

St Johns Mar Thoma Church UK

Charity Registration Number : 1203763



UK - EUROPE - AFRICA DIOCESE OF THE MAR THOMA CHURCH

MEMBER OF CHURCHES TOGETHER IN ENGLAND

MEMBER OF CHURCHES TOGETHER IN BRITAIN & IRELAND

67th YEAR OF MAR THOMA COMMUNITY FORMATION IN UK

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

FOR THE NINE MONTHS ENDING 31st MARCH 2024

2023 - 2024

ST JOHNS MAR THOMA CHURCH UK

REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR 9 MONTHS ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024

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**ST JOHNS MAR THOMA CHURCH, UK****28th REPORT FOR 9 MONTHS ENDING 31st MARCH 2024****1. Introduction**

For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

Romans 12:4-5.

The church is a congregation of God's chosen people, united by the Gospel of Jesus Christ and invigorated by the divine presence of the Holy Spirit to take part in God's redemptive mission to reconcile all of creation to Himself. As a "counter-cultural community," the church functions in a state of "dialectical tension" with the secular world, embodying a distinctive way of life that challenges the values and assumptions of society at large. Its members are set apart as a holy people, called to serve God's purposes and to act as a "royal priesthood," mediating His love and grace to the world. A parish, in turn, represents a sacred gathering where the faithful convene to express their gratitude, deepen their connection with Christ and His Church, and foster a caring and affectionate community through the practice of worship and sacraments. Indeed, it is through the grace of God Almighty that we are able to witness Christ's message and share His boundless love with others.

It is with immense joy and fervour that we present the report of the activities of St John's Mar Thoma Church, UK on behalf of the Executive Committee.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

We wish to assure you, with utmost sincerity and transparency, that the financial statements have been prepared with absolute integrity and in full compliance with the charity law.

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the terms of the Charities Act 2011 and the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Notwithstanding the explicit requirement in the extant statutory regulations, the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008, to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the SORP 2005, in view of the fact that the SORP 2005 has been withdrawn, the determined to interpret this responsibility as requiring them to follow current best practice and prepare the accounts according to the FRS 102 SORP 2015.

In particular, charity law requires the Trustees, if they prepare accounts on an accruals basis, to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity as at the end of the financial year and of the surplus or deficit of the charity. In preparing those financial statements the Trustees are required to :-

- to prepare the accounts in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law).
- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

- state whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed , subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;

The law requires that the trustees must not approve the accounts unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the surplus or deficit of the charity for the year.

The Trustees are also responsible for maintaining adequate accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and which are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with regulations made under the charity legislation. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees are also responsible for the contents of the Trustees' report, and the statutory responsibility of the Independent Examiner in relation to the Trustees' report is limited to examining the report and ensuring that , on the face of the report, there are no material inconsistencies with the figures disclosed in the financial statements.

1.1 Reference and Administrative information

Charity Name: St Johns Mar Thoma Church UK

Charity Registration Number: 1203763

Operational Address: 80-96 Cambridge Road, Hounslow, Middlesex, TW4 7BH

Trustees

Vicar / President: Rev. John Mathew Charivil

Vice President: Dr John Thomas MBE

Secretary: Mr Alexander Renjith Joseph

Treasurer & Accountant: Mr Saji Varghese & Mr James Varghese

Mr Philip Kureekkaparampil John	Mr Abraham Pathinettil Thomas	Mr Sunny Abraham Valiyakalayil	Mr Puliyelethu Mathai Mathew
Adv. Jacob Poovathumannil Abraham	Mrs Lincy Elizabeth Philip	Mr Nigel Koshy	Mr Mathew Samuel
Mrs Mary Varughese	Mr Varughese Mathew	Dr Suresh Samuel	Mr Rengy Oommen

Mr Gijo Jacob Cherian	Mr Shibu Abraham	Mr Binu Thomas	Mr Robin Poykayil Babu
Dr Elenza Jacob	Mr Anil Kalathil Mathew	Mr Dibin John	Mr Koshy Thomas

Internal Auditors:

Mr John Chacko, Mrs Joji Samuel

Health and Safety Officer & Building Manager:

Dr John Thomas MBE

Independent Examiner

Fairfax Tax and Accounts Limited, 9 Stoughton Road, Oadby, Leicester, LE2 4DS.

Bankers

Barclays Bank Plc, 210 High Street, Hounslow, Middlesex TW3 1DL.

1.2 Governing Document

St John's Mar Thoma Church, UK is governed by the constitution adopted on 27th October 1996 and as amended on 29th January 2006 submitted to the Charity Commission as charity unincorporated organisation till as on 30th June 2023 and new Charity Incorporated Organisation constitution commencing from 1st July 2023; and by the constitution of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar, Kerala, India.

1.3 Risk Management

The Executive Committee have, from time to time, examined the significant operational risks that the parish faces and confirms that systems have been established to enable regular review of steps that can be taken to reduce these risks. Risk management is reviewed and discussed at Executive Committee meetings. A Health and Safety Policy has been adopted and is updated and maintained.

1.4 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

We have adopted a policy based on the requirements of the Children Act 1989, which is monitored and reviewed annually. DBS checks are being carried out on all individuals responsible for children's activities.

1.5 General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

In compliance with the requirements, St John's Mar Thoma Church established a GDPR policy in April 2018 and updated it in 2021. All trustees have been briefed on the regulation and their responsibilities to ensure compliance with the procedure.

1.6 Reserves Policy

The cash reserves of the charity, which are carried forward from year to year usually be equivalent of one year's income. The reserves held are prudent minimum to ensure that the work of the charity continues in an orderly manner from year to year, even when donations may fluctuate. It also provides funds for any development and expansion work in the future. The current cash balance is high as we have set aside funds for purchasing a new church property.

2. Parish

The Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar traces its origins to the pioneering evangelistic efforts of St Thomas the Apostle, who arrived to India in AD 52. The Church is renowned for its illustrious heritage and possesses a complement of twelve Bishops, indicative of its high standard of ecclesiastical hierarchy. The supreme head of the Church is the Most Rev. Dr. Theodosius Mar Thoma Metropolitan and the headquarters of Mar Thoma Church is located in Thiruvalla, a city in the southern state of Kerala, India, which is known for its cultural and religious significance.

The mother church is divided into 14 Dioceses, with each comprising numerous parishes, and governed by a Diocesan Bishop. The UK is home to a thriving Mar Thoma community that first came together to worship in 1957. The St John's Mar Thoma Church in the UK was established in 1996 as an extension of this initial worshipping community. This esteemed institution is recognized as a registered Charity Incorporated Organisation within the United Kingdom, bearing the registration number 1203763 (1060532 charity registration number till 30th June 2023), and is headquartered at 80-96 Cambridge Road, Hounslow, Middlesex, TW4 7BH.

St John's Mar Thoma Church was under the UK & Europe Zone of the Mar Thoma Church, Church, and it comes under the North America-Europe Diocese, which is helmed by the Diocesan Bishop, the Rt Rev. Dr Isaac Mar Philoxenos Episcopa till 31st December 2023. From 1st January 2024 the Zonal status has been uplifted to a new Diocese in the Mar Thoma Church named UK-Europe-Africa Diocese. The newly consecrated Rt Rev. Dr Joseph Mar Ivanios is the Diocesan Bishop. We extended a farewell to Rt Rev. Dr Isaac Mar Philoxenos Episcopa and a warm welcome to the newly consecrated Rt Rev. Dr Joseph Mar Ivanios. May this transition be a blessing for the community in UK-Europe and the parish continues to thrive and flourish.

2.1 Mission & Objectives

The primary aim of St John's Mar Thoma Church, UK, is to propagate the Christian faith through the conduct of consistent Christian worship services in accordance with the traditions of the Mar Thoma Church. Additionally, the church strives to provide compassionate pastoral care to its members and to arrange spiritual activities that enrich their spiritual lives.

Moreover, the parish endeavours to foster ecumenical relationships within the local community and other churches, while also making benevolent contributions towards evangelistic and charitable initiatives both in the United Kingdom and internationally.

2.2 Membership

The Vicar maintains a parish register of all members. All persons above 18 years, who have their names on the parish register, receive Holy Communion in the Parish and whose parish membership has not been barred are entitled to be Edavaka Sangham members (General Body of the Parish). As of 31st March 2024, our membership encompasses nearly 200 active families consisting of 750 members. Within the reporting period, about twenty-one new families have been enrolled into the Parish, and we extend a cordial welcome to these new additions to the fellowship of St John's Mar Thoma Church UK.

2.3 Appointment of Trustees/Executive Committee

The trustees/executive committee members are annually elected prior to the beginning of the fiscal year. They are chosen either by the General Body or by the constituents of the organization that they represent, or alternatively, may be nominated by the Diocesan Bishop.

The appointment of Trustees is in accordance with the constitution and upholds high standards of governance.

