

# CHRONICLE

1900 - 2006



Compiled by  
**A. Livingstone**

## PREAMBLE

Along with the entire people of South Travancore, we as a Church are particularly indebted to the London Missionary Society. This society was formed in England on September 21, 1795. Its motto was Isaiah 52:7 - "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good; that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!"



*The emblem of the London Missionary Society was a flying dove with an*

*olive twig in its beak. However, we do not have any direct reference for this. The emblem is shown in a coin struck by Rev. John Campbell, a LMS missionary, for the use of the Griqua people of South Africa in the 1800s.*

Devoted Christians of different denominations volunteered to carry the Gospel to different parts of the world, including India. The first Protestant missionary to South Travancore was William Tobias Ringeltaube of the LMS in 1806. Ringeltaube, born in 1770,



Rev. Ringeltaube

was a native of Prussia in Germany. He was a Lutheran who belonged to the Evangelical Church in Germany.



Vedamanickam

He was ordained in 1796 and came to Calcutta in 1797. He returned to Europe and came to Tranquebar in 1804 as an LMS missionary. He went to Mylaudy on April 25, 1806. He entered South Travancore through the Aruvaimozhi Pass on an invitation of Vedamanickam Maharasan of Mylaudy who had been converted in Tanjore by Rev. Kohlhoff, an SPCK (Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge) missionary. Ringeltaube was moved at the plight of the social out-castes of South Travancore.

He worked among them and in May 1809 laid the foundation for a church in Mylaudy, the first Protestant Church of that area. He visited 'Trevandrum' (Trivandrum) in 1811 and it is believed, started worship at Valiyathura, which grew into the present 'Ringeltaube Memorial CSI Church'. He left Travancore in 1816. Rev. Charles Mead arrived in December 1817 as the successor of the first missionary. He was welcomed by Vedamanickam who was holding charge of the mission work when Ringeltaube left. Charles Mead shifted the mission centre from Mylaudy to Nagercoil in 1818. The



Rev. Charles Mead

foundation stone of the Home Church at Nagercoil was laid on the New Year Day of 1819 by Richard Knill. Mead established the first seminary and the first printing press in Nagercoil in 1820. (This was the first printing press in Travancore). The growing Travancore mission established centres in Kollam (in 1821) and 'Paraechaley' (Parassala).

### TRIVANDRUM MISSION



Rev. John Cox

Mead was eager to begin a mission centre in Trivandrum. But the State Government was against it. He was able to bring this to the attention of the then British Resident, Lt. Col. J. S. Frazer in 1819. The follow-

up work was taken up by Rev. John Cox the successor of Mead. John Cox arrived in Trivandrum in 1838. A man of unusual energy and a splendid physique, Cox laboured steadily till he got land for the Trivandrum mission. Col. Frazer who was a well-wisher of the LMS helped the Mission to get the land for the mission centre in Trivandrum. The Dewan of Travancore Mr. Venketa Rao suggested a low lying slum area near Pettah. But the missionaries suggested a hill at Kannammoola, believed to be a haunted hill. The Maharaja granted the land for the mission centre, free of cost. Rev. Cox built a bungalow, a chapel and a boarding home on that hill. None of these buildings stand there today at the site, which is presently the famed Kerala United Theological Seminary.

By that time, LMS missionaries from Nagercoil had come here at the invitation of the Maharaja to start the Raja's Free School. John Roberts was the first Principal of the school, which later became the Maharaja's College (present University College). Cox conducted worship for Europeans at the veranda of the house of Mr. Roberts at Pettah. On May 13<sup>th</sup> 1838, Cox started a Tamil worship at the veranda of his rented house at Pettah. This is our parent congregation.

Col. Frazer wanted Rev. Cox to build a chapel at Cantonment for Englishmen to worship. Cox built a chapel in August 1838 on government land, at the area where the University Library stands today.



An early photo of the University College

Photo: J. Lex Jacobs

After the English worship, the Tamil worship at Pettah was also shifted to this church. Later Malayalam worship service was introduced. This chapel was known as the Trivandrum Protestant Church.

### Schools

It is worth remembering that English education, female education, and education of lower caste people were all pioneered in Kerala by Protestant missionaries – by the LMS in South Travancore, CMS in North Travancore and the Basel Mission in Malabar. A paper by E. T. Mathews (*Growth of Literacy in Kerala - State Intervention, Missionary Initiatives and Social Movements*) speculates why the Catholic contribution was minimal till the 1880s: "According to one view, the Catholic missionaries were not much to blame as most of them were Italians, Spaniards and men of other nationalities who found great difficulty in taking active part in English education [Agur 1903:418]."

The LMS missionaries set up a school in each village where they worked, though most of them had only one or two classes. The majority of mission schools were partly supported by grants-in-aid from the Government but when the education code was revised in 1894, stricter requirements led to the closure of a good many of them. In 1946, as per the Statham Committee report, the Travancore Government started compulsory primary education and restricted grants-in-aid to complete primary schools consisting of five classes. During 1946-48, the LMS handed over or closed 158 schools and surrendered 120 buildings to Government on lease for 12 years.



Silver Paten



Silver Chalice

This is the parent church of the Mateer Memorial Church. Col. Frazer presented a silver chalice and paten for Holy Communion. They are safely kept in our church even today as a valuable memorial of the origin of our Church. Even after the worship of Europeans was shifted in 1859 to the newly constructed English Church nearby, the LMS worship continued in their old chapel.

Rev. John Cox worked in Trivandrum till 1861. In 1859 Rev. Samuel Mateer succeeded Rev. John Cox in the Trivandrum mission centre.

