

AMENDED BY- LAWS OF ST. STEPHEN'S MARTHOMA CHURCH, INC.

PREAMBLE

We, the members of the St. Stephen's Marthoma Church, Inc., a Non Profit Corporation (Religious Corporation-Church) incorporated pursuant to Tittle 16 of New Jersey Revised Statues, in its duly convened general body meeting held on the _____ day of _____, 2018, in order to carry out the religious activities, charitable and missionary works, and to conduct religious worship services and other sacraments according to the liturgy, faith and practices, and constitution of the Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church also known as Mar Thoma Church (herein after called the parent church) with its headquarters in Thiruvalla, Kerala, India, do hereby amend and its existing by-laws and adopt the following by-laws for the above said corporation.

ARTICLE 1

Name & Approval of the Church:

This church is one of the churches of the Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church commonly known as Mar Thoma Church established for the benefit of its members residing in New Jersey area. The name of the church shall be 'St. Stephen's Marthoma Church, Inc.' (hereinafter referred to as the "Church"). It shall be a duly approved church of the Mar Thoma church under the jurisdiction of the Diocese of North America and Europe of the Mar Thoma Church under Clause 322 A of the Sabha Constitution subject the jurisdiction of the Diocese of North America and Europe of the Mar Thoma Church.

ARTICLE II

Affiliation to Parent Church:

The Mar Thoma Church believed to be established by St. Thomas the Apostle of Jesus Christ, in A. D. 52 in Kerala, India, and known by the name of the apostle, is part of the 'one holy, catholic, and apostolic church'. This church will be one of the churches of the parent church and will be subject to its control in all temporal and ecclesiastical matters. This church and its members shall be governed by the faith and practices and constitution of the parent church and subject to the jurisdiction of the Diocese of North America & Europe of the Mar Thoma Church and the Mar Thoma Church headquartered in Kerala, India in all ecclesiastical and temporal matters. If there is any conflict between these by-laws and the constitution of the parent church, the constitution of the parent church or decisions of the Diocesan Episcopa or Metropolitan or of the Episcopal Synod shall prevail, and binding on the church, its members, organizations, prayer groups and all committees.

ARTICLE III

Mission and Objectives:

The following are the main objectives of this church, among such other things:

1. To worship the only living God our savior Jesus Christ and conduct other religious functions as and when necessary in accordance with the faith and practices of the parent church.
2. To arrange for and celebrate sacraments and conduct observances as authorized and required by the faith and practices of the parent church.
3. To conduct meetings, conventions, conferences, retreats, seminars, counseling sessions and such other things as deem necessary in the best interest of the church, which are not in conflict with the faith and practices of the parent church.
4. To help members of the church in their spiritual growth and also to help them to nurture their children in the faith and practices of the parent church.
5. To establish and conduct Sunday school classes, adult Bible classes, and such other activities for the spiritual growth of the members.
6. To engage in missionary activities on its own, and in association with the diocese or the parent church which would enhance not only the spiritual lives of the members of the church but also to help the parent church and the diocese in the Mission endeavors among Native Americans, Neighborhood communities, and Mission fields in India Mexico and other parts of the world.
7. To initiate and arrange various social and cultural activities that will enrich the lives of the members of the church and provide ecumenical fellowship with other churches having the same faith, beliefs, and practices like the parent church.
8. In the light of the principles of Christian unity, the church shall have ecumenical relationship with the local churches in the United States of America that are in agreement with the theology, faith and practices of the parent church.
9. To hold and administer both real and personal properties that is necessary for the proper functioning of the church, its organizations, and prayer groups.
10. To publish newsletters, magazines, membership directories both in print and electronic media, web sites, blogs, including social media sites and also to collect and use the e-mail addresses and other contact information of the members solely for communication purposes of the church, its organizations, prayer groups and committees.

ARTICLE IV

Faith and Practices:

1. This church shall follow the faith and practices of the Mar Thoma Church.
2. Along with other historic churches in the world, the members of this church also believe in the Holy Trinity as revealed by Jesus Christ, God incarnate and the

redeemer of humankind.

