

.St. Matthew the Apostle Orthodox Church

Annual Meeting

January 22, 2023

Attendance: 35 adults, 5 children

1. **Opening Prayer:** "O, Heavenly King" 12:28 p.m.

2. **Review of 2022 Minutes**

David Lobue made the motion to accept 2022 Minutes, Bud Snowden seconded, motion passed unanimously.

3. **Reports**

- a. **Pastoral Report:** Father Joshua thanked His Eminence, Archbishop Alexander for the opportunity to serve as a priest of the Orthodox Church in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, at St. Matthew's for another year. We have had a full and busy year. We have celebrated more services this year and have had more people attend those services than in previous years. It is not atypical to have around 70 people at a Sunday Divine Liturgy, with our highest attendance being 76. This is more than we have had at Pascha. This year we have involved more people in parish life - the Teams had their most active year since we started them several years ago. More people serving each other, giving of themselves for the benefit of the community. We have had another good financial year, in certain regards. People continue to give to support the life of the parish. We received five people into the Church through baptism and chrismation. This was less than half of the people in our catechumen class but due to sickness and scheduling conflicts we technically received the other half in 2023, so they will be counted for this year's numbers. We have several more ready to continue or begin the catechumen process this year. And with babies being born, we can anticipate the joy of at least a few baptisms in the upcoming year. We were even able to enjoy a wedding service this past year. We enjoyed our first episcopal visit, hosting Bishop Gerasim in December for our St Matthew Lectures. He encouraged us to host a deanery meeting in the future and has promised that for his next visit, we will celebrate the full episcopal rite of the liturgy. We continued our Summer Lecture series with Bud and the Launeys speaking to us about death and science, respectively. And we continue to work on annual parish events such as the chili cook-off. The Mission Council members will discuss the building progress, but I will go ahead and say what is not surprising: that I am disappointed that we are still in this building and have not at least broken ground on our property. I am thankful for the space we have to gather as a community though its adequacy for our parish is being put to the test almost weekly. Still, I remain hopeful that God will continue to bless our efforts in this space for as long as we are here.

- b. Audit Committee Report: Daniel Loper presented the report and findings for the audit conducted during 2022. The report is attached.
- c. Ministry Teams: Father Joshua summarized the purpose and duties of each team and indicated which teams were in need of help.
- d. Treasurer's Report: J.T. presented the 2022 budget report. See attached.

New Business:

- a. Presentation of Mission Council for 2023: Father Joshua introduced the Mission Council. Elizabeth and John are to remain on the Council one more year. John will assume the role of Warden and Elizabeth will remain as the Secretary. JT will be the Treasurer and Daniel Loper is the newest Council member.
- b. Nomination of Delegate and Alternate to the DOS Assembly (July 17-21 in Greenville, SC): Cliff Grout self nominated, John McFarland self nominated as alternate, Father seconded, vote was unanimous.
- c. Election of 3 person Audit Committee: Daniel (for continuity purposes, Jay Buzbee, and Frank Mulhern. The audit will be conducted on the Liturgical cycle rather than the calendar year.
- d. 2023 Budget Presentation: See attached. Daniel made a motion to accept the 2023 budget, David seconded, vote was unanimous.
- e. Building Update & MC Presentation: The Mission Council gave a three part presentation to serve the purpose of providing a financial snapshot of St. Matthew the Apostle and the status of our current building aspirations. Elizabeth, being a parishioner at St. Matthew's the longest of the Mission Council, provided a brief history of what the parish was like during the 8.5 years she has been here, to include Father Joshua's meager stipend. John, then spoke about how we are not giving enough to build, the need to evaluate pleasures in our lives we can scale back on in order to give more for a proper temple. J.T. spoke in specific numbers and provided real estate listings as examples of what our current savings could purchase, all requiring a lot of updates.
- f. Parish Goals for 2023: Father Joshua advised the goals are posted on the website: www.orthodoxybr.com

Daniel made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Gregory seconded. The Annual Meeting was adjourned with "Meet it is in Truth" at 2:10 p.m.

Officer Contact Information:

Warden: John McFarland, 918-814-2460

Treasurer: John Fussell, 225-573-8066

Secretary: Tracey Lobue, 985-415-6163

Mission Council Member: Daniel Loper, 225-788-2594