

Kerala Ecumenical Christian Fellowship- Dallas

Annual Report for the Year 2017.

Dear Members of the Kerala Ecumenical Christian Fellowship,

“Greetings to everyone in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ”

The Kerala Ecumenical Christian Fellowship, also known as KECF is an organization for the Kerala State based Episcopal Churches conducting worship and services in the Dallas Fort Worth area in the State of Texas.

Currently we have 21 churches as members which has joined together to build up the Christian faith and core values to strengthen the love and unity among the Kerala based churches in this region under the banner of KECF.

It is my great pleasure and honor to present you the annual report for the year which ended on December 31st, 2017.

On behalf of KECF, I take this opportunity to praise and thank Lord God Almighty for His abundant love, mercy, and blessings bestowed up on us throughout the years since its inception on December 26th, 1979. We are humbly praying to the Lord to continue His mercy up on us throughout the future years to come. We, the KECF executive committee express our sincere love, thanks and appreciations to all the clergies, member churches and the parishioners for their commitment and support towards the growth and prosperity of this organization and requesting to continue the same cooperation during the coming years.

1. Member churches:

Following are the current 21 churches which has the membership in the KECF

1. St. Mary's Malankara Orthodox Valiyapally- Farmers Branch
2. Mar Thoma Church of Dallas- Carrollton
3. St. Ignatious Jacobite Syrian Cathedral Church- Carrollton
4. St. Alphonsa Syro Malabar Catholic Church- Coppell
5. CSI Congregation of Dallas- Garland
6. St. Mary's Jacobite Syrian Church- Carrollton
7. Holy Trinity CSI Church- Dallas
8. St. Thomas Kananya Jacobite Church- Irving
9. St. Mary's Malankara Catholic Church- Mesquite
10. St. Thomas Evangelical Church of India- Irving
11. St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church- Garland
12. St. Paul's Malankara Orthodox Church- Plano
13. Mar Gregorios Jacobite Syrian Church- Mesquite
14. St. George Malankara Orthodox Church- Irving
15. St. Mary's Malankara Orthodox Church of India- Carrollton
16. St. Gregorios Malankara Orthodox Church- Garland

17. Mar Thoma Church of Dallas- Farmers Branch
18. Christ the King Kananya Catholic Church- Farmers Branch
19. Schion Mar Thoma Church- Plano
20. St. Thomas Malankara Orthodox Church- Dallas
21. St. Paul's Mar Thoma Church- Mesquite

2. General Body Meetings:

The annual general meeting for the year 2016 was held on January 15th, 2017 at St. Mary's Malankara Orthodox Valiyapally, 14133 Dennis Lane, Farmers Branch, TX 75234. The 2016 KECF president Rev. Fr. Raju M. Daniel presided over the meeting. After the prayer, welcome and introduction, the annual report for the year 2016 was presented by the general secretary Mr. Alex Alexander and was unanimously approved by the meeting. Mrs. Jiji Thomas Mathew, the trustee of the KECF presented the annual accounts for the year 2016 and the accounts were approved and passed unanimously by the general body.

The following items were discussed as the agenda for the year 2017.

1) Hosting Church.

The General Body unanimously elected St. Mary's Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church, 2112 Old Denton Dr, Carrollton, TX 75006 as the hosting church for the year 2017.

2) Executive Committee Members for 2017.

The following persons were unanimously elected to the 2017 KECF executive committee.

1. President – Very Rev. V. M. Thomas Corepiscopa, St. Mary's Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church
2. Vice President – Rev. Fr. Raju M. Daniel, St. Mary's Malankara Orthodox Valiyapally
3. General Secretary - Mr. Alex Alexander, - St. Gregorios Orthodox Church- Garland
4. Trustee – Mr. Jacob Scaria, St. Mary's Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church,
5. Choir Coordinator - Mr. John Thomas, – St. Paul's Mar Thoma Church- Mesquite
6. Youth Coordinator –Mr. Nithin Panicker, St. Mary's Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church

Committee Members:

