

THE TRISAGION

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Look Ahead: Nov. 18 Annual Mtg.

Our Annual Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, November 18 following the Divine Liturgy. Holy Trinity's approach to this yearly event is simple. Reports are sent in ahead of time. Resolutions to be voted on are submitted to Council in writing, prior. Comments are kept on topic and within the competence of the assembly. We vote on a budget. Officers are selected. Then we go home. It usually takes 45 minutes, though we have done it in less time. Rarely do we need more.

Of course, this is the easy part. That is, it is easy to attend a meeting, receive reports, authorize expenditures and then adjourn. The real work of parish life goes on continuously. Council meets monthly, and ministries function year around. Hardly a day goes by where a ministry, a service, a meeting is not going on, either at the building or in the parish at-large. This constant working together, day by day, by so many people reminds us that the Church truly is not an organization, as much as an organism. Bulgakov, the Russian theologian, made this observation in the last century.

An organism functions, and if healthy, it functions rather naturally. One action complements the other. The Church mutually edifies itself in love. (cf. Ephesians 4). It is not without guidance, but it functions rather harmoniously and above all, it grows. Only when an organism takes on decay, begins to rot, or lacks direction is growth impeded. Its natural function, its mutual edification, can cease altogether. In the case of parishes, if this happens, they can become more like worldly institutions

Meeting Information

Holy Trinity will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, November 18 at noon following the Divine Liturgy. Nominations are open for Council President, Vice President—Grounds, and Assistant Treasurer. Resolutions must be submitted in writing to the Parish Council for review by November 7. **Nothing will be considered from the floor.**

Parishioners in good standing who were registered with the parish as members at the end of the previous calendar year and who have fulfilled their Lenten obligations of Confession and Communion may and should attend.

Agenda

- i. Opening Prayer: "O Heavenly King..."
- ii. Minutes of the 2011 Meeting
- iii. Priest's Report
- iv. Treasurer's Report
- v. Review and Approval of 2013 Budget
- vi. Election of Officers
- vii. Closing Prayer: "It is truly meet..."

seeking to justify their own existence, and focusing merely on themselves.

Above all, I think this is why our meetings are the way they are. They are not contentious. They reflect the mutual edification and harmony of parish life. And they look to the future, not to the past, because growth always leads us somewhere new. The Church organism constantly takes us forward. Christ guides and leads us onward. Our life together is one of organic movement forward in the Kingdom.

(continued—see last page)

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH
119 S. Sparks Street
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Schedules

| | Coffee Hour | Greeters | Tellers | Servers** |
|-------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------|
| November 4 | J. Cadman and K. Oleyrik | B. Roberts and E. Miranda | S. Siveris and A.T. Peltan | Team A |
| November 11 | M. Thompson and L. Rush | L. Radomsky and M. Radomsky | D. Carroll and B. Haupt | Team B |
| November 18 | K. Carroll and D. Vin Dular* | M. Thompson and M. Fedin | M. Fedin and M. Siveris | Team A |
| November 25 | C. Strauss and J. Miranda* | M. Leathers and D. Swisher | S. Siveris and R. Schauf | Team B |
| December 2 | Russian Ladies* | B. Roberts and E. Miranda | D. Carroll and B. Haupt | Team A |
| December 9 | K. Oleyrik and J. Miranda* | L. Radomsky and M. Radomsky | M. Fedin and M. Siveris | Team B |

* Devotes Fast
** Team A: C. Dook, N. Fedin, A. Miranda, K. Peltan, S. Oleyrik, D. Siveris, Jr. Siveris, and J. Swisher
Team B: J. Cadman, M. Dook, P. Dook, K. Kucherynyy, J. Miranda, B. Oleyrik, and Jr. Siveris.

■ CHAPEL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

A Great Deal and Nothing at All

by Fr. Basil Biberdorf

If you have been wondering what is going on at the Chapel, the answer is simple: a great deal, and nothing at all. By “nothing at all” I mean nothing out of the ordinary. Our community continues to gather for worship and prayer, for group study (current topic: the prayers before Holy Communion), for choir rehearsal, for community events, for the support of our faithful and community who need a hand, and, as always, hosting the best coffee hour in central Pennsylvania.

