



# Union Christian College Alumni Association of North America (UCCAANA)

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VOLUME VI

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## *President's Message*

*Dear friends,*

*I hope all of you are doing well and enjoying the warm and rainy weather.*

*I am happy we will be able to get together on August 24th at Sitar Palace (Orangeburg, New York). I hope a good number of the alumni and friends will be able to attend. Please do your best to attend the gathering as everyone will have a good time reminiscing and seeing old friends.*

*I want to share with you about the two special students we have been helping at UCC. They sent me the photos in another page.*

*UCCAANA Educational Endowment at UCC has been helping to award scholarships to about 25 to 30 students every year on need and merit basis.*

*Now about UCCAANA membership, due to **some** reason we are not attracting new members. I am requesting all alumni and friends to ask other alumni to join UCCAANA. In addition, to attract new members we are planning to have regional get-togethers in different cities like Toronto, Dallas, Houston, Chicago, Los Angeles, Raleigh, etc. One of the Board members has agreed to take the lead in organizing a get-together in North Carolina. I am hoping others will join us to take the initiative in organizing regional gatherings in other cities.*

*We would like to hear from you. If you have any questions or concerns, please drop me a line at [thomasmathew@hotmail.com](mailto:thomasmathew@hotmail.com)*

*Wishing everyone a happy and pleasant summer and hoping to meet you at the August 24th get together in Orangeburg, New York.*

*With warm regards and prayers,*

*Dr. Thomas P. Mathew*

*President, UCCAANA*

*August 2019*

## *Secretary's Message*

*Warm greetings to all of you!*

*"Sometimes you will never know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory"—Dr. Seuss*

*I am sure this is how all of us feel about our time at U C College. We all have special memories of our life at UCC – the memories of our friends and professors as well as the experiences we had during those days, memories that have touched and changed the course of our lives. Staying connected is a powerful bond, and the main objective of UCCAANA is to establish a wide network of connectivity among all UCC alumni residing in North America. When talking to UCC alumni at various events, I always find it inspiring and exhilarating to see the common vitality that exists in UCC graduates. We are ambassadors of a unique institution – an institution which fostered East-West cooperation, ecumenism and the grooming of generations of students spread all over the world. Ours is an institution that provided an ambience that captured people's awe and admiration. We are proud of our UCC roots. We have that distinct UCian charm in us - the poise, the self-assurance, and a heart blessed with humility.*

*I took over as the Secretary of UCCAANA in January 2019 with great pride and humility. It is a matter of great honor for me to have been given an opportunity to work for you all and on your behalf. UCCAANA strives to promote close relations between U C College and its North American alumni, and to initiate and develop programs/projects that are beneficial to both the alumni and the College, and to assist the College in its pursuit of academic excellence.*

*This year we are hosting a fall reunion at Sitar Palace, Orangeburg, New York on August 24, 2019. Please RSVP to this event if you haven't already done so. Remember that this is YOUR alumni association. Stay involved, Stay Connected and Keep participating! We are also planning to set up regional chapters in major North American cities to help our alumni in those areas make valuable professional contacts as well as personal friendships. To help us stay informed, we have our electronic newsletter which provides up-to-date information about UCCAANA programs and events as well as articles contributed by fellow alumni. You can also follow upcoming activities and information on our newly launched Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/UCCAANA/>*

*So connect (or reconnect) with us today. I am looking forward to your suggestions to make our association vibrant, informative and highly interactive. Volunteer with our regional chapters, engage with our charity initiatives, and help us continue on our journey that would benefit UCCAANA, U C College, and the society at large. I would love to listen and interact with you. You can reach me at [anjumphilip@gmail.com](mailto:anjumphilip@gmail.com).*

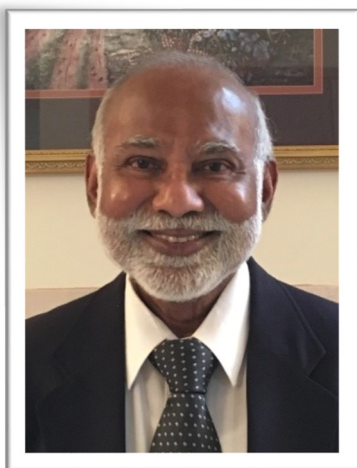
*Best Wishes!*

*Dr. Anju Mary Philip*

## Bio of Office Bearers

### Dr. Thomas P. Mathew

Attended UCC from 1963 to '66 and got B.A. degree in Philosophy and Psychology. Dr. V.K. Alexander Sir was our Professor of Psychology. Then attended St. John's College, Agra from 1966 to '68 and got master's in Psychology. Padmasree Rev. P. T. Chandy was the Principal there. Finding a job in Kerala with a master's degree in Psychology was next to impossible then. A few of my family friends even teased me that I had to be insane to get a Psychology degree. During this time my younger brother was a student at UCC, and then- Principal Prof. C. T. Benjamin Sir asked him what I was doing. Next thing I got a post card from Benjamin Sir asking me to come to UCC and work as his Secretary with a salary of Rs. 200/- per month. As soon as my parents saw the post card, they gave me bus fare, and next morning I went to UCC and met Benjamin Sir. He took me across his office at Kacheri Malika and showed me where I will be sitting. Our old office staff Annamma Kochamma, Abdu, Ayyappan all were there to welcome me. I really enjoyed working there as Secretary to the Principal with Benjamin Sir for over an year (1969-'70), and became very close with faculty, staff, and a lot of students; and it gave me a unique attachment/ relationship with our alma mater. Then in 1971 I was blessed to come to Ohio, USA on a student visa with 8 dollars and 25 cents in my pocket. Got a Bachelor's degree in Sacred Literature, another master's degree in Community Counseling, and in my old age got a doctoral degree in Biblical Studies. Worked at the largest Juvenile Court in State of Ohio as a Probation Officer, Probation Counselor and Probation Manager for 30+ years. In 2010 retired from Juvenile