2.4 Day to Day Management

The trustees/executive committee meet regularly, while the day-to-day management of the Charity is delegated to the Vicar, Secretary, Treasurer, and Accountant, reflecting a commitment to good governance and a high standard of operational excellence.

2.5 Farewell to the Vicar, Rev. Binu John Varghese and Family

Rev. Binu John Varghese has dutifully discharged his responsibilities as Vicar of the Parish since 2019 up to April 2023. He has also assumed several significant duties, including serving as a member of the Sabha Council, as well as holding the position of Vice President of Mar Thoma Churches in UK-Europe Zone, Bishop's Secretary for the UK & Europe Zone, and leadership to Salem Mar Thoma Congregation, Southampton. His wife, Mrs Sujith Thattaruzhathil John, and children, Master Nived Johan Varghese and Master Netan John Varghese, have also been actively engaged in various parish activities. Farewell meeting was organised to Rev. Binu John Varghese and family on 30th April and they left for India after completing four years of ministry on 30th April 2023.

2.6 New Vicar, Rev. John Mathew Charivil and Family

Rev. John Mathew Charivil is the new Vicar of the parish from 1st May 2023. He served as the Vicar of several Mar Thoma parishes in Kerala and Tamil Nadu and remarkably as the Mar Thoma Church youth wing's (Yuvajana Sakhyam) organisational General secretary. His wife Mrs Blessy John Mathew and children Miss Aardra John Mathew and Miss Achsa John Mathew are also active in the parish's organisational activities. Rev. John Mathew Charivil and family arrived by the second week of May 2023 and took charge as the Vicar. From January 2024 Rev. John Mathew Charivil has also been appointed as the Diocesan Secretary of the newly formed UK-Europe-Africa Diocese. We wish Rev. John Mathew Charivil and family's service in the coming years to be a blessing for the parish, diocese and the community.

3 General Body Meetings & Executive Committee Meetings

The administrative functioning decisions and the mission-oriented activities of the Parish are managed by the executive committee, which adheres to high standards of governance and subject to the approval of the General Body. All the decisions made are scrutinized thoroughly and aligned with the charity commission guidelines before receiving final approval from the Diocesan Bishop.

The Executive Committee members demonstrate their unwavering commitment to the Parish by participating in a dedication service and retreat at the beginning of the financial year. Throughout the year, the Current Executive Committee has convened seventeen times, demonstrating their proficiency and agility in taking necessary decisions for the smooth functioning of the Parish. The members have also come together twice in April and December after the Sunday service to carry out the essential tasks of rearrangement and cleaning, upholding the high standards of hygiene and orderliness within the Parish.

The General body meetings were held four times in the financial year on 09th July 2023, 29th October 2023, 21st January 2024 and 07th April 2024 at the church. The meeting held on 21st January 2024 elected the Office Bearers and Internal Auditors of St Johns Mar Thoma Church, UK, for the financial year 2024-2025.

The following were elected as Trustees and Internal Auditors for the 2024 – 2025 financial year.

Vice President: Mr Philip Cherukara Thomas

Secretary: Mr Philip Kureekkaparampil John

Treasurer: Mr Binu Sam

Accountant: Mr Samuel Daniel

Lay Leader: Mr Subin Baby & Mr Biju Mathews

Internal Auditors: Mr Mathew Samuel & Dr Jansen Jacob

3.1 COVID-19 Protocol Team

The government has fully relaxed all COVID-19 protocols and WHO has declared COVID-19 as a normal flu condition last year. In the reporting year, the Church was opened for Sunday services and all activities in person. The team monitors and makes sure of a healthy atmosphere in the premise. The protocol team comprised of the Vicar, the Secretary, Finance Trustees, Mr P. M. Mathew, and the protocol officer, Mr Varughese Mathew.

3.2 Parish development committee

On 14th July 2019, the Annual General Body meeting convened and passed a resolution to explore the feasibility of acquiring a new property to address the multiple challenges presently faced by the parish, mainly the space capacity. The committee, under the leadership of convenor Mr. P. M. Mathew, is actively engaged in fulfilling this duty with utmost fidelity and has made significant progress in this regard. The executive committee had bid for two potential properties at Slough and Camberley but were unsuccessful in acquiring them, but are looking into the possibility of another property at Weybridge.

3.3 Internal Auditors

Mrs Joji Samuel and Mr John Chacko diligently fulfilled their roles as internal auditors during the fiscal year 2023-2024, verifying the financial statement, policy documents and providing requisite counsel.

4. Financial Statement

The financial statement for the reporting nine months period after the internal auditing, is enclosed herewith the booklet. For the nine months period ending 31st March 2024, the Charitable organization has recorded a total revenue of £241,455 and expenses amounting to £147,665 thereby yielding a surplus of £93,790

5. Worship Services & Activities for the year 2023 – 2024

Through the beneficence of God Almighty, we were able to duly execute all the prescribed liturgical services and sacraments, as well to fulfil the church's missional and ministerial obligations during the reporting year. This notable accomplishment has undoubtedly heightened the spiritual fortitude and enrichment of our beloved faith community.

5.1 Worship & Other Services

Throughout the year, weekly Sunday services were conducted alternately in Malayalam and English languages. Additionally, a series of special services were conducted to commemorate various occasions such as Zonal Sunday, Edavaka Mission Sunday, Education Sunday, Sevika Sangham Day, Youth Sunday, Choir Sunday, Senior Citizens Day, Family Sunday, and World

Sunday School Day. Special prayers were held during Remembrance Sunday and Ecumenical Sunday. These events were celebrated with great zeal and fervour, bringing together the members of the congregation to reflect upon and cherish their shared values and beliefs. The congregation eagerly participated in these events, which served as a reminder of the importance of community, faith, and the power of coming together in fellowship.

5.2 Lenten Prayers and Maranaya Festivals

The observances of Lent and Maranaya festivals hold a significant place in the liturgical calendar of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church, as they are intimately linked to the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. These acts are deemed of utmost importance and are considered obligatory for all faithful believers of the Church to partake in, as the Church firmly believes that the life of a Christian should be a reflection of Jesus Christ's journey from Bethlehem to Golgotha and ultimately to the mount of resurrection.

The Mar Thoma Syrian Church's constitution firmly upholds the observance of these festivals as a fundamental aspect of Christian practice. Therefore, it is incumbent upon all believers to observe them regularly with reverence and devotion. By doing so, they align themselves with the Church's teachings and embody the virtues of Christ in their daily lives.

5.3 Great Lent Services and Passion Week Services

The Passion Week services were conducted in a devout and sanctified manner, with a particular emphasis on the virtual Sandya Namaskaram held on all Wednesdays and Thursdays in the year 2023 and Thursdays in 2024. Furthermore, the Great Lent was marked by the special worship of Reconciliation, the Mid-Lent service, and the 40th Friday service.

The Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar adheres to the tradition, which places great importance on the fifty days before Easter Sunday, and twenty-five days before Christmas. These days are dedicated to prayer, meditation, and fasting, as the Church believes that they are crucial for spiritual growth. The Parish organized special prayers and services during all the five Lents observed by our Church, thus reinforcing our commitment to this sacred tradition.

5.3.1 Sreeha Nombu - the fast of the Apostles:

It is the time of commemorating the life and witness of the 12 disciples. Special services were arranged on all Thursdays during this Lenten period from 16th to 29th June 2023.

5.3.2 Pathinanchu Nombu:

It is time to honour the life and testimony of the Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ. Special services have been organized on Thursday evenings throughout this Lenten season from August 1st to August 15th the time of commemorating the life and witness of Virgin Mary, mother of Jesus Christ.

5.3.3 25 Day Lent:

During this sacred season, devout individuals engage in prayerful preparations for the commemoration of the birth of Jesus Christ. In observance of the Lenten period, which spans from the 1st to the 25th of December, a series of special services have been arranged on each Thursday. This serves as an opportunity for believers to reflect on the significance of the upcoming celebration and to strengthen their spiritual connection with their faith.

5.3.4 Nineveh Lent:

The solemn observance of the three-day Lent commenced on the 22nd to the 24th January 2024.

5.4 Moranaya festivals

The Moranaya festivals are a time of solemnly commemorating the pivotal events of Jesus Christ's life. These sacred observances are marked by the arrangement of special prayers and the faithful gathering together to honour the following days:

5.4.1 Day of Ascension:

The service has been arranged on Thursday 18th May to commemorate the events that happened on the day of Ascension.

5.4.2 Day of Pentecost:

Special service has been added on Sunday, 28th May during the Holy Communion service.

5.4.3 Day of Transfiguration:

Worship has been conducted on Sunday 6th August to commemorate the events that happened during the time of Transfiguration where Jesus was filled with glory and the disciples learnt new aspects about their journey of faith.