3. The Holy Bible consisting of sixty-six (66) books of the old and new testaments, accepted by the parent church as the basis of its belief relating to faith and doctrine, and the Nicene Creed, formulated in accordance with the Holy Scriptures shall in no way be altered in any manner by the members of this church. The three-fold ministry of the Deacon, Minister and Bishop, the rites of church dedication, church consecration, holy baptism, Holy Communion, holy matrimony, unction of the sick, funeral, as well as the observance of Sundays, Lents and dominical feasts shall not at any time be abolished.
4. The object and mission of the church is to keep and safe guard the faith and belief as revealed through Jesus Christ and taught by the Apostles, to promote the spiritual life of the faithful members through the administration of the sacraments and preaching of the word, and to proclaim the gospel to all nations, baptizing them to be His disciples in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

ARTICLE V

Worship Services:

1. The church will conduct the worship services both Holy Communion Service and the ordinary service following the liturgy approved by the parent church. There shall be at least one worship service every Sunday following the liturgy approved by the parent church. Separate worship services in English , if necessary either Holy Communion service or ordinary service or both Holy Communion service or both ordinary service may be held regularly on all Sundays or alternate Sundays, or at such convenient times as necessary, and on other special days at such convenient times in the sanctuary of the church or at other places convenient for conducting such worship services.
2. Regular Sunday school and adult Bible classes may be held on all Sundays before or after the worship services in English or on such other convenient times.
3. The Vicar may conduct the Bible classes or may appoint a suitable person for conducting adult Bible classes for a term not exceeding one year. The same person may not be appointed for more than three consecutive terms, unless suitable and qualified persons are unavailable or unwilling to act in such capacity when directed by the Vicar.
4. The general body shall elect one or more competent lay persons separately as Lay Ministrants for English services to assist the Vicar in the worship services, and other sacraments, and also to conduct the ordinary services in the absence of the Vicar.

ARTICLE VI

Membership:

1. All members of the parent church and those residing in the local area of this church are eligible for membership in this church as per the constitution of the parent church. Membership will be confirmed only on the application signed by the individual or the head of the household accompanied by the transfer certificate from the previous parish or church signed by the Vicar of the previous parish or church. If for any reasons the individual applicant or the family is unable to obtain such a certificate he/she may be granted membership with the written permission of the Diocesan Episcopa on production of affidavit or such other evidence required.
2. Those members who belong to other Christian denominations, both in communion with the parent church or not, are also eligible to become members of this church by applying for the membership as per the provisions contained in the constitution of the parent church. The Vicar should make sure that they were baptized members in their previous churches. The constitution and by-laws of this church as well as the constitution and by-laws of the parent church are binding on them as long as they are members of this church. They should give an affidavit signed by the individual or the head of the household affirming to the fact that they believe in the faith and practices of the parent church.
3. Those who are not members of any denomination, but believe in the faith and practices of the parent church are also eligible to become members of this church by applying for the membership to the Vicar in accordance with the constitution of the parent church. The Vicar will scrutinize the applications, and after listening to the opinion of the members of the church allow them to become members of this church after baptizing such persons as per the constitution of the parent church.
4. Those members whose names are in the church register, and who participate in the Holy Communion, and who attained the age of 18, and whose membership is not cancelled by the Diocesan Episcopa are eligible to attend and vote in the general body meetings of the church.
5. All adult married children living separately from the parent's residence will be considered as a separate family. If any married children while staying in the parent's residence requests to the Vicar to be considered as a separate family, such persons will be considered as a separate family.
6. It is the Christian duty of every church member, to contribute voluntarily a definite sum, to meet the financial requirements, in connection with the maintenance of the church and its Christian witnessing. Any family or individual may contribute any amount in addition to the above voluntarily as monthly pledge or for special projects or programs. Any amount contributed for the projects and programs of

the parent church, Diocese or the organizations of the parent church or to the other parishes or churches of the parent church should be shown under such heading in the accounts as contributions from such families or members.

