicker	Feb 3	Mr. & Mrs. Simon Cheeran Ittikuru	Feb 16
Mr. & Mrs. Rajan C Padiyara	Feb 3	Mr. & Mrs. Mathew N K.	Feb 16
Mr. & Mrs. Tobin Thankachen	Feb 3	Mr. & Mrs. Ponnachen Geevarghese	Feb 16
Mr. & Mrs. Jacob M Zachariah	Feb 4	Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Mathew Vaidyan	Feb 16
Mr. & Mrs. Anto G Panicker	Feb 5	Mr. & Mrs. Jerin Jacob	Feb 17
Mr. & Mrs. N K Thomas	Feb 6	Mr. & Mrs. Maliyil M Philip	Feb 19
Mr. & Mrs. Cherian V V.	Feb 7	Mr. & Mrs. Bivin Varghese Pulivelil	Feb 22
Mr. & Mrs. Ron Philip	Feb 8	Mr. and Mrs. Jose K John	Feb 29
Mr. & Mrs. Joel Philip	Feb 10		
Mr. & Mrs. Robin Philip	Feb 11		
Mr. & Mrs. O. Geevarghese Panicker	Feb 12		
Mr. & Mrs. Anil George Panicker	Feb 12		





# FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Saramma Thomas	Feb 1	Tiby Raju	Feb 12	Ezra Mathew	Feb 19
Anil T. Babu	Feb 1	Paul C John	Feb 13	Nathania George	Feb 20
Sajan Benny	Feb 1	Alex P Symon	Feb 13	Norah Mary Daniel	Feb 20
Jessly Alex	Feb 1	Isabel A Anish	Feb 13	Philip Melavila	Feb 20
Liya S. Alex	Feb 1	Alexander Mathew	Feb 13	Jenny Raj	Feb 20
Varghese Baby	Feb 2	Ditty Mariam Saji	Feb 14	Robin P. Montharayil	Feb 20
Binu Thankachan	Feb 2	Ginu C. John	Feb 14	Mariamamma Cherian	Feb 21
Edwin Saji	Feb 3	Justin K Alex	Feb 14	Sophy Mathew	Feb 21
Manu Varghese	Feb 3	Shibu Thomas	Feb 14	Jacob P Chacko	Feb 21
Dona Lijin	Feb 3	Jiju Alex	Feb 14	Dennis Abraham	Feb 21
Reeja George	Feb 4	Jibin K Alex	Feb 14	Subi Mathew	Feb 22
Simmy Aneena Jacob	Feb 4	Raji Aji	Feb 15	Leelamma Rajan	Feb 22
Laly Joyes	Feb 5			Zarah Kurian	Feb 24
Joelyne Jacob	Feb 5			Ashok Mathew Koshy	Feb 24
Jeena Jacob	Feb 5	Siny Mathew	Feb 15	Asher Varghese	Feb 24
Steffin Manoj	Feb 7	Ezekiel Raju	Feb 15	Bindu Thomas	Feb 25
Reni Nelson	Feb 7	Jimmy James	Feb 16	Chinnamma Philip	Feb 25
Sheena Vaidian	Feb 7	David Roy	Feb 16	Binny Cherian	Feb 25
Vinod Jacob	Feb 8	Jilu Jacob	Feb 16	Joel Philip	Feb 26
Noel Stephen	Feb 8	Abraham John	Feb 17	Cherian Varghese	Feb 26
Maria Mathai	Feb 9	Omana Abraham	Feb 17	Jaisy John	Feb 27
Jaime M George	Feb 9	Milly Philip	Feb 17	Leon Lynnson	Feb 27
Grace John	Feb 9	George Varughese	Feb 17	Sally Thomas	Feb 27
Aleyamma Varghese	Feb 10	Alia Ann Bivin	Feb 17	Joby George	Feb 27
Melissa Alice Abraham	Feb 10	Jerry Peter Alexander	Feb 18	Susan Abraham George	Feb 28
Cristia Susan Shibu	Feb 10	Maya Kappil	Feb 18	Silpa M Thomas	Feb 29
Evana V John	Feb 10	Jayden Mathew	Feb 18		
Jitha Ann Alex	Feb 11		Feb 19		

# Sunday School News

All parents are encouraged to join the Sunday School Parents WhatsApp group to keep up with all communications from Sunday School.

*Steven Kurian, Principal*

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## One Year Bible Reading Schedule - February

Date	I	II	III
February 1	Exodus 5-6	Psalms 58-59	Romans 10-11
February 2	Exodus 7-8	Psalms 60-61	Romans 12
February 3	Exodus 9	Psalms 62-63	Romans 13-14
February 4	Exodus 10	Psalms 64-65	Romans 15-16
February 5	Exodus 11-12	Psalms 66-67	Mark 1
February 6	Exodus 13-14	Psalms 68	Mark 2
February 7	Exodus 15	Psalms 69	Mark 3
February 8	Exodus 16	Psalms 70-71	Mark 4
February 9	Exodus 17-18	Psalms 72	Mark 5
February 10	Exodus 19-20	Psalms 73	Mark 6
February 11	Exodus 21	Psalms 74	Mark 7
February 12	Exodus 22	Psalms 75-76	Mark 8
February 13	Exodus 23	Psalms 77	Mark 9
February 14	Exodus 24-25	Psalms 78	Mark 10
February 15	Exodus 26	Psalms 79-80	Mark 11
February 16	Exodus 27	Psalms 81-82	Mark 12
February 17	Exodus 28	Psalms 83-84	Mark 13
February 18	Exodus 29	Psalms 85-86	Mark 14
February 19	Exodus 30	Psalms 87-88	Mark 15-16
February 20	Exodus 31-32	Psalms 89	1 Cor. 1-2
February 21	Exodus 33-34	Psalms 90-91	1 Cor. 3
February 22	Exodus 35	Psalms 92-93	1 Cor. 4-5
February 23	Exodus 36	Psalms 94-95	1 Cor. 6
February 24	Exodus 37	Psalms 96-99	1 Cor. 7
February 25	Exodus 38	Psalms 100-101	1 Cor. 8-9
February 26	Exodus 39-40	Psalms 102	1 Cor. 10
February 27	Leviticus 1-2	Psalms 103	1 Cor. 11
February 28	Leviticus 3-4	Psalms 104	1 Cor. 12-13

**Please remember to pray for the Sunday School children and staff in your daily prayer.**