7. Rev. Fr. John Kunnathusserril, St. Thomas Malankara Orthodox Church- Dallas
8. Rev. Alex K. Chacko, Sehion Mar Thoma Church- Plano
9. Rev. Fr. Paul Thotakat, Mar Gregorios Jacobite Syrian Church- Mesquite
10. Rev. Viju Varghese, Mar Thoma Church of Dallas- Carrollton
11. Rev. Shiju P. John, St. Paul's Mar Thoma Church- Mesquite
12. Rev. Fr. Dr. Renjan Mathew, St. Ignatious Jacobite Syrian Cathedral (KECF Clergy Secretary)

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| 13. | Mr. Shaji Ramapuram, | Mar Thoma Church of Dallas- Carrollton |
| 14. | Mr. Shiju Abraham, | St. Thomas Kananya Jacobite Syrian Church- Irving |
| 15. | Mr. Jeryl Sajumon, | St. Mary's Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church- Carrollton |
| 16. | Mr. Anil Joshua | Schion Mar Thoma Church- Plano |
| 17. | Miss. Aleesha Johnson, | St. Mary's Malankara Orthodox Valiyapally- Farmers Branch |
| 18. | Mr. John Varghese, | CSI Congregation of Dallas- Garland |
| 19. | Mr. Prince Abraham, | St. Mary's Malankara Orthodox Valiyapally- Farmers Branch |
| 20. | Mr. Soney Jacob | St. Ignatious Jacobite Syrian Cathedral- Carrollton |
| 21. | Mr. Sujan Mathew Kakkanat, | St. Mary's Malankara Catholic Church- Mesquite |
| 22. | Mrs. Jiji Thomas Mathew
(Ex-officio) | St. Mary's Malankara Orthodox Valiyapally- Farmers Branch |

3. KECF Executive Committee Meetings:

The KECF Executive committee met 5 times to discuss various activities of the organization and taken important decisions during the year. In addition to the meetings, various conference calls were also conducted during the year to make appropriate decisions as necessary.

4. Major Activities during the Year:

a) World Day Prayer of 2017

The World Day Prayer for the year 2016 was held on March 11th, 2017 at St. Mary's Malankara Orthodox Valiyapally, Farmers Branch from 09:00 AM to 01:00 PM. The president Very Rev. V. M. Thomas Corepiscopa, presided over the meeting. Special prayers were held on behalf of the designated Country Philippines during the occasion. Special invitees from the Philippines Church in the Dallas area also participated in the meeting and presented interfaith activities. Mrs. Saramma Raju, the coordinator of the 2017 World Day Prayer welcomed the audience.

Miss. Lijin Hanna Raju was the guest speaker for the event and delivered a meaningful message about the importance of women in the world and in a family life. About 250 plus people participated in the meeting which ended with lunch. On behalf of KECF, we express our thanks to the vicar Rev. Fr. Raju M. Daniel, the managing committee members and the parishioners of St. Mary's Malankara Orthodox Valiyapally- Farmers Branch for hosting the event.

During the business meeting, Mrs. Ann Thomas Kochamma of St. Mary's Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church was elected as the 2018 coordinator of the world day prayer celebrations. The function will be held at St. Mary's Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church- Carrollton during the 1st week of March, 2018. The general body unanimously decided to merge the present separate accounting system of the world day prayer with the KECF accounts starting 2017. An amount of \$454.70, the balance of the world day prayer was handed over to the KECF president at the meeting. Any funds needed for the world day prayer functions will be disbursed from the KECF funds. The event was a great success and everyone enjoyed the presentations and the melodious choir songs under the KECF.

b) Three-Day Ecumenical Convention:

The 20th, three-day ecumenical convention for the year was held on August 4th, 5th and 6th 2017 at St. Alphonsa Catholic Church Auditorium, Coppell from 06:00 PM to 09:00 PM. Very Rev. Paulose Parekara Corepiscopa, from Kerala State, India was the main speaker for the convention. This three-day convention was a great success and has generated spiritual brilliances among the gatherings.

Mr. John Thomas, the KECF choir director and various members deserves special appreciations for their melodious and beautiful ecumenical choir songs presentation during the convention days which was highly enjoyed and appreciated by the audience. An average over 1100 people participated every day which was the highest number of crowds present for the KECF convention. The KECF executive committee is very happy to see the increase in attendance every year and appreciate all parishioners for their cooperation.