ARTICLE VII

Vicar's Powers and Authority:

1. Any ordained member of the clergy of the parent church and appointed by the Episcopal Synod shall be the Vicar (Clergy in charge of the parish is designated as the vicar) of the church for the appointed term and will be responsible to conduct the worship services and other sacraments for the members of the church. He shall be responsible for the administration of the church, organizations, prayer groups, subject to the constitution of the parent church and shall be the presiding officer of all general body meetings of the church and Executive Committee meetings, and the general body meetings and committee meetings of all recognized church organizations and prayer groups of the church, and other committees either appointed by the general body or by the Executive Committee. In his absence, the Vicar, may delegate the Vice President or such other person for officiating the general body meetings and committee meetings of the church.
2. In all matters pertaining to the ecclesiastical affairs of the church, the final and judicatory authority shall be the Diocesan Episcopa in charge of the Diocese, subject to appeal to the Metropolitan and his decision shall be final. No legal actions shall be initiated challenging or involving any ecclesiastical matters including the faith and practices of the parent church by any member of the church, its organizations or prayer groups and no civil courts have jurisdiction for such ecclesiastical matters. In all matters pertaining to the temporal affairs of the church, the administrative procedures in the constitution of the parent church should be followed, and no church or any member, organization or prayer groups shall bring any legal actions on any temporal matters against the church, Diocese or the parent church or against the Vicar, Diocesan Episcopa, or Metropolitan, and office bearers of the church until all the administrative remedies provided in the constitution of the parent church have been sought in time, and exhausted.

ARTICLE VIII

General Body (Edavaka Sangham) of the Church:

1. The General Body of the church shall have power, to make rules and constitute sub-committees, from time to time, to regulate the functioning of prayer groups and institutions, if any, of the church and to deliberate and take decisions on all matters relating to the church. However, matters which are detrimental to the common objectives and smooth functioning of the parent church and polity of the Church, the Diocese or the church are not allowed to be made subject of consideration by the General Body.

2. The Vicar shall be the President and the co-vicars (if any) and one or more lay persons elected by the General Body shall be Vice Presidents of the General Body. The Vicar, or in his absence, one of the clergy vice-presidents nominated by the Vicar, or in their absence, one of the lay vice-presidents nominated by the Vicar, shall preside over the meeting of the General Body. If it happens that the Vicar has not made any nomination, in this behalf the Edavaka Sangham may elect one of the clergy vice-president and in their absence, one of the lay vice – presidents, to preside and proceed with the meeting.
3. Notwithstanding anything contained in the foregoing section, the Metropolitan or the Diocesan Episcopa, or any person nominated by either of them, or the Vicar General, shall be entitled to convene and preside over any meeting of the General Body.
4. The General Body shall ordinarily meet at the place and time determined by the Executive Committee (Kaisthana Samithi). One meeting shall be held before the end of November, at which the lay Vice Presidents, Treasurer, Accountant, Lay Ministrants, Secretary, other members of the Executive Committee and auditors for the coming year shall be elected. Another meeting, which shall be the annual meeting, shall be held before the end of February and in that meeting, the report, accounts, balance sheet of the past year and budget of the New Year shall be presented. The outgoing Trustees shall hand over the balance of cash as per accounts, account books, receipt books and other records, to the incoming Trustees.
5. The Executive Committee of the past year shall continue its office until the past year's accounts, report and balance sheet are submitted to General Body. However, if the Executive Committee commits default in presenting the accounts, report and balance sheet, at a duly convened meeting before the end of February, the New Year's Executive Committee may be inducted into office from March 1st, with the permission from the Diocesan Bishop. Minutes of the Executive Committee shall be recorded and passed in the respective meetings.
6. Notice of meeting of General Body, setting out the date, and subjects for consideration shall be announced during worship service on two Sundays, by the Vicar or in his absence, by the Secretary and in the absence of the Secretary, by any other person nominated in that behalf by the Vicar. A copy of the notice, under the signature of the Secretary shall be affixed on the notice board. In circumstances involving practical difficulties, to give notices in the above manner, the Diocesan Episcopa may sanction other suitable arrangements to give notice.
7. At the meeting of the General Body, the opinion of the majority shall prevail and if opinion is equally divided, the opinion endorsed by the President shall prevail. Members present in the General Body shall constitute the quorum of the General Body meeting.