Court. My wife is still working as a Pediatrician, and our son is a lawyer, and our daughter recently got a master's degree in Screen Writing. We live in Orange Village, near Cleveland, Ohio. Always thankful to God Almighty for His blessings.

I have been actively involved with UCCAANA since its inception in 2006. Have been in the Board since then as Treasurer and now as the President.

We are actively involved with our local Malayalee church, St. Gregorios Orthodox Church of Cleveland. In fact, our church is the only church in all State of Ohio owned by any Indian Christians.



### Dr. Bhamini M. P. Nayar, Ph.D.

Union Christian College:  
June 1967 - March 1974  
(PDC, B.Sc. and M.Sc  
(Mathematics)

University of Delhi: Ph.D. in  
Mathematics (1984)

Currently working as a  
professor of Mathematics  
at Morgan State University,  
Baltimore, MD

Husband: Dr. Kannan P. Nambiar, Ph.D., Retired  
Professor of Anthropology (Retired from George Mason  
University, Fairfax, Virginia)

Daughter: Dr. Shanti M. Nambiar, MD (Currently doing  
residency in OB/GYN at Riverside Regional Medical  
Center, Newport News, Virginia)

Son-in-Law: Dr. Vikram Shivaji, MD (Currently doing  
residency in Radiology in Wake Forest Baptist, Winston  
Salem, North Carolina)

Living in McLean, Virginia.





## Dr. Anju Mary Philip

*U C College is more than just my alma mater. It is my second home. As a kid, I even learnt bicycling in the UCC campus grounds. I am the daughter of Dr. T. Thomas Philip, former Principal of U.C College. I did my bachelors and masters programs in Biotechnology at UCC (2003-2008) and was the MG University First Rank holder for both programs. I worked as a guest lecturer in*

*Biotechnology at U.C College for 6 months before moving to Canada in 2009 to pursue higher studies. I completed my Ph.D. from the University of Waterloo, Canada and I am now working as a Post-doctoral fellow at St. Michaels Hospital, Toronto. I am also Administrative*

*Manager at Leslie Street Animal Hospital, Richmond Hill. I am married to Dr. Abraham P. Alex who is a veterinarian/practice owner and I have two wonderful sons, Alex Abraham and Philip Abraham ages 7 and 2. In my free time, I enjoy travelling and trying out different cuisines.*

*I am an advocate for higher education and I consider it is a great honor to serve as the Secretary of UCCAANA. My primary aim is to improve and increase meaningful communication between UCC alumni residing in North America to build a strong and connected alumni network.*



## George Varghese, CPA

*George Varghese is a Certified Public Accountant practicing in NJ. He attended UCC from 1976 to 1983 completing his pre-degree, B. Sc (Physics) and M.A. in English Literature. He started his career in India as a Bank Officer with the Federal Bank. In 1990, he moved to NY and completed his MBA from Pace University, NY. He worked for Price Waterhouse Coopers, Prudential Financial and Citigroup. He held various leadership positions at Citibank as was most recently the Head of Technology Risk Management and Compliance for Mexico and Latin America. In 2016 he left Citigroup to pursue his own entrepreneurial calling and started Lifeline Urgent Care LLC, in Montvale, NJ. He has been an active member of UCCAANA from inception and has served on the Board of Directors of UCCAANA for many years. He hails from Aluva and currently lives in Upper Saddle River, NJ with his wife Dr. Rebecca Varghese, an internist. They have two children Betty Varghese a Medical Student and Neil Varghese a Computer Engineering Student. He also serves on the Board of Trustees of St. John's Orthodox Church, Orangeburg, NY, and the Board of Directors of Montvale Chamber of Commerce.*



### GREAT QUOTES

*We need 'strength' while doing the possible but we need faith while doing the impossible.*

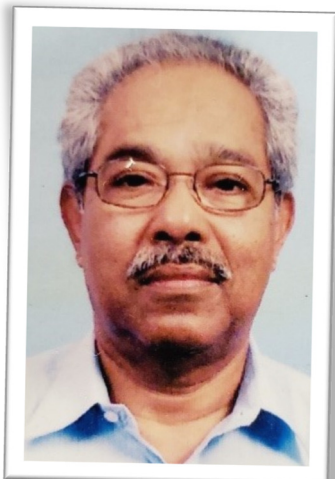
*Daleep Thakur*



## Dr. M. G. Sarngadharan

*I started my college education at U C C in 1954. After the Intermediate, I moved on to Madras Christian College for my B. Sc. and to Delhi University for M. Sc. and Ph. D. degrees in Chemistry. After teaching at Delhi University for about three years I came to the United States in*

