



St Thomas Indian (Malankara) Orthodox Church, Poole, UK

(Charity No 1142499)

Annual Report 2023-24

The annual report for the financial year 2023-24 provides a concise overview of the overall services, spiritual activities, other initiatives, and projects undertaken by our parish in align with our core objective.

Liturgical Services and events:

- The Holy Qurbana/Eucharist was celebrated on the first and third Saturdays of each month and adult members, children, and youth actively participated. After Holy Qurbana, refreshments, generously contributed by our members which benefited Sunday School activities.
- Special services were held for feast days, including Saint Thomas and St. Gregorious, as well as the Feast of Denaha/Epiphany.
- Christmas was marked with a special service on December 24th, led by Fr. Alexander Kurian (USA). Achan delivered a special message after the service and adults, youth members sang liturgical nativity hymns, and Christmas Carol services were held in members' homes. The Christmas and New Year event in January saw enthusiastic participation from families, with adults and young people performing nativity-themed cultural items.

Holy Week:

- Fr. Zacharia Cherian celebrated holy week services , lead canonical hourly prayers during Holy Week. Achen delivered devotional talks which enriched the spiritual journey of our congregation during great Lent and holy week. There was a special service on March 25th celebrated Vachanippu Perunnal (Feast of Annunciation). Many members also took the opportunity for Holy Confession during this holy week

Parish Day and Feast of St. Thomas (Patron Saint)

- In the first weekend of July, our parishioners along with our invited guests gathered for Parish Day. Because of the special of Nercha/offering by a family, the presence of Diocesan Bishop HG Abraham Mar Stephanos, Bishop HG Geevarghese Mar Pachomios and 12 priests made it a blessed occasion. The sacred procession, devotional messages, and annual harvest auction were integral parts of the celebration.

Spiritual Organizations:

Our spiritual organizations continue to be pillars of our parish community, fostering spiritual growth and connection.

The Sunday school

- Our Sunday school remains a cornerstone of our spiritual community, nurturing students in the formation of spiritual faith and traditional Christian values. Sunday school students actively engaged in regular Holy Eucharistic services, Holy Week observances, and other special parish events. We had approximately 37 students across various classes, supported by 13 dedicated teachers. Classes primarily took place after Holy Eucharist services. The Sunday school organized talent search competitions during the year, encouraging students' skills and creativity.

Academic Achievements:

- All Sunday school students successfully passed the reporting year. Notably, 7 students passed from year 10, and 5 students graduated from Year XII/Veda Praveen Diploma course with excellent grades.

OVBS

- Our OVBS provided a relaxed environment for students to deepen their understanding of the Word of God. The camp was well-coordinated, featuring colourful presentations and a concluding rally.

OCYM (Orthodox Christian Youth Movement) :

- Our youth members actively connected with fellow parishioners and newcomers via social media, primarily Instagram. Youth members volunteered for major events such as Parish Day, cultural gatherings, and Christmas and New Year celebrations. Additionally, youth members contributed to teaching Sunday school students in junior classes and supported the organization of the OVBS camp. Youth members also represented the Aura 2023 event organized by the OCYM-Diocese.

MMVS (Martha Mariam Vanitha Samajam - Women Fellowship):

- MMVS continued its work with the operational motto of Prayer, Action, and Shine. The women's fellowship supported all parish activities and day-to-day operations. MMVS played a crucial role in offering refreshments to young people and adult members after each service. Representatives from MMVS actively participated in regional and Diocesan conferences and engaged in liturgical services and other parish activities.

Prayer Fellowship:

- The Prayer Fellowship since 2003, remains as the first spiritual wing that enabled the formation of congregation in Poole. Regular prayer meetings, evening prayers, and devotional messages foster spiritual discussions and Bible study among adults and young people. Vicar, members including youth members and occasional guest speakers lead devotional sessions.

AMOSS -Akhila Malankara Orthodox Shushrooshaka Sangam (Acolytes Fellowship) :

- Acolytes provided significant support to the clergy throughout the year for conducting all services. Their voluntary efforts in arranging the holy altar, especially during the period of renting church halls for services, were commendable. Six newly ordained acolytes were initiated into the service of the Holy Altar during the Parish Feast on July 6th, 2023.