The 3-day convention ended on August 6th at 09:00 PM with vote of thanks by the KECF General Secretary Mr. Alex Alexander.

c) Ecumenical Youth Convention:

Under the leadership of the KECF, the youth two-day retreat was held on June 23rd and 24th, 2017 Friday from 06:00 PM to 09:00 PM and on Saturday from 09:00 AM to 05:00 PM at St. Mary's Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church- Carrollton. The program started on Friday with evening prayer led by Very Rev. V. M. Thomas Corepiscopa along with the youth members followed by the praise and worship session. The KECF President welcome the audience to the conference and requested for more participants for the remaining sessions.

The evening session started with the opening message by the KECF general secretary Mr. Alex Alexander. During his message, a brief explanation about the history of this ecumenical spiritual organization in Dallas along with its annual activities. The youngsters were requested to come forward to the leadership of this organization without any reluctances.

The secretary also delivered the message for the evening session focusing the challenges of the youth members facing in today's society. The meeting also discussed few solutions for the issues with our limitations to overcome these challenges with faith, prayer and upholding the inherited heritage and cultural values. The meeting concluded with prayer followed by dinner by 09:00 PM.

On Saturday the program started with registration at 08:00 AM followed by the breakfast. The session started with prayer, welcome message and praise and worship. The conference leaders were Rev. Fr. Mathew Alexander, Dr. George Aramath, Mrs. Irene Thomas and Ms. Lijin Hanna Raju. All the speakers delivered very valuable and inspiring messages which was well appreciated by the youth members. The program had various question answer sessions, Bible quiz and games. We express our sincere thanks to all the leaders for their dedication and valuable advices given to our youth members.

Mr. Nithin Panicker, the KECF youth coordinator along with Ms. Aleesha Johnson, and Mr. Jeryl Sajumon worked as a team for the success of this event and on behalf of the KECF, I would like to sincerely appreciate their dedication and hard work for the success of the conference. The

participation for this year's conference was less than expected due to the inclement weather conditions during that week end.

d) Half Year General Body Meeting:

The Kerala Ecumenical Christian Fellowship (KECF) ½ yearly General Body meeting for the year 2017 was held on June 25th, 2017 at 04:00 PM at St. Mary's Malankara Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church, 2112 Old Denton Dr, Carrollton, TX 75006. The meeting started with prayer led by Rev. A. V. Thomas followed by the welcome speech by Very Rev. V. M. Thomas Corepiscopa the president of the Kerala Ecumenical Christian Fellowship.

Very Rev. V. M. Thomas Corepiscopa presided over the meeting and there were nineteen (19) members from various KECF member parishes participated in the meeting.

The following items were discussed as the new agenda items for the year.

1) Presentation of the previous GB meeting report:

The report of the previous general body meeting held on January 15th, 2017 was presented by the KECF General Secretary, Mr. Alex Alexander, and the report was unanimously accepted and passed by the general body without any amendments.

2) Presentation of the current financial status:

The ½ year income and expenses report for the year 2017 was presented by Mr. Eldo Mathew on behalf of the KECF treasurer. The statement reflected the opening balance for the year 2017 as \$2,317.03. In addition to this amount it showed income received as dues from last year \$200.00, transfer from World Day Prayer accounts \$\$454.70, donation for KECF youth retreat from an individual \$300.00, and income from youth registration for \$600.00 with the current balance of \$3,871.73. The expenses of \$2,727.09 as of June 25th was reflected on the statement showing the current balance as \$1,144.64.

3) Three Day KECF Ecumenical Convention:

The president informed the meeting that Very Rev. Paulose Parekara Corepiscopa from Kerala has confirmed his availability as the speaker for the convention for 2017. In addition, the venue for the event has been set as St. Alphonsa Catholic Church Auditorium, Coppell and the rental agreement and advance has been signed with that parish. It was also informed that the ecumenical choir practices are progressing well and the remaining arrangements will be taken care as soon as needed.

As per the established guidelines, the meeting decided to give a gift of \$1000.00 to the speaker as honorarium.