### Rev. SAMUEL MATEER

Rev. Samuel Mateer was born in Belfast on August 24, 1835. He belonged to the Methodist Church. He studied in Bedford Theological College and was sent to Travancore as a Missionary by the Board of Directors of the LMS in 1859. He was given charge of the Parassala Mission. When Cox resigned, Mateer became the Trivandrum missionary. Rev. Mateer concentrated his work among the downtrodden people, suppressed by the upper castes and so was mockingly called 'Pulaya Padiri'. He was a friend of nature and he kept a good collection of plants and trees of rare varieties in the mission compound. He wrote books and translated some parts of the Epistles for our Malayalam Bible. Rev. Samuel Mateer is the founder president of the Trivandrum YMCA. He was famous for his extraordinary charm and varied talents. The City Mission grew steadily and progressed under his care. In 1866, when Dr. Mullens, Foreign Secretary of the LMS visited Trivandrum, he made arrangements to buy a compound of 16 acres known as 'Captain Davidson's Compound' for Rs. 9000 at Cantonment



Rev. Samuel Mateer

(Palayam). This is the present LMS Compound (Head Station of South Kerala Diocese). It was his fervent desire to build a magnificent church in the newly purchased 'Captain Davidson's Compound'. But his dream could not be materialised since he had to return to England in 1891 as he fell ill. In 1893, he passed away on Christmas eve.

Rev. Mateer served the Trivandrum Mission for 33 years. At the end of his service in Trivandrum the number of Churches (congregations) increased from 25 to 56 and the number of believers from 3000 to 10,060.

Mr. Harold Temple Wills who had arrived in Trivandrum in December 1892, took up the City Mission after Samuel Mateer. He was a lay missionary. In 1899, H. T. Wills built a hostel funded by his father in the Davidson's Compound (later named Wills Hostel for Men) for the young men who came from village areas to study in various colleges and other institutions in Trivandrum.



H.T. Wills

### BUILDING A CHURCH



Rev. I. H. Hacker

The project of building a spacious and beautiful church in the mission centre was taken up by Rev. I. H. Hacker, Rev. T. W. Bach and Mr. H. T. Wills. In 1900 Rev. Arthur Parker took charge of the Trivandrum Mission and he took a keen interest

and great effort in the construction of the church. Mr. A. H. Bastow, the Chief Engineer of the Travancore State Government designed the church



Rev. James Duthie

building. The foundation stone was laid in December 1897 by Stephen Massey, a director of the LMS, at a meeting presided over by Rev. James Duthie.



Rev. Arthur Parker

The construction of the church building began in 1902. It took 4 years to complete the building,



P. John

constructed under the supervision of Mr. P. John, contractor. Mr. S. Gnanabharanam carried out the masonry work and Mr. Lonan M. Richards did all the carpentry work. The total cost of the building as per records was Rs. 17,950 ( Rupees seventeen thousand nine hundred and fifty) and the furniture cost Rs. 757 (Seven hundred and fifty seven). Total contributions received for the construction was Rupees: 20,338, Chakrams: 6 and Cash: 3. The following is the break up of the contributions: Rs. 5000 received from the LMS, Rs. 500 from the Maharaja of Travancore, Rs. 135 from the members of the Royal family. Mr. H. T. Wills contributed Rs. 1000, Mrs. Parker collected Rs. 3,958/14 through sales and Rs. 500 for installing tablets in memory of individuals; Rev. I. H. Hacker donated Rs. 482/3/3; T. W. Bach gave Rs. 246 . The Bazaars and sales in Trivandrum collected Rs. 1497/7, the District Missionary Rs. 968/8 and the rest through Church and individual collections.



Lonan M. Richards



S. Gnanabharanam

missionaries also raised up native pastors such as Rev. V. Moses, Rev. William Gunamudayan Rasalam, Rev. Samuel Sumanam and Rev. Mathew Kesari. Rev. Devalam was a fiery speaker and a reformer who paved the way for the establishment of the Trivandrum Church. Rev. Mathew Kesari, the first Indian Pastor of the Trivandrum Church, was ordained when it was raised to a pastorate in 1895. He retired from service due to ill health on 31<sup>st</sup> July 1904.



Rev. A. Devalam



Rev. G. W. Rasalam

After the Trivandrum Church was elevated to a pastorate in 1895, as per available records, the Church committee was constituted (nominated by the Travancore District Committee of the missionaries) in 1900. The minutes of the Church committee are available from that year onwards and constitute the principal source of this chronicle. The usage and terminology of the minutes have been exactly reproduced wherever necessary.

## 1900

### NATIVE PASTORS

Initially the congregations and churches (including the Trivandrum Church) were directly administered by the missionaries. In those days the missionaries conducted church services with the assistance of native catechists/evangelists. Samuel Sumanam (1878-1888) and J. Devadasan (1889- 1906) were two such evangelists, who later became pastors.



Samuel Sumanam



J. Devadasan

During the later missionary period, there were native Assistant Missionaries such as Rev. A. Devalam and Rev. K. P. Thomas. The



J. M. Gough

The first Church committee was constituted by the nomination of deacons by the chairman and secretary of the District Committee. The deacons elected were Messrs. J. M Gough, T. Jepagnanam, J. Aasirvaatham, K. P. Manuel, J. Albert, J. D. Bhanu and P. John.



T. Jepagnanam

The first meeting of the above committee was held in the church on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1900, chaired by the pastor Rev. Mathew Kesari in the presence of Rev. Arthur Parker and Rev. T. W. Bach. Mr. J. M. Gough was elected as the secretary.