Charitable Projects:

- The parish actively participated in charitable projects, collaborating with Diocesan organizations like MMVS. These projects focused on providing medical aid to critically ill patients.

Cultural Festival - Onam:

- Our MMVS members organised the cultural event and members celebrated the Onam festival with a delicious Onam Sadhya (traditional feast). The celebration aimed to cultivate traditional values while promoting integration into mainstream culture through cultural performances, folk arts, and dances.

Church Property and Building Search:

- The search for suitable church buildings remained a high-priority agenda. Our beloved parishioners actively supported this endeavour. There were promising prospects with a couple of church buildings available for sale in the open market.

Governance and Financial Review:

- The internal and external auditors reviewed the parish accounts. Based on feedback from previous years, improved accounting methods were adopted and put into practice. There were a surplus fund of £ 37,752.25 during the accounting year due to the generous support of our members.
 - The Parish held general assembly meetings to select office bearers for the term and approve accounting procedures. The managing committee met regularly during the year.

To conclude, we offer our prayer of gratitude to the Triune God and seek intercession of all Saints, especially our Patron Saint for a blessed and fruitful years ahead. Parish express its very sincere gratitude to our beloved Diocesan Metropolitan HG Abraham Mar Stephanos, Diocesan Officials, Rev Fr Robin Varghese (Former Vicar), Rev Fr Joe Mathew (Vicar), Trustee, Secretary, Managing Committee members, Charity trustees, spiritual organisations and all beloved parishioners, well-wishers, local parishes, our ecumenical partners and local authorities for extending their whole hearted support for the functioning of our Parish.

For the Vicar, Trustees and Managing Committee,

Charity Trustees

ST THOMAS INDIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH, POOLE, UK
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 31 MARCH 2024

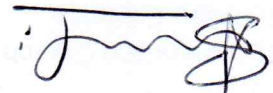
Income			
£	£	£	£
Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	
20784.78	5020	25804.78	Subscriptions
9238.38		9238.38	Offertory
480		480.00	Sunday School
40		40.00	Birthday Gift / Donation
21417.16			Gift Aid Received (2019/20 to - 22/23)
300		300.00	MOMS Charity
2012		2012.00	Auction Income
473		473.00	Carol
1510.77	169.11	1679.88	Bank Interest Received
Total			
56256.09	5189.11	61445.20	
Expenses			
8,223.00		8,223.00	Vicars Allowance
4,642.25		4,642.25	Rent
185.74		185.74	Stationery and Church Supplies
46.77		46.77	Software Expense
1,354.77		1,354.77	Sunday School
3,887.78		3,887.78	Food Expense
1,161.78		1,161.78	Feast and Other Expense
1,070.00		1,070.00	Charity
376.20		376.20	Insurance
1,410.00		1,410.00	Subscription
429.78		429.78	Website Expense
750.00		750.00	Professional Service Charges
154.88		154.88	Bank Charges
Total Expenses			
23692.95	0.00	23692.95	
Excess of Income over expense			
32563.14	5189.11	37752.25	

In accordance with the engagement letter, and to assist you to fulfil your duties under the Companies Act 2006, we have compiled the Financial Statements of the charity which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, and the related notes from the accounting records and information and explanations you have given to us.

This report is made to the Charity's Board of Trustees, as a body, in accordance with the terms of our engagement. Our work has been undertaken so that we might compile the Financial Statements that we have been engaged to compile, report to the Charity's Board of Trustees that we have done so, and state those matters that we have agreed to state to them in this report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Charity and the Charity's Board of Trustees, as a body, for our work or for this report.

You have acknowledged on the Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2024 your duty to ensure that the charity has kept proper accounting records and to prepare Financial Statements that give a true and fair view under the Charities Act 2011. You consider that the charity is exempt from the statutory requirement for an audit for the period.

We have not been instructed to carry out an audit of the Financial Statements. For this reason, we have not verified the accuracy or completeness of the accounting records or information and explanations you have given to us and we do not, therefore, express any opinion on the Financial Statements.



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