But that’s not all. In the past year, the Chapel faithful have sought to determine what’s important to them, as preparation for using the half-acre lot we purchased last year. At the most basic level, four core values were identified: Worship, Discipleship (the cultivation of the Orthodox faith among ourselves), Community (being involved and interested in the people and institutions in our area), and Witness (sharing our faith and exhibiting Christian love to those in need).

In support of those values, the Chapel has desired to do several things: offer more educational opportunities, particularly for inquirers and children; expand our service schedule; and expand our “reach” where we are. Currently, we worship in a home, and give thanks to God that we have it available to us. There are, nonetheless, some limitations that accompany the arrangement. We can’t hold very many people, and they’re spread across two or three rooms. We lack space for traditional fixtures such as an iconostasis, multiple icon stands, to say nothing of a narthex. We set up and tear down for each service, putting our Holy Table in the basement and the sacred vessels, antimens, Gospel book, and the like in a plastic box.

Our choir has recently added additional rehearsals to the schedule, to improve our worship even

further, meeting in a member’s home. Choir materials must be packed, transported, and unpacked for each gathering. Our Sunday evening classes are similar. We want to do more, but there are logistical challenges in meeting at different locations and communicating these details to those who have an interest in coming.

It is becoming clear that we need to take additional steps to continue our support for our core values. In spring we began exploring possible floor plans for a church building that would meet our needs, and, having reached agreement on an “ideal” design, have considered what we might be able to afford. Those estimates range from approximately \$140,000 to \$185,000 total, with \$700-1,000 per month in debt service, and a \$30,000 to \$37,000 down payment. Again, those were estimates according to hypothetical scenarios we developed. We have since spoken with a couple of builders, with one of them proposing construction that would cost between \$153,000 (church and narthex alone) and \$203,000 (church with parish hall).

This is all very preliminary, in that we have not yet determined what we think God is calling us to do. Nonetheless, our picture is becoming clearer week-by-week. We know that whatever we pursue will require funds. We know that we will need to seek additional contributions from other faithful Christians in addition to our own in order to realize this vision. That request will come, eventually. But, for now, I’ll close by asking for your support of the Chapel’s work in prayer above all. Pray that our minds be clear and mindful of God’s commands (particularly *Matt 28:19-20*), and pray that those in our community would hear the message of Christ through our efforts. In the meantime, we’ll continue to worship, pray, and study. All are invited to join us. ■

A Look Ahead to the Annual Mtg. *(from page 1)*

This year, we will be asked to look ahead financially to a budget increase, reflecting our continued growth. It is reasonable and one well within our means to attain (about 7%). The majority of the expense is because of our need to pay our first deacon an adequate salary for his full time work. Until now, we have not provided him retirement or health benefits. The proposed budget addresses this: a five percent raise to Deacon Alex’s base pay, plus allowances for his pension and health insurance. This will put our commitment to him in conformity with the OCA’s Clergy Salary Guidelines. The Budget and Pastoral Care Committees are to be commended for their work and their due diligence this year, making sure that we spend wisely on ministry and meet the moral obligations we have to full time clergy on our staff.

I look forward to your participation at the Annual Meeting. More importantly, I look forward to your participation in parish life beyond the meeting. Passing a budget is only one step. Supporting the budget with tithes and offerings makes that budget a real indicator of where our hearts are in our parish. It is further proof that we are truly an organism, not an organization. For, we seek to build up one another in love, so that Christ is the center of life together at Holy Trinity, in deed and not merely in word.

As with any other call for increased stewardship, my pledge will be raised first. Please pray and consider your commitment as well, as I pray for you to follow my lead. ■