5.4.4 Danaha (Baptism of Jesus Christ):

Special service has been arranged on Thursday 4th January to commemorate the baptism of Jesus Christ.

5.5 Sandhya Namaskaram on Thursday's

The Sandhya Namaskaram, a spiritual practice aimed at fostering inner peace and strength, commenced amidst the COVID-19 pandemic on a Thursday evening at 8 pm. Since its inception, it has been seamlessly continued on the virtual platform. The service comprises of a wide range of spiritual experiences, including hymns, readings, sermon, and intercessory prayers. The coordination of the Sandhya Namaskaram was spearheaded by the Edavaka mission, ensuring a harmonious and structured experience for all participants.

5.6 Chain Prayer

The chain prayer is held from 5am to 7pm on Tuesdays. This dedicated group comprises of nearly 40 devout members, who undertake the responsibility of allocating individual time slots for prayer, allowing each participant to engage with utmost devotion and sincerity. As a testament to our collective commitment, we ensure that all prayer requests are communicated with meticulous care and regular updates, providing a beacon of hope and comfort to numerous members and their loved ones who have benefited significantly from the power of our collective prayer.

Mrs Saramma George – Coordinator

5.7 Baptism

The following have become official members of our parish and the larger Christian community after the Holy sacrament of Baptism. This momentous occasion marks their formal initiation into our congregation, signifying their inclusion in the fold of faithful believers.

1. Oliver George Peggy, S/o Mr Peggy N. John and Mrs Jincy Johnney

5.8 Marriage

Throughout the year of reporting, the sacrament of holy matrimony was solemnized/banns of marriage were published and No Objection Certificate for Marriage was issued for Marriage, to the following esteemed individuals. The parish extends its heartfelt blessings and well wishes for a joyous and prosperous Married life:

1. Mr Joel Mathew Philip and Mrs Angela Susan Alex, July 2023
2. Mrs Divya John and Mr Milton Alexander John, August 2023
3. Mrs Jasmine George and Mr Sibin George, October 2023

5.9 Housewarming

During this year several of our members have acquired new homes and the house blessing services have been conducted.

5.10 Obituary:

The parish, in solidarity with its congregants, extends its deepest sympathies and heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family during this trying time of inconsolable grief and profound loss. In an effort to offer solace to the family, organized prayer meetings were held and a visit was paid to them for their comfort.

Mrs Salome Oommen, West London prayer group, one of the senior member passed way in October 2023.

Parish extended spiritual support for the consolation of these families. We place on record our condolences to the bereaved families.

6. Special Services:

6.1 Farewell Meeting to Rt Rev. Dr Isaac Mar Philoxenos

Rt Rev. Dr Isaac Mar Philoxenos was the Diocesan Bishop from 2016 to 2023. Thirumeni's leadership in the UK-Europe region is commendable. The UK-Europe region becoming a Zone and its later transition into a Diocese is because of Thirumeni's silent hard work and dedication. Mar Philoxenos Thirumani has given leadership and guidance to our church during his visit in the UK-Europe. The church is grateful for Thirumeni's tenure and service to the parish. A farewell meeting to Rt Rev. Dr Isaac Mar Philoxenos was held on 12th November 2023.

7. Activities for the year

7.1 Parish Day

We have held special thanksgiving service for Parish Day on Sunday, 23rd April 2023. The parish mission activities, especially neighbourhood mission project Olive Branch, was highlighted after the service.

7.2 Family Retreat 2023 and 2024

The 2023 Family Retreat was arranged on 1st April at Queen Mary's College, Basingstoke. Rev. Merin Mathew gave the leadership. The adults, youth and children had separate sessions. Games were arranged for the afternoon. The convenors were Mr Binu Sam and Adv. Jacob P. Abraham

The 2024 Family Retreat was held at Aldworth School, Basingstoke on 23rd March. Rev. Dr M. J. Joseph and Dr Sunny Stephen gave the leadership. Separate session for adults, youth and children were arranged. Mr Cibi Mathew led the youths and children's sessions. The convenors were Dr. John Thomas and Mr. Binu Sam.

7.3 Topic Discussion

We had a topic discussion on Sunday, 11th June after the service. The discussion topic was 'Cheap Grace vs Costly Grace in our ever-growing secular world' as put forward by author and theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer in his book The Cost of Discipleship. The moderator for the discussion was Mr Sony Koleth.

7.4 Kerala Day

The Kerala Day celebrations was on 10th September after the Holy Communion Service. It is a day when the members celebrate their heritage and look back on their roots and attempt to keep it alive. Around 350 people attended Kerala Day and it was a wonderful occasion for everyone who attended. There were live cultural performances which everyone enjoyed. The highlight of the day was the 27 different traditional items of Kerala food that was served for lunch on banana leaves.

Mr Anil K. Mathew , Mrs Lincy Philip & Mr Robin P. Babu - convenors

7.5 Harvest Festival

The Harvest Festival, a time of great communal celebration and thanksgiving to God, was held on Saturday 16th September 2023 between 12-4pm and on Sunday 17th September 2023 after the Holy Communion service. The event was inaugurated on Saturday 16th September at 12 pm by Rev John Mathew with a special thanksgiving service assisted by Dr Elenza Jacob and Mr Dibin John. It was a solemn service for parishioners as they expressed their gratitude to God for His mercy and grace towards them through liturgy, songs and prayers.

The service was followed by the offering of a fruit basket beautifully prepared by Mrs Susan Mathew as a token of expression to honour God with the first of all our resources. The festivities commenced with talented auctioneers who presented enticing goods, plants and food products brought in by the parishioners. The festivities were further enhanced by the sale of aromatic and delicious food items skilfully prepared by various church members.

On Sunday 17th September, the event commenced soon after the communion service. On both days, a one-day income offertory was dutifully submitted by the church community to support the church in its charitable endeavours.

The collection of funds was undertaken by our trustees, Mr Saji Varghese and Mr James Varghese. The Sevika Sangam secretary Mrs Mary Varughese provided advice on food items that were firm favourites within our church community. The festive mood was a testament to the joy of fellowship and the unwavering spirit of generosity that characterises our church community. Through the tireless efforts of our members a gracious sum of £24,990 was raised to support the assigned charities- Olive branch(50%) Church Development Fund(25%) and Church Mission (25%). The Harvest Festival once again gave us the opportunity to celebrate God's generosity towards us as a community and to be a blessing in this world by sharing our resources with those who are in need.

*Dr Elenza Jacob, Mrs Renji Varughese, Mr Dibin John, Mr Mathew Samuel, Dr John Thomas -
Conveners*

7.6 Parish Convention

The annual convention was held from 29th Sept to Oct 1st 2023 and the guest speaker was Rev Dr Jacob Thomas. The theme of the convention was “Called for A Noble Purpose”. Achen used this opportunity to encourage parishioners to have an encounter with the living God. They were reminded that they are created for a purpose and that they are part of a relationship. Singing was led by St Johns Men’s Voice and intercessory prayers were led by our members.

Dr Suresh Samuel - Convenor

7.7 Badminton Day

The St John’s Mar Thoma Church Badminton tournament was held on 8th November at Brentford Fountain Leisure Centre. The tournament was planned as a Mar Thoma Church family get together for all the Mar Thoma parishes in United Kingdom. Owing to the previous year’s success, the turnout and response from our sister churches was outstanding and commendable. The participants came from as far as Manchester, Cardiff and the enthusiasm and the cooperation enabled the tournament to be held in an orderly fashion. The endurance of all participants to play through the group games and finals in a day showed their support to the tournament. Altogether over 85 contestants participated.

Mr Daniel Soby Mathew, Mrs Mary Varughese, Mr Philip K. John and Mr Gijo Jacob Cherian - Convenors

7.8 VBS

The VBS was conducted over two weekends during the school half term holidays in October. The theme for the VBS was “Root and Fruit”. Ninety-nine children both from our parish and sister churches participated in the VBS. This year there was a session for the children in Grades 11-13. Children learned about Christ in a fun filled environment through action songs, skits, crafts ,discussions and enjoyed the snacks and meals together during the VBS. The following Saturday after the morning session, there was a presentation programme for the parents and members of the parish. Rev. Reji Easow , Reshmi Kochamma and Annet Koshy were the leaders of this year’s VBS.

Mrs. Beula Elizabeth Mathew -Convenor

7.9 Youth Conference

A Youth Conference of remarkable significance was held in Mickleham, spanning from the 22nd to the 24th of October. An impressive 46 members actively participated in the conference, making it a resounding success. Rev. Reji Easow led the conference with great zeal and perseverance. The conference offered an unparalleled opportunity for the youth to engage in profound and thoughtful deliberations, fostering strong bonds and relationships with each other. It was a moment of immense pleasure and camaraderie, as the participants enjoyed the chance to interact with like-minded individuals who shared their ideals and aspirations.

