

ST. IGNATIUS ELIAS JACOBITE SYRIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

BELFAST, NORTHERN IRELAND, UNITED KINGDOM

[MALANKARA SYRIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH – U.K. REGION]

(Under the Holy Apostolic See of Antioch & All the East)

Charity Registration Number: NIC100633

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2022-2023

Administrative Information

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

VICAR & PRESIDENT

Rev. Fr. Abin Mathew

SECRETARY

Mr. Daniel Kavalayil

TREASURER

Mr. Gibi Andrews

Jt. SECRETARY

Mr. Shaji John

Jt. TREASURER

Mr. Bennet V Mathew

MANAGING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mr. Biju Kuriakose

Mr. Jins Jose

Mr. Joby Mathew

Mr. Nelson Peter

Mr. Niju Baby

Mr. Nishanth Thomas

Mr. Rajan K Markose

Mr. Saji George

Mr. Shibu Abraham

Mr. Shibu Jacob

INTERNAL AUDITOR

Mr. Paulose N Kuriakose

WORSHIP PLACE

St. Polycarp's Church Hall

104 Upper Lisburn Road, Finaghy

Belfast BT10 0BB

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Trustees Report

The Trustees present their report and accounts for the period from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.

Reference and administrative details of the Church, its Trustees and advisers during this period are shown on page 1.

Structure, objects, Governance and Management

This church is a part of the Universal Syrian Orthodox Church. The supreme head of this Church is His Holiness Moran Mar Ignatius Aphrem II, the Patriarch of Antioch and all the East and his Successors. The Patriarch may appoint a Metropolitan (The Patriarchal Vicar) from Malankara Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church as the Metropolitan in charge of the Church. This Church is a registered charity under Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.

Objects. To maintain the faith, traditions and doctrines of the Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church and to perform all religious rights and sacraments for all in Northern Ireland in accordance with the ancient Syrian Orthodox traditions, as followed by the Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church in India.

The church conducts holy Eucharist, sacraments and services according to the faith, traditions, customs and rights of the Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church, organises and conducts Sunday school, prayer meetings, retreats and activities of community development for youth.

The church generates funds through charity fund raising events, members' contributions and donations. This is used to provide financial assistance to sick people who require hospitalisation and medical treatment and financial assistance to those who can't afford education.

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The Charity is organised, the General Body Meeting elects the Trustees. During the period there were one annual General Body Meeting, one half yearly General Body Meeting and three special General Body Meetings held. The Trustees manage the administrative as well as the financial affairs of the Church. The Trustees meet regularly for monitoring the activities. During this period, Trustees met thirteen times to review, monitor and plan activities.

Activities

1. The Holy Services are usually conducted every Saturdays of the month. Holy services are conducted by the vicar or any other priest deputed by the vicar. Many altar assistants are helping the priests in conducting the Holy services. Refreshments are provided to all after the Holy services.
2. Holy week services were conducted from 9th April 2022 to 16th April 2022. Fr Abin Mathew led the holy week services.
3. Annual General Body Meeting was held on 30th April 2022 and elected the board of trustees listed in page 1.
4. Members of the parish participated in the Lenten convention organised by the UK diocese during April 2022.
5. Vacation Bible School was conducted on 18th, 19th and 23rd April 2022 at Dunmurry Community Centre. Many non-members also attended.
6. Feast of St. George was celebrated on 23rd April 2022.

