



**ST. GREGORIOS INDIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH (IOCNI) - BELFAST**

(EST: 2004)

(Diocese of UK-Europe-Africa of the Malankara (Indian) Orthodox Church)

Charity Registration No:106964

# Annual Report

**St. Gregorios Indian  
Orthodox Church, Belfast**

**2022-2023**  
2022-2023



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## Trustees Report:

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, with great honor, I present this church report for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

### **Governance and Structure:**

The St. Gregorios Indian Orthodox Church, Belfast is a parish affiliated to and constituted by the Malankara Orthodox Church, also known as the Indian Orthodox Church founded in India by St. Thomas, one of the Twelve Apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, presently administered by His Holiness Baselios

Marthoma Mathews III, Catholicos of the East and Malankara Metropolitan, successor to the Apostolic Throne of St. Thomas.

St. Gregorios Indian Orthodox Church, Belfast is under the direct ecclesiastical jurisdiction of His Grace Abraham Mar Stephanos Metropolitan of the Diocese of UK- Europe- Africa, subject to the authority of the Holy Episcopal Synod of the Malankara Orthodox Church. Rev. Fr. George Thankachan, our present vicar who led the parish during the report year whose spiritual and administrative contributions helped in the growth of the church. Dn. Calvin Poovathoor is actively assisting our Vicar in all church matters. Our Church is a registered Charity under the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland. The church generates its funds through members monthly subscriptions, donations from members, yearly charity box collections within the church community and other events organized by church. Church donates money for people in need with medical conditions, the homeless and for educational purposes as well as making donations to various charity organizations in Northern Ireland.

St. Gregorios Indian Orthodox Church,  
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### Objectives:

To maintain the faith and traditions of Malankara (Indian) Orthodox Church and to perform all religious rights and sacraments for all in Northern Ireland in accordance with the ancient Malankara (Indian) Orthodox traditions as followed by the Indian Orthodox Church in India.

The Church conducts Eucharist (Qurbana), sacraments and other services according to the faith, traditions, customs and rites of the Malankara (Indian) Orthodox Church. The church organises and conducts Sunday school, prayer meetings, and different activities for community development.

### 1. General Body and Managing Committee/Board of Trustees Meetings, Office Bearers for the Year 2022-23.

The general body held on 20/3/22 and elected following office bearers.

Hon. Secretary	Mr. Anil Thomas
Hon. Treasurer	Mr. Varghese Philip
Committee Members	Mr. Sanu John
	Mr. Shoby Saimon
	Mr. Sijo Joy*
	Mr. George Thomas
	Mr. Abraham Varkey
	Ms. Jinsu Mary Jacob
	Mr. Raju Issac (Ex Officio)
	Mr. Bejoy Daniel (Ex-Officio)
Internal Auditor	Mr. Mathew Koshy



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\*Mr. Sijo Joy resigned after a few months.

The general body also elected other representatives:

Dr. Cucki Thomas (Youth representative)

Mr. George Thomas (Sunday School Headmaster)

Mrs. Sini Kuriakose (Martha Mariyam Samajam Secretary)

Mrs. Tensy John (Prayer Meeting Secretary)

The vicar Fr. T. George is the chair of the trustee Board.

The General Body held on 15/5/2022 approved the annual report and the Annual Account Statement and balance sheet for the year 2021-2022.

The Managing Committee (Board of Trustees) met online several times during the year to plan and coordinate day to day church administration of the parish. I would like to take this opportunity to thank each committee member for their continued cooperation, dedication, and hard work.

## **2. Activities**

### ***a) Worship and Pastoral Care***

Holy Qurbana held every month during 2022-23 except July due to unavailability of Fr. T George. The Holy Qurbana is celebrated on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month, commencing with Morning Prayer at 9 am and Holy Qurbana at 10am. Holy services are conducted by Vicar Rev. Fr. T George. On special occasions such as birthdays and anniversaries, our Vicar conducts special prayers after Holy Qurbana and greets them with greeting cards.

### ***b) Holy Week Services 2022***

Holy week services were held from 10<sup>th</sup> April to 17<sup>th</sup> April 2022. Holy week services lead by vicar Fr. T. George.

### ***c) Onam Celebration - Harvest Festival***



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Onam is an Indian Annual Harvest Festival celebrated predominantly in the Southern state of Kerala. Onam was celebrated at our church on 18/9/22 with Onam sadhya (meal) arranged for all members and entertainment as well. Raffle prizes were also won by a number of families. Church members brought in home-grown products and auction of these products were carried out during Onam celebrations.

### **d) Feast of our Patron Saint Gregorios**

By the Grace of God, we celebrated the 120<sup>th</sup> Memorial Day of the St Gregorios of Parumala on the 20<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

We conducted the Rasa and Nercha serving which was followed by the feast after the Holy Qurbana.