8. Minutes of the proceedings of the General Body shall be approved and signed in the respective meetings and a copy of the same shall be sent, within three days, to the Diocesan Episcopa for approval.
9. No decision of the General Body shall be implemented, without written assent of the Diocesan Episcopa or the Vicar General. The Diocesan Episcopa alone shall have authority to keep in abeyance decisions of the General Body.
10. In emergency situations, the Vicar, in exercise of his inherent power, may convene a meeting of the General Body by public announcement during the worship service on a minimum of one Sunday, so as to be held, after a minimum of three days from the announcement.
11. Whenever considered necessary in that behalf, the Diocesan Episcopa or in his absence, the Vicar General may convene meeting of the General Body by special notice and all subjects specified in the notice and any other subjects permitted by the President, may be considered and decided at such meeting. In emergency circumstances, the Metropolitan may also invoke this power
12. If twenty (20) percent of the total membership or an aggregate of fifty (50) members of the General Body make a written request to the Vicar to convene a meeting of the General Body together with the proposed subject for consideration, the Vicar shall convene the Executive Committee (Kaisthana Samithi), as per procedure, to fix the date and place of the proposed meeting and proceed to convene the General Body, by due notice. In case, the Executive Committee fails to take necessary preliminary steps within two weeks, the Vicar shall nonetheless proceed to convene the General Body, within thirty days, from the date of request. If the Vicar also commits default in convening the General Body, the matter may be reported to the Diocesan Bishop, and further steps shall be taken, as directed by him.
13. The General Body shall have power to devise new sources of income and expenditure or modify prevailing mode of collection of existing income. Provided that no actions, shall be taken in these matters in contravention of any decision of the General Body of the Church (Sabha Prathinidhi Mandalam) or any Kalpana of the Metropolitan or the Diocesan Episcopa. New source of income may be devised and implemented whether permanently or temporarily only with the sanction of the Diocesan Episcopa.
14. The general body may constitute sub committees and frame rules or by-laws for its operation as and when necessary for implementing special projects or programs or functions, and such committees will be in existence until the term is expired or the project or programs are completed.
15. The names of the members of the church eligible to vote in the annual general body meeting held for the election of office bearers and Executive Committee members shall be published for ten (10) days in the notice board prior to such

general body meeting or at least before October 15th of each year, or at such intervals deem fit and necessary, and any corrections to such list shall be made by the Vicar before the general body meeting, provided objections are filed within 10 days of such publication.

16. If there is a stalemate in the ecclesiastical or temporal matters of the church or its organizations or prayer groups, the Diocesan Episcopa has power and authority to intervene and make such decisions and suitable arrangements so that the regular function of the church, organizations or prayer groups may not be interrupted. The Diocesan Episcopa may make any arrangements for the functioning of the church, its organizations, and prayer groups to comply with the State laws or Federal laws as and when necessary.

ARTICLE IX

Executive Committee (Kaisthana Samithi):