*January 1967, to pursue a career in science. I started as a Postdoctoral fellow at Albany Medical College, Albany, New York, and continued in the same program (with the same Professor) at St. Louis University School of Medicine for a total of five years.*



*In September 1971 I joined National Institutes of Health program at Bionetics Research Laboratories to search for an as yet unknown class of viruses called Human Retroviruses, and to delineate, if found, what relation they might have on human leukemia, or other malignancies or infectious diseases. I was fortunate to be able to make significant, major contributions in this effort, leading to the discovery of the human retroviruses that include the human leukemia viruses (HTLV-1 and HTLV-2) and the AIDS virus (HIV), and in the development of the first (and still used) blood test to identify HIV-infection.*

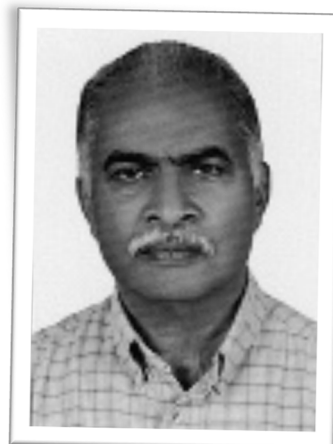
*Has been actively involved with UCCAANA for many years. Was instrumental in establishing Vidwan P. G. Nair Endowment and Memorial Research Centre at the Malayalam Dept. at UCC.*

*Recognizing the urgent need for combatting viral diseases in India, particularly Kerala, the government of Kerala took steps in setting up an institute for research on viruses and viral outbreaks. In this effort I joined a group of experts to advise the Chief Minister for founding the Kerala Institute of Advanced Virology at Thonnakkal, a suburb of Trivandrum.*

## Thomas Varughese

*I had my entire college education at UCC - Pre-university and B.Sc Physics (1958 to 1962); M.Sc Physics (1963 to 1965). After studies worked for two years in India - Mar Thoma College, Thiruvalla ('65 - '66); St. Stephen's College, Uzhavoor ('66 - '67) and S.N. College, Nattika 1967 (June - August).*

*The next twenty-one years worked in Africa - ten years in Ethiopia and eleven years in Nigeria. Came to the US in 1988. Worked as Math teacher in a Newark (NJ) private school for five years and then in a Public school in the same city for fourteen years. Also worked as an adjunct instructor in community colleges. Since August 2015 leading a retired life in Piscataway, NJ.*



*My wife, Moly Thomas, and our daughter Asha Mary Abraham are also UCC alumni. Moly did Pre-university (1963-'64) and M.Sc Physics (1967 - '69). Asha did Pre-degree (1987-'89).*

*I have been a Board member of UCCAANA for the past six years. Also served as its Secretary for one term (2017 - 2018).*



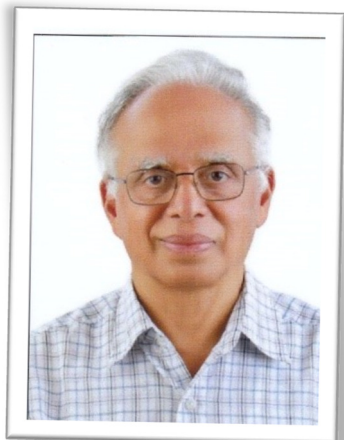
### ***Riya Raju Kariath***

*Riya Raju Kariath is the daughter of retired, U C College Principal and Manager Dr. Raju K John. She completed her Pre-degree (1997-1999) in U C College and came to US in 2005 to do her Master's Degree in Computer Science from North Carolina State University. She now works for Cisco Systems as an Engineering Manager. She currently resides in Cary, North Carolina with her husband Balu Joseph, who is a UCC alumnus, and their daughter Rachel and son Reuben. Riya is very active in their local church activities.*



### ***Dr. Kottayil Iype Varghese***

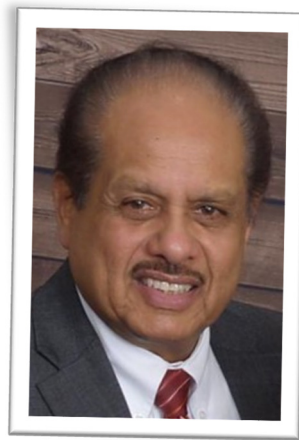
*I attended the Pre- University class (1962-63) at UC College. Afterwards, I continued my studies at various institutions: B.Sc at St. Berchman's College, Changanachery, M.Sc at Indian Institute of Technology, Madras and Ph. D at the University of Madras. After graduation, I worked as a research scientist at the Indian Institute of Science for 3 years before coming to USA in 1977 to join the Roswell Park Memorial Institute in Buffalo. Subsequently, I worked at the National Research Council Ottawa Canada, University of California at San Diego, Scripps Research Institute La Jolla California. In 2006, I joined the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences as a Professor in the Department of Physiology and Biophysics.*



