

The First UK Europe Mar Thoma Family meet was conducted on 6th April 2019 at The Coton Green Church in Tamworth.

Introduction

The council met in August 2018 and embarked on a plan driven by our Thirumeni to host a Family Meet in order to bring all Marthomites within the Zone together in an annual celebratory event. The vision was for a joyful celebration of coming together, of providing a platform to evolve relationship amongst members within the zone and on this occasion to give thanks to our Achens who served in the zone and who were being transferred out of the zone.

Holy Communion

The day began by celebrating Holy Communion, led by our Thirumeni Rt Rev Dr Isaac Mar Philoxenos. The service was truly an uplifting and moving experience. The Very Rev V T John, the Vicar General and 10 of our Achens were co-celebrants in the holy communion service. The Central Choir under the leadership of Rev Stanley Thomas led the singing during the service. The congregational strength was more than 900 which included members from Ireland & Germany. More than 600 members partook in the Holy Qurbana. The congregational response and singing during the holy communion welled within each member an emotive consciousness.



Photo Courtesy: Sam Thomas

Public Meeting

The Holy Qurbana was followed by a public meeting. Mr P M Mathew – Secretary of the Zonal Council gave the welcome address.

We are truly blessed to have an inspirational speaker in Rev Sam Koshy in our zone who delivered the devotional message. The theme of the message was to ‘Redeem our families and Renew our Mission’.

Redeeming our Home based on a reflection from Luke19:10.

Redeem our home from,

- Misconception by challenging us to be based on a commitment to God.
- Gadgetism that occupies our time that could otherwise be spent with the family.
- Redeem our home from permissiveness (Philippians 3:18,19)

Renew our home to Christian Mission by,

- Evangelising our home – Deuteronomy 6: 5 – 9
- Our homes to be intergenerational, working together – Psalm 128: 6
- Our mission to other families – Luke 1: 39 - 45
- Renew our home for the mission of the church – Acts 16: 12 – 15, 40

Achen's message was intergenerational and resonated well across all age groups with anecdotes and humour.

Dr Zac Varghese introduced the book 'Festschrift', brought out by The Diocese of North America on the occasion of our Thirumeni completing 25 years of service as an Episcopa. Thirumeni released the book in UK and in his presidential address gave thanks for being able to serve the church and sought our prayers and support as he continues in his ministry.

We had an occasion to honour and acknowledge the work done by Miss Amika George in campaigning for free menstrual products for school girls from low income families. Amika started the campaign after she learned that her peers were skipping school because of period poverty. Philip Hammond in his spring statement pledged funding to provide free sanitary products in all English secondary schools. Her work has won her global and national awards.

As a zone, it is for the first time that we are able to felicitate our Achens who were being transferred from the zone with a presentation of a memento by our Thirumeni.

Very Rev V T John gave a response on behalf of the all the Achens to the felicitation.

The public meeting was compered by Mrs Lincy Philip.





Photo Courtesy: Sam Thomas

Organisation Presentation

The post lunch session in the afternoon was dedicated for presentation by the various Zonal Organisation.

The Sunday School presented 2 songs as a centre with a participation of almost 200 children.

The Sevikha Sangham, North and South Zones, each presented a skit.

The Youth ,as a centre, presented a Song and a dance.

The Edavaka Mission presented a skit.



Photo Courtesy: Sam Thomas

There were presentations for the upcoming Zonal Youth and Family Conference to be held in July & August 2019.

The post lunch session was compered by Mrs Lincy Philip & Mr Rony Eappen.

The vote of thanks was delivered by Mr Bijo K Kuruvilla – Joint Convener.

The committee that planned and executed this unique event, involved members of the Council, Assembly Members, elected representatives from all churches and leaders of all the zonal organisations. It was challenging to bring all thoughts and ideas together but by God's grace it was a truly blessed event.

Committee Chairman: Rev Aji John

Convenor: Mr Thomas Abraham

Jt. Convenor: Mr Bijo Kurian Kuruvilla