

Kerala Ecumenical Christian Fellowship- Dallas

Annual Report for the Year 2018.

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 have joined together to build up the Christian faith and core values of Christianity to strengthen the love and unity among the Kerala based episcopal churches in this region under one banner of the “KECF”.

It is my great pleasure, privilege and honor to present you the annual report for the year which ended on December 31st, 2018.

On behalf of KECF, I take this opportunity to praise and thank Lord God Almighty for His abundant love, mercy, and blessings bestowed upon us throughout the years since its inception on December 26th, 1979. We are humbly praying to the Lord to continue His mercy upon 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 during the future years to come.

1. Member churches:

Following are the current 21 churches which has a membership in the KECF as of 2018

1. St. Mary's Malankara Catholic Church- Mesquite
2. St. Paul's Mar Thoma Church- Mesquite
3. Mar Thoma Church of Dallas- Farmers Branch
4. Holy Trinity CSI Church- Dallas
5. St. Thomas Kananya Jacobite Church- Irving
6. St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church- Garland
7. St. Alphonsa Catholic Church- Coppell
8. St. Paul's Malankara Orthodox Church- Plano
9. St. Mary's Jacobite Syriac Orthodox Church- Carrollton

10. Christ the King Kananya Catholic Church- Farmers Branch
11. St. Thomas Malankara Orthodox Church- Dallas
12. St. Thomas Evangelical Church of India- Irving
13. Sehion Mar Thoma Church of Dallas - Plano
14. St. Ignatious Jacobite Syriac Christian Cathedral- Carrollton
15. St. Mary's Malankara Orthodox Valiyapally- Farmers Branch
16. Mar Thoma Church of Dallas- Carrollton
17. Mar Gregorios Jacobite Syriac Orthodox Church- Mesquite
18. St. Mary's Malankara Orthodox Church of India- Carrollton
19. St. Gregorios Malankara Orthodox Church- Garland
20. CSI Congregation of Dallas- Garland
21. St. George Malankara Orthodox Church- Irving

2) Annual General Body Meeting of 2017:

The annual general meeting for the year 2017 was held on January 21st, 2018 at St. Mary's Jacobite Syriac Orthodox Church, 2112 Old Denton Dr, Carrollton, Texas 75006. The 2017 KECF president Very Rev. Fr. V. M. Thomas Corepiscopa presided over the meeting which started with the opening prayer by Rev. Fr. Raju M. Daniel.

After the welcome speech by the president and self- introduction of the participants, the annual report for the year 2017 was presented by the General Secretary of the KECF Mr. Alex Alexander, which was unanimously approved by the meeting.

Mr. Jacob Scaria, the trustee of the KECF presented the annual accounts for the year 2017 and the accounts were approved and passed unanimously by the general body meeting.

3) Matters arising from the annual report. (Existing Business)

a) The general body unanimously decided to discontinue the raffle drawing during the Christmas New Year program due to the lack of interest of participants staying until the benediction of the program. (Most of the participants left the venue after their presentation)

b) The general body unanimously decided to continue the coffee/snack stall with the set guidelines by the KECF general body until further revised decision by the KECF general Body.

4)The following items were discussed as the agenda for the year 2018.

Selection of the Hosting Church.

The General Body unanimously selected St. Mary's Malankara Catholic Church, 2650 East Scyene Road, Mesquite, Texas 75181 as the hosting church for the year 2018.

5) Executive Committee Members for 2018.

The following persons were unanimously elected to the 2018 KECF executive committee.

1. President – Rev. Fr. Mathai Mannoovadakethil, St. Mary's Malankara Catholic Church, Mesquite
2. Vice President – Very Rev. V. M. Thomas Corepiscopa, St. Mary's Jacobite Syriac Orthodox Church
3. General Secretary - Mr. Alex Alexander, - St. Gregorios Malankara Orthodox Church- Garland
4. Trustee – Mr. Jobi Abraham, St. Mary's Malankara Catholic Church, Mesquite
5. Choir Coordinator - Mr. John Thomas, – St. Paul's Mar Thoma Church of Dallas - Mesquite
6. Youth Coordinator –Mr. Josh Mathew, St. Mary's Malankara Catholic Church, Mesquite

Committee Members:

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|---------------------------------|---|
| 7. Rev. Fr. Raju M. Daniel, | St. Mary's Malankara Orthodox Valiyapally, Farmers Branch |
| 8. Rev. Alex K. Chacko, | Sehion Mar Thoma Church- Plano (Assumed by the new Vicar) |
| 9. Rev. Fr. Joshua George, | St. Mary's Malankara Orthodox Church of India- Carrollton |
| 10. Rev. Viju Varghese, | Mar Thoma Church of Dallas- Carrollton |
| 11. Rev. Fr. Thampan Varghese, | St. George Malankara Orthodox Church, Irving |
| 12. Rev. Fr. Eldho Paily, | St. Ignatious Jacobite Syriac Christian Cathedral- Carrollton |
| 13. Mr. Shaji Ramapuram, | Mar Thoma Church of Dallas- Carrollton |
| 14. Mr. Shiju Abraham, | St. Thomas Kananya Jacobite Syrian Church- Irving |
| 15. Mr. Soney Jacob | St. Ignatious Jacobite Syrian Cathedral- Carrollton |
| 16. Mr. Sajumon Mathai, | St. Mary's Jacobite Syriac Orthodox Church- Carrollton |
| 17. Mr. Sujana Mathew Kakkanat, | St. Mary's Malankara Catholic Church- Mesquite |
| 18. Mr. Sajan Cherian | St. Mary's Malankara Catholic Church- Mesquite |
| 19. Mr. Shanu Rajan | St. Thomas Malankara Orthodox Church- Dallas |
| 20. Mr. Philip Mathew | Sehion Mar Thoma Church of Dallas - Plano |
| 21. Mr. Elson Samuel, | St. Mary's Malankara Orthodox Valiyapally- Farmers Branch |
| 22. Mr. Varghese John, | CSI Congregation of Dallas- Garland |
| 23. Mr. K. V. Joseph | St. Mary's Malankara Orthodox Church of India- Carrollton |
| 24. Mr. Scaria Jacob | St. Mary's Jacobite Syriac Orthodox Church (Ex-officio) |

6) Activities during the year- 2018

World Day Prayer of 2018

The World Day Prayer for the year 2018 was held on Saturday March 10th, 2018 at St. Mary's Jacobite Syriac Orthodox Church- Carrollton from 09:00 AM to 01:00 PM. The president Rev. Fr. Mathai Mannoovadakethil presided over the meeting. Very Rev. V. M. Thomas Corepiscopa, the vicar of the hosting parish welcomed the audience to the meeting. After the opening procession ceremony, Mrs. Ann Thomas Kochamma introduced theme of the country *Suriname* the designated country for the year with special illustrations along with the challenges by the current economic crisis.

Mrs. Dr. Irene Abraham, the main speaker for the function pointed out the challenges currently faced by Suriname. Many of the audience were unknown to the economic crises existed in that part of South America. The audience appreciated the vibrant presentation of the speaker who is a graduate in Master of theology from the University of North Texas.

The meeting conducted special prayers for that country and extended our support for the spiritual growth of that part of the region through prayers. Most of our clergies from the KECF member parishes participated in the program.

The Kerala Ecumenical Christian Fellowship Choir team under the leadership of Mr. John Thomas presented various melodious Christian songs which added special spiritual effects to the entire program. Over 350 ladies of the KECF member parishes participated in the function which included the skit presentation by St. Mary's Jacobite Syriac Orthodox Church, the hosting church.

During the business session, it was decided to conduct the 2019 World Day Prayer conference on March 02nd, at St. Mary's Malankara Catholic Church, Mesquite under the leadership of Rev. Fr. Mathai Mannoovadakethil. Mrs. Mercy Mathai, member of that parish has been elected as the coordinator for the function. On behalf of the KECF, I sincerely appreciate all the clergies, leaders, Volunteers and speakers from various churches for their dedication and hard work which made the program a great success. The function ended at 01:00 PM with delicious lunch for everyone.

7. KECF Executive Committee Meetings:

The KECF Executive committee met 4 times to discuss various activities of the organization and taken important decisions which were implemented during the year. In addition to these meetings, various conference calls were conducted during the year to make appropriate decisions needed as necessary.