On 28<sup>th</sup> April 1900 the Church committee decided to use the balance of the sacramental collection

(communion offertory) as poor fund. A list of the members of the congregation also was prepared by the secretary (presumably, previous membership lists were not available).

The church keeper was boarded in a room in the Wills Hostel in the mission compound, so that "he may be under the immediate care of the pastor."

Mr. J. Aasirvaatham resigned on 29<sup>th</sup> November 1900, following his transfer to Cochin.

## 1901

A rubber stamp was made for the use of the pastorate.

## 1902

A new church keeper was appointed as sanctioned by the Referee. (Though the details of the appointed person is not mentioned, this has to be Mr. Gunamudayan, whose name is mentioned later.)

On 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1902, in the absence of the pastor, the Church committee meeting was chaired

### Reader

The catechists in the LMS mission were called 'readers' by the Rev. Mead, who also gave them English names in honour of the English donors to the mission. They were unordained workers who taught Scripture and also publicly read the Scriptures in towns and villages adjoining the mission centres. They also distributed tracts and books to non-Christians.

by Mr. Timothy Daniel, the referee. In this meeting Mr. K. P. Manuel was appointed as secretary, most probably by the power vested in the Referee.

## 1903



S. S. Phanuel

A new Church committee was elected in the beginning of the year with the following deacons: Messrs. J. M. Gough, Timothy Daniel, P. John, T. Jepagnanam, S. Enoch, K. P. Manuel and S. S. Phanuel.

The above committee was convened for the first time on 17<sup>th</sup> January 1903.

A subcommittee with Messrs. P. John, T. Jepagnanam and K. P. Manuel as members was constituted for framing a set of rules for the guidance of the pastor, mission agents of the pastorate and deacons.

The catechist, Mr. J. Devadasan was proposed to be provided with a house in the LMS Compound itself.

The pastor used to visit the lunatic asylum of the LMS to see to the spiritual needs of the inmates.

The pastorate was divided into seven circles and the deacons were expected to conduct weekly prayer meetings in their respective circles.

As per the available records, on 5<sup>th</sup> August 1903 two new deacons viz., P. G. Benjamin and Lonan M. Richards entered the diaconate and no further entry for J. M. Gough and Timothy Daniel was seen.

It is probable that (1) J. M. Gough and Timothy Daniel had resigned and their vacancies were filled by P. G. Benjamin and L. M. Richards. (2) A new Church committee was formed with the introduction of new members.



P. G. Benjamin

This is probable, as the next election was conducted only in 28<sup>th</sup> January 1906, after more than two years.

## 1904

The meeting of the South Travancore Church Union was held on 24<sup>th</sup> August 1904. Messrs. K. P. Manuel and S. S. Phanuel were elected as delegates for the same.

Rev. Mathew Kesari resigned as pastor due to ill-health on 31<sup>st</sup> July 1904. A special Church meeting was called with Rev. A. Parker in the chair, wherein the Church expressed its good feelings, regard and respect to him. He was presented with a copy of the scripture and a sum of money, and was also provided with a monthly pension.

On 21<sup>st</sup> August 1904 at a special Church meeting chaired by Rev. A. Parker, in the presence of Mr. H. T. Wills Esq. and Mrs. Wills, it was decided to give a call to Mr. John M. Kesari, son of Rev. Mathew Kesari, to become the pastor of this Church from the beginning of 1905.



John M. Kesari

## 1905

Mr. John M. Kesari joined our Church as pastor on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1905. Later, he was ordained in June in the same year.

Mr. L. M. Richards was appointed as “deacons’ treasurer” on 6<sup>th</sup> December 1905, to handle the regular weekly collections and to defray all minor expenses. During this period the major accounts of the Church were handled by the district treasurer (missionary in charge).

## 1906

The following deacons were elected on 28<sup>th</sup> January 1906: Messrs. J. W. Samuel, T. Jepagnanam, S. S. Phanuel, P. John, S. Enoch, P. G. Benjamin and K. P. Manuel. In a Church committee held on the same day, Mr. K. P. Manuel was elected as secretary and Mr. P. G. Benjamin as Treasurer of the deacons.

As the new church was nearing completion, Rev. Arthur Parker was asked to address the trustees

regarding the disposal of the existing land and church building.

The Mateer Memorial Church was dedicated on 1<sup>st</sup> December 1906. Rev. R. W. Thompson, foreign secretary of the LMS presided over the dedication service. The church was opened by Mrs. Thompson.



The first Church Organ

Mrs. H. T. Wills was our first organist.

On the first Sunday, after the dedication of the church i.e., 2<sup>nd</sup> December 1906, the Church gave Rev. Arthur Parker, a presentation of a wooden tray, two cups and saucers, a sugar bowl and a milk jug in silver, which were specially made, along with an address read by the secretary, to honour him in connection with the dedication of the new church.

Our catechist Mr. J. Devadasan was transferred on 31<sup>st</sup> December 1906.

An address is a formal speech of congratulation or thanks, prepared in writing, delivered to an eminent person at an audience specially convened. Usually printed copies are taken and distributed. Many of our missionaries and pastors were honoured with addresses at felicitation or send-off meetings.

## 1907



J. Lazarus

Mr. J. Lazarus was appointed as catechist from 1<sup>st</sup> January 1907.

In July 1907, the house (possibly parsonage) near the old church was dismantled under the supervision of Mr. P. G. Benjamin.

On 4<sup>th</sup> August 1907 Mr. H. T. Wills Esq. along with all the deacons measured out and extended the cemetery, marking out its boundaries.

## 1908

An election of the deacons was conducted in the Church meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> March 1908. Mr.