### **e) Christmas**

Christmas carol service was conducted on Dec 3rd, 4th and 10th December again this year in a traditional manner, visiting the houses of friends and parish members. Over the period of three days, we visited multiple homes including most of our church members and friends spreading the warm festive greetings. Our Santa was very glad to present gifts along with greeting cards to every household and pose with families for family photos. We raised £1605.00. We express our sincere thanks to everyone for actively participating in the Christmas carol service, especially to all the youth who took the time to make it a tremendous success. This year our success was reflected by the participation of our new youth members in the carol service. We appreciate the effort taken by the youth coordinators in coordinating the service and organizing the youth. Christmas programs conducted at our church on 18/12/22 after holy service.

### **3. Food Collection for Homeless**

During Christmas we have arranged a food collection for the homeless in NI (Appeal titled "Feed our Homeless") on behalf of Welcome Organization. We have handed over all collections to Welcome Organization in Belfast. We extend thanks to all church members and also to Belfast badminton group for their support.

### **4. Donations & Refreshments**

Our Sincere thanks to everyone who contributed during the Perunnal, Christmas carol, auctions and birthday/anniversary collections. We are grateful

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to all of you for your continued contributions through monthly subscriptions and offerings. Several families contributed towards refreshments/meals after the Holy Qurbana and other events. God bless them all.

## **5. Gift Aid.**

We are preparing for Gift aid claim for 3 years. (2020-23). We appreciate all the effort taken by Mr. Varghese Philip in preparing the accounts for submission to HMRC. I extend my sincere thanks to all members who filled the gift aid declaration form when requested.

## **6. Our Charity Box**

We have distributed charity coin boxes. My sincere thanks to those who have contributed towards our charity causes. Special mention to Mr. Thomas George and Mrs. Elizabeth Ninan for winning top charity contributors' awards.

## **7. Spiritual Organizations**

### ***a) Sunday School***

Sunday School classes are held online most weekends. I would like to thank Mr. George Thomas (Headmaster) and all the Sunday School teachers for their continued efforts in making Sunday school a big success. Sunday school children and Martha Mariyam Samajam members were actively participated in Christmas programs conducted at our church on 18/12/22 after holy service. Also Sunday School organized talent competition on 23/4/2022 and prizes were distributed to all participants. Thanks to George Thomas (Sunday school headmaster), Sini Kuriakose (Martha Mariyam Secretary), Tensy John (Prayer meeting secretary), all managing committee members and participants.

### ***b) Martha Mariyam Samajam.***

Martha Mariyam Samajam was involved in organizing all church events. Thanks to all team members for their efforts.



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### **c) Youth Movement**

Youth Movement is actively supporting in all church activities. I appreciate all the youth coordinators in organizing the youth that are new to Northern Ireland.

### **8. Appointments/Recognition from Church**

Rev. Fr. T. George is elected as Malankara Sabha managing committee member, Mr. Bejoy Daniel is elected as Malankara Association member and Dr. Cucki Thomas is elected as OCYM Ireland region coordinator. Congratulations to all.

### **9. New Members.**

We welcome all the new members who joined our church in the last year.

### **10. New Born**

We welcome all little ones to our church.

### **11. Our Charity**

A number of charity donations were made over the last year. Our charity donations are listed below:

Cash donations to the homeless (Welcome Organisation), Food donations to the homeless collected by church for Welcome Organisation, Donation for funeral help, Church renovation help in India, Earthquake victims help in Turkey and Syria, Donation to RNIB, City Hospital Cancer Centre, British Red Cross appeal for earthquake victims and medical cost donation (student). **Total cash donations made £1650.**



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## **12. Communication**

We are using e-mail and WhatsApp to communicate church news to our members. Our Facebook page also covers most events through wonderful photographs. Our official website is: [www.iocni.org.uk](http://www.iocni.org.uk)

## **13. Financial Activities:**

During 2022- 2023 the total income was £ 25,847.33 and the total expenditure was £15,034.49. With the retained surplus of £ 47,570.80 from the previous year, the current retained surplus for the period is £ 58,383.64

## **14. Future Developments.**

With the enormous support from our members and well-wishers we would like to extend our activities. We are planning to find our own permanent place for worship and activities.

## **15. Conclusion and Word of Thanks**

Sincere thanks to Diocesan Metropolitan H.G. Abraham Mar Stephanos, Vicar Rev. Fr. T George, Hon. Treasurer Mr Varghese Philip, all managing committee members and all parish members for their continued support to me to during my tenure. A special mention to Sanu John for his unwavering support throughout. I would also like to extend a thank you to the officials of Bible College and the Church of Ireland for their support.

### **Approval**

This report is presented to the Church General Body and approved on 10/6/2023.

For Board of Trustees.

Anil Thomas  
Secretary

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