The conference was characterized by a spirit of fellowship, as the young attendees congregated to learn from one another and build a sense of community. The event proved to be an invigorating and uplifting experience for all those who partook in it, leaving an indelible impression on their hearts and minds.

Mr. Aaron Alexander - Convenor

7.10 Cake Sale

On 3rd December 2023, Sevika Sangham organised annual cake sale and were able to collect £4,620. This sum was allocated to continue supporting Evangelist (Late) Santhosh George's Daughter for her Nursing studies, Church development fund and Sevika Sangham fund.

Mrs Bibi Abraham & Mrs Aleyamma Cherian – Convenors

7.11 Christmas Carol Service & Advent season

On the 16th of December 2023, a festive Christmas Carol service was held at the Church. The esteemed chief guest, Prof. Dr Roys Mallassery, Former Principal of St Thomas College, Kozhenchery and UK YMCA delegate, delivered a captivating Christmas message. The event featured a bright display of live presentations by the Choir, Sunday School, youth fellowship, Edavaka Mission, Sevika Sangham and the Diaspora students. Furthermore, representatives from various organizations within the Parish lent their voices to the occasion by delivering the bible readings.

7.12 Harmondsworth Care & Custody Centre

This year also, a magnificent Christmas carol service was orchestrated and wholeheartedly bestowed gifts to the detainees housed at Harmondsworth Care & Custody centre, as a reflection of our charitable mission during the Christmas season. On the 17th of December the detainees were gifted with living essentials and stationary items, which were handed over to the prison chaplain, Rev. Patrick Wright, for efficient distribution amongst the inmates.

Additionally, our choir rendered soulful renditions of traditional carols, and orchestrated a mesmerizing narration that was enjoyed by all in attendance. Our team was honoured to have the opportunity to uplift the spirits of those incarcerated during the festive period and remain committed to spreading the message of goodwill and compassion to all.

7.13 Year Ending Meditations and Watch night service

The year ending devotions were held on 28th and 29th December evening virtually. Watch night Holy communion service was held on 31st December evening at Church.

7.14 Swargiya Thalam (Talent Evening)

On February 3rd 2024, at Costello school, Basingstoke, St John's Mar Thoma church conducted an entertainment evening to provide an opportunity for its members to express their talents through songs, dance, plays, instrumental, mimes and mono act. Participants were encouraged to present their talents in keeping to our Christian faith and witness.

The evening was well attended and the presentations were well delivered by children and adults alike. It also afforded the opportunity to socialise with one another and to welcome visitors to the event. The event was made possible through the joint efforts of many church members. Mr Anish P. Tom provided the technical advice and coordination throughout the planning stage. Mr Sam Thomas undertook the video recording and photos; prayer group secretaries helped with the distribution of the tickets for the event. Dr Tammy Samuel anchored the order of events enabling its smooth running and Mr Tony Cherian catered the delicious food for the occasion.

It was fortunate to have the services of an external company run by Mr Sibi, who provided the excellent sound and lights system which ensured every act was projected in an extraordinary way thus ensuring a captive audience. The executive committee and Rev John Mathew Achen gave advice and support throughout the planning stages. Swargiya Thallam provided a successful and enjoyable social opportunity for the church through this talent evening. We thank God for the various talents expressed and reminded ourselves to use them for God's glory.

Dr Elenza Jacob, Mr Shibu Abraham - Convenors

8. Visiting Clergy and Other Speakers

Rev. Sijo John provided leadership for worship services when we needed on some Sundays and other festive and Lenten services. He supported us in all the spiritual activities of the Parish. Rev. Sijo John has completed his ministry in the UK and left to India in April 2024 and the church have arranged a farewell meeting on 25th February 2024 in appreciation of his service and leadership in this parish

The church was fortunate to have the following guests / parish members who inspired us through their messages:

The guest leaders/preachers were Rt. Rev. Dr Isaac Mar Philoxenos Episcopa, His Grace Dr Anthimos Mathews Metropolitan, Bishop Saju Muthalaly, Rev. T. S. Thomas, Rev. Dr M. J. Joseph, Rev. Merin Mathew, Rev. Mathews George, Rev. John T. Thomas, Rev. Reji Easow, Rev. Stanley Mathew John.

Dr K. O. John, Dr John Thomas, Mrs Blessy John Mathew, Mr Nigel Koshy, Mr Shane Binu, Prof. Dr Roys Mallassery, Dr Sunny Stephen, Mr Abin Varghis, Mr Alexander Renjith Joseph.

9. Area Prayer Groups, Prayer Meetings and Holy Communion Services

The Parish has eight prayer groups in ten different areas and prayer meetings were held regularly in all areas. Bible study, discussion and intercessory prayers are the regular programs at the prayer meeting. Songs are sung in both English and Malayalam. In some prayer groups, a 'Thought of the Day' is shared by a member of the hosting family, or one of the youth members or children. Quizzes were held in some prayer groups, which encourage participation by all age groups. Bible readings are done by children and adults. Special meetings have been arranged in all the occasions of the bereavement of the dear ones of the members in the prayer group.

Holy Communion service is held at Oxford area on every Thirds Sunday, Sunday School also started before the service. This year Holy Communion service has also started at Bedford area on Third Saturday's.

Area	Meeting schedule	Area Representative
Guildford	Second Friday of the month	Dr Elenza Mary Jacob
North London	Third Saturday of the month	Mr Shibu Abraham

Oxford	Third Sunday of the month	Mr Abraham P. Thomas
Slough	Fourth Friday of the month	Mr Anil K. Mathew
South East	Second Saturday of the month	Mr Koshy Thomas
Staines	First Sunday of the month	Mr Binu Thomas
Stevenage	Fourth Saturday of the month	Mr Robin P. Babu
West London	Second Saturday of the month	Mr Gijo Jacob Cherian
Also prayer meetings are held at Reading on 1 st Friday and South West on 1 st Saturday evening.		

10. Organisations and Activities

All the organisations of our Church functioned in-personal or virtually this year to further the mission and ministerial activities of our Parish.

10.1 Edavaka Mission

The Edavaka Mission plays a significant role in spreading the Gospel and overseeing the mission-related activities of the Parish. The organization operates under the guiding principle of "Every Marthomite is an evangelist" and works to promote a variety of activities within the Parish, including intercessory prayers and Christian fellowship.

Sandhya Namaskaram were conducted on Thursday evenings, led by Vicar. The Bible study during the last year was from Philippians, Ephesians and Galatians. The Vicar led the Bible study and this was followed by prayer. Around 20 families attend the service regularly and members of the parish also take leadership for the service.

Every Sunday, there is an intercessory prayer, prior to the service led by members of the parish and to intercede for the needs of our church, individuals and world at large.

The annual convention was held from 29th September to 1st October and the guest speaker was Rev. Dr Jacob Thomas. The convention was coordinated by the Edavaka Mission.

During the Christmas carol service, the members of the Edavaka mission participated by singing a song led by Mrs Sheeba Philip. As part of our outreach ministry, Edavaka Mission visited Harmondsworth Care & Custody Centre and distributed gifts and fellowship on 17th December 2023.

Mrs Aleyamma Abraham and Mrs Achiamma John served as the Vice-President and Treasurer respectively.

Dr Suresh Samuel – Edavaka Mission Secretary

10.2 Sunday School

Sunday school classes were held regularly on Sundays. Curriculum texts issued by the North America Diocese was used. During the year, regular tests were conducted in enhancing children's understanding. The UK & Europe Zonal Sunday school conducted the annual examination on 2nd July 2023. Combined sessions were held during the school summer holidays.

Education Sunday service was organised on first Sunday of September and the special offertory taken was used for the “Light to Life” project. In October, the Zonal Sunday school teachers training took place in our parish. This also gave the teachers an opportunity to meet and to have a fellowship with other teachers of the South zone. Our Sunday school participated in the Zonal World Sunday school Day celebrations. This was held at Cardiff and our Sunday school children and teachers actively participated in this event. Children presented a 8-minute programme which included a Malayalam song, English Song and a short skit based on prayer.

World Sunday school day was celebrated in our parish on 5th November. Children were given greater participation in the Holy Communion service on that day. Our Sunday school participated in the “Operation Christmas Child programme” of Samaritans Purse UK. Children brought in gifts in beautifully decorated shoe boxes for children affected by wars and natural calamities in Europe and Africa. Children were also given prizes for their achievements in the previous academic year. The senior children presented online Lenten thoughts in March during the lent period. Mrs Preneetha Pallath coordinated the Lenten thoughts. The Sunday school also participated, in the Parish Carol service by presenting a musical nativity skit. We are extremely grateful to God’s grace and blessings in conducting the Sunday school during the reporting year.