S. A. Azariah

H. T. Wills Esq. M.A., B.Sc., F.G.S was in the chair. Messrs. P. John, T. Jepagnanam, S. S. Phanuel, Timothy Daniel, S. A. Azariah, P. G. Benjamin and K. P. Manuel were elected.

Subsequently in a committee meeting held on the same day, Mr. K. P. Manuel was elected as the secretary and Mr. P. G. Benjamin as the local treasurer.

It was resolved in 28<sup>th</sup> March 1908 to give one Sunday's collection every year to the Medical Mission.

A children's service was to be conducted once in three months.

An afternoon service between 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. was started, for those who could not attend the morning service.

The Church committee on 9<sup>th</sup> May 1908 decided to start a library attached to the church, with voluntary help.

## 1909

Mr. S. D. Wills, father of Mr. H. T. Wills Esq. passed away. A condolence letter signed by the secretary was sent to Mr. H. T. Wills Esq. and family. The Wills Hostel (constructed in 1897 with funds from Mr. S. D. Wills) was named in memory of Mr. S. D. Wills after his death.

During this period Mr. S. S. Phanuel served as the Sunday school superintendent.

## 1910

On Sunday, the 6<sup>th</sup> March 1910, the Church meeting took place after the communion service for the election of the deacons. T. Jepagnanam (Sub-treasurer), K. P. Manuel (Secretary), S. A. Azariah,



T. A. Thomas

Timothy Daniel, K. Paul, S. S. Phanuel and T. A. Thomas were elected.

In the same meeting, it was decided that the eligibility criteria for election shall be,

above 25 years of age and two years membership in this Church.



K. Paul

On 11<sup>th</sup> March 1910, the pastorate was re-divided into 6 circles and entrusted to six deacons excluding the secretary. The six circles were Nanthencode, Pattom, Thycaud, Palayam, Kunnukuzhi and Kannammoola. The deacons were expected to conduct weekly prayer meetings, collect subscriptions and visit the sick in their respective circles.

YMCES requested funds for training Mr. Robert Ballard in the harmonium for playing in the church.

An "Ingathering Service Sale" (probably similar to the present Harvest Festival and Fancy Sale) was held on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of October 1910.

Our Church celebrated the silver jubilee of His Highness Sree Moolam Tirunal the Maharajah of Travancore, by decorating the church and conducting a special service. A greeting telegram also was sent to His Highness on the occasion.

## 1911

The first Sangam meeting of 1911 was held on the last Sunday (26<sup>th</sup>) of February. Sangams were special meetings held four times in a year, when the Church members are expected to bring forth their offerings towards their membership. Later this ceased and the sangam collection became a monthly affair without any specific publicity.

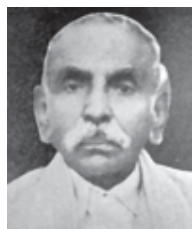
The responsibility of conducting the weekly prayers (which was to be conducted by the deacons in their circles) was given to the pastor.

In the Church meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> March 1911, it was decided that each member should give 1/40<sup>th</sup> of his monthly income to the Church.

A fund called the “parsonage fund” was started for the construction of the manse (official residence of the pastor), as Rev. A. Parker, the district missionary had promised a suitable site for the house.

*In April 1912, it was decided to build two rooms that will form a part of the main building, for a cost not exceeding Rs. 450. A subcommittee also was appointed for the same. On September 1912, the district missionary assigned the site for the manse and the catechist’s house. In October, a plan was drawn and approved to build the west wing of the manse for an amount not exceeding Rs. 500. But as quotations could not be got within the stipulated amount, further work did not proceed. In April 1917, another attempt was made for the construction of the manse with a new plan being drawn for Rs. 1,000, without much progress. In 1920, the Church committee proposed building the parsonage outside the mission*

*compound so that the land also will be under the ownership of the Church, which the congregation rejected. In 1922, following the decision of constructing the parsonage inside the mission compound, a subcommittee was formed, still without any progress. In 1925, as per the advice of Rev. A. Parker, the Church committee requested the mission council, to transfer the ownership of the land where the church stands and also 25 cents of land in the mission compound, for the construction of the manse, to the Church. In April 1926, land was allotted for the parsonage where the present parsonage stands. So, even though, much thought and efforts were made in connection with the construction of a manse for our Church from 1911, effective work that came to fruition started only in 1927.*



B. M. Kadaksham

Mr. B. M. Kadaksham was appointed as the superintendent of the boys’ Sunday school.

## Moses Walsalam Sastriyar



Mosa Walsalam, son of Evangelist Arulanandam of Thirupuram, was a travelling evangelist of the LMS. The name Moses was given him as an infant by John Cox. He went to the Nagercoil seminary at the age of 15. He studied Latin and Greek, English, Malayalam, Tamil and Sanskrit. He wrote poems, composed songs in the Indian classical style and translated many English hymns. He also conducted kalakshepams and street meetings.

He was assisted by the lyricist Paul Joel Singh. Samuel Mateer encouraged him to develop his musical talents. A Scottish lady, through Arthur Parker, presented him with a gospel cart, drawn by bullocks, in order to spread the gospel. Many of the songs in our hymn-book were either composed or translated by him. He was given the title ‘Sasthriyar’ by the Jacobite Metropolitan Mar Dionysius.







An early photo of M. M. Church.

Photo: J. Lex Jacobs

The Church committee requested Rev. A. Parker to speak to Dr. J. Davidson M. D., medical missionary at Neyyoor, on behalf of the Church and its suburbs, to start a dispensary in Trivandrum.

