



METROPOLIS
OF DETROIT

HOLY TRINITY-ST. NICHOLAS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

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Fall 2018 General Assembly Meeting Minutes October 7, 2018

ATTENDANCE

Clergy: Fr. Mark Emroll

Pastoral Assistant: Mr. Nick Tzetzis

Parish Council Members present: Andy Stefanopoulos, Bill Kanelopoulos (Recording), Sylvia Rombis, Jessica Mavridoglou, Jay Williams, Eli Cassis, Kim Lambrinides, Gus Koutsogiannis

Parish Council Members absent: Nektarios Papasavvas, Karen Aamodt, William “Buzzy” Gaz, Ron Nichols, Dimitrios Makrozahopoulos

Parish Staff: Eugene Nicholas, Craig Sansone

Parishioners: 58 voting members present

MEETING

Call to order: Quorum count was met & confirmed at 12:01PM.

Opening Prayer: Father Mark led the opening prayer.

Election of Chairperson: Andy Stefanopoulos nominated Nick J. Sarakatsannis to serve as chairman. Bill Tsacalis seconded. Nick accepted. Nick was elected Chairperson of the Fall 2018 General Assembly.

Minutes from the Spring 2018 General Assembly Meeting:

- The minutes from the Spring 2018 General Assembly had been made available and posted publicly before the Fall 2018 General Assembly.
- Beryl Love moved to suspend the rules, dispense with the reading of the minutes, and accept the minutes as posted on the website and bulletin board. James Gelis seconded. The motion passed.

Reports:

President's Report:

Read on President's behalf by: Andy Stefanopoulos (Parish Council Vice President)

- Expressed thanks to everyone for their volunteerism, altruism, hard work and stewardship
- Emphasized and highlighted that everything we do is in accordance to our Parish's Mission and Vision Statements
- We launched our 3 Strategic Pillars in the areas of Engagement, Education and Outreach

- Thank you to all the Panegyri volunteers!
 - This is another example of how our hard work and volunteerism brings results and benefits to our entire community
 - We have a need for more volunteers
 - If you have not volunteered before, come on in and join us!
 - Special thanks to Eugene Nicholas for his Panegyri leadership over the past few years, and to Craig Sansone for all of his time and efforts
- **Archdiocese Financial Situation**
 - Our Archdiocese is on a good road to recovery
 - Plans are in place to repay all past obligations
 - Strong control measures are also in place to ensure more robust budgeting, financial performance monitoring, and expense curbing.
 - Budget cuts impacted the jobs of some of the employees at the Archdiocese level.
 - To minimize, or eliminate, impact to the Parish level, at the recent Clergy Laity Congress, it was voted to keep the 2019 allocations at the 2018 levels
 - Our Parish's 2019 allocation will remain the same as 2018 at \$98K
- **Clergy Laity Congress**
 - Held in Boston, MA early July 2018
 - Topics that are central and fundamental to our existence as Orthodox Christians were discussed, including "Parish Engagement", "Why Orthodox", "Are We Doing Ministries Correctly", "Are Our Youth Really Engaged", "Youth Safety", and many others
 - Some of these topics are already being considered in the work that our own Parish Ministries and our Strategic Committee are and will be doing
- **Safety**
 - In continuing to look out for our safety we will be repairing and upgrading our parking lot lighting to maximize light and visibility in all areas on our lot that our Parishioners may find themselves
 - We are currently looking into devising our own Emergency Response Plan, so we are better prepared for any type of an emergency or an unforeseen event
- **Facilities**
 - Facilities Committee is currently working on surveying our buildings and installations for potential maintenance issues.
 - It is important to complete this assessment to understand the risks, and in turn ensure that we not only have the right funding plan in place when it is needed, but to also ensure we have the right preventive maintenance where needed to avoid expensive headaches down the road.

Clergy Report:

- **Given by: Fr. Mark**
 - Gratitude expressed to the Panegyri Leadership team and to all those who volunteered on what was a very successful 2018 Panegyri.
 - Thanks expressed to Eugene for his role as the Panegyri Chairperson
 - Peter Zaferes will be the 2019 Panegyri Chairperson

- The Good Shepherd Food Pantry Ministry will be hosting and serving a Thanksgiving Meal on Wednesday, November 21st, starting at 4PM, at the Church
 - Volunteers are needed to help prepare, serve and clean up
 - Please contact the Church office if interested and if you would like to contribute financially by sponsoring a meal
 - Very good progress made by the Strategic Planning Committee
- The Archdiocese has a manual for Youth Safety Protection
 - It will be implemented for all Holy Trinity-St. Nicholas Youth Ministries
 - It will be reviewed by Fr. Mark and Mr. Nick in the Fall of 2019
- We are still awaiting word from the Archdiocese on an ordination date for Mr. Nick