*I live in Little Rock, Arkansas with my wife Elizabeth (Omana) Varughese. We have two children and two grandchildren. Our son (Jay Iype Varughese) and daughter (Gita Mariam Varughese) live in California.*

### ***Varghese K. Samuel***

*I am from Haripad, Allapuzha District. I graduated from U.C.College – B.Sc (Physics and Mathematics) in 1967, and worked for the Government of India at the Accountant General's Office in Trivandrum over seven years as an auditor. I migrated to United States with my wife in 1975 and arrived in St. Louis, Missouri. After completing a diploma program in computer software, I worked for Control Data Corporation for over 17 years. During my tenure at Control Data, I completed and graduated MBA program (in Business and Financial Management) from Webster University, St. Louis. After leaving Control Data in 1993, I worked either as President or Executive Director for four private Colleges – Vatterott College, Lincoln College of Technology, Pinnacle Career College, and Corinthian College. Retired on December 28, 2017, I am enjoying life with my wife Sarakutty. We have one son, and he lives with his wife and two children about a mile away from us. Life is good especially with the grand children of age three and half (girl) and one and half (boy).*



*I am a true believer in Higher Education and I had served in the Missouri Department for Higher Education (Private College Section) as a board member for three years.*

*I get very passionate about U. C. College. Six of my family members (one brother, three cousins and three nieces) studied at U. C. College since me leaving in 1967.*



### **Dr. K.M. Koshy**

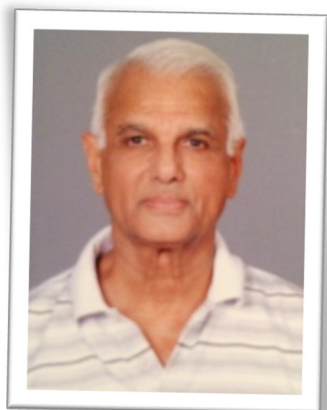
I was a student at U.C. College from 1955-59 with Chemistry major. Did my M.Sc in Organic Chemistry at St. John's College, Agra. I joined U. C. College teaching staff from 1962 and became a member of the college fellowship. Came to Canada to do Ph. D. and completed in 1973 in Organic Chemistry. After spending few years as Post-doctoral fellow at Univ of Toronto, joined the Research Institute of the Hospital for Sick Children. Took early retirement in 1999. Taught pharmaceutical chemistry at Seneca College, Toronto. Now fully retired living in Toronto. Married to my wife Geetha, has 2 sons both living in Toronto. Became grandpa in 2018.



Has been involved with UCCAANA for the past several years. Organized an alumni get together at Toronto in 2012, and it was well attended.

### **Dr. Pothan Varughese**

Attended UCC in 1954 to 1956 B.Sc. Chemistry, and M.Sc. Physical Chemistry from Saugar University in 1959. Taught Physical Chemistry at UCC from 1959 to '61, and was Warden at Skinner Hostel. Was Assistant Professor at Cuttington College in Liberia, West Africa from 1962 to '68. Came to USA in 1968. Attended Kent State University, Ohio from 1968 to 1974 and got Ph.D. in Organic Chemistry. Was instructor at KSU branch at Warren, Ohio from 1973-'74. Was Professor of Chemistry and eventual Chairman of the department at Indiana



University of Pennsylvania during 1974 to 2004. Was visiting professor at John Carrol University, Cleveland, Ohio from 2005 to '06. Fully retired in the Summer of 2006. Permanent home is in Indiana, PA, and Winter home is in Tucson, AZ. Wife is Keiko Varughese, and daughters are Michelle Edwards and Lily Paskey.

Was UCCAANA Vice President in 2012 and 2013, and has been involved with UCCAANA activities.

### **Dr. Kamakshi Krishnan**

During my school and college days I lived at Thottakkattukara, Aluva, with my parents and siblings. Joined U C College in 1955; Intermediate 1955-57 (that was the last batch of Intermediate), B.Sc Chemistry 1957-59. Was fortunate to be a student of Prof.T.R.Anantharaman (my father) and Dr. A.M.Chacko sir.

Joined Calicut Medical College, Kerala in 1959. Graduated from Medical College in 1963. After 1 year of House Surgency, joined the same institution as a Tutor in Medicine.



I got married in 1967 to Dr. R.G.Krishnan and moved to Bombay. I did private practice in Bombay until 1972, when we moved to NJ, USA. I did my residency at Raritan Bay Medical Center (it was named Perth Amboy General Hospital those days) and joined the same institution as an Emergency Room Physician in 1978 and retired in 2006.

We have three wonderful daughters; and all are married and well settled. My husband and myself live in Somerset, NJ; we travel whenever we get a chance and we visit our children and grandchildren as much as possible.

Was President of UCCAANA when it was inaugurated in 2007.



**U**CCAANA helped one

student to buy a motorized wheel chair earlier this year. It is helping her to get around on the campus without any additional help. The other student whom we had helped to get admission at UCC, and we have been paying all her college tuition and hostel expenses for the last 3 years. Recently she graduated from UCC, and joined for MSW program at another college in Kerala. They both were living at Skinner Hostel, and were close friends. The student with the wheel chair started 3rd year at UCC. She also hopes to go for her master's degree.

