



INTACH

CHURCHES OF INDIA

ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, KADAMATTOM, KERALA



The Kadamattom Church is one of the ancient churches in India. The Church is located between Kolenchery and Muvattupuzha towns in the Ernakulam ditrict, Kerala.

There are many stories underlying the making of this church. Some believe that the Church was established in the 9th century A.D. while others date it back to the 6th century.

THE LEGENDARY MYTH:

The main prominent narrative mentions that Mar Abo, a priest from Nineveh, reached the shores to spread Christianity. He reached Kadamattom hungry, tired, and finally ended up walking into the house of a poor old lady. He asked her to boil some water in a pot and put a single rice grain they found in her house. They then prayed to god. The pot then filled with rice with which they filled their stomach.

The old lady was a “Karthā”, one of the prominent families of Kadamattom in those days. Impressed with this, she took the priest to the landlord and gave this land to him as a bequest for curing one of the children in the family which was not curable by doctors. Along with the land, the landlord gave the priest a permission to build a church. It is this church which later became the St. George Orthodox Church of Kadamattom.



When we enter the church, we can see a photo of Mar Abo Metroplitan, The Reverend Paulose, alias the Legendary Kadamattathu Kathanar’s mentor who is believed to have constructed the church in the land gifted by the Kartha’s. It is believed that the priest Mar Abo took in an orphan, Paulose who later became Kadamattathu Kathanar.

There is a Persian Cross on the right wall of the Madhbaha or ‘Holy of Holies’, having four equal arms with ancient writings inscribed. The wings of the cross also end with floral designs. The tombstone of Mar Thoma IX lies on the left side just outside the Madhbaha.

Another aspect of this church is the door lock with unique a wood mechanism. The Pathala Kinar or well lies near the Poyyedum Church. It is believed that Kathanar went to Pathalam

from here. There are many legends of Kadamattathu Kathanar and it is said that he possessed supernatural powers.



The devotees of the Kathanar, mostly non-Christians bring in chicken, money and bottles of liquor into the well as mark of respect and gratitude. In memorial of the death of Kadamattathu Kathanar, his feast is observed as a major festival during the January-February period.

To see the old church, one has to walk through the stairs in front of the church. The Church looks glorious with its large structure and greenery around. It has another church with it to the left side of the church. There is a gate with two lion statues on both sides and outside there is a steep way leading down to the church which was built separately for the legendary Kadamattom Kathanar. This was done because his way of action was completely different from the normal way which the church accepts.

ACTIVITY

A. Is there a church in your region? When was it built and by whom?
What are some of the architectural features in it?

B. Is there a myth associated with the church?

REFERENCES

<https://navrangindia.blogspot.com/2016/02/9th-century-kadamattom-church-kerala.html>

<https://www.onmanorama.com/travel/getting-around-kerala/kadamattom-church-kathanar-demons.html>

https://www.tripadvisor.in/ShowUserReviews-g4053412-d4826318-r281514816-Kadamattom_Church-Ernakulam_Kochi_Cochin_Ernakulam_District_Kerala.html