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Holy Trinity Orthodox Church
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THE TRISAGION

The Monthly Newsletter of Holy Trinity Orthodox Church
119 S. Sparks Street, State College, PA 16801 814-231-2855
www.holytrinity-oca.org February 2010 Volume 15, Number 2

SUCH PROBLEMS TO HAVE!

As I have blessed homes during January, a steady refrain has been to the effect: “Father, we’ve out grown our space.” “Father, we need to build a new church.” “Father, how do we get all these people into such a small area?”

I can’t help but agree. This is becoming a “problem.” But such a problem to have! In fact, I welcome the challenge. God continues to add daily to this church such as are being saved, (*cf. Acts 2:47*), just as we have been praying. In fact, I believe the addition of more clergy to staff was a strong indication that we need to rev up our engines for this next phase of parish life.

In fact, when we chose to remodel four years ago, we took this step as an interim one in the overall scheme of things. We were too hamstrung by the inadequacy of the old facility. Yet, we needed to grow considerably more in order to undertake the goal of construction of a new, Orthodox temple from the ground up. This included, and still does, developing a stronger financial base.

We knew that the remodel would see us through to accommodate 200 in church, provided folks could find parking. (It is available—legally—but we have to hunt for it at times.) We now number 185 souls, including adults and children, and average 130 per Sunday. And we’ve already felt what 200 people are like on Pascha, so the time to begin to plan for the future is now, not tomorrow.

Now, planning for the future does not mean rushing out precipitously to purchase land “somewhere cheap.” But it certainly does not mean waiting for several years before we decide how to face this new expectation that God presents us.

As a beginning, the Parish Council is undertaking a process of evaluation (and re-evaluation) of church ministries under the auspices of Fr. Jonathan Ivanoff of St. John the Theologian Church in Shirley, NY. (Fr. Jonathan used to work with me in the Department of Church Growth and Evangelism.) As a first step, ministry leaders will undertake a survey of the parish’s existing ministries, programs, and facilities. This will be done in conjunction with the principles of *Natural Church Development*, a concept pioneered by Dr. Christian Schwarz, a church-growth specialist from Germany.

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IT'S 9:00—DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOUR CHILDREN ARE?

Several years ago, television stations would run a public service announcement late in the evening asking parents if they knew the whereabouts of their children. It's a relatively innocent question on the surface but sometimes those are the most thought-provoking types of questions to answer. The question can be at least answered in respect to their physical location, mental capacity and social awareness. However, we should not forget where they are in their spiritual development.

A few weeks ago our parish Sunday School began meeting for the spring semester. For the next five months teachers will meet with our children weekly to assist parents in developing each child spiritually. This will be done through the teaching of the scriptures, Church practices, history, and through the recitation of prayer. They will engage each other in fellowship and discussion of important issues. They will be challenged to live a Christ-like life.

The primary and intermediate classes are following a course entitled "*Journey to Pascha*." In this unit, each class will focus on a different theme that is part of our Holy Week journey to Pascha. Included will be the story of Lazarus and will continue with the celebration of Jesus' joyful Entrance into Jerusalem. In the following sessions, students will examine each day of Holy Week, what Jesus taught His disciples during this time, and what happened to Jesus as He was brought to trial, put to death and buried. Finally, the students will study the events that led to His Resurrection from the dead.

The middle/high school class is studying "*The Way, The Truth, and The Life*." This course is intended to help students to live in our demanding society with the knowledge of one's faith, appreciation of the value of our spiritual traditions, and a mature understanding of the Christian life.