4) KECF Youth Retreat:

Mr. Nithin Panicker, the youth representative along with Mr. Jeryl Sajumon informed the meeting that the one-day retreat for the youth has created spiritual revival among members and the speakers were able to deliver good messages to participants. Even though the attendance was low comparing to last

d) Ecumenical Sports and Games:

The 2017 Youth sports and games competitions were held on September 9th, 2017 from 09:00 AM to 05:00 PM. Five teams were participated from various KECF member parishes in the flag football games under the guidelines set by KECF. Everyone enjoyed this spots event which was coordinated under the leadership of Mr. Nithin Panicker along with Mr. Jeryl Sajumon and Miss. Aleesha Johnson and other sub-committees from the member churches. Registration fees from participants, fees to the referees and other sports related expenses were met from the registration fees. The youths were able to make a balance of \$210.00 dollars after all their expenses which will be used for the 2018 youth activities. St. Paul's Mar Thoma Church, Mesquite were the winning champions for the year and the KECF Revolving Championship Trophy was awarded to the winning team at the end of the event.

e) Christmas- New Year program- 2017

The 2017 Christmas and New Year program was held on December 02nd, 2017 at the MGM Auditorium, Garland. The program started at 05:00 PM with the procession of lighted candles by the children, Clergies and the executive committee members of the KECF. The program started sharp at 05:00 PM with the opening prayer led by Rev. Viju Varughese of the Carrollton Mar Thoma Church. Rev. Fr. John Kunnathusserril led the ecumenical prayer followed by the presidential welcome speech by Very Rev. V. M. Thomas Corepiscopa. The program was inaugurated by lighting the lamp by the executive committee members followed by a well-planned Christmas skit presented by the hosting church St. Mary's Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church- Carrollton. The skit was well appreciated by all the audiences and on behalf of the KECF, I sincerely appreciate everyone of that parish for their dedication, hard work and professional execution of the skit.

This year's Christmas and New Year message was delivered by Rev. Fr. Mathai Mannoovadakethil, the newly appointed vicar of St. Mary's Malankara Catholic Church, Mesquite. On behalf of the KECF, I express our sincere thanks and gratitude to Rev. Fr. Mathai Mannoovadakethil, for giving us a purposeful Christmas and new year message. Most of the member churches presented melodious and colorful Christmas carol songs which was highly appreciated by the audience.

As per the decision of the KECF general body, raffle drawings of \$100.00 each to five winners were conducted at the end of the program. The event concluded with the vote of thanks by the KECF general Secretary Mr. Alex Alexander followed by the concluding prayer and benediction.

f) KECF Finance:

Besides the \$200.00 contribution per year from each member parishes, during the year we could collect offertory during the 3- day ecumenical convention and the Christmas new year program. As per the set guidelines and bylaws, the KECF do not accept any sponsorships from individuals or business for any of the KECF related functions. We had an opening balance of \$2,317.03 received from last year. We had a total operating income of \$16,262.38 and the expenses of \$11, 400.54 with a closing balance of \$4,861.84 for the year 2017. There are two member churches which has not yet paid their annual dues and these amounts will be collected by the next executive committee of the KECF. A detailed finance report will be presented by the KECF trustee Mr. Jacob Scaria for discussion and approval of this general body meeting.

g) Conclusion:

On behalf of the Kerala Ecumenical Christian Fellowship of Dallas (KECF), I would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks, love, gratitude and appreciations to all the clergies, member churches and the parishioners for their dedication, cooperation and commitment towards

the spiritual growth and unity for the last 39 years in the Dallas Fort Worth area. We are looking forward for your continued prayers and support to keep-up the unity of this organization which is the oldest ecumenical fellowship in the North American Region.

We would also like to express our thanks to all the executive committee members, present and past leaders, youth members for their contributions towards the successful growth of KECF. On behalf of all the member parishes, executive committee members and the parishioners, I would like to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to Very Rev. V. M. Thomas Corepiscopa, the vicar, Church committee members and the parishioners of St. Mary's Jacobite Syrian Orthodox church for their dedication and support to conduct the year-long activities of the KECF in a very professional manner.

We, the 2017 KECF executive committee members would like to express our gratitude to everyone for giving us an opportunity to serve them to glorify the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Prayerfully submitted to the general body,

For the Kerala Ecumenical Christian Fellowship- Dallas

Alex Alexander,

Alex Alexander

General Secretary

January 21, 2018