Mr Varughese Mathew – Headmaster

10.3 Youth Fellowship

The Youth Fellowship comprises of more than 56 vibrant and active members. The group holds meetings on 2nd and 4th Sundays. During these gatherings, there were customary Bible studies, praise and worship, and moments of prayer and introspection. The Youth Fellowship plays an integral part in the regular activities of our Church and participates zealously in the UK & Europe Zonal activities, such as the Zonal Youth Conference and South Centre Youth Retreat, respectively. Our youths have actively participated in the parish carol service and other parish activities, in addition to any Zonal activities.

On Sunday, 15th October 2023, the congregation observed Youth Sunday, which was led by our youth members. This year, the Youth Conference was held at Juniper Hall, Mickleham, spanning from the 22nd to 24th September 2023 with the theme ‘WALK BY FAITH AND NOT BY SIGHT’. An impressive 46 members actively participated in the conference, making it a resounding success. The esteemed Rev. Reji Easow led the conference with great zeal and perseverance.

10.3.1 Youth Band

A youth band had been established within the Parish, and it assumes responsibility for leading the worship service on every 4th Sunday. This initiative has given the opportunity to engage senior Sunday school students and youth members in a unique opportunity during the worship service. Mr. Isaac George is leading the youth band in a blessed manner.

Jessica Varghese, Aaron Alexander, Daniel Mathew, and Reya Varughese served as the, Vice President, Joint Secretary, Treasurer and Zonal representative, respectively.

Mr. Nidhin Philip - Youth Fellowship Secretary

10.4 Sevika Sangham (Women's Auxiliary)

Sevika Sangham is the fellowship of all the women in the Parish who have attained the age of 18 years or above. It is with great gratitude that God's blessing is acknowledged for the privilege to serve for another year as members of the Sevika Sangham in our Parish and for providing the opportunity to work towards the greater glory of God. The unique and significant role, as women, in the faith formation of our families and communities is recognised and embraced

Meetings were held on 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month after service and engaged in studying together the 'Women Characters' from the Bible and our members have taken the initiative to present their reflections on the characters and was followed by group discussions. Fasting prayer was conducted every Friday from 10.30am to 12pm, The prayer gathering commences with hymns, reading of Bible and culminate in a thoughtful reflection to ready our hearts and minds for prayer.

South Centre Zonal Sevika Sangham conference took place on 24th June 2023 in Bristol Mar Thoma Church. The Sevika Sangham members took part in intercessory prayers. In the afternoon, South Centre Zonal Sevika Sangham singing competition took place. There were 12 Sevika Sangham members representing our Parish in this competition and thank God for all their dedication and hard work which enabled our Parish to attain the 1st Prize. The Sunday 10th September was observed as Sevika Sangham day. Sevika Sangham members played an active role in the worship service on that day, helping in various roles. A special song for Sevika Sangham day was sung by members during the service. Annual Conference of the UK-Europe Zonal Sevika Sangham took place on 7th October 2023 in Midlands. Sevika Sangham members assisted in the worship service with our vicar. In the afternoon there was Bible quiz competition from the book of Jeremiah. There were five Sevika Sangham members representing this Parish in this competition. Gratitude is expressed to God for their hard work and dedication in securing 1st Prize in the competition.

On 3rd December 2023, Sevika Sangham organised annual cake sale and were able to collect £4,620. The members of the Sevika Sangham presented a short skit for the Parish Christmas Carol Service which took place on 16th December 2023. Sevika Sangham coordinated the after-service refreshments every Sunday.

Mrs Mary Varughese – Sevika Sangham Secretary

10.5 Young Family Fellowship

In the tapestry of our church life, each thread represents a story, and when woven together, these stories create a rich and vibrant community fabric. Amid the highs and lows that naturally accompany any journey of significant impact, the collective efforts continue to illuminate a path toward brighter futures. The mission is to foster a nurturing environment where families can thrive has never been more relevant. In a year filled with both predictable

and unforeseen challenges, the transformation, empowerment, and growth was witnessed through the annual continued engagement programmes and exploring new avenues.

Throughout the year, the Fellowship continued to come together regularly to learn and meditate on the word of God. The events of the year as outlined in this report is hereby placed on record. Bible Study: Running up to the Bible Quiz earlier this year, the Vicar led the study online detailing the books of Joshua and Romans on every Wednesday at 8:00 pm delving into the context, history, and teachings and reflected on its message.

Family Bible Quiz: On January 28, 2024, a Family Bible quiz was held for the members of the church. The quiz was one among many means amongst the church tapestry to encourage families to gather and study the Word of God. After consideration with other events and suggestions from members, the assigned portion for the Bible quiz was Joshua from Old Testament and Romans from New Testament. There were five enthusiastic families who participated in the Family Bible Quiz. The winners were as given below: First Prize: Dr Jansen Jacob and Dr Elenza Jacob; Second Prize: Mr Biju Mathews, Mrs Elizabeth Biju Mathews and Miss Ruth Biju Mathews; Third Prize: Mr Alan Zachariah Sam, Mrs Beula Elizabeth Mathew and Master Ivan Sam Zachariah

Mr Mathew Samuel – Young Families Fellowship Secretary

10.6 Senior Citizens Fellowship

Senior Citizens Fellowship consisting of active members of the parish met at regular intervals during the year at the church quarterly on a Wednesday to spend the time together in building friendships and for sharing the fellowship. These meetings usually last for the whole day during which the members participate in discussions of theological issues. These discussions were continued by email communications. One of the features of these meetings were the sharing of a meal together to build on the friendship and the fellowship. Contacts between the members were maintained between the meetings through emails and telephone calls offering moral and spiritual support. On Sunday 17th September the Senior Citizens' Sunday was observed at which the Senior members took the leading role during the worship service. This was an opportunity to recall the contributions of members who are now "Seniors" made to the parish and the wisdom they bring into the church life. The group's commitment to ongoing communication and engagement ensures that the members remain connected and supported, both in their spiritual and everyday lives. As a vibrant group the members of the Senior Citizens' Fellowship participated and contributed to all aspects of the church life. Mr Rengy Oommen represented the Fellowship on the Executive committee during the year.

Dr John Thomas – Senior Citizens Fellowship Secretary

10.7 Choir

Praise and thanks are due to God for His guidance through another year of countless blessings. With God's divine grace, St. John's Church choir consistently contributed to the delight of worship, actively participating in the church community for the greater glory of God. The church choir, consisting of 57 registered members spanning various age groups, contributed harmoniously to the worship experience. Attendance continues to be taken for both, services and choir practice. It is indeed a blessing that, as is commissioned by Jesus, all choir members diligently did their best to proclaim the gospel through songs. The choir members took the initiative in leading the singing during the regular Sunday worship services and on other special occasions.

On Sunday, 28 May 2023, Choir Dedication Sunday was celebrated, and various members of the choir actively assisted in the worship service and Bible readings.

Gratitude are due to the Choir Master, Mr. Abraham K Thomas, Assistant Choir Masters, Mrs. Grace Varughese-Abraham and Mr. Shaun Thomas for leading and guiding the choir.

Mrs Lincy Philip – Choir Secretary

11 Missionary & Charitable Activities

St. John's Mar Thoma Church upholds a rich heritage of promoting diverse missionary undertakings and charitable works both domestically and internationally. The financial assistance offered to individuals has primarily catered to their medical, educational, and housing needs. The Parish has raised funds for these noble initiatives through various channels, including the Harvest Festival, Renounce the Taste and Spread the Flavor (a special collection drive during lent), Uposhnaram, Fasting Offertory, Prayer Group Collections, voluntary donations, and cake sales.

11.1 Neighbourhood Mission

St. John's Mar Thoma Church feels deeply privileged and greatly honoured to lead the 'Olive Branch' project in collaboration with Holy Trinity Church Hounslow and Hounslow Evangelical Church. This initiative represents a significant effort to provide the critical aid and support to the homeless population in the surrounding areas of Hounslow. The 'Olive Branch' project operated from Thursday to Saturday each week, offering a comprehensive range of essential services to those in need. These services include food, shower facilities, laundry services, new clothing, and guidance on housing and counselling services. The project coordinator, Mr Kottackal George Joseph, has been a true driving force behind this initiative, skilfully managing and overseeing its implementation.

This opportunity is taken to thank all the parish members and church organisations for their whole-hearted support for the charitable activities of the parish during this year and look forward to their continued support in the future years.