— Fr. John

| HOLY TRINITY INCOME | | | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------|
| CATEGORY | 2012 YTD* | 2012 BUDGET | 2013 BUDGET | % CHG |
| Stewardship Offerings | \$135,454 | \$182,064 | \$191,682 | 5.3% |
| Deacon Support | 3,755 | 5,000 | 5,000 | 0.0% |
| Parking | 2,642 | 2,000 | 3,500 | 75.0% |
| Missions Appeal | 1,260 | 2,000 | 3,000 | 50.0% |
| Candles/Flowers | 2,429 | 2,600 | 2,600 | 0.0% |
| OCF Funding Appeal | 1,200 | 2,000 | 2,000 | 0.0% |
| Choir Internship | — | — | 2,000 | — |
| Discretionary Fund | — | 500 | 500 | 0.0% |
| Interest | 320 | 500 | 361 | -27.8% |
| Other | 198 | 700 | — | -100.0% |
| Total Income | \$147,258 | \$197,364 | \$210,643 | 6.7% |
| HOLY TRINITY EXPENSES | | | | |
| Personnel | \$91,264 | \$120,004 | \$129,720 | 8.1% |
| Archdiocese | 12,859 | 17,891 | 20,856 | 16.6% |
| Mortgage | 15,116 | 19,444 | 17,315 | -10.9% |
| Outreach & Fellowship | 6,012 | 7,250 | 8,250 | 13.8% |
| Liturgical | 3,924 | 4,675 | 6,675 | 42.8% |
| Utilities | 4,947 | 6,485 | 6,535 | 0.8% |
| Physical Plant | 2,509 | 4,050 | 4,050 | 0.0% |
| Office Administration | 2,871 | 3,350 | 3,850 | 14.9% |
| Christian Education | 1,914 | 3,900 | 3,200 | -17.9% |
| Missionary/Seminaries | 2,250 | 3,000 | 3,000 | 0.0% |
| Coffee Hour | 1,502 | 2,000 | 2,000 | 0.0% |
| Insurance | 1,611 | 1,815 | 1,692 | -6.8% |
| Discretionary Fund | 2,147 | 1,500 | 1,500 | 0.0% |
| All-American Council | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 0.0% |
| Refurnishings | 891 | 750 | 750 | 0.0% |
| Miscellaneous | 568 | 250 | 250 | 0.0% |
| Total Expenses | \$151,385 | \$197,364 | \$210,643 | 6.7% |
| CHAPEL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT INCOME | | | | |
| Total Income | \$25,173 | \$28,200 | \$32,510 | 15.3% |
| CHAPEL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT EXPENSES | | | | |
| Personnel | \$11,424 | \$15,700 | \$15,400 | -1.9% |
| Outreach & Fellowship | 782 | 1,325 | 1,625 | 22.6% |
| Property | 484 | 580 | 820 | 41.4% |
| Office Administration | 55 | 345 | 295 | -14.5% |
| Liturgical | 906 | 240 | 280 | 16.7% |
| Refurnishings | — | 510 | 250 | -51.9% |
| Christian Education | 114 | 200 | 200 | 0.0% |
| Utilities | — | 100 | 100 | 14.9% |
| <i>(Transfer to Savings)</i> | — | 9,200 | 13,540 | 47.1% |
| Total Expenses | \$13,765 | \$28,200 | \$32,510 | 15.3% |

* through September 30, 2012

■ CHURCH GROWTH AND EVANGELISM

Growth Team Outlines Plans for Future

After months of research and analysis, the Strategic Growth Team met on October 18 to review five different plans Holy Trinity could implement in response to continued growth in the parish. Participants examined growth models, evaluated the options using a SWOT matrix, and began the refinement process. In the upcoming months, all possible courses of action—which range from modifying existing resources to a total relocation—will be reviewed by staff and then brought before the Parish Council for the best three to be chosen. The goal is to have three complete and finalized options

presented to the entire parish at an informational meeting early next year to be carefully and prayerfully deliberated upon. ■



■ NEWS & NOTES



Local Abbess Honored for Reaching Milestone

ELLWOOD CITY, PA [via oca.org] – On October 13, the sisterhood and friends of the Orthodox Monastery of the Transfiguration here celebrated the 25th anniversary of the elevation of Mother Christophora to abbess of the community. The day opened with the celebration of the Divine Liturgy in the monastery chapel, at which Archbishop Nathaniel of Detroit, and the Romanian Episcopate presided. A luncheon was held at a nearby restaurant, attended by the two hierarchs, area clergy, members of Mother Christophora's family, friends, neighbors, and monastery workers. A gallery is available at oca.org. May God grant Mother Christophora many years!