8. KECF General Body Meetings:

The Kerala Ecumenical Christian Fellowship conducted five general body meetings during the year. The half yearly General Body meeting for the year was held on July 15th, 2018 at 04:00 PM at St. Mary's Malankara Catholic Church, 2615 East Scyene Road, Mesquite, TX 75181. The meeting started with prayer led by Very Rev. V. M. Thomas Corepiscopa followed by the welcome speech by Rev. Fr. Mathai Mannoovadakethil, the president of the Kerala Ecumenical Christian Fellowship. The report of the previous general body meeting was presented by the General Secretary and the half- year accounts were presented by the KECF Trustee Mr. Jobi Abraham. Both of them were passed unanimously without any amendments. There were fourteen (14) members from various KECF member parishes who participated in the general body.

In addition to the half- year general body meeting, there were four additional meetings held during the year to discuss and decide various important matters concerning the organization.

9) KECF- Three-Day Ecumenical Convention:

The 21st, three-day ecumenical convention for the year was held on August 10, 11, and 12th, 2018 at St. Mary's Malankara Orthodox Valiyapally, Farmers Branch from 06:00 PM to 09:00 PM. The 2018 KECF President Rev. Fr. Mathai Mannoorvadakethil, introduced and welcomed the chief guests, all the clergies and the audience for the function.

As per the established guidelines, the KECF choir worship started sharp at 06:30 PM followed by the opening prayer of the conference. This year we were blessed by the presence of our chief guest and the main speaker H. G. Dr. Thomas Mar Koorilos Metropolitan. In addition, Rt. Rev. Dr. Euyakim Mar Coorilos Episcopa of Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church (Diocese of Kottarakara-Punalur) were present for the inaugural function. Rt. Rev. Dr. Euyakim Mar Coorilos bishop delivered an exemplary spiritual message in emphasizing to the significance of ecumenism in today's challenges among the world religions. He also recognized and appreciated the unity of the KECF member parishes in the Dallas area for the last 40 years of its existence.

Our invited chief guest and the main speaker H. G. Dr. Thomas Mar Koorilos, (Archbishop of Malankara Catholic Church, Archdiocese of Thiruvella, Kerala State, India) was able to keep the audience engaged with his spontaneous messages with his perspective knowledge about the Holy Bible.

The convention sprouted spiritually nourishing experiences among the audience by learning and understanding more about the religion along with its comparison to our traditions and cultural values of the motherland. The three-day ecumenical convention was a great success and has generated spiritual growth among the attendees.

Mr. John Thomas, the KECF choir director along with various singers from the member parishes deserves special appreciations for their melodious and harmonious choir songs presentation during the convention days which was enjoyed and appreciated by the audience. Mr. Eldo Jacob and Mr. Thomas Mathew deserves special appreciation for their dedication and commitment to the KECF for many years by assisting the choir with musical instruments. An average over 900 people participated for the convention.

The 3-day convention ended on August 12th at 09:00 PM with vote of thanks by the KECF General Secretary Mr. Alex Alexander.

10) KECF Youth Convention:

Under the leadership of the KECF youth coordinator Mr. Josh Mathew, the youth convention and retreat were held on June 18th, 2018 Saturday from 09:00 AM at St. Mary's Malankara Catholic Church, Mesquite. The program started with prayer, welcome speech followed by the praise and worship session by the youth members from various member parishes.

This year, we were fortunate to have our invited chief guest Rev. Sister Dr. Jocelyn Edathil, MD from New Jersey as the speaker for the youth conference. The participants enthusiastically enjoyed every minute of Dr. Edathil's presentations, question and answer sessions, which wiped out many concerns existed among the youths in relation to the religions and their academic environment and education.

As usual, the breakfast, lunch and snacks were served to the participants and the event was a great success with the participation of over 60 youths. The program was organized and conducted by our own youth leaders from member parishes which concluded with vote of thanks by Mr. Alex Alexander, the General Secretary of the organization by 06:00 PM.

11) KECF Sports and Games:

The 2018 Youth sports and games competitions were held on November 03rd, from 09:00 AM at Katy Rail Road Park, Forney. Under the leadership of the KECF youth coordinator Mr. Josh Mathew, and the sub-committees, eight teams were participated from various KECF member parishes in the flag football games. Rev. Fr. Mathai Mannoovadakethil who supervised the events deserves special appreciation and the spots events were well enjoyed by our youth members. Registration fees from the participants, fees to the referees and other sports related expenses were met from the registration fees. The youths were able to generate a balance of \$942.00 dollars to the KECF fund after all the related expenses. Mar Thoma Church of Dallas, Carrollton, were the winning champions for the year and the KECF Revolving Championship trophy donated by Mr. Shiju Abraham Vadakkamannil, was awarded to the winning team at the end of the event. Over 150 youth members from our KECF member churches participated in this year's tournament which was a great success and the youths are anxiously looking forward towards the next years tournament.