St. John Chrysostom writes that the "primary goal in education of children is to teach, and to give the example of a virtuous life." Through the cooperation of the parents and the example of each parishioner our Sunday School will help to show our children how to walk in the path of Christ. — *Dn. Mark*

HOLY DAYS AND FASTS DURING FEBRUARY

The Meeting of Our Lord

Vespers—Monday, Feb. 1, 7pm
Liturgy—Tuesday, Feb. 2, 9am

Sunday of the Last Judgment

Matins—Sunday, Feb. 7, 9am
Liturgy—Sunday, Feb. 7, 10am
Omit meat beginning Feb. 8

Sunday of Forgiveness

Matins—Sunday, Feb. 14, 9am
Liturgy—Sunday, Feb. 14, 10am
Vespers—Sunday, Feb. 14, 7pm
Omit dairy & fish beginning Feb. 15

Beginning of Great Lent

Great Canon—Feb. 15, 16, & 18, 7pm

UKRAINIAN ORPHANAGE UPDATE

This past Fall, Holy Trinity parishioners graciously provided support for Lara Haluszczak's Christmas break trip to Ukraine, sponsored by the Consistory of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in America. Because of the outbreak of the H1N1 virus there, it was decided to be in the best interests of all concerned to postpone the trip, lest the contagion be spread further. Although the trip did not take place, the money raised is nevertheless being used to benefit these special children. Deacon Ihor Mahaly, trip coordinator for the Consistory, reports that the funds raised were used to help supply diapers (\$6,000 annual cost) as well as provide additional teachers in the orphanages. Thank you to everyone who supported her efforts.

SABBATICAL UPDATE

Fr. John will depart on his sabbatical trip to Finland, Russia, Siberia and the Russian Far East, retracing the journey of St. Herman to Alaska at the end of May. This means that Father will be with us to celebrate Pentecost (May 23), our patronal feast and an appropriate way to begin his odyssey. More details will be forthcoming with each edition of the *Trisagion*.

PARISHIONERS COME TOGETHER TO ASSIST HAITIAN RELIEF



On Sunday, January 24, the Sunday School assembled hygiene kits using dozens of supplies donated for Haitian disaster relief.

IOCC thanks the many generous members Holy Trinity who sent them more than 115 hygiene kits and donated more than \$1,600 to support the people of Haiti and other places of need around the world. Hygiene kits, filled with such basics as soap, towels, toothbrushes and band-aids are crucially important to help maintain sanitary conditions and keep disease at bay following humanitarian disasters like Haiti.

MAY HIS MEMORY BE ETERNAL!

Clay (Marc) Bond, beloved choir member, reader, and treasurer-elect of Holy Trinity, fall asleep in the Lord on January 7. He had been hospitalized and suffering since October 31, when he was diagnosed with terminal lung cancer. He was 54. During his two-and-a-half month hospitalization, his unwavering faith and devotion to our Lord deeply touched the lives of many who came to visit, pray, and sing with him. Funeral services were held at Holy Trinity on January 10 and 11. Interment followed the next day at Holy Cross Hermitage in Wayne, West Virginia.

THE ORTHODOX CHURCH BEYOND OUR PARISH

In Orthodox news from around the world:

- **Istanbul, TURKEY** – CBS News has now posted Bob Simon’s full interview of Patriarch Bartholomew, which ran on “60 Minutes” last December. To view the feature, log on to *60minutes.com* and search for “Patriarch.”

The aforementioned broadcast informed hundreds of thousands about the injustices committed against Christians in Turkey. At the beginning of the twentieth century, two million Orthodox lived there; today, only 4,000 are left. While some left on their own volition, there have been several periods of persecution. In 1923, more than 1.5 million were deported. Later, the government automatically banished another 150,000 Orthodox to quell an anti-Christian Muslim mob that savagely attacked and plundered Istanbul in 1955.

In covering the interview, one journalist wrote: “Patriarch Bartholomew had the temerity to state that the Greeks, like the other minorities, are considered second-class citizens in the Republic of Turkey.” While Turkey’s foreign minister denied the ecumenical patriarch’s claims he was being “crucified,” the same reporter noted that “he forgot the dates of 1657 and 1821, when two ecumenical patriarchs were hanged in front of the main entrance to the patriarchate. Furthermore, he forgot the Adana massacres that occurred a century ago, as well as the Armenian Genocide, which is considered the greatest crucifixion of the Christian church. He also forgot 1923, when Armenians and Greeks were dumped into the sea in broad daylight.”