1. There will be an Executive Committee, titled as 'Kaisthana Samithi' to implement the decisions of the General Body, propose subjects for consideration by the General Body and to help the Vicar in other ways. The Executive Committee or the Vicar may invite such expert person or persons to participate in the deliberations in the committee for advising the committee for any such matter discussed, but such invitees shall have no right to vote.
2. The Vicar shall be presiding officer of the Executive Committee. The Vice President shall be presiding officer of the Executive Committee in the absence of Vicar or at his request, and in the absence of both Vicar and Vice President such other committee member duly delegated by the Vicar shall preside over committee meeting.
3. In addition to the President who is the Vicar of the church, the Executive Committee shall consist of Co-Ministers, Lay Vice Presidents, Trustees, Lay Ministrants (not exceeding two as decided by the General Body), Secretary, representatives of the prayer groups, representatives of the recognized organizations functioning within the church and members of the Diocesan Assembly and General Body of the Church (Sabha Prathinidhi Mandalam) shall be the members of the Executive Committee. The Lay Ministrants appointed by the Diocesan Episcopa shall be a member of the Executive Committee. Tenure of membership of Diocesan Assembly members and Sabha Prathinidhi Mandalam (General Body of the parent Church) members in the Executive Committee will be the tenure of the said Houses as provided in the Sections of 78 and 194 of the Sabha Constitution.
4. Representatives of the prayer groups and the organizations functioning in the church shall be elected and notified to the Secretary before the meeting of the General Body. In default of such notification, the General Body shall have power to elect and appoint representatives of the respective organizations and prayer

groups. In the first notice convening the meeting of the General Body to be held before November end, mention shall also be made of the election of representatives of prayer groups and other organizations to be held by said bodies.

5. Casual vacancies arising in the Executive Committee shall be filled by the respective bodies, which has made the original appointments and if that is not practicable, the Executive Committee may make appointments in such vacancies.
6. Office bearers of the General Body shall also be the office bearers of the Executive Committee.
7. The Executive Committee shall meet at least four (4) times in a year as per notice to be issued by the Secretary as per direction of the President. The secretary shall record the minutes of all meetings in the minutes book kept for this purpose in the meetings itself and it should be read and approved in the meeting and signed by the secretary or the recording secretary and by the President at the meeting itself.
8. The notice for the Executive Committee should be given at least three days prior to the meeting showing the agenda, date and time and place of the meeting to all Executive Committee members. If it is sent by mail, the three days shall be calculated from the date when such notice is properly addressed and stamped and delivered to US postal service.
9. The quorum for the Executive Committee meeting shall be forty (40) percent of the membership in the Executive Committee who are physically present in such meeting and the opinion of the majority shall prevail. If no quorum is present for a meeting such meeting shall be adjourned to another date and time to discuss only such agenda included in the original notice by giving three (3) days' notice as mentioned above as per direction of the President to all Executive Committee members. For such a meeting no quorum is necessary, and the members present shall be the quorum, and the majority decision shall prevail.
10. Any member except the ex-officio member who is absent for three (3) consecutive meetings without prior notice and sufficient reasons will lose his or her membership in the committee. The Executive Committee may pass a resolution terminating such member from the committee, and should notify such member. The committee also should inform the concerned organization or the prayer group about such termination, and they should elect their representative and notify the Vicar immediately. Such person will be committee member for the remaining term of the removed or replaced member. If such organization or prayer group was unable to elect persons to fill such vacancies, the Executive Committee shall refer the matter to the General Body and it shall elect such persons to fill that position.

11. If forty (40) percent of the Executive Committee members make a written request to the Vicar signed by all of them stating reasons therefore, the Vicar shall convene a meeting of the Executive Committee within one month after the request is received for discussing the requested matter. The Vicar shall be bound to convene a meeting of the Executive Committee whenever directed in that behalf by the Metropolitan, Diocesan Episcopa or the Vicar General. The Metropolitan, Diocesan Episcopa or a person nominated by either of them or the Vicar General shall have authority to preside over the meetings of the Executive Committee.
12. The Executive Committee shall have the power to appoint subcommittees to perform any function on its behalf. Conveners of such subcommittees shall be appointed from among the members of the Executive Committee itself.
13. No person irrespective of the organization or prayer groups he/she represents may be reelected for more than three consecutive terms to the Executive Committee. When new members are not available or not willing to act in such capacity, such members who had already completed three consecutive terms may be re-elected.

