

St. Matthew Orthodox Church Parish Council Meeting

Meeting: September 12, 2023

Meeting called to order at 6:00 pm

1. Opening prayer was given by Father John

Council members attending:

Paul Novak – president

Matt Tomac – vice president

Tom Julian – treasurer – excused

Mark Massopust – corresponding secretary - excused

Elaine Gavaras – recording secretary

Guests: Melissa McNeil, Jeff Zdrale

Minutes from August were reviewed. Isaac Crowmer's name was corrected. A motion was made to approve by Paul Novak, seconded by Matt. Approved by all.

Guest:

Melissa questioned the progress of the window construction in Herrick Hall. The windows will be installed this weekend. The focus is on the lower-level windows. There remain funds for the upper windows to be addressed/considered, in the future.

Jeff questioned who has a copy of the most recent bylaws. Paul has a copy, most recent from March 17, 2017. Everyone in the Council should have a copy of the bylaws to refer to if they need.

If the picnic continues at Bay Beach, Jeff suggests having activities to keep the children close to the pavilion. This could be considered at future picnics anywhere.

Regarding the thought of a young adult choir starting this fall, if the child is 14 years or older, they should be in the adult choir. So, a young adult choir is not needed.

Jeff questions if the exchange of the icons on the iconostasis was discussed and voted on with the Parish Council. To clarify, Paul noted a conversation was made at last month's meeting. We continue to look at options. There will be an update today for the Council to vote on replacing these icons.

Reports/updates/new business:

1. Priest's report – Father John:

Since the last meeting, we had a well-attended Liturgy in Sister Bay. We also had a Liturgy in Waupaca which was also well attended. Father would like to do a Liturgy once a month in Waupaca.

Earlier today, Father met with the Deanery. Everything is going well, and all the parishes are seeing similar growth as St. Matthew.

Father, who oversees and makes decisions for church school, decided to split the 'Upper Room' into high schoolers and post high schoolers. The high schoolers will eat lunch, then meet in the office room on the second floor. Sunday School will start on September 17.

There will be a gathering at the end of September on how to coordinate activities together as a group.

The Liturgical schedule has been created for October. Father will be gone for a few days for the Diocesan Assembly in Chicago from October 2-4 but will not miss any services at St. Matthew.

On October 07 there will be Great Vespers at the Chapel in Sister Bay for our annual gathering. No service at St. Matthew.

On October 14, Mary Peterson, Melissa McNeil and Nana Odman will be walking for Walk for Life.

There will be a group of six people coming into the church in November.

2. President's report – Paul Novak:

There was a conversation for more people to make prosphora. One person was recently added which will make the maker's list more complete.

Paul will not be able to go to the Diocesan Assembly. Matt will hopefully be able to go to the assembly and