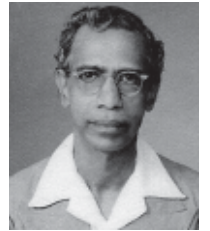
In September 1911, the Government appointed Rev. John M. Kesari as a member in the 'Christian Committee' for enquiring into the customs of succession among the Christians. During his absence from the church consequent to attending the above committee, Mr. D. Devasahayam B. A. of Nagercoil was appointed in November 1911 as Tamil catechist to be in charge of the Tamil service and to render general help in the congregational work.

On December 1911 our church was decorated and illuminated on the occasion of the coronation of His Majesty George V, King Emperor. A special service was held on Tuesday, the 12<sup>th</sup> December 1911. 200 copies of a coronation song composed

by Mr. Moses Walsalam Sasthriar for the occasion, were printed and used in the service.

## 1912

Mrs. H. T. Wills who was our first organist and choirmaster expressed her inability to continue, as she wished to retire. This was recorded in the committee on 10<sup>th</sup> March 1912. The Church expressed their thanks for her valuable services by a formal letter from the Church secretary. Rev. H. Hewett was requested to serve the Church as choirmaster in her stead. Later, on 19<sup>th</sup> July 1912, Mr. J. Jesudas was given charge as organist and he was asked to form a choir with male members.



J. Jesudas



T.W. Rasalam

The election of deacons was held on 17<sup>th</sup> March 1912. Messrs. Timothy Daniel, K. P. Manuel (Secretary), S. S. Phaniel, T. Jepagnanam (Local Treasurer), S. A. Azariah, P. G. Benjamin and T. W. Rasalam, were elected as deacons.

Regular subscriptions to the Church were collected through dedicated money collectors. On April 1912, Mr. Y. Harris the money collector resigned following which the charge was given to the catechist with a special remuneration.

On 16<sup>th</sup> August 1912 Mr. K. P. Manuel resigned as secretary. Mr. T. Jepagnanam was elected as secretary on 18<sup>th</sup> August. On 17<sup>th</sup> August Mr. S. A. Azariah was the acting secretary.

The office of the assistant treasurer was abolished with effect from 18<sup>th</sup> August 1912. Mr. T. Jepagnanam was assistant treasurer at that time.

Mr. K. P. Manuel's resignation from the diaconate was accepted and Mr. T. A. Thomas was elected on 18<sup>th</sup> August 1912.

The Church received a donation of Rs. 30 as a contribution towards buying a church bell. On 13<sup>th</sup> September 1912, the committee decided to start a "bell fund" with the Rs. 30 as a nucleus. On 29<sup>th</sup> November 1914, Mr. P. Gnanabharanam contractor promised a sum of Rs. 300 to purchase a bell and enquiry was made through Rev. A. Parker if it could be got from England. However, it materialised only in 1923.

Dr. Horton, one of the Directors of the London Missionary Society visited Trivandrum on 24<sup>th</sup> November 1912. The Church drew up an address and presented it in his honour.

## 1913

Following a call of the South Travancore Church Union, Rev. J. M. Kesari resigned from the charge of our Church on 9<sup>th</sup> March 1913 to take the charge of the pastorate at Nagercoil. A farewell address was given to him and a send-off meeting was held on 4<sup>th</sup> March 1913. He started the Christian Endeavour Society in our Church. As Rev. J. M. Kesari had left our Church, Mr. Gnanamony, catechist of James Town was appointed on 30<sup>th</sup> March 1913 as the Tamil catechist through Rev. Sinclair of Nagercoil. Rev. A. Parker was the acting pastor till the next pastor was appointed.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1913, the Church committee decided to keep a separate account book in the church. The post of accountant was started for maintaining the same and Mr. T. W. Rasalam was appointed as the first accountant.

A deputation of the London Missionary Society consisting of Rev. and Mrs. Lenwood and Mr. W. Somervel visited Trivandrum. On Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> November 1913, a special service was held at 6 p.m., cancelling the regular Tamil service, for welcoming them publicly. An address of welcome was also presented.



Nagamony Paul

Mr. S. Nagamony Paul (1868 – 1913) an ardent social worker in the slums of Trivandrum who initiated the Hindu Sunday School at Thycaud, passed away.

## 1914

The Church decided in a general body held on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1914, to set apart the collections during the communion services for a "poor fund".

The election of deacons for the next biennium was held on 8<sup>th</sup> March 1914. Messrs. S. S. Phanuel, T. Jepagnanam, S. A. Azariah, T. W. Rasalam, P. John, S. Enoch and Lonan M. Richards were elected as deacons. In the Church committee held on 11<sup>th</sup> March 1914. Mr. T. Jepagnanam and Mr. T. W. Rasalam were elected as secretary and accountant respectively.

Mr. Timothy Daniel, a Church member was elected by the members of the congregation to be the pastor of the M. M. Church. Consequently, Mr. Gnanamony, Tamil catechist was relieved from his work on 15<sup>th</sup> April 1914. The congregation came together to convey their thanks and wishes, and to give him a parting gift on 12<sup>th</sup> April 1914 after the evening service. Mr. Timothy Daniel took charge of the congregation on 1<sup>st</sup> May 1914.



The wooden screen

The wooden screen at the main entrance of the church was donated by Rev. and Mrs. A. Parker.

## Election of Pastors

In the early days of our Church, the election of pastors was done according to the traditional style of Congregational Churches, wherein the Church members elect the pastors usually from among them. In 1914, Timothy Daniel, one of the Church members was elected as pastor. The procedure followed is reproduced:

The committee members prayerfully decide on one of the Church members to take the responsibility of being the pastor. This decision was conveyed to the person to get his consent. If the person consents to take this responsibility, the same is placed in a Church meeting where the members cast votes to elect the pastor.

