

Holy Trinity Orthodox Church
Willimantic, Connecticut

Parish Assembly Meeting

January 31, 2016

Present: Fr Marc Vranes; Kathy Andrzejewski and Danielle Lesperance; Stephen Bradford; Diana Chapdelaine; Robert Dolan; Tim and Katrina Fetzko; Jason Geeza; Rob Giokas; Mary Ellen Junda; Frank Kaputa; Barbara Lacey; Dorothy Sinchuk; Kevin and Martha Vincent; Gregory Zlotnick; Jon and Merci Matcheson; OCF students Peter Hopko, Tim Paproski, Sarah Jacobson, and Melanine Sulich.

The meeting opened at 11:25 AM, and was held in the nave of the church.

Opening Prayer: "O Heavenly King . . ." led by Fr Marc.

Departed Members from 2015: Memory Eternal sung for Joe Hutnik and Nick Kornilieff.

Minutes:

The minutes for the 3.1.2015 meeting were subsequently circulated by Fr Marc via email to members. Since no corrections or changes were requested of the secretary by members via email, the minutes for that meeting are recorded herewith as accepted.

Pastor's Report:

In speaking briefly about recent change and renewal in his life, Fr Marc noted increased energy and sermons prepared in depth that have been well received. Giving some highlights from the Pastor's Report, he emphasized the need to be a caring community who show love for one another, and the responsibility to prepare every Sunday for the liturgy and for hearing the word of God before communion. The full text of the Pastor's Report may be found in the church bulletin for 2.1.2016.

Financial Report and 2016 Budget Proposal:

Frank Kaputa distributed a printed report, highlighting some features of the report and answering questions posed by parishioners. Generally, in 2015 we spent more than we put in, largely because the rectory was not rented. In 2016, Diana and John Chapdelaine will move into the rectory and it is anticipated that the budget will be balanced. In 2017, however, we will have to pay approximately \$3,800 in taxes related to this property to the town of Windham. Some items were budgeted for more than was expended, such as church school and education, and flowers. But Greg noted that the practice of putting interest made in the cemetery fund into the church bank account will diminish money needed at the cemetery over time. Fr Marc commented that our commitment of scholarship money to graduating seniors will require more funds, not less, in this budget line. Frank reminded us again of the

problem that the OCA assessment has to be paid out of church funds because not enough people are paying in their “fair share.”

To address the Fair Share problem, Fr Marc declined to make any more personal appeals because they might sound self-serving. He suggested instead that we send out written quarterly statements, in February, May, August, and November, reminding members what they have paid to date and what is outstanding. Paying in installments, such as monthly or quarterly, is an option. If all has been paid, the member should be commended. There is also a need to determine how many members the church actually has. At present there are 28 people in our congregation who consider themselves members, a number that has been used as a general rule. To be as accurate as possible, a letter should be sent out asking people if they are in communion with the Orthodox church, and if they are parishioners they need to meet this financial responsibility, (Fr Marc did note that the non-Orthodox are also vital to our community.) Mary Ellen Junda offered the essentials of these suggestions in a combined proposal which passed unanimously, and Sue Dolan (who had previously agreed) was voted in to take on this assignment.

Religious Education Report:

Reader Stephen Bradford, Director of the Parish Religious Education Program, circulated a written report and gave some of its highlights. While attendance is spotty, progress is being made by Mila Zadrozny, who teaches the younger students using Orthodox Christian Education materials, and by Steve, who works with the high school students through readings in the Old and New Testaments. The study of the Psalms by adult readers was discontinued during preparations for the Diocesan Assembly in October, but plans are to continue with it during Great Lent. OCF students are welcome to join. Meetings take place on the third Sunday of the month before liturgy.

Katrina asked for help with the church school so teachers can attend part of the liturgical services.

Martha Vincent volunteered to help with the church school.

Fr Marc announced a new handmaiden ministry, in which girls (age 6 to 18), in addition to the boys, will have a role serving in the liturgical procession. Archbishop Nikon has given his blessing to this new learning opportunity for our young girls.

New Business:

The major topic of discussion under New Business, as led by Bob Dolan, was planning for the Centennial. Individuals were given leadership roles for a variety of activities:

Jason-- Choir and a possible concert in September, 2016.

Tim—Photography.

Steve and Diane—Establish a data base with contact information, including businesses and dignitaries.

Barbara—Community communications/PR.

Dot and Barbara—menu (buffet ca. \$26), cash bar (cost?), centerpieces (cost?) at Lakeview Restaurant.

Greg—offered to donate the champagne for the toasts.

Mary Ellen—she and son Nik offered to pay, in memory of Joe, between \$3,000 and \$5,000.

(Cost: About 100-150 people are expected. All in the parish will attend the banquet at no cost.

A donation will be suggested on the invitations and advertisements rather than charge for the tickets.)

Steve—interior clean-up.

Nick and Jon—exterior clean-up.

Steve--landscape clean-up.

Mary Ellen—slide show and movies at the restaurant.

Greg or Fr Marc—point out people in the images, e.g. Ann Sikorsky, Sonja; explain change over time.

Dot—look into possibilities for music at the restaurant.

*Greg and cousin Alfred Sadow— could work on the cemetery, straightening the path and the grass.

*Roof repair—Bob Dolan has received a quote for \$13,500.

*Interior paint—Bob has agreed to get a quote for painting, but only after it is a real possibility.

*These last three projects need approval; the expenses involved will be put in the church bulletin.

The question of a new altar table was raised by Rdr Bradford. The current altar table is the packing crate the original icons were shipped in from New York in 1957-58. Some saw the value of maintaining the original one for future generations as an expression of our humble beginnings. The subject does not require a decision right now. The possibility of gifting a new altar table to ourselves after the Centennial Celebration takes place was raised as an idea for consideration.

Election of Parish Council for 2016:

Following Mary Ellen's motion, the present office holders were unanimously voted into a new term:

Tim—President

Greg—Vice President

(Greg and Tim exchanged offices)

Frank—Treasurer

Barbara—Secretary

Finally, Steve offered thanksgiving and praise to all who contribute and help.

Tim, OCF member, expressed heart-felt appreciation to HTOC for being a home away from home for the students.

The date of the next quarterly meeting was not set.

Closing Prayer ("It is truly Meet . . .")

The meeting adjourned at 12:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Lacey, sec.