12) Christmas- New Year program- 2018:

The 2018 Christmas and New Year program was held on December 01st, 2018 at the Mar Thoma Church Event Center, 11550 Luna Road, Farmers Branch. The program started at sharp 05:00 PM with the procession of lighted candles by the Chief guests, Clergies, Children, the executive committee members, and the volunteers from various parishes.

We were blessed with the presence of the following dignitaries for this year's program which we consider as a great blessing from the Lord to our organization. H. G. Dr. Zacharias Mar Aprem (Metropolitan of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church- South West Diocese of America, Very Rev. C. K. Jacob, (Vicar General of St. Thomas Evangelical Church of India) and Hon. Council Member Mr. Biju Mathew (City of Coppell Dist. 3).

Very Rev. C.K. Jacob, started the program with the opening prayer followed by the Holy Bible reading in English and Malayalam and the closing prayer by Very Rev. V. M. Thomas, Corepiscopa, concluded the 1st part of the worship services.

Presidential Address

The Kerala Ecumenical Christian Fellowship President Rev. Fr. Mathai Mannoovadakethil welcomed the audience to the 2018 Christmas New Year celebrations and to the 40th anniversary of the organization. During the address, he appreciated all the past and present individuals who contributed their inspirational talents and hard work which made the event a success, unity and growth towards bringing the KECF as a team under one spiritual umbrella.

Inauguration of the Program:

The president invited all the chief guests, clergies and the KECF committee members to the stage for the inaugural function. After the felicitation by the Council Member of the City of Coppell Hon. Biju

Mathew, he inaugurated the program by lighting the lamp along with Very Rev. C. K. Jacob and other KECF officials.

During his remarks, Very Rev. C. K. Jacob, the vicar general expressed congratulations and appreciations and best wishes for the bright future of the KECF on behalf of himself and of the St. Thomas Evangelical Church of India.

Rev. Fr. John Kunnathusserril, who is one of the founding member and active supporter of the KECF since its inception, recollected the challenges faced by the organization until 1998 in finding suitable facilities to conduct the yearly program with limited resources. He stated that when this origination was started with three Christian denominations and about sixty people, the Lord has been so grateful to our community by upholding the churches together and grow to a 21-member organization with 2000- 3000 participants every year. He thanked everyone who contributed to the growth and unity of the KECF and wished all the best for the future years to come.

In addition, we were able to print a full center page supplement in the Malayalam News Paper SANGAMAM in connection with the 40th Anniversary celebrations. The supplement was inaugurated by presenting copies to the Honorable Council Member and Very Rev. C.K. Jacob by the KECF President Rev. Fr. Mathai Mannoovadakethil. This issue has been distributed to all the major cities in the USA. On behalf of the KECF executive committee, I express my sincere thanks and appreciation to Mr. Shaji Ramapuram who took the initiative and enthusiasm to fulfill this project.

Presentations of the evening:

The Christmas New Year choir presentation started with a well-organized Christmas skit presented by the members of the hosting church St. Mary's Malankara Catholic Church. The skit was well appreciated by the audiences which was beyond imagination on characterization, action and professionalism. This is the first time in the history of the KECF, the hosting church was able to use the LED projector as the back-stage screen which appeared better than a movie screen. On behalf of the KECF, I sincerely appreciate everyone of the St. Mary's Malankara Catholic Church for their dedication, hard work and the incomparable execution of the skit actors' characterizations on the stage performances.

KECF Ecumenical Choir

The Choir members from 21-member parishes presented a well-organized ecumenical choir for the audience. The KECF choir coordinator Mr. Thomas John deserves appreciation for coordinating this item and we express our thanks to everyone who took part in the presentation.

Presentation by the Member Churches

Out of the 21-KECF member parishes, 18 were able to present melodious Christmas carol songs which were highly appreciated and enjoyed by the audience of over 2000 people.

