

General Assembly Minutes

March 17, 2024

Call to order at 12:30pm. ~42 Attendees

1. Election of Chair

Motion to nominate George Milanos: M/Tanya Spirtos; 2nd/ Art Smith
Motion Passed unanimously

2. Approval of Minutes of Prior Assembly

Motion to pass minutes: M/Tanya Spirtos; 2nd/ Art Smith
Motion Passed unanimously

3. Pastor's Report (Fr Peter Salmas)

- It has been a busy 2024 so far with the ordination and addition of Fr Manoli and Presby Alyssa to the parish beginning in Nov. 2023. Fr Manoli is close to his 40 liturgies and has begun working with our youth groups and seniors.
- Attendance on Sundays has been increasing including in our Sunday School and Studies of the Faith. People that are new to the Orthodox faith have been attending. We have been having 1-2 new babies welcomed to the church per month. This increase in membership of young people has been observed across the country.
- Fr Manoli has been busy planning the annual youth retreat. ~28 young people are expected to attend. It will be at the Headlands the last weekend of March.
- The spiritual odyssey will return this year and will focus on digital media and AI. Medical professionals, Digital technology professionals and Orthodox clergy will present. This will be the weekend of April 13 and 14. This event will be recorded.

4. President's Report (Jim Smith)

- Jim reviewed where we are as a parish today.
- We are back to normal operations (just passed the 4yr anniversary of the Covid pandemic). Many have returned to church and there seems to be a movement towards liturgical worship (Orthodox, Anglican and Roman Catholic). We have a great opportunity to welcome parishioners back.
- We now have Fr Manoli as the assistant priest and we should feel blessed for the time we have with him and with Presby Alyssa.
- The crab feed returned this year. Thank you to Bill and Nina Azar.
- We have a chairman (Phil Louridas) that has already volunteered for the Festival.
- Our ministries are doing well and thriving and they will give updates today. Preschool is expanding.
- We are about to start our Lenten journey together and we look forward to seeing everyone at Holy Cross on May 5 for the Pascha picnic celebration.

5. Treasurer's Report (Mark Phillips)

- Reviewed the 2024 Budget compared to 2021-2023.
- The largest revenue line is Stewardship and Donations.
- 2023 was the best year ever for Stewardship, 15% YOY growth.
- **Our goal in 2024 is to grow Stewardship 25% YOY growth. Currently we are \$130/family and we are asking for \$150/family. This will allow us to fund annual church expenses solely based on Stewardship.**
- Activities increased in 2023 and we will look to continue that in 2024 (ex. Crab Feed and Festival)
- We are optimistic that Preschool income will increase in 2024.
- Question: What is the final net Festival contribution for 2023. This is largely the Activities line item or ~\$125K of \$130K
- Question: Why is maintenance and property improvement expense decreasing? We had larger expenses in 2022 and 2023 due to the purchase of 4 Kimmie court. In 2024 we are expecting these expenses to return to normal.
- Salaries continue to be the largest expense item. This has increased in 2024 because we now have a full year with the assistant priest.
- Balance sheet was reviewed. Total buildings increased with the addition of 4 Kimmie Court. Excluding that, the sheet is relatively consistent over the years. We try and maintain a minimum \$50K balance to cover salaries and Archdiocese commitments.

6. Committee Reports & Updates

a) Stewardship (Jim Smith)

- Reviewed 2018 – 2023 Stewardship. 2023 was the best year ever. ~\$625K was donated to Stewardship. These donations are not linear which can make cashflow challenging. Dec. typically has an increase as does April/May likely due to end of year and Pascha.
- We need to remind ourselves that our Stewardship pledge to the church is just the beginning and we need to be engaging with our ministries and our parishioners to encourage more giving of our time, treasure and talent with love.
- The parish council will continue to write testimonials.

b) Buildings and Grounds (Dima Khoury)

- The Capital Plan was reviewed. In 2023;
 - A number of items are exceeding their life expectancy which is saving us money.
 - 4 Kimmie Court has been upgraded to make it more livable.
 - Certain roofs required maintenance.
- In 2024, the trellis will be repaired to fix storm damage and trees will continue to be trimmed. We have a high priority list and a lower priority list and these were reviewed.
- Comment: Suggest sharing these lists with the broader parish so people are aware and can help with donations towards these items.