Contribution towards various Charitable causes	Amount (£)
Olive Branch Hounslow - Neighbourhood Mission Project	12,175
Supporting - Hope Church Food bank, Christians Against Poverty, Manipur Relief work, Prison Ministry	5,664
Supporting Individuals with Medical, Educational and other urgent needs	13,250
Light to Life Project, India - to support Education and Development of less privileged Children – Sunday School Children initiative	900
Barnardo's Children Charity – supported by Sunday School Children	300
Sevika Sangham - Supporting Education of bereaved Evangelist's Family	1,500
TOTAL	33,764

12 Mandalam and Zonal Assembly of Mar Thoma Church-UK Europe Zone

12.1 Sabha Prathinidi Mandalam

The Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church's Sabha Pratinidhi Mandalam was held on August 29th, 30th, September 1st, and 2nd, 2023, at the Dr Alexander Mar Thoma Memorial Auditorium in Thiruvalla. This event was significant due to the election of three new Episcopas. The gathering successfully ratified the annual report and accounts for the years 2021-2023, alongside endorsing the budget for the fiscal year 2023-2024. Additionally, the assembly passed multiple resolutions and engaged in extensive deliberations revolving around the study theme of the year, namely, 'Migration of Marthomites and Ministry to the Marthoma Diaspora.' A special mandalam meeting for constitution amendments was held at the same venue on February 7th, 8th and 9th 2024.

Mr Sunny Abraham Valiyakalayil– Mandalam Representative

12.2 The Mar Thoma Church UK & Europe Zone / (UK-Europe-Africa Diocese)

The Mar Thoma Church UK & Europe Zone had a dynamic and fruitful financial year in 2023/2024, marked by spiritual growth, community engagement and meaningful outreach initiatives. The Episcopal Synod uplifted the UK and Europe Zone to a Diocese as "UK–Europe-Africa Diocese" with effect from 1st January 2024, all the legal documentation is under process. The Synod appointed Rt Rev. Dr Joseph Mar Ivanios Episcopa as our 1st Diocesan Episcopa.

The Diocese has over 2,000 families registered as members, served by 17 resident clergies and 23 centres of worship. All the church organisations, namely Sunday school, Youth Fellowship, SevikaSangham and Edvaka mission are also organised at the Zonal level. Youth fellowship at the Zonal level have started the "YOUMAT" programme which supported the youths currently in universities across UK and Europe.

The major new initiative of the Diocese is to initiate "Light to Life". The project aims at social development and transformation of communities through education of children, improve healthcare accessibility, foster personal growth, and empower children from marginalized backgrounds. Grounded in the vision of Rt Rev. Dr Issac Mar Philoxenos Episcopa, this initiative radiates hope and opportunity and the Diocese is committed to supporting 300 children. As a parish, we have been able to support 36 students.

The financial health of the Mar Thoma Churches in UK & Europe remained stable throughout the financial year. The Diocese acknowledged and thanked all St Johns members for their active support to all Zonal activities and their generous financial support to the Zonal initiatives.

Looking ahead the Diocese is committed to build upon the foundation laid in 2023-24 and furthering our mission of spreading the love of Christ in the UK – Europe - Africa Diocese. We will continue to adapt to the changing landscape, leveraging technology to enhance outreach efforts and strengthen community connections. With a renewed sense of purpose and unity, we are poised to embark on another year of spiritual growth, service, and transformation.

Mr P. M. Mathew and Adv. Jacob P. Abraham - Zonal Assembly Representatives.

12.3 Parish in the Zonal, Diocesan and Centre Activities of the Church

The Parish has actively and faithfully participated in numerous activities organized by Zone at various levels. The parishioners wholeheartedly joined in all the Zonal/Diocesan events and gatherings. Moreover, the members extended their unwavering support and actively contributed to the Zonal/Diocesan activities.

The Parish has also made significant contributions towards various Offertories and special collections initiated by the Church and the Zone/Diocese.

13 Ecumenical Relationships

This parish serves as a representative of the Member of Churches Together in England (CTE) and Churches Together in Britain & Ireland (CTBI) through the Council of Mar Thoma Parishes in Europe (UK-Europe Zone). Furthermore, actively participate in a range of parish activities and fostered cordial relationships with local authorities and organizations. As a member of Hounslow Friends of Faith, our parish's Vicar and Vice President attend meetings on behalf of our congregation. We also engage in ecumenical fellowship with Episcopal Churches and participate in various meetings.

14 Website & Programme Diary

The website for St John's Parish, located at <http://www.stjohnsmtc.org.uk/>, consistently provides thorough and up-to-date information regarding upcoming programmes and events. Dr Suresh Samuel's efforts are appreciated for updating the website. Recently, a digital programme diary for the parish was released on January 1st 2024. This programme diary was meticulously prepared by the Lay Ministrants in collaboration with the Vicar, ensuring that it contains comprehensive and precise details. Specifically, the programme diary features a concise summary of the service dates, lectionary, and the individuals responsible for reading lessons and providing service assistance.

15 Appreciation and Prayers

God has blessed the Mar Thoma Church to consecrate three new Bishops. The Ramban ordination was held on November 2023 and Episcopal consecration in December 2023. The parish extends its best wishes and prayers to the three newly consecrated Bishops namely Rt Rev. Zacharias Mar Aprem Episcopa, Rt Rev. Dr Joseph Mar Ivanios Episcopa and Rt Rev. Mathews Mar Seraphim Episcopa.

16 Acknowledgements

The Executive Committee wish to express its gratitude to our Metropolitan, The Most Rev. Dr Theodosius Mar Thoma, and the Episcopal Synod for their benevolent support towards the advancement of our Parish. We are particularly appreciative of the exceptional leadership, counsel, and backing provided by our Diocesan Bishop Rt Rev. Dr Isaac Mar Philoxenos. We also extend a warm welcome to the new Diocesan Bishop Rt Rev. Dr Joseph

Mar Ivanios and pray Mar Ivanios leadership will be a blessing for the UK-Europe region in the coming years.

Furthermore, our special thanks are extended to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Most Rev. Justin Welby, and the Bishop of Kensington of the Church of England for their continuous patronage. Also respectfully acknowledge and thank the Government of His Majesty and the London Borough of Hounslow for their valuable assistance during the reporting year.

The genuine guidance of the Vice President, the diligent and commendable efforts of the Treasurer and Accountant, the lay leaders, the internal auditors, the convenors of various programmes, the office bearers of organizations, and all members who have provided their unwavering support to the Parish through their prayers and generous contributions during the year are recognised and acknowledged. Special appreciation goes to Mr Kottackal George Joseph, Mr Anish P. Tom, and Mr Dibin John for their technical assistance, liturgy projection, and guidance in effectively conducting services and programs virtually. Also, acknowledge the services and the assistance in all the possible DIY services from the members residing near the church, especially Mr Mathai Oommen for his sincere dedication and commitment.

17 Post COVID-19 impact on the Charity/Going concern

Covid-19 pandemic had an impact on the charity operations during the last four years. The in person gathering started and all the activities has come back to normal in the last financial year. The charity finances are not significantly impacted as it received majority of its donations by online bank transfer. The trustees monitor and ensure that the Charity responds to the challenges and continue to support various activities.

18 Closure of Old Charity and Formation of New Charity as CIO

As new Charity Incorporated Organisation been successfully registered, the old Charity with Charity Commission registration number 1060532 will be dissolved. All Assets and Liabilities of this Charity has been transferred to the newly registered CIO with the same name and with Charity Commission registration number 1203763. Mr Samuel Daniel's efforts are appreciated for carrying out this transition..

19 Conclusion

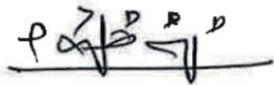
The church is not merely an institution or a social organization, but rather a tightly-knit community of individuals who have been divinely summoned out of the prevailing culture to embody a distinct and alternative way of existing in the world. As a community, we must strive to maintain our identity as a faith community that holds the values, practices, faithfulness and transmit vision of God's reign, which is revealed through Jesus Christ.

As a parish, we must remain steadfast in our commitment to "neighbourliness," which is characterized by a strong sense of solidarity and care for the marginalized and vulnerable, as well as our unwavering dedication to loving and caring for our neighbours, especially those who are oppressed and excluded by the dominant culture.

As we move forward, let us wholeheartedly reassert our commitment to advancing the mission and ministry of God Almighty by reflecting the character of Christ - embodying traits such as humility, love, integrity, generosity, and servanthood. It is through such noble traits that we can effectively represent God's divine purpose and fulfil His great commission. May

the Almighty God continue to abundantly bless our congregation and empower all our efforts for His ultimate glory and the expansion of His eternal Kingdom.

For and on behalf of the Executive Committee / Charity Trustees.



Rev. John Mathew Charivil
Vicar & President



Alexander Renjith Joseph
Secretary

INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT- ST JOHNS MAR THOMA CHURCH UK**Report of the Independent Examiner to the Trustees of the charity on the accounts for the period ended 31 March 2024**

I report on the financial statements of the charity on pages 25-31 for the period ended 31 March 2024 which have been prepared in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 (the Act) and with the Financial Reporting Standard 102 (effective January 2015) as modified by the Statement of Recommended Practice for Accounting and Reporting issued by the Charity Commission for England & Wales, effective January 2015 (The SORP), under the historical cost convention and the accounting policies set out on page 25.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Independent Examiner

As described on pages 1-2, the charity's Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts.