Method of voting: The rules of the Church Union with regard to election of pastors will be read to the congregation. One of the deacons will introduce the candidate with details of his past career, detailing his suitability to be the pastor. Time will be given to the congregation to ask any question and to clear the doubts if any. A roll call of the Church members will be made and each member of the congregation that is present will be given a slip of paper with his or her register number and name. This, he or she will have to put into the collection bag when it is passed around, to mark a favourable vote to the prospective candidate for the pastor. If not, the person is to retain it.

For members who are absent, the voting slips are sent to them to be returned before a particular date either by registered post or by hand through the catechist who will mark the assent directly. For voting slips sent by post, the slips will have to be returned marking whether the person is in favour or against. The voting slips not returned will be counted as votes in favour as per rules. A minimum of 75% of votes in favour are required to appoint a candidate as pastor.

Once this is attained, the candidate is intimated of the result and given a call to join the Church as pastor. Simultaneously, arrangements will be made by the diaconate, to the district council, for the conduct of examination to assess the theological knowledge of the candidate and for the ordination.

A farewell address was given to Rev. A. Parker on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1914 after the evening service as he was going on furlough.

As per the proposal of Mrs. H. T. Wills, the boys' and girls' Sunday school, which were conducted separately till then, was amalgamated.

Mr. S. A. Azariah resigned his deaconship on 19<sup>th</sup> July 1914. Mr. T. A. Thomas was elected in his place on the same day.

Special services were held for one week in August 1914, for the cessation of the war which was raging at that time in Europe and for the restoration of peace.

Mr. Timothy Daniel was ordained on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 1914.

## 1915

As. Mr. H. T. Wills Esq. was leaving Trivandrum, a farewell address was given to him by the Church on the eve of his departure.

A thanksgiving service was arranged on the evening of the arrival of the Rev. and Mrs. A. Parker on their return from furlough.

Mr. Thompson C. Rethinam was appointed as organist from 21<sup>st</sup> November 1915 as the current organist Mr. J. Jesudas resigned on 13<sup>th</sup> November 1915.

The Young Men's Christian Endeavour Society started conducting Christmas Eve service in the Church.

## 1916



Paul Daniel

The Government appointed Mr. Paul Daniel as a member of the Legislative Council. The Church sent a letter to the Dewan thanking the Government for the same.

Election of deacons for the next biennium was held on 5<sup>th</sup> March 1916. The following persons were elected as deacons, Messrs. P. John, Lonan M. Richards, T. W. Rasalam, T. A. Thomas, S. S. Phaniel, S. Enoch and T. Jepagnanam. On 10<sup>th</sup> March 1916, Messrs. T. Jepagnanam and T. W. Rasalam were elected as Secretary and Accountant respectively.

### Election of Deacons (old procedure)

The procedure for electing the deacons was relatively simple in the early days of our Church. The method of election followed in 1916 is presented: "Tickets were previously numbered, and at the meeting were distributed to each member present. They were requested by the president to write down on each, the names of seven Church members whom they considered eligible for holding the office of deacons. The tickets were afterwards collected and counted by the president". The seven members who get the most number of votes are declared elected.

The appointment of the organist Thomson C. Rethinam was terminated with effect from 12<sup>th</sup> June 1916 as his probation period was over. Mr. J. Jesudas was reinstated as organist from 13<sup>th</sup> June 1916.

Following the report of Mr. S. S. Phaniel, the Sunday school superintendent, that there is not sufficient room to accommodate the Sunday school children in the church, it was decided to conduct the Sunday school in the L.G. E. School building.

## 1917

In the initial part of 1917, major work was done in the cemetery. The basic layout of the cemetery as it is today was done during this period, with a road from the outer gateway down to the northern boundary. A gate was also installed at the top (southern boundary).

The YMCES, with the permission of the Church committee placed an almirah of books in the church to function as a library.

On 24<sup>th</sup> September 1917, the front of the church was decorated, an arch put up at the gate, flags planted and the church illuminated for the 60<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations of H. H. Sree Moolam Tirunal, the Maharajah of Travancore.

On 15<sup>th</sup> October 1917, YMCES conducted a fancy sale at the mission L. G. E. School building to raise funds for the Thycaud Sunday school. (Though mention of sale is made before, [See 1910] the term 'Fancy Sale', is introduced for the first time here.)

Mrs. Rebecca Parker did meticulous service to uplift the women and children. She taught sewing and embroidery and developed the embroidery industry. Mrs. Chellachi Samuel was a native expert who helped Mrs. Parker. Two among the first batch of students Kujamma Rathnam and Giji Bai Joseph Evans Joseph later served as trainers enabling scores of women to earn their livelihood through embroidery.



Rebecca Parker



Chellachi Samuel



Kujamma Retnam



Mrs. Giji Bai Joseph

## 1918



Sadhu Sunder Singh

Sadhu Sunder Singh, the famous Indian preacher was invited to address the congregation, when he arrived in Travancore about the 12<sup>th</sup> February 1918.

Mr. T. W. Rasalam, presented to the church a hymn board, for displaying the numbers of songs, to the church on 28<sup>th</sup> February 1918.

The election of deacons for the next biennium was held on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1918. The following persons were elected. S. S. Phanuel,

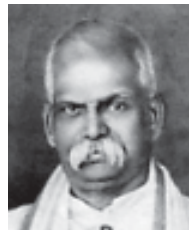


Dr. M. Joseph

Lonan M. Richards, T. Jepagnanam, Dr. M. Joseph. S. Enoch, P. John and P. Gnanabharanam.