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7. Feast of Pentecost was celebrated on 4th June 2022.
8. Feast of St. Peter and St. Paul was celebrated on 25th June 2022.
9. Feast of St. Thomas was celebrated on 2nd July 2022.
10. The Patriarchal Vicar Dr. Mathews Mor Anthimos Metropolitan visited our parish and celebrated Holy Mas on 30th July 2022.
11. Mr. Shibu Abraham of this parish was elected to the diocesan level council and Mr. Paulose Kuriakose was nominated to the council.
12. Rev. Fr. Aju Varghese was appointed as the assistant vicar of this parish from 1st August 2022.
13. Feast of St. Mary was celebrated on 13th August 2022.
14. One day picnic was conducted to Castlewellan Forest Park on 21st August 2022. Many parish members participated in the picnic.
15. A pilgrimage trip was conducted to Knock church in Ireland on 3rd September 2022. Around 100 members participated.
16. Onam (Festival of Kerala, India) along with the annual harvest festival was celebrated on 17th September 2022. Many games and cultural programmes were conducted. Onasadya (traditional special dinner) was served to all participants.
17. Feast of St. Baselios was celebrated on 1st October 2022.
18. Half yearly General Body Meeting was held on 22nd October 2022.
19. Parish annual day was conducted on 29th October 2022. Cultural competitions for Sunday school children, games and cultural programs for adults were conducted on the day. Lunch and dinner were provided to all.
20. Feast of St. Gregorios was celebrated on 5th November 2022.
21. Bishop Issac Mor Osthathos Metropolitan was appointed as the new Patriarchal Vicar for UK diocese.
22. Former Patriarchal Vicar Zacharias Mor Phelexinos Metropolitan visited our parish and celebrated Holy Mas on 3rd December 2022.
23. To commemorate the birth of Lord Jesus Christ, Christmas Carol was conducted on 6 days during December 2022 under the leadership of the Vicar and Assistant Vicar. The Carol Team visited all houses and distributed church calendar and sweets.
24. Christmas Service was conducted on 24th December 2022. The Holy Mass was celebrated by Rev. Fr. Eldho M.C. Special cake and Christmas Dinner were provided to all. Christmas gifts were distributed to all children.

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25. The church carol team participated in the Diocesan level carol singing competition.
26. A workshop was conducted on 31st December 2022 for the Sunday school children on church faith and bible study.
27. Feast of the Patron Saint, St. Ignatius Elias III was celebrated on 3rd and 4th February 2023 at St. Polycarp's Church, Finaghy, Belfast. On 3rd, Evening Prayer, Gospel Preaching & Love Feast were conducted. On 4th, Holy Tri-Mass was celebrated by Rev. Fr. Raju Cheruvillil Cor-episcopa, Rev. Fr. Abin Mathew, Rev. Fr. Aju Varghese and Rev. Fr. Eldho M.C. After the Holy Mass, Procession, Dinner and Cultural Programs were conducted. Prizes were distributed to all winning students for academic excellence, attendance and cultural programs. On this occasion, those who have completed 60 years of age and those couples who have completed 25 years of their marriage were specially honoured and mementos were presented to them.
28. Service of reconciliation was conducted on 18th February 2023.
29. Balakalolsavam (Cultural competition for children) was conducted during March 2023.
30. Zonal-wise Family Prayer meetings are conducted on 1st and 3rd Fridays of every month under the leadership of Vicar/Assistant Vicar. Online prayer meetings in English are conducted on 2nd and 4th Fridays.
31. Youth association is actively involved in conducting prayer meetings in English with the participation of students and young people.
32. Gospel wing is leading the initiatives for organising all prayer meetings.
33. Sunday school classes are conducted on every Saturdays and students are taught as per the MJSSA syllabus. Snacks & refreshments are provided to all after the classes.
34. Vanitha Samajam (Women's Association) was actively involved in organising all church events including Harvest Festival, VBS, Parish Annual Day, Annual Feast & Cultural Programs.
35. Church Choir is very active in making the Holy Service live and musical as and when needed.
36. House visits are conducted periodically under the leadership of the Vicar/Assistant Vicar.
37. Thirteen new members were admitted to the parish during the year.
38. The church has distributed a total of £2,700.00 from the charity fund to 13 individuals as support for medical treatment and to one organisation in support of their charitable activities.
39. The church has claimed back a total of £12,364.61 as Gift Aid from HMRC for the years 2019-2020 and 2020-2021.
40. Financial activities: During 2022-2023, the total income was £51,383.00 and the total expenditure was £33,202.06. With the retained surplus of £99687.30 from previous year, the current retained surplus for the period is £130,232.35.

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Future Developments

With the enormous support from members and well-wishers, the parish was planning to buy a property to use as a church. The church was able to locate a property at 43 Derriagh Road, Lisburn and agreed to buy the property. The planning and other legal formalities for the purchase of the property are in progress.

Approval

This report was approved by the General Body Meeting on 29th April 2023.

For board of trustees,

Daniel Kavalayil

Secretary