Pastoral Assistant Report:

- **Given by: Mr. Nick**
 - Very impressed with the 2018 Panegyri!
 - The Church tours were very well attended
 - Vacation Church School will likely be moving from July to a different month
 - **HOPE** (Kindergarten through 2nd Grade) & **JOY** (3rd through 5th Grades)
 - Lessons and projects are being put in place to help educate & challenge the kids
 - **GOYA**
 - Ministry is actively engaged and going very well
 - **Young Adults**
 - Working on initiatives to draw them in
 - **Digital Activities**
 - TV used as a bulletin board can be a very effective means of communication
 - Continuing to utilize Facebook and Instagram social media platforms
 - **Orthodoxy 101** begins on Monday, October 8th @ 7pm (and will be held on Mondays @ 7PM thereafter)
 - Working with Parish Council to start a program that utilizes funds in conjunction with individuals/students writing grants with regard to ministry involvement instead of them trying to simply raise money

Treasurer's Report:

Given by: Jessica Mavridoglou

- We are under budget in 2018 and going in a good direction
- Archdiocese "Fair Share" Commitment appears to be over budget, but that's because we paid semi-annually rather than monthly which front-loaded the expense
- Our goal is to be a parish that is 100% fully supported by Stewardship
- Panegyri was over budget on revenue and under budget on expenses, which accounts for most of our surplus this year
 - We still have work to do to remove our dependence on the Panegyri Funds to support our Church's operation and ministries
- Our mortgage (for the Community Center) will be a fixed rate through 2019
 - We still need \$234K to pay it off and hope to clear the mortgage before it becomes a variable interest rate mortgage

- The goal for our “Capital improvement” fund is that it will continue indefinitely even after the mortgage for the Community Center is paid off for future capital improvement projects

Stewardship Report:

Given by: Justin Bates (Stewardship Committee Member)

- **Our Parish’s Stewardship Theme for 2018 is “Our Faith, Making a Difference!”**
 - Our Faith, our Stewardship and what we do matters and it does make a difference!
 - Thank you to all those who have graciously given of their **time**, **talent** and **treasure** in support of our Church and its ministries!
- **Stewardship Sunday was held on September 23rd, signaling the formal “start” of our 2019 Stewardship Ministry/Campaign**
 - A big thank you to everyone who filled out a 2019 Stewardship Commitment!
 - **Currently we have 110 individuals/families that have turned in a 2019 Stewardship Commitment totaling over \$141,000!**
 - Making a Stewardship Commitment is not just about helping our Church budget for the upcoming year.
 - **More importantly**, it is about taking the time to prayerfully make a financial commitment/offering to God and His Church as a tangible sign that **we’re putting God first** and acknowledging/thanking Him for what He has given us to responsibly manage
- **Thanks and gratitude to all those who have graciously taken the time to write an article for our Monthly Voice expressing why Stewardship is so important to them and how it makes a difference in their life & the life of our Parish family.**
- **Our Parish Stewardship Goal for 2018 is \$500,000**

As of Sunday, 9/30/18:

- **2018 Number of Stewards that have given: 468**
 - **Note:** Number of Stewards through 9/30/17 that had given was 447
 - Number of Stewards is up by 21 (**4.7% Increase**)
- **2018 Total Stewardship Commitments: \$355,535**
 - **Note:** Stewardship Commitments through 9/30/17 were \$358,235
 - Stewardship commitments are down \$2,700 (**0.7% Decrease**)
- **2018 Total Stewardship Received: \$323,840**
 - **Note:** Total Stewardship received through 9/30/17 was \$334,420
 - Total Stewardship received is down \$10,580 (**3.1% Decrease**)

- The Stewardship Committee and the Education Pillar of the Strategic Planning Committee are honored to be hosting a Parish Wide Event on Saturday, November 3rd
 - **Topic:** *Stewardship: Committing our Whole Life to Christ*
 - "How to be Stewards of all good things that come from the Lord"
 - **Presented by:** *Rev. Fr. Jon Boukis*
 - Presiding Priest of Assumption Church, Louisville, KY
- Thanks and gratitude to Fr. Mark, Mr. Nick, Parish Council, Stewardship Committee and everyone present here today and to everyone who helps make a difference in the life of our Church!

Audit Committee Report

- 2017 audit found nothing to indicate the expense and revenue and balance reports were inaccurate

Endowment Committee Report

- Approximate value as of 9/30/18 is \$1,300,000 which is a net increase despite the 2018 disbursement that was used to pay down the Community Center capital improvement mortgage
- The available disbursement for 2019 is \$46,279.11
- The fund has increased by \$1,000,000 in the last six years, which is outstanding.