ARTICLE X

Finance:

1. The source of income of the church shall be from monthly subscription/pledges, offerings during worship services, special offerings, gifts, donations in cash or kind and special collections as authorized by the general body from time to time. All such contributions shall be on voluntary basis as mentioned on the constitution of the parent church.
2. An accounting system shall be set up and maintained and all fiduciary relationship between the trustees and a non-profit incorporated religious organization shall be applicable to this church.
3. All funds received by the church shall be deposited in church's designated accounts within five (5) days of such receipt. All funds necessary for the daily expenses of the church shall be incurred from the designated accounts, and no withdrawal can be made from any accounts of the church without the joint signature of trustee and accountant.
4. Trustees shall not spend any amount more than authorized by the general body, for such things budgeted in the accounts. If any amount either budgeted or not budgeted in the account exceeding the limit need to be spent by the Trustee, the same should be reported to the Executive Committee prior to such spending, and should obtain ratification from the general body in its next or following meetings.

All other outlays of finance shall be strictly governed by the decisions of the general body.

5. The trustees shall make the duly authorized routine disbursement, like the minister's salary, and other allowances, rent for parsonage, mortgage payments if any, expenses for church and parsonage including the utilities and maintenances, expenses for the car used by the Vicar if any, remittances to the Diocese, and Sabha office, and such other routine expenses.
6. On special occasions like marriage, baptism or such other special occasions the persons or families may contribute an amount to the church, and proper receipts should be given for the same showing the amount and the item under which it is received.
7. The trustees shall maintain an inventory register of all movable and immovable properties and assets of the church. Acquisition and disposition of all assets shall be in the name of the church, and signatories to such acquisitions and dispositions shall be the Trustee and Accountant.
8. The trustees shall present the income and expenses of the church at least every three months in the Executive Committee, and such approved accounts may be published in the notice board of the church for general information.
9. At the end of each year the trustees shall make arrangements for auditing of the accounts of the church including auditing by external CPA's if authorized by general body, present the same before the Executive Committee, and then to the general body's approval, and then for approval from the Diocesan Episcopa.
10. Before the end of January each year, the trustees shall make arrangements for the distribution of the receipts to the members or other persons who have made contributions to the church to claim tax exemption from the Internal Revenue Service as charitable contributions.
11. The trustees shall properly hand over all books and documents relating to the financial matters including accounts of the church to the newly elected trustees and also hand over the keys of the church to the newly elected trustees at the end of their term of office.
12. All electronic data relating to the financial matters and accounts of the church should be maintained and saved safely for future use and reference and the access to such data and other information shall be handed over to the newly elected trustees at the end of their term of office.

ARTICLE XI

President, Vice President, Trustees, Secretary:

1. The Vicar shall be the President of the church, general body, Executive Committee, all organizations, prayer groups, and all committees of the church. He shall preside over all general meetings and committee meetings of the church, organizations, and prayer groups. If he is unable to preside over any such meetings the Vice President or such other person designated by the President shall preside over such meetings. The decisions of the President in the general body meeting or committee meeting will be final regarding the validity of the meeting or matters discussed in the meeting subject to the appeal to the Diocesan Episcopa.
2. Vice President shall act as the president of the church, and shall preside over all general body meetings and committee meetings of the church as per the direction of the Vicar during his absence.
3. The secretary shall be responsible for writing the minutes of the general body meetings, and Executive Committee meetings, and also responsible for maintaining such records as may be prescribed by the constitution of the parent church, or the general body from time to time. The secretary shall correspond in the name of the church and also will be responsible for presenting the report at the annual general body meeting of the church. The secretary shall also be responsible for keeping all records in safely and shall hand over the same to the new secretary when his term expires or when he ceases to function as the secretary.
4. The secretary shall properly hand over all books and documents of the general body and Executive Committee and of the church to the newly elected secretary and also hand over the keys of the church if any in his possession to the newly elected secretary at the end of their term of office.
5. All electronic data relating to the general body and Executive Committee, newsletters and announcements made in the church should be maintained and saved safely for future use and reference and the access to such data and other information shall be handed over to the newly elected secretary at the end of the term of office.
6. The trustees shall administer the trust funds of the church in conformity with the constitution of the parent church, and articles and by-laws of the church. The trustees shall be responsible for collecting and maintaining the funds of the church and to give proper receipts to the donors. They shall be responsible for maintaining proper accounts and vouchers for all income and expenses of the church on a daily basis.
7. The outgoing trustees shall hand over the new trustees the balance of cash as per account, all account books, check books, receipt books, other records, keys

of the church and parsonage, all safes and cabinets if any in possession when their term expires or when they cease to function as trustees. If no trustees are elected to receive the above items the same should be entrusted to the Vicar.