“

**We can see that in her smile. She is very thankful for our assistance.**

”



## *Last days of our beloved Dr. A. M. Chacko Sir*

A few UCC alumni visited Dr. A. M. Chacko Sir at Ahmedabad on October 22, 2018. This was the last set of UCC alumni who visited him. Sir was rather tired that day. Standing behind him are, from left to right, RBK Menon, B Vasanthakumari, B Somanath, Shanti Poduval, Chandran Poduval and M S Girija.

All those in the group except Chandran were students of Chacko Sir. We planned the visit while visiting Somanath, who was settled in Vadodara, Gujarat. Spent quite some time with Chacko Sir. All were glad we could meet him. He left this earth on December 6, 2018. Also, very sadly, hardly one and a half months after Sir's departure, Somanath succumbed to a sudden cardiac arrest on January 20, 2019.



## AMC, My Mentor

*by Dr. Raju K John (Retired Principal and Manager U C College)*

My association with Dr. A. M. Chacko started in 1974, the year I joined U. C. College as Junior lecturer in Physics and continued until he and Sodari Kochchamma left Alwaye for Ahmedabad to live with their son Prasad. During this period spanning over forty years I received his love and affection in great abundance. Looking back, the only regret I have is that I took that love for granted. I continued to receive his love in spite of the fact that very often I failed to appreciate and reciprocate it. He knew somehow that this behavior was not intentional and that it was more or less like the negligent attitude of the son towards the father. We had strong differences in opinion on many issues concerning the college and heated arguments in the decision-making bodies. But care was taken - the initiative almost always came from him - that such things did not affect our personal relationship. A few days before leaving for Ahmedabad he came to visit me. He was physically weak, needed a helper to move about, had no conveyance of his own and more over people were coming to visit him to bid farewell. The fact that in spite of all these, he came and spent almost an hour with me did not surprise me at all because this was the way he always dealt with people and relationships. Such care and concern were not only a reflection of the innate goodness of the man but also of the values that he imbibed at U. C. College.

A few days after I was nominated Principal of the college, Chacko Sir gave me a copy of the article 'Role of Principal in Indian Colleges' written by The Rev. Cannon Dr. P. T. Chandy, former Principal of St Johns College, Agra and Vice Chancellor of Gorakhpur University. Principal of an Indian college, according to Dr. Chandy, is expected to be a wonder creature who is a visionary, a great leader, an efficient administrator, a prolific fund raiser and an inspiring teacher. Moreover, he should always be at hand to don any other role as and when required, even that of the college watchman. Dr. Chacko had great admiration for Cannon Chandy and I always felt that he took Cannon Chandy's advice

very seriously. He devoted most of his time - even taking a chunk off the family share - to the affairs of the college. Sodari Kochchamma waiting for her husband at the gate of the Principal's quarter even late into the night was not an uncommon sight. One has to take a pledge before becoming a member of the College Fellowship and one of the items in the pledge is that one's primary loyalty is to the Fellowship and hence to the College. When I took the pledge and joined the Fellowship, AMC and people like him were supposed to be our role models. The thought of living up to the exacting standards set by AMC and teachers of his generation frightened new entrants to the Fellowship like me. I once asked Prof. C.T. Benjamin in the presence of AMC, "Is not my primary loyalty to the family?" Then and there I knew that such heretical thoughts had never ever crossed their minds. Generations of students were the beneficiaries of AMC's exceptional loyalty and dedication to the college.

At the time I joined UCC, a controversy was raging internationally over the Page - three stars of the Sun Tabloid. But there were no controversies over what UCC had at that time, the Page - one stars. Those were the teachers whose names appeared on the first page of the teachers' attendance register. The list included teachers revered in Kerala's academic field like Prof. T.B. Thomas, Dr. V. K. Alexander, Prof. C. T. Benjamin and Prof. Narayana Menon. Of course, Dr. Chacko was one among them. He was then the Professor and Head of the Department of Chemistry. Juniors like I used to keep a respectful distance from them. Observing Dr. Chacko from that distance and later at close quarters we could perceive in his words, gestures and actions a confidence, determination and sense of purpose that came from his strong belief system. He came to the campus as a fifteen-year-old student and had the privilege to learn from the founding fathers and come under the tutelage of Prof. T.B. Thomas. What he learned from them and his experiences on the campus



formed the basis of his belief system. His absolute trust in the divine providence was remarkable. He had his convictions about right and wrong and he always stood to the end by what he considered right. Some people interpreted this as rigidity of stance, but to AMC, knowing what is right and not to do it was nothing but cowardice. A teacher, Confucius said, will not be able to walk with his student till the end of the journey but should be able to show him the road to take. Dr. Chacko knew the road and showed the road to his students. In a society where people increasingly fail to see what is right due to lack of a strong value system or refuse to stand by what is right even when they know it because of fear or servility, Chackos of the world are a rare breed. Dr. Chacko's demise is a great loss to the society not because he would have made valuable contributions if he had lived for a few more years but because we have lost a role model.