- **Naga Hammadi, Egypt** – Six Coptic Orthodox deacons were murdered here in a drive-by shooting last month as they were coming out of church after celebrating the Feast of the Nativity. This incident is only the latest in a series of assaults against Egyptian Christians, who constitute around eight to ten percent of the population. Some experts believe that the violence was the result of an extreme Islamic ideology, Wahhabi Salafism. They note that Wahhabi ideals are becoming antagonistically iconoclastic, forbidding forms of art, music, and singing. More dangerous, they argue, Wahhabi Salafist theology teaches that Copts are not citizens but *dhimmi*s, a defeated and subordinate minority in a country conquered by Muslims.

2009 HOLY TRINITY FINANCIAL RECAP

Having completed the fiscal year ending December 31, 2009, below is an overview of the finances for Holy Trinity Orthodox Church. We thank you for your sacrificial support of the ongoing mission of our parish.

CONTRIBUTIONS		BUDGET vs. ACTUAL	
General	\$149,136	Total Income	\$167,995 92.4%
<i>versus budget</i>	-16,836 -10.2%	Total Expenses	182,119 100.2%
		Deficit	14,124
Building Fund		ACCOUNT BALANCES	
Income	10,276	All Accounts	\$152,735
Outstanding Pledges	11,698	Liquid Assets	90,319
OCF Alumni, Deacon	5,000	Undesignated	20,296

SUCH PROBLEMS TO HAVE! *(continued from page 1)*

Dr. Schwarz’s findings are closely aligned with those that Fr. Thomas Hopko has advocated for years in Orthodox Church life, although the two individuals have never collaborated or even met. (Details of Fr. Hopko’s presentation can be found on the OCA website.) In all actuality, much of *Natural Church Development* is already in process at Holy Trinity. We simply haven’t called it that.

The survey being used is for Orthodox parishes. I was fortunate to be able to work with Fr. Jonathan to develop an Orthodox-specific instrument. Once its results are relayed to us, we will be better able to focus on the next steps for the future growth of our parish and the building which we will need to construct, God-willing, down the road.

Additionally, the Parish Council is also going to oversee installation of a picture window in the narthex wall to allow visibility into the nave for overflow. This item was postponed during construction because of a code issue, which has now been resolved.

It might sound strange, but with “problems” like these, I wake up with a renewed sense of energy and enthusiasm, not foreboding and dread. So, keep “complaints” like these coming!

– Fr. John

For the Record

BIRTHS

- *Elena Serafina Stevens, daughter of Shane & Maria Stevens, born January 22; 7 lb. 3 oz., 19.5 inches.*

RECEPTIONS

- *Ravi, Deanna, Simeon, and Noah Patel, received through confession, December 2009.*

MEN’S FELLOWSHIP LOOKING FOR FEBRUARY SPONSOR

The Men’s Fellowship at Holy Trinity, which meets monthly for breakfast and spiritual reflection, is looking for a sponsor to fix breakfast at its next meeting on Saturday, February 13, at 9am. See Fr. John if you are interested.

FEBRUARY SCHEDULES

	Coffee Hour	Greeters	Altar Servers*
Feb. 7	Anne-Therese Pelikan Cathy Nemtsov	Mark Radomsky Leslyn Radomsky	Team A
Feb. 14	Mat. Dea Biberdorf Mat. Kelly Oleynik	Melody Thompson Mark Fedkin	Team B
Feb. 21	Russian Ladies	Megan Leathers David Swisher	Team A
Feb. 28	Karen Cattell Diana Van Duin	Andreas Artemiou Rachael Cattell	Team B

* **Team A:** D. Andresen, C. Doty, N. Fedkin, M. Haupt, A. Miranda, and S. Oleynik.
Team B: J. Cattell, M. Doty, P. Doty, J. Miranda, S. Pelikan, and J. Stickles.