8. Two internal auditors elected by the general body should audit the accounts of the church maintained by the trustees to be presented to the general body for its approval. If the general body decides that an external auditor/s preferably a CPA should be appointed, the internal auditors should submit their audited accounts through trustees to the external auditor/s for their auditing. The internal auditors or if there is external auditor/s they should provide a report along with the audited account containing their observations to be submitted to the general body.

ARTICLE XII

Prayer Groups:

1. For purpose of fulfillment of the spiritual and temporal commitments of the church, the Executive Committee shall ordinarily divide the church into prayer groups, consisting of families and other individuals consistent with geographical viabilities of the place in which the church is situated.
2. The Vicar of the church shall be the president of the prayer groups. The prayer groups may elect other necessary office bearers for efficient conduct of the prayer groups. The representatives to the Executive Committee should be elected during the month of November or such times before the annual general body meeting to be convened for the election of office bearers and Executive Committee of the church.
3. The names of the Executive Committee members elected by the prayer groups shall be reported to the secretary in writing before the general body meeting of the church held in November for the election of the church's office bearers and Executive Committee members. The names of all office bearers and prayer group leaders of the prayer groups should be submitted to the Vicar by the end of December 31st of each year in writing. In the discharge of their duty, they shall be responsible to the Vicar.
4. Every prayer group shall be free to make internal decisions and implement the same, without infringing the regulatory provisions or hampering the progress of the Sabha, polity of the parent Church, the Diocese and the Church, but all such decisions shall be subject to approval of the Vicar prior to its implementation.
5. If transfer from one prayer group to another prayer group is desired by a member or family, it may be made, only clearing the arrears if any, due to the former prayer group and upon obtaining permission of the Vicar in that behalf. When a member changes his place of residence from one area to another area, the member and his family shall be the members of that new area prayer group.

6. Statements of all income and expenses and annual report of the prayer groups shall be submitted to the prayer groups every year before February end of next year, and an approved copy of the annual accounts signed by the office bearers or prayer group leader and report signed by the prayer group leader or secretary shall be given to the Vicar.
7. No person shall be elected as office bearers or the prayer group leader for more than three consecutive terms. If other members are not available or not willing to act in such capacities, such persons who have completed three consecutive terms can be elected with the permission of the Vicar.

ARTICLE XIII

Church Organizations:

1. There shall be recognized organizations in the church namely Sevika Sanghom for the women, Edavaka Mission for the entire members of the church, Yuvajana Sakhyam for Malayalam speaking youths, Youth Fellowship for English speaking youths, Young Family Fellowship, Sunday School, English Choir, Malayalam Choir, Senior Fellowship and other authorized organizations approved by the parent church or diocese from time to time. All approved organizations by the parent Church are entitled to elect their representative/s to the Executive Committee of the church. In the case of Choir, both the combined Malayalam and English choir can send only one representative to the Executive Committee and in order to be eligible to send the representative, the choir should be registered with the Department of Sacred Music and Communication (DSM&C) of the parent church.
2. The Vicar of the church shall be the president of the organizations. The members of the organizations shall elect their office bearers and such other leaders, including their representatives to the Executive Committee during the month of November or at such times before the annual general body meeting to be convened for the election of office bearers and Executive Committee of the church, for the efficient conduct of each organization.
3. The names of the executive members elected by the organizations shall be reported to the secretary in writing before the general body meeting of the church held in November for the election of the church office bearers and Executive Committee members. The names of all office bearers and other leaders of the organizations should be submitted to the Vicar by the end of December 31st of each year in writing.
4. Members of an organization may make and implement any decision or functions not in inconsistent with the constitution, faith and practices of the parent church, and the church, and all such decisions, programs, functions shall be

implemented only with the prior approval of the Vicar.