I was first elected to the U.C. College Association which is the supreme decision-making body of the College in 1990. AMC was also a member of the body. When his name was proposed to the Board of Directors, he expressed his willingness to step down to give opportunity to younger people. He then proposed my name. I was then the youngest member of the Association. The remarkable thing about his gesture was that it happened at a time when the younger generation had not yet started clamoring for their share of power. The membership of the Governing Board, thanks to AMC, gave me an opportunity to get a grasp on the decision-making process and to work closely with other members who were all well-known persons from different walks of life. This experience stood me in good stead in my later years at UCC.

The proceedings of the meetings of the Association are recorded by two recording secretaries appointed from among the junior members. When my name was proposed to the post, I expressed my reluctance to take it up. There was a reason for this reluctance. The debates and discussions in the meetings were of very high standard with carefully selected words and phrases, fine-tuned arguments and even the strongest of disagreements expressed in the most agreeable manner. In such a scenario I did not consider myself up to the task to be entrusted. Chacko Sir understood my fear. He came and sat my side and volunteered to be

the other recording secretary. He would make me write the minutes, read it in the meeting and finalize it before the next agenda item is taken up. At the end of the meeting we would hand over the fair copy of the minutes to the Principal. This we did for the next three years. I was not the only one to have come under his mentorship, I have heard even some of the new generation teachers recounting similar experiences.

“

***On the whole, Dr. Chacko's was a life fully dedicated to the college. It was a blessing to the community and a gift from God for which we should ever be thankful.***

”

***On behalf of UCCAANA we thank you Raju K. John Sir for sharing this tribute of a great person. Thank you, Riya, for your assistance.***



## Thinking in Rain by Riya Raju Kariath

**I**t was a particularly warm night back in August of 2015. I was up that night playing with my 5-month old baby. I remember receiving that phone call as clear as day. My dad's brother was on the other end, asking me to rush back home as soon as I can. My dad was in critical condition battling for his life. That was only the beginning of the unfolding of God's change in plans for our family.

My daughter and I arrived and were immediately taken to see my dad in the hospital. In the hospital was every one of our family members, my mom, my sister, my dad's siblings. To my utter surprise I did not see anyone of them crying, or losing hope. It was an atmosphere of silent prayer, putting faith in God and hoping for the best. Each one of us was the other's strength. That was a way of life for our family.

Anytime I would talk about having a difficult time or something that I felt I could not fathom was happening to me; my parents would equate that to pouring rain. Being from Kerala, pouring rain is the easiest metaphor a child could understand. Rain would dampen your plans and reduce your visibility to what the future holds. But they never asked me to pray to God to stop the rain. My prayer would be to ask for a stronger umbrella to shield me from the rain or to ask for the ability to dance in the rain so it did not matter. The older I grew I realized this to be the "Attitude of Gratitude".

In the days that passed we learned what my dad had was a Spinal Cord Injury. It was unclear to us even if he survived whether he would speak, walk or have any hand movement. Two agonizing months passed and finally he was out of intensive care. But he was frail, could barely breathe and talk may be five minutes in a day. Knowing the active life, he led as the Principal and later Manager of Union Christina College, Aluva this was not easy. As hard as it sounds we took it day by day, hour by hour, minute by minute.

After a few months at the CMC Vellore Rehabilitation center he regained his ability to talk and his health improved. It also was becoming increasingly clear that he would not be able to walk for a long time. That was heartbreaking, but we never questioned it. Instead the

focus was always on how do we make the best of what we had.

In early March, he was back home. We had made peace with what the future held for him, but had he? I understand it was more than a million times harder on him than it was for anyone of us. He seldom talked about it. My mom is his rock and never let a bad thought shade him. It was not the retired life they had planned for, not even in our wildest dreams, but now this was the reality. Nothing could ever have prepared us for this.

A year passed. By then my dad was ready for his first public speaking engagement post his injury. He took the stage, the stage which in the past he would command every week, now in a wheelchair after a year's hiatus. The audience was overflowing in the Hall.

He finally opened up about what was going through his mind while all this was unfolding.

It was a quote from the poem, "The Charge of the Light Brigade" by Alfred, Lord Tennyson:

“

*Theirs not to make reply,*

*Theirs not to reason why,*

”