Hymn Board



P. Gnanabharanam

On 4<sup>th</sup> March 1918, Mr. T. Jepagnanam was appointed as the Secretary.

On 13<sup>th</sup> June, as Mr. T. Jepagnanam was going out of station, Mr. S. S. Phanuel was made acting secretary. Later, on 8<sup>th</sup> December 1918 when Mr. T. Jepagnanam resigned, Mr. S. S. Phanuel continued as secretary.



J. John

The organist Mr. J. Jesudas resigned on 15<sup>th</sup> June 1918. Mr. J. John was appointed as organist in his place from 16<sup>th</sup> June 1918.

On 27<sup>th</sup> June 1918, Mr. P. John was appointed as accountant of our Church.

In 27<sup>th</sup> July 1918 the Church committee approved of a proposal to bring the Peter Cator classes held in various Protestant churches in Trivandrum under one organisation.

### Peter Cator

Peter Cator was a barrister at Madras in early 1900s. He founded the Peter Cator Prize Fund to encourage Biblical and other learning among British subjects educated in India. Special classes and an exam was conducted under this name and prizes were distributed annually. In our church, from the information available, no special classes were conducted and the Peter Cator exam was conducted among the Sunday school students. The Peter Cator prize is still being awarded elsewhere.

In July 1918, Mr. K. Paul, B. A., B. L., secretary to the Trivandrum Indian Christian Social Service Band requested the Church committee to take over the management of the school and congregation founded by the band at Kattachakonam.

A Sunday School Committee was formed for the first time with three members from the Church committee and four members from the congregation of which two were ladies. The elected members were Mr. P. John, Mr. L. M. Richards and Mr. S. S. Phanuel from the Church committee, Mr. J. John and Mr. M. Daniel from the Church members, Miss. Mary Isaac and Mrs. Emily John as ladies.



M. Daniel

The qualifications to be elected to the office of deacon were revised as 25 years of age and membership of this Church in good standing for not less than one year.

As Mr. T. Jepagnanam had to be away from town, he resigned from the diaconate on 8<sup>th</sup> December 1918. Mr. K. Paul, B.A., B.L. was elected in his place.

On 26<sup>th</sup> December 1918, it was decided to conduct an "annual sale of work" (i.e. an annual Fancy Sale) beginning in the year 1919. A committee for the same was appointed with seven members (3 men and 4 women). The fund raised was proposed to be used for the expansion of the evangelistic activities of the Church. (*Note: This could be the beginning of the regular annual fancy sale. Before this, events like this were not regular.*)

The evangelistic work done by the Indian Christian Social Service Band was appreciated by the Church.

## 1919

On 10<sup>th</sup> January 1919, our pastor Rev. Timothy Daniel passed away after a devoted and faithful service. A memorial service was conducted on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> January 1919 after the morning service.

Mr. J. John, offered to work as organist without honorarium from 1<sup>st</sup> January 1919.

Mr. P. John, resigned as accountant on 14<sup>th</sup> March 1919. Mr. K. Paul was appointed as Financial Secretary in his place from 1<sup>st</sup> April 1919.

Ringing of the church bell to announce deaths was started in 11<sup>th</sup> September 1919. The bell was to be rung as soon as the pastor receives information about the death of a member. The second bell was to be rung at the time of the funeral procession.

Mrs. H. T. Wills passed away in England on 6<sup>th</sup> December 1919. A memorial service was held on 21<sup>st</sup> December, in her memory. A letter of condolence was sent to Mr. H. T. Wills.

## 1920



Dr. D. Jeevanayagom

The election of Deacons was held on 7<sup>th</sup> March 1920. Messrs. K. Paul, S. S. Phaniel, P. Gnanabharanam, D. Jeevanayagom, Dr. M. Joseph, L. M. Richards and Sam A. Samuel were elected. Mr. Sam A. Samuel was elected as Church Secretary. On 16<sup>th</sup> March 1920, Mr. K. Paul was elected as Financial Secretary.



Sam A. Samuel

Mr. Lonan M. Richards, one of the deacons and the builder who did the wood work for the church and made the furniture, passed away on 14<sup>th</sup> July.

In the Church meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1920, the rules to regulate the conduct of the Church meetings were passed. They were (1) Any Church member may bring before a Church meeting any proposal not previously submitted to the Church committee, and this by a vote of the meeting may be referred to the committee for its consideration and submission at the next Church meeting. (2) Recommendations made to the Church by the Church committee may either be accepted or referred back to the committee for further consideration. (3) The Church may not reject or vitally alter recommendation from the Church committee until it has been referred back to the committee for reconsideration and resubmission at a subsequent meeting. If, at the next Church meeting, there shall still be difference of opinion between the Church and the committee, the decision of the Church shall be final. (4) No business shall be transacted at the Church meeting unless 15% of the members qualified to vote are present. (5) The pastor shall ordinarily preside over the Church meeting. In his absence the Church may elect one of the deacons present to take his place.

The church tower and the wall in front of the church were illuminated on the evening of 26<sup>th</sup> October 1920 on the occasion of the visit of His Excellency the Governor of Madras and Lady Willington to the State.

## 1921

The M. M. Church decided to form the Trivandrum Circle Council on 5<sup>th</sup> January 1921. The Trivandrum Circle Council oversees the M. M. Church, Valiyathura Church, Kattachakonam School, Cannammoolay school and the school in the mission compound. Messrs. K. Paul, S. S. Phaniel, P. Gnanabharanam, Sam A. Samuel and Dr. M. Joseph were elected members from among the deacons to represent the Church in the council.