The Trustees consider that the audit requirement of Section 144(1) of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act) does not apply, and that there is no requirement in the governing documents of the charity for the conducting of an audit. As a consequence, the Trustees have elected that the financial statements be subject to independent examination.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under any legal provision, or otherwise, and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:-

- a) examine the accounts under section 145 of the Act;
- b) follow the procedures in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act; and;
- c) state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Examiner's Statement and scope of work undertaken

I conducted my examination in accordance with the General Directions issued by the Charity Commission for England & Wales, under section 145(5)(b) of the Act, setting out the duties of an Independent Examiner in relation to the conducting of an Independent Examination. An Independent Examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and of the accounting systems employed by the charity and a comparison of the financial statements presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the financial statements, and seeking explanations from you, as Trustees, concerning such matters. The purpose of the examination is to establish as far as possible that there have been no breaches of charity legislation and that the financial statements comply with the SORP, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.

The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and information supplied by the Trustees in the course of the examination is not subjected to audit tests or enquiries, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the financial statements, and in particular, I express no opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view of the affairs of the charity, and my report is limited to the matters set out in the statement below.

I planned and performed my examination so as to satisfy myself that the objectives of the Independent Examination are achieved and before finalising the report I obtained written assurances from the Trustees of all material matters.

Independent Examiner's Statement, Report and Opinion

Attention is drawn to the accounting policy stating that, notwithstanding the explicit requirement in the extant statutory regulations, the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008, to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the SORP 2005, in view of the fact that the SORP 2005 has been withdrawn, and in order to accord with current best practice, the Trustees have determined to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the FRS 102 SORP 2015. I concur with this approach, and any references in my report to the regulations should be read subject to this comment.

Subject to the limitations upon the scope of my work as detailed above, in connection with my examination, I can confirm that :-

This is a report in respect of an examination carried out under section 145 of the Act and in accordance with any directions given by the Commission under subsection (5)(b) of that section which are applicable;

and that no matter has come to my attention in connection with my examination which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements :-

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act 2011;
- when preparing accounts on an accruals basis under s132 of the Charities Act 2011, to prepare financial statements which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act and the 2015 Regulations setting out the form and content of charity accounts;
- that the financial statements be prepared in accordance with the methods and principles set out in the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities (effective January 2015)

have not been met or to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in my report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached;



Jitender Kaur
Member of ICAEW

Fairfax Tax
Faith House, Main Street
Little Stretton
LE2 2FS

This report was signed on 18/11/2024

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE 9 MONTHS ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024

Note	Unrestricted funds			Restricted funds	Total Funds March 2024	Total Funds March 2023
	General funds	Designated funds	Total			
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Income from:						
Subscription and Donations	5,6 & 12	134,633	13,734	148,366	62,524	210,890
Other Activities-Fundraising Events	5 & 13	12,280	12,280	24,561	-	24,561
Investments - Bank Interest		6,005	-	6,005	-	6,005
Other		-	-	-	-	-
Total Income		152,918	26,014	178,932	62,524	223,753
Expenditure on:						
<u>Charitable Activities</u>						
Church running costs	15	92,036	13,511	105,547	6,464	112,011
Other Charitable Activities	14	1,479	14,875	16,354	17,410	33,764
<u>Other</u>						
Independent Examiner's Fees		1,890	-	1,890	-	1,890
Total Expenditure		95,405	28,386	123,791	23,874	163,307
Net Income/(Expenditure)		57,513	(2,372)	55,141	38,650	93,790
Transfer between funds						
Capital Expenditure	8	5,634	(5,634)	-	-	-
Others	5	(85,402)	85,402	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		(22,255)	77,396	55,141	38,650	93,790
Reconciliation of Funds:						
Total funds brought forward		464,614	350,057	814,671	24,611	839,282
Total funds carried forward		442,358	427,453	869,811	63,261	933,072

The charity's income and expenditure relate to continuing operations.

The charity has no gains or losses for the 9 months ended 31st March 2024 other than those shown above.

The surplus for the 9 months comprising of net incoming unrestricted fund & restricted fund equals £93,790 (2023:£60,446)

The figures in the Accounts for period ended 31st March 2024 are for 9 months and for year ended 31st March 2023 are for 12 months .

All figures in the Accounts are in decimals but shown rounded off for presentation purposes. Any difference in the totals is due to rounding off effect.

St Johns Mar Thoma Church UK

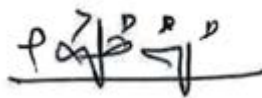
Charity Reg. No. 1203763

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST MARCH 2024

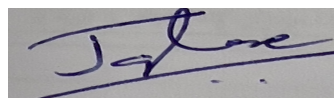
	Note	31 March 2024	31 March 2023
		£	£
FIXED ASSETS	2	324,279	332,380
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash at Bank & in hand	11	609,127	518,923
Sundry Debtors/Prepayments	3	1,465	1,915
		610,593	520,838
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Creditors: Amount falling due within 1 year	4	1,800	2,280
NET CURRENT ASSETS		608,793	518,558
NET ASSETS		933,072	850,938
FUNDS OF THE CHARITY			
Unrestricted funds			
- General funds		442,358	470,097
- Designated funds	5	427,453	362,580
		869,811	832,676
Restricted Fund	6	63,261	18,262
		933,072	850,938



Saji Varghese
Treasurer



Rev. John Mathew C
Vicar & President



James Varghese
Accountant

Notes 1 to 16 on the following pages form part of these financial statements.

Notes to the accounts for 9 months ended 31st March 2024

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES AND PRESENTATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention and are prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" [Charities SORP (FRS102)] and Charities Act 2011.

Incoming Resources.

Donations, grants and other forms of voluntary income are accounted within the accounting year. Income tax recoverable on Gift Aid donations and legacy are recognised when the income is received.

Resources Expended

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis. Management and administration costs are those incurred in connection with the administration of the charity.

Resources expended include attributable VAT that cannot be recovered.

Tangible Fixed Assets and Depreciation

Tangible Fixed Assets other than Freehold Land are stated at cost less depreciation. From 2014-15, the Freehold Property has been re-classified as Freehold Land valued at £100,000 and Building (balance value). No depreciation has been charged on Freehold Land.

Depreciation is provided on tangible fixed assets at the following rates to write off the cost of assets, over the useful expected life as follows:

Fixtures, fittings and equipment	- 25% on written down value
Building	- 2% on cost
Freehold Land	- Nil

Funds

General Funds represents those funds that are not subject to any restrictions regarding their use and are available for application to the general purposes of the charity. The balance represents the unexpended resources held within the fund.

Designated Funds are part of Unrestricted funds, that have been set aside for specific purposes by the trustees. These purposes are set out in the note 5.

Restricted Funds are those funds which must be spent for specific charity purposes as specified by the donor (Refer note 6).

Notes to the accounts for 9 months ended 31st March 2024

2 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS AND DEPRECIATION

	Note	Freehold Land £	Building £	Equipment & Furniture £	Total £
Cost					
At 01 July 2023		100,000	418,756	149,787	668,544
Additions	8	-	-	5,634	5,634
Disposal		-	-	(1,690)	(1,690)
At 31 March 2024		100,000	418,756	153,731	672,488
Depreciation					
At 01 July 2023		-	204,113	135,123	339,236
Charge for the Period		-	6,281	4,382	10,663
Relate to disposal		-	-	(1,690)	(1,690)
At 31 March 2024		-	210,394	137,814	348,209
Net Book Value					
At 30 June 2023		100,000	214,644	14,665	329,308
At 31 March 2024		100,000	208,362	15,917	324,279

3 PREPAYMENTS/ADVANCE

Building & Motor insurance

2023-24*	As at 30/06/24
£	£
1,465	719
1,465	719

4 CREDITORS: AMOUNT FALLING WITHIN ONE YEAR

i) Sundry Creditors

Accruals

Independent Examination charges

2023-24*	As at 30/06/24
£	£
-	-
1,800	5,519
1,800	5,519

* 9 months ending 31st March 2024

Notes to the accounts for 9 months ended 31st March 2024

5 DESIGNATED FUNDS

The accumulated unrestricted funds of the charity include the following designated funds which have been set aside out of general funds by the trustees for the specific purposes.