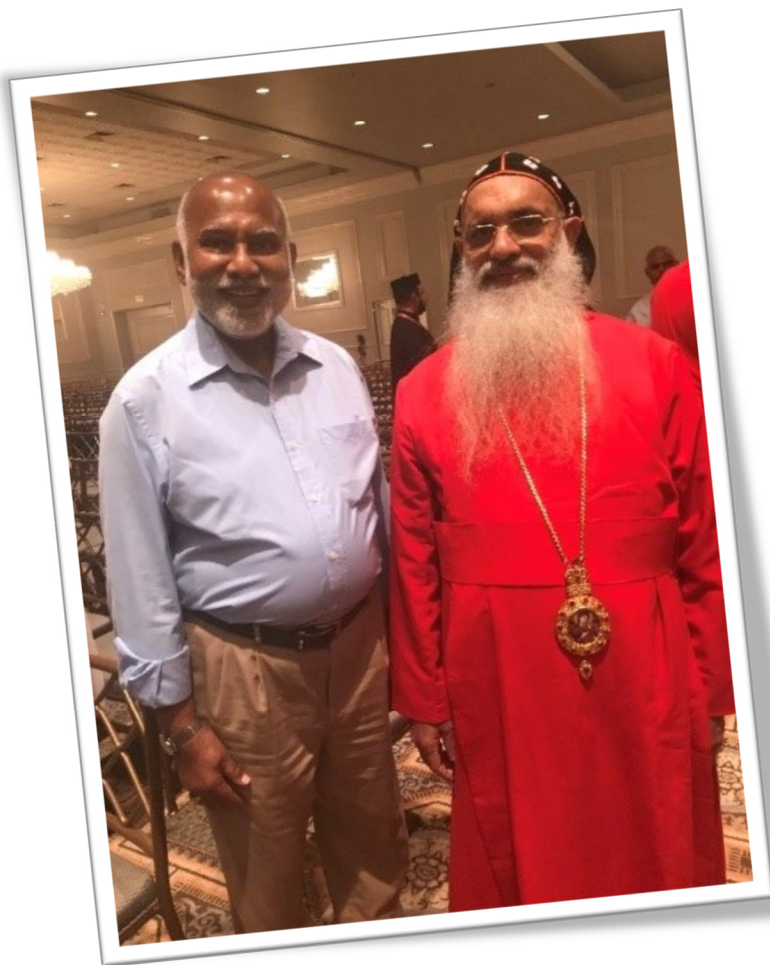
The poem is about the "Light Brigade", a light British cavalry unit, charging against the Russian forces in the Crimean war. The "Light Brigade" men armed with swords was facing a Russian artillery unit in what is called a "Valley of Death", due to a miscommunication. Despite the obvious outcome, they bravely carried out the orders.

Adversities happen in life, almost always it is hard to comprehend why. Our joy and happiness come from not feeling sorry for ourselves but instead choosing to focus on our everyday blessings in spite of the hard times.

It indeed is about learning to dance joyously in the rain, despite the deluge.

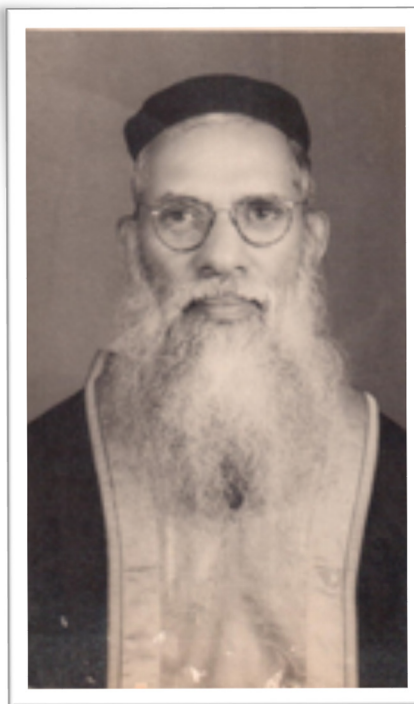


UCCAANA President, Dr. Thomas P. Mathew met with **His Holiness Baselios Mar Thoma Paulose II, Catholicos of the East & Malankara Metropolitan of the Orthodox Church** at Chicago on July 19, 2019, and shared the present situation at UCC, as His Holiness is fully aware of the recent developments at UCC.



## Down the memory lane:

*Rev. T. V. John (John Achan)*



He was born around 1888. He completed his M.A. in English and was teaching at Guntur Christian College when he was invited by Mr. K. C. Chacko, one of the founders of UCC, to teach at UCC. He spent the rest of his career there and retired around 1948. Some of

his colleagues were Prof. D. P. Unni, Prof. V. M. Ittyerah, Prof. Aravamudam Iyengar, and Prof. T. B. Thomas. He participated in the Indian independence struggle, as well as in the effort to merge Travancore with India. His wife was Annamma John. In 1934 he visited King's College in London where he conducted the Holy Qurbana in Malayalam.

He is mentioned in the book "Marakkanavathavar" by Shri Nitya Chaithanya Yathi - it was Achan who was instrumental in getting Yathi to become a student at UCC in early 1940s.

Achan died in 1970.

Information for this article was received from UCC alumnus Dr. T. Jacob John, son of Rev. T. V. John, and Professor Emeritus at Christian Medical College, Vellore. Thanks to Achan's grandson John T. Simon, Chicago for his assistance.



## *Re-Union of Pre-Degree 2nd Group 1968-1970 Batch of U. C. College, Alwaye by Lal Varghese, Esq., Dallas*

*The first official re-union of the pre-degree 2nd batch of 1968 – 1970 of U. C. College, Alwaye was held at Cherai Beach Resort from April 27th to 28th 2019. I (standing 2nd row from left to right) was fortunate*

*and paid their respect to the beloved teachers by giving them Ponnada. Prof. A. P. Mathew, Prof. C. M. Mathew, Prof. Joyce Mathew, Prof. P. J. Joseph, Prof. Itoop Mathew, Prof. V. C. Mathew, Prof. N. C. Chacko, Prof. Thomas Abraham, Prof. B. Valsala Kumari, Prof. P. C. Koshy were present during the occasion at the VMA hall. Dr. David Saj Mathew (Drawing and Disbursing Officer) of the College also attended the function and received the Ponnada. Most of the teachers including Dr. Saj Mathew gave felicitation speeches and appreciated all those who worked hard including those behind the scenes to co-ordinate the re-*