5. Any member of the church eligible to become a member of the organization should apply for membership in such organization and also should pay the membership fee if any each year. The members of organization shall follow the rules and guidelines prescribed for such organization by the parent church, Diocese, or by the general body of the church, or by the general body of the organization.
6. Statements of all income and expenses and annual report shall be submitted to the general body of such organizations every year before the end of February, and an approved copy of the annual accounts signed by the office bearers and report signed by the Secretary shall be given to the Vicar.
7. No person shall be elected as office bearer or as the leader of any organization for more than three consecutive terms. If other members are not available or not willing to act in such capacities, such persons who have completed three consecutive terms can be elected with the permission of the Vicar.

ARTICLE XIV

Records to be maintained in the Church:

The church shall maintain all the records both in print and electronic medium if any as needed for the administration of the church under the custody of the respective officers as per the constitution of the parent church, and such other records to comply with State and Federal laws including U. S immigration laws.

ARTICLE XV

Supremacy Clause:

In all ecclesiastical and temporal matters the constitution of the parent church shall be binding on the corporation (church), the organizations of the church, prayer groups of the church and its members. If there arises any conflict between the articles and by-laws of the corporation with that of the constitution of the parent church with respect to any ecclesiastical matters or temporal matters, the constitution of the parent church shall prevail. All matters both ecclesiastical and temporal for which there are no specific provisions in the articles or in the by-laws of the corporation, or in the constitution of the parent church, the decisions of the Diocesan Bishop, or the Metropolitan or Episcopal Synod shall be binding on the corporation, its members, the organizations, and prayer groups of the church. The Diocesan Bishop shall have exclusive jurisdiction on all ecclesiastical matters, and his decisions shall be final subject to the appeal to the Metropolitan or to the Episcopal Synod. The decisions of the Diocesan Bishop shall be binding on the members, and its organizations, prayer groups in respect to all temporal matters subject to appeal to the Metropolitan as per the constitution of the parent church. No legal actions shall be brought against the

church, Diocese or parent Church with respect to any ecclesiastical matter or questioning the faith and practices of the parent Church. No civil court has jurisdiction to entertain any legal actions challenging the faith and practices of the parent church or any ecclesiastical matters or ecclesiastical actions taken by the Diocesan Episcopa or Metropolitan or Episcopal Synod. Regarding temporal matters no legal actions shall be initiated by any members or church organizations or prayer groups against the church, its office bearers, any other members of the church, the Diocese, Diocesan Bishop, Metropolitan, Episcopal Synod and the parent church until all the administrative remedies have been sought and exhausted as provided under the constitution of the parent church.

ARTICLE XVI

Amendments:

1. As and when need arises, with the prior permission of the Diocesan Episcopa, this by-law may be amended, added, deleted by the approval of the majority of the members present at a general body meeting convened with an agenda stating such amendments or changes to the by-laws, and approved by the Diocesan Episcopa as per the constitution of the parent church. All such amendments, additions, deletions must be subject to the constitution of the parent church and its faith and practices and must be approved by the Diocesan Episcopa in order to take effect. If there arises any dispute regarding such amendments, changes, additions or deletions, the decision of the Metropolitan and or the Episcopal Synod shall be final and binding on the church and its members and organizations.
2. No part of the by-laws shall be amended, changed, deleted or added so as to render the church incapable of maintaining its tax exempt status under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Service Code or any such future laws. No part of the by-laws shall be amended, changed, deleted or added so as to render the church incapable of maintaining the status as a non-stock corporation under the laws of the State or any such other laws where it has been incorporated.

Approved by general body of the church on this _____ day of _____, 2018

Dr. Samuel Thomas, Secretary

Rev. Varghese Mathew, President & Vicar

Approved by the Diocesan Bishop:

Rt. Rev. Dr. Isaac Mar Philoxenos
Diocesan Bishop
Date: _____

(Seal of the Diocese)