	Balance as at	During the current year					Balance as at
	01 Jul 2023	Transfers from General funds	Collections/ Proceeds	Utilised		Net Movement	31 Mar 2024
				Capital Expenditure	Other Expenditure		
Vicar's Transfer (incl. Visa) Fund	1,508	5,000	-	-	72	4,928	6,436
Church Car Fund	20,000	-	-	-	-	-	20,000
Church Improvement Fund	1,725	5,000	200	5,634	-	(434)	1,291
Church Development Fund	230,000	71,200	-	-	1,200	70,000	300,000
Conference Fund	5,495	-	-	-	-	-	5,495
Reserve / Contingency Fund	25,000	5,000	-	-	-	5,000	30,000
Vicar's Ex-Gratia Fund	1	2,300	-	-	0	2,300	2,301
Harvest Festival-Special Projects	48,940	(6,248)	12,280	-	12,175	(6,143)	42,798
Choir	413	200	-	-	155	45	459
Edavaka Mission	513	-	-	-	-	-	513
Youth League	1,244	750	5,520	-	5,981	289	1,533
Family Fellowship	14	200	-	-	0	200.00	214
Sevika Sangham	11,202	-	2,949	-	2,041	908	12,110
Sunday school	573	2,000	2,068	-	4,185	(117)	456
VBS	3,429	-	2,997	-	2,578	419	3,848
	350,057	85,402	26,014	5,634	28,386	77,396	427,453

- Vicar's Transfer Fund - for the expenses incurred incl. visa costs for Vicar and his family upon their transfer to and from the United Kingdom.
- Church Car Fund - this fund provides for the planned replacement of Church car in future.
- Church Improvement Fund - provides for cost of major renovation/improvement to the Church premises and towards capital expenditure.
- Church Development Fund - set aside towards Church development including purchase of land and/or worship place and/or vicarage.
- Conference Fund - set aside for meeting any shortfall in hosting Diocesan Conference, when we are the host Parish.
- Reserve / Contingency Fund - set aside for meeting the church running cost in case of an emergency.
- Vicar's Ex-Gratia Fund - amount set aside for the Vicar and payable when he completes his term in the UK.
- Harvest Festival-Special Projects - Funds for Special Projects from Harvest Festival Collections. The outstanding balance will be used for Gadchiroli Project (once their FCRA Account is operative) & other special projects in the coming years.
- Choir, Edavaka Mission, Youth League, Family Fellowship, Sevika Sangham, Sunday School & VBS are internal organisations of the church and funds are transferred from the General Funds to cover shortfall between budgeted income and budgeted expenditure.

6 RESTRICTED FUNDS

	Balance as at 01 Jul 2023	During the current year				Balance as at 31 Mar 2024
		Transfers from General funds	Collections	Utilised	Net Movement	
CHARIS-Fasting offertory/RTT	14,536	-	3,046	2,895	151	14,687
CHARIS - Special Collections	550	-	14,340	14,490	- 150.00	400
Recessa/Lent Fund	3,641	-	1,033	-	1,033	4,674
Prayer Group Collections	25	-	0	25	(25)	-
Special Collection	5,250	-	0	-	-	5,250
Collection (Diocese)	610	-	6,155	6,464	(309)	301
New Church Property Purchase	-	-	37,950	-	37,950	37,950
	24,611	-	62,524	23,874	38,650	63,261

- Fasting offertory/RTT Cover -funds are used to meet the specific needs of individuals or organisations outside the church who are in dire financial need. It covers broadly three areas i) Educational Aid ii) Medical Aid iii) Other Miscellaneous Aid for the needy.
- CHARIS - Special Collections during the year included donations to for emergency Medical help, Manipur Relief work etc.
- Recessa is collected from individual members and paid to the parent church as membership fee (Recessa) of the parent church and Lent fund (Uposhanavaram) is collected during Lent and is used by the parent church towards Orphanages and Destitute Homes (Homeless).

Notes to the accounts for 9 months ended 31st March 2024

- d) Prayer Group Collections are collections made by Area Prayer Group members, to support various charitable activities around the world.
- e) Special Collection during the year was NIL.
- f) Collection (Diocese) are contributions made from our members and remitted to UK, Europe & Africa Diocese.

7 LOAN

There was no loan amount outstanding as at 31st March 2024.

8 ANALYSIS OF ADDITIONS TO FIXED ASSETS DURING THE YEAR

The following assets were bought and capitalised during the year. As against the approved Capital Expenditure Budget of £14,000 for 2023-24, the total spent was £5,634 as detailed below:

Asset description	Cost (£)
a) Church - Speaker & Stand	1,374
b) Church - Table for Audio/Video system	2,500
c) Parsonage - New Boiler	1,760
Total	5,634

9 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

Unrestricted Fund

Tangible Fixed Assets
Current Assets
Less: Current Liabilities

Restricted Fund

Total Net Assets

2023-24*	2022-23
£	£
324,279	332,380
547,332	502,576
(1,800)	(2,280)
869,811	832,676
63,261	18,262
933,072	850,938

10 Sundry Expenses

- i) CRB Check Expenses

2023-24*	2022-23
£	£
282	-
282	-

11 MOVEMENT IN CASH BALANCE

Notes

Opening Cash Balance

Net surplus /(deficit)

Depreciation

(Increase)/decrease in debtors

Increase/(decrease) in creditors

Capital expenses

Closing Cash Balance

2
3
4
8

2023-24*	2022-23
£	£
514,774	446,160
93,790	60,446
10,663	13,589
(746)	(687)
(3,719)	300
(5,634)	(885)
609,127	518,923

* 9 months ending 31st March 2024

St Johns Mar Thoma Church UK

Charity Reg. No. 1203763

Notes to the accounts for 9 months ended 31st March 2024

		2023-24*	2022-23
		£	£
12 SUBSCRIPTION, DONATIONS ETC. - GENERAL FUND			
Subscription from Members		53,387	64,688
Other Donations/Collections		8,125	8,742
Various Offertories		37,127	46,081
Gift Aid		35,994	40,925
		134,633	160,436
13 INCOME FROM OTHER ACTIVITIES - FUNDRAISING EVENTS			
Harvest Festival - Special Projects	DF	12,280	11,913
Harvest Festival - Others		12,280	11,913
Cake Sale Collections		0	5,436
		24,561	29,263
14 EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE AND EVANGELICAL ACTIVITIES			
Charity - Harvest Festival	DF	12,175	-2,000
Charity - Sevika Sangam and Sunday School	DF	2,700	4,168
Special Offertory Donations	RF	2,895	4,020
Charity + Evangelism (Special Collections)	RF	14,515	6,679
Other Charitable Activities		1,479	8,107
		33,764	20,975
15 CHURCH RUNNING COSTS			
Vicar's Salary		23,848	27,946
Parsonage & Bishop Suite Expenses		5,878	6,745
Visa & Vicar Transfer/Ex Gratia	DF	72	12,917
Church Utilities/Repairs/Insurance/Legal		17,210	17,996
Motor Expenses incl. Lease Costs & Insurance		6,720	9,218
Special Events Expenses		3,195	2,584
Diocese/Sabha Office		5,900	17,413
Visiting Speaker Expenses		1,350	2,900
Convention & Family Retreat		2,057	400
Printing, Stationery, Telephone etc		2,838	3,835
Bank Charges		586	781
Depreciation		10,663	13,589
Church Organisation Expenses	DF	12,239	10,090
Church Development Expenses	DF	1,200	-
Regional Events/Conference		3,153	3,125
Diocese Dues Collection from members, paid	RF	6,464	-
Sundry/Altar/Harvest Expenses/Ordination Ceremony		2,193	1,672
		105,566	131,211
Special collection from Members			
Fellowship Events Expense		6,445	4,417
Zonal Development Fund	RF	-	4,425
		6,445	8,842
		112,011	140,053

16 TRUSTEES REMUNERATION, EXPENSES & DONATIONS

No remuneration or any other financial benefit, either directly or indirectly was paid or is payable out of the funds of the charity to any of the trustees or to any persons known to be connected with the charity except for the Vicar, who is expressly permitted to receive remuneration for his services, as per his employment contract (note 15 above) and housing at the Church Vicarage valued at £19,600 p.a.

During the Nine months ended 31st March 2024, the total amount re-imbursed to the Vicar was £3,326 towards business travel, car fuel, local conveyance, postage, stationery etc.

During the period, the total expenses reimbursed to 10 other trustees towards expenses incurred for and on behalf of the Charity amounted to £5,086

* 9 months ending 31st March 2024

Internal Audit Report of St Johns Mar Thoma Church, UK

To the Members of St Johns Mar Thoma Church UK

We have examined the attached Financial Statements including the Balance Sheet, Statement of Financial Activities and the related Income and Expenditure and Receipt and Payments Accounts of the Church for the Financial Year ended 31st March 2024.

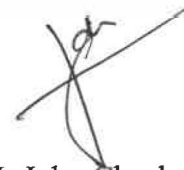
Our responsibility as Internal Auditors is to express an opinion on the Financial Statements the preparation of which is the responsibility of the Trustees.

All the information and explanations, which to the best of our knowledge and belief were necessary, for the audit purposes were made available to us.

In our opinion, based on the information received and the explanation provided to us, the Financial Statements give a true and fair view of the financial affairs of the Church as at 31st March 2024.



Mrs Joji Samuel
Internal Auditor



Mr John Chacko
Internal Auditor

Dated 26th May 2024

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances;
for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18



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