*enough to attend this re-union by travelling all the way from Dallas to Alwaye along with my spouse Kochumol. This is my 3rd time attending the re-union at U. C. College, first time the re-union of B. Sc. Botany batch of 1973-1977 in 2006, 2nd time being the re-union of the hostel mates of Tagore Hostel of 1968 in 2015. The attendees of the re-union first met at the Varkey Memorial Assembly Hall in the afternoon of April 27th*

*Atty. Lal was actively involved in establishing UCCAANA, and did all the necessary paper work with the State, IRS, etc. Was the first Vice president and Legal Advisor. Thank you, Lal for your support of UCCAANA.*

*union. All of them mentioned that it was one of a kind experiences which will always cherish in their memory for the rest of their life to be honored by former students especially after 50 years. After tea and snacks, we left to Cherai beach resort, where we spent 2 days with lot of fun and entertainment and interacting with each other especially with the family members. About 49 of the 2nd group classmates and most of them with their spouses attended the re-union. It was after a long 50 years that majority of us meeting each other and at a time when most are retired with grandchildren. Members also came from Malaysia, U. S. A. and other States in India to take part*

*in the re-union. We also paid our respects to four of our departed class mates Mr. S. Ashok, Mr. Philip C. Koshy, Mr. Mathew Sebastian and Mr. Peter Thomas. Mr. Babu Joseph K. and Mr. Fredy Philip along with others made it possible for this once in a life time re-union of the batch. The group has an active WhatsApp Messenger group and also provides voluntary services and much needed help including financial to other members those who struggle in their life to meet both ends for various reasons. The group was active during the recent flood in Kerala, especially when hundreds and hundreds of people sought refuge in the campus of the college. They even visited few members whose houses were affected by flood and provided them with the much-needed help including financial.*



## GREAT QUOTES

*"Kindness is a language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see." -- Mark Twain*

*"Learn from yesterday, live for today, and hope for tomorrow." -- Einstein*

*"A hand that wipes your tears is better than the million hands that clap for your success". -- Author Unknown*

*"Soft nature of a person does not mean weakness; remember nothing is softer than water but its force can break the strongest of rocks." -- Author Unknown*

*"We can't help everyone but everyone can help someone" -- Ronald Reagan*

*"Procrastination is one of the most common and deadliest of diseases and its toll on success and happiness is heavy". -- Wayne Gretzky*

*"Don't spend time beating on a wall, hoping to transform it into a door". -- Dr. Laura Schlessinger*

*"Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life". -- Steve Jobs*

*"Peace of mind is attained not by ignoring problems, but by solving them". -- Raymond Hull*



## UCC Alumni lunch in North Brunswick, New Jersey

by Mr. John Medamana and Dr. M. S. Girija

A small group of UCC alumni met for lunch in North Brunswick, NJ on April 23, 2019. Most were students of UCC during 1960s and 70s. Several live in the Northeast US, but some folks came from distant states such as California and Texas. Girija and Menon were visiting here from Kerala, and Sankar and Mini were visiting here from Chennai. Some of the attendees were seeing each other for the first time since student days at UCC. The attendees were T.J. Jacob, Tara Fatima, M.S. Girija, R.B. K. Menon, Gila Rosenblatt, John Medamana, Vijayakumari, Bala Nayar, Sankar, Mini, and Sudhakar. UCCAANA President Dr. Thomas P. Mathew called and greeted all of us.





## UCCAANA 2019 Reunion Flyer

# Welcoming

## All North American Alumni to the 2019 Reunion...

**Date: Saturday, August 24th, 2019**  
**Time: 4PM to 9PM**  
**Venue: SITAR PALACE,**  
**38 Orangetown Shopping Center**  
**Orangeburg, NY 10962**





**UNION CHRISTIAN COLLEGE  
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF  
NORTH AMERICA, INC.**

**(UCCAANA)**

Website: [www.uccollegealumni.org](http://www.uccollegealumni.org)  
Email: [uccaana4you@gmail.com](mailto:uccaana4you@gmail.com)  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/UCCAANA](https://www.facebook.com/UCCAANA)

For more information please contact:  
**201 926 4875 or 216 534 9632**

President: Dr. Thomas P. Mathew  
Vice President: Dr. Bhamini Nayar  
Secretary: Dr. Anju Mary Philip  
Treasurer: Mr. George Varghese, CPA



### HOTELS IN ORANGEBURG, NEW YORK FOR OUT OF TOWN ALUMNI

1. PEARL RIVER HILTON, 500 VETERANS MEMORIAL DR.,  
PEARL RIVER, NY 10965, PHONE: **(845) 735-9000**
2. HOLIDAY INN, 329 ROUTE 303, ORANGEBURG, NY 10962,  
PHONE: **(845) 359-7000**
3. MARRIOTT RESIDENCE INN, 3 STEVENS WAY,  
ORANGEBURG, NY 10962, PHONE: **(845) 359-5200**



Leave footprints  
of **love** and **kindness**  
wherever you go.