Christmas and New Year Message

We were blessed by the presence of H. G. Dr. Zacharias Mar Aprem Metropolitan, who delivered the Christmas and New Year Message during the program. H. G. reminded us to uphold the unconditional love of our Savior Jesus Christ among us in today's world which is filled with selfishness, crimes and atrocities. H. G. encouraged the people to love, care and assist each other and help the homeland which is still under crises due to the recent flooding.

H.G. well appreciated all the past and present leaders of the organization and churches for its unity and strength for the last 40 years in the southwest part of this country which has set an example for the other parts of the world. (The Christmas New Year message was delayed due to the late arrival of H. G. Dr. Zacharias Mar Aprem due to the demise of Very. Rev. C. M. John Corepiscopa, one of the senior priests of the Malankara Orthodox Church at New Jersey)

13) KECF Finance:

Besides the \$200.00 contribution per year from each member parishes, we were able to collect the offertory during the 3- day ecumenical convention and the Christmas new year program as income for this year. As per the set guidelines and bylaws, the KECF do not accept any sponsorship from individuals or business for any of the KECF related functions. With an opening balance of \$5,540.34 received from previous years, we were able to operate the expenses during the year with a closing balance of \$3,436.83. There are three-member churches who has not yet paid their annual dues for the year 2018 which shall be collected by the next year's executive committee. A detailed finance report will be presented by the KECF trustee Mr. Jobi Abraham for discussion and approval by this general body meeting.

14) Our heartiest Congratulations and Appreciations goes to the following:

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 the following personalities who made the 2018 Christmas- New Year and the 40th- anniversary a grand success. It would haven't been possible without each one of your prayers, dedication and commitment towards this organization by being here with your prayers and blessings.

- a) H. G. Dr. Zacharias Mar Aprem (Metropolitan of Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church- Diocese of South- West Diocese)
- b) Very Rev. C. K. Jacob (Vicar General of the St. Thomas Evangelical Church of India- Kerala)
- c) Coppell City Council Member Hon. Biju Mathew (District 3)
- d) Rev. Fr. Mathai Mannoorvadakethil, the Vicar of St. Mary's Catholic Church (Hosting Church 2018)
- e) Members of the executive committee, Parishioners, and Volunteers, Choir members of the hosting parish
- f) All the member parishes who participated by presenting melodious choir songs for the program
- g) All the KECF Executive committee members, especially the clergies, Choir Coordinator and Youth Coordinator and Mr. Shaji Ramapuram for a well-prepared supplement for the 40th year anniversary.
- h) The businesses and parishes who contributed for the advertisement in the 40th KECF anniversary supplement publication
- i) Our own founding member Rev. Fr. John Kunnathusserril for his felicitation, dedication and commitment to the KECF
- j) All the clergies, Deacons, World Day Prayer leaders, Ladies and its executive committee members for their full- hearted support to the KECF

k) The Parishioners of the Mar Thoma Church of Dallas- Farmers Branch, Vicar Rev. Dr. Abraham Mathew, Asst. Vicar Rev. Blezin K Mathew, the church managing committee, the Trustees and secretaries and great big thanks to Mr. Cecil Cherian CPA and Mr. Philip Thomas (Kochu Thampy) for taking the extra pain in professionally helping us and providing us with the beautiful facility

l) The Media Group- Mr. Jacob John (Jimmy Kulangara), Mr. Ravikumar Eduthua (Flowers TV), and the AVL (Audio Video Team)

m) Mr. Jose Plakatt of Kairali TV who broadcasted the live stream of the program two years in row free of cost, the professional Photographer Sunny from Mesquite, Aby John from St. Gregorios- Dallas, and many volunteers. Also, a special thanks to Mr. Shaji Ramapuram and Mr. P. P. Cherian for the media news coverage through different publication in the US and India.

15) Conclusion:

We, the 2018 KECF executive committee members would like to express our gratitude to everyone for supporting us and giving us the opportunity to serve them during the year. We hope and pray that the future leadership of this organization shall lead us to the best of its ability to unite our community by adding more membership of churches to glorify the name of our Lord Jesus Christ with the unconditional Christian love and friendship.

Prayerfully submitted to the general body,

For the Kerala Ecumenical Christian Fellowship- Dallas

Alex Alexander,

General Secretary

January 20, 2019