- Question: Are any of these just nice-to-have? No, these items will end up costing more if we do not address them.
- Removal of the mold on the mosaics has been completed.
- Comment: Suggest making the pathway from the Oaks to the parking lot which currently has diamond shaped stones more friendly for parishioners with disabilities. Elias volunteered to address this.
- Comment: There is a tree that needs to be straightened.
- Comment: The slate around the church should be repaired. We are soliciting bids for this item to repair or replace.

7. Parish Organization and Ministries Reports

a) Philoptochos (Laura Jadelrab)

- Highlights were shared about the 17-member Philoptochos board.
 - This past year Christmas Tea, Philoptochos Luncheon and Kids'n'Cancer resulted in donations of ~\$14K
 - Dinner reception following vespers with Catholic church this past Weds.
 - Dinner this evening following Vespers of forgiveness and look forward to celebrating Pascha in May.
 - High school senior wishing to apply for the community service award deadline is April 22nd.
 - Fashion Show on May 18. Flyer and raffle tickets will be mailed in a couple of weeks.

b) ORA (Matina Polakis)

- ORA is the Organization of Retired Adults that meets monthly in the Oaks.
- This is a social gathering for ~90 people with lunches, raffles and various speakers. New members are welcome.

c) Religious Education (Art Smith)

- We are very happy with the progress of the Sunday school.
- Focus has been on engagement and setting lofty goals; 214 kids have been identified as those that could attend Sunday school and >50% are engaged. This is a really great level of engagement.
- Registrations have increased to 108 with an average weekly attendance of 40 kids (compared to 30 in 2023).
- There is a dedicated group of co-instructors. Focusing on how to make the experience more compelling for the kids and examples were given.
- May 3 there is an all-day retreat and more details will be provided closer to the date.
- May 19 is graduation and youth appreciation Sunday.
- Basil garden needs to be refreshed.

d) Youth Council & Young Adults (Paul Flocas)

- The youth is coming back to the church, volleyball in Oct. (4 teams), peace-meal in the Oaks, Godparents luncheon in Nov., Christmas Tree in Dec., Oratorical festival.
 - Dance festival had 120 Holy Cross attendees which is a 20% increase from 2023. Several groups place 1st through 3rd place. The group was invited by a village in Greece to perform and ~15 people are interested in this. The potluck was well attended.
 - Basketball now starts after FDF (began today) and Holy Cross has 3 teams. Volunteers should talk to Steve Tonas (?).
 - Comment: Suggest that a financial report from the Youth Council is shared with the Parish. Suggest participation in the vocal competition.
- e) Outreach (Virginia Coppock & Edie Christoforidis)
- Outreach continues to reach out to local (and sometimes national) communities.
 - In 25 year, ~\$144K has been collected. In 2023, \$9,053 was collected.
 - The list of organizations that received disbursements was reviewed.
 - Many hearts have been touched by these disbursements.
- f) Preschool (Tom Mavrakakis)
- Chris Shreve continues to be the Director of the pre-school and does a lot of work to provide a great pre-school experience.
 - We plan to add kindergarten.
- g) Greek School (Katerina Chiotis)
- This year enrollment increased 15% with 75 kids registered. This is still below pre-pandemic levels. 13 new families joined this year.
 - The goal is to increase attendance next year.
 - Souvlaki fundraiser and Bakesale are examples of event that the Greek School has hosted.
- h) Choir (Chris Cannelos)
- The choir is currently rehearsing the beautiful hymns of Holy week and Pascha.
 - New members are welcome.

8. New Business

- a) Nominations Committee: 3 volunteers are requested. The nominations committee provides potential names for nomination to Parish Council. George Milanos (M:Jim Smith, 2nd: Art Smith). Paul Flocas (George Milanos (M:Jim Smith, 2nd: Art Smith). Michael Vilanovich (?) George Milanos (M:Jim Smith, 2nd: Art Smith). All accepted.

9. For the Good of the Order

10. Adjourned at 1:29pm (M: Mark Philipps, 2nd: Jim Smith)

Respectfully submitted by Mark Rowen