ORTHODOX MISSIONARIES TO TARGET MOSCOW TRAIN STATIONS

MOSCOW [via *The Moscow Times*] – Russian Orthodox missionaries will descend on Moscow train stations every Friday starting this month. Graduates of an Orthodox missionary course will have a chance to put theory into practice, serving as train station parish consultants, *Interfax* reported Wednesday. The move is the latest in a series of expanding Orthodox missionary activities in Russia. Patriarch KIRILL personally controls the church's missionary department.

NEW YORK'S OLDEST AND LARGEST CLINIC STOPS ABORTIONS DUE TO PROTESTS

BROOKLYN, NY [via nydailynews.com] – A Sunset Park abortion clinic has shut down after [Pro-life] protesters drove away doctors and patients, according to the owner of the clinic. The Ambulatory Specialty Surgery Center of Brooklyn on 43rd St. closed [in September] and [reopened last month] as a new medical center providing outpatient surgeries, but not abortion... So far as many as 20 doctors have expressed interest in working at the new clinic—a stark difference from as recently as a month ago when [clinic owner Terry] Lazar struggled to find doctors willing to work there.

Help Matthew 25 Help Others

The poor are among us even in State College: A recent article in the *Centre Daily Times* noted that the “poverty level stays hidden in Happy Valley.” But through your donations of time, food, gifts, or money—and through prayer—we can serve Christ by serving others. **Matthew 25's** Thanksgiving food drive is now in full swing, and in December, the ever-popular St. Nicholas Tree will make its annual appearance. Learn how you can get involved in these important drives through the bulletin, Web site, and announcements following Divine Liturgy.

Register Your Preteens Today

Parents of area middle school students can group register through our parish for the 2012 St. Herman of Alaska Retreat at Antiochian Village, taking place December 14-16. Holy Trinity's Sunday School is sponsoring tuition and transportation for the annual winter camp themed on the Scriptures. The weekend schedule includes games, fellowship, worship, great food, and, if God provides the snow, even sledding! Registration and release forms are available at holytrinity-oca.org and due by Sunday, November 11. Email dnmark@holytrinity-oca.org for more information.

Pray for our Assembly Delegates

In addition to Holy Trinity's annual meeting, two additional assemblies will take place this month on the Archdiocesan (Nov. 10) and All-American levels (Nov. 13). Please pray for our delegates representing Holy Trinity: Fathers John and Basil, and Deacons Alexander and Mark (both Councils); and David and Brenda Smith, Bruce Haupt, and Michael Stickles (Archdiocesan Assembly only). Thank you.

November's Bookstore Feature

The Parish Bookstore is now featuring *Everyday Saints and Other Stories* by Archimandrite Tikhon. An Orthodox bestseller with more than a million copies sold, it is available in English and Russian.

■ CAMPUS MINISTRY

OCF Invites Two Prominent Speakers to Area this Month

The Penn State Orthodox Christian Fellowship will host two nationally recognized speakers this month. On Thursday, November 8 at their weekly 6 p.m. meeting on campus (212 Pasquerilla), Fr. Michael Ellis, OCF North American Chaplain, will speak to the group on “Coping with Scandal,” addressing the tumultuous events that have taken place at Penn State over the past year.

Later that week, on Sunday, November 11, OCF will host renowned Palestinian activist Maria C. Khoury, Ed. D. Dr. Khoury—a human rights champion and author of several books and articles bringing international awareness to the dwindling Christian population on the West Bank—will speak to the entire State College community at 7 p.m. in 104 Thomas Building. A prolific speaker, Dr. Khoury is the wife of the mayor of Taybeh, the last remaining all-Christian village in Palestinian-occupied Israel. She was recently featured on a *60 Minutes* episode highlighting her cause of improving living conditions for all those living behind a 430-mile long Israeli “security” wall, which critics have denounced as being akin to apartheid. Q&A will follow her presentation, which is open to the public.

Register for College Conference

Registration for the 2012 College Conference at Antiochian Village is now open at events.ocf.net. Annually, nearly 400 college students from across North America participate in the conference to learn and grow in their Orthodox Faith.

For the Record

ORDINATION

➤ **Dn. John Diamantis** was ordained to the Holy Priesthood on September 29 by Bishop Michael at Holy Trinity Church in East Meadow, NY. **Axios!**