Panegyri Report:

Given by: Eugene Nicholas

- 2018 Panegyri was successfully, helped primarily due to excellent sponsorship, excellent sales, and good weather
- Thanks to all the volunteers who help make the Panegyri successful
- There will be a new Panegyri chairperson in 2019: Peter Zaferes
 - Peter thanked everyone for the support that he has already received and hopes to make it bigger and better, but we need more volunteers and not just on the weekend

Strategic Planning Report:

- Philanthy Nichols spoke about the Education Pillar (Powerpoint slide also was shown)
- **Education Pillar's Purpose: "Promote the word of God within our families and our communities"**
 - We cannot "promote" something in words or in deeds, if we do not "understand or personally know" it's meaning...
 - The Education Pillar's slide/roadmap represents a variety of opportunities for education and spiritual growth.
 - There are many Parish ministries, such as Philoptochos with the Lenten Retreat, Hope & Joy, Panegyri, St. Nicholas Camp, Vacation Church School, etc. that contribute to the overall Education process and the ability to "promote the word of God within our families and our communities"

- **New Initiatives:**
 - Under “*Theological*”
 - **Additional Church Services**
 - Additional Church services during the week
 - We’ve had 2 Paraklesis services (services of supplication to the Theotokos)
 - **Guest Speakers**
 - **Fr. Jon Boukis from Louisville, KY (Saturday, November 3rd)**
 - His talk will be on “How to be Stewards of all good things that come from the Lord” and we’ll be learning about “Committing our Whole Life to Christ”
 - **Dr. Niki Karavasilis, author and historian**
 - Featured speaker for the Lenten Retreat sponsored by Philoptochos on Saturday, April 6
 - She will educate us about the importance of the history of the Greek catastrophe of Smyrna.
 - **Fr. George Parsenios**
 - Will be with us in November 2019 to present a talk (to be determined) on a spiritual topic.
 - Under “*Community Awareness*”
 - Receiving the Sunday Bulletin by email
 - Families/Individuals can be better prepared to anticipate and think about the upcoming Epistle and Gospel readings, as well as the special feast day hymns, and any supplemental services of the day (such as memorials and churching of new infants).
 - Keeps us connected to those Parishioners who are travelling or out of town, the elderly and sick, the shut-ins and those unable to attend Church.
 - **Learning Groups**
 - **Parish Bible Study** on the Gospel According to Saint Luke with Fr. Mark on Wednesday evenings at 7pm
 - **Orthodoxy 101** with Mr. Nick on Monday evenings at 7pm to explore and better understand our relationship with our faith and our Church through our relationship with God.
 - This class is not just for inquirers, but for anyone who wants to better understand and deepen their relationship with God through the Church.

- **“Come and See” Day**
 - Similar to the idea of the Church tours during the Panegyri, but instead for our own parish family members to have a special day where they can come inside the Church and see various stations/exhibits and information available for them to ask any questions about any of the different aspects of our faith: icons, hymnology, vestments, the church interior, the altar, the various Services, the Church Calendar

Nominations

Audit Committee

- The following persons were nominated and approved
 1. Nick J. Sarakatsannis
 2. Patricia Neuendorf
 3. Christine Masella
 4. Bill Karas

Election Committee

- The following persons were nominated and approved
 1. Peter Aamodt
 2. Loy Johnson
 3. Lewis Assaley
 4. Carol Stefanopoulos
 5. Beryl Love

Endowment Committee

1. Philanthy Nichols was nominated and approved for the 1-year term
2. Jim Gelis was nominated and approved for the 2-year term

Parish council

- The following persons were nominated and approved
 1. William “Buzzy” Gaz
 2. Bill Kanelopoulos
 3. Gus Lazares
 4. Matthew Neuendorf
 5. Peggy Kehayes

Unfinished Business:

N/A

New Business:

2019 budget

- No major changes, just minor adjustments compared to the 2018 budget
- Expenses are largely forecast based on past history/experiences
- Certain costs recur every other year, so some line entries will vary year to year based on the that timing/schedule
- Stewardship Goal for 2019 is \$505,000 (compared to \$500,000 in 2018)
 - Bill Tsacalis moved to accept budget, Peter Zaferes seconded.
 - Motion passed and the 2019 budget was approved

Organization Reports:

N/A

Adjournment

Call to adjourn: Lew Parsenios moved to adjourn at 1:36PM

Closing prayer: Fr. Mark led the closing prayer. The meeting ended at 1:36PM

Approved as written,



Fr. Mark Emroll
Proistamenos



Andy Stefanopoulos
Vice President



Bill Kanelopoulos
Assistant Secretary