A farewell meeting was held in the church on Wednesday the 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1921 at 6 p.m. for Rev. and Mrs. Arthur Parker who were leaving Trivandrum. Rev. Parker had rendered valuable service to the Church for 21 years. The Church honoured him with an address and a souvenir.



John Eben  
Kesari

Mr. John Eben Kesari took up the charge of the Church as pastor on 30<sup>th</sup> January 1921.

Mr. S. S. Phaniel resigned on 28<sup>th</sup> February 1921.

On 6<sup>th</sup> March 1921 after the communion service, Messrs. Rekshadas Moses and S. Enoch were elected as deacons in the vacancies of Mr. L. M. Richards and Mr. S. S. Phaniel.



Rekshadas Moses

Mr. Moses Gunamudaiyan, the church keeper resigned on 28<sup>th</sup> February 1921. Mr. K. M. Manuel was appointed as acting church keeper.

On 8<sup>th</sup> November 1921, the Sunday School Committee formed in 1918 was abolished. Mr. S. S. Phaniel was elected as superintendent in its place.

## 1922

Mr. Markose who was working as temporary church keeper since the beginning of the year was appointed as permanent church keeper on 20<sup>th</sup> March 1922. (As there is no other mention about the church keepers during this period, it is assumed that Mr. K. M. Manuel worked till the end of 1921 and Mr. Markose started from January.)

In continuation of the "bell fund" started in 1912, Mr. P. Gnanabharanam donated Rs. 500 for the purchase of a church bell. Mr. Eben Kesari, the pastor corresponded with Rev. Arthur Parker in England to arrange for its purchase.

## 1923

The new bell was installed in February 1923. On 28<sup>th</sup> February 1925, Rev. A. Parker requested the Church to give him the old bell and its supports, (presumably, there was a bell in use before February 1923) which was being removed from the church, to provide a few gongs for poor churches in the district. The Church committee conceded the same.



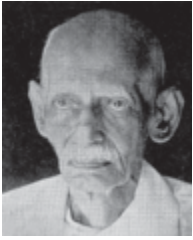
Church Bell

On 31<sup>st</sup> October 1923, it was decided that the pastor will give out and receive back the collection bags in a tray, from the deacons, during offertory collection. Bible verses relating to Church offerings also were to be read during the collection.

It was decided to start a religious library in connection with the ordination of Mr. J. E. Kesari.

The pastor, Mr. John Eben Kesari was ordained at a service held on the evening of Friday the 7<sup>th</sup> December 1923.

The deacon elections during these periods were conducted every three years. An election for deacons

Thampi Y.  
Harris

was conducted on 16<sup>th</sup> December 1923. Messrs. P. Gnanabharanam, S. Enoch, Sam A. Samuel, Rekshadas Moses, Thampi Y. Harris, V. Ponnambalam and Dr. M. Joseph were elected. Mr.



V. Ponnambalam

V. Ponnambalam was elected as Church Secretary. Mr. Sam A. Samuel was appointed as the Financial Secretary on 21<sup>st</sup> December 1923.

## 1924

A fancy sale was held on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1924 with Mr. Rekshadas Moses as secretary. It was decided to set apart the forenoon for sale and the afternoon for sales by auction. The fancy sale committee proposed to conduct a lucky dip for the first time during the sale. However, the Church committee did not give sanction.

Mr. S. S. Phanuel resigned as Sunday school superintendent. The Church committee put on record its appreciation of the valuable services rendered by him and appointed Rev. J. E. Kesari as Sunday School superintendent in his place and Mr. T. Y. Harris as assistant superintendent.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1924 it was decided to hold Church meetings on moon lit nights once in two months, instead of being held as it was, before the communion services on Thursdays, so that the members of the Church might conveniently attend the meetings.

Singing of short chants after the reading of Psalms and singing of a hymn or lyric when collections are being taken was started in September 1924.

It was decided to use the Malayalam hymn book prepared by Rev. Arthur Parker "Hymns and Lyrics for Christian Worship" in the Malayalam services.

Rev. Arnold Henry Legg arrived in Trivandrum. A warm welcome was given to him in the church.



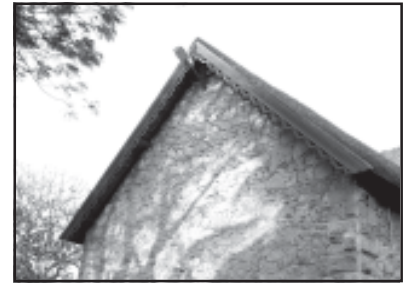
Rev. A. H. Legg

The rules regarding granting of leave to the officers of the Church were formulated.

On 26<sup>th</sup> November 1924, Messrs. Rekshadas Moses and T. Y. Harris proposed the establishment of an English Middle School to commemorate the work of Rev. Arthur Parker. A committee was appointed at a Church meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> December 1924 with Mr. Rekshadas Moses as its convener.

## 1925

Rev. A. Parker gave as a parting personal gift to the Church, ornamental barge boards (carved, decorated wooden boards along the roof) to be placed on the north, east and west side gables of the church.



Ornamental Barge Board

A send-off was given to Rev. and Mrs. Marshall of the Divinity School, Kannammoola. (present KUT seminary)

Mr. Thampi Y. Harris resigned from his appointment as Assistant Superintendent of the Sunday school.

As Mr. V. Ponnambalam was out of station, Mr. T. Y. Harris was appointed to act as secretary with effect from 17<sup>th</sup> July 1925.

The Church meetings were usually held on Thursday evenings. In 1925, it was decided to hold the Church meetings on Sundays after the morning service.

On the Church meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> November 1925, it was decided to record the names of the deacons who were absent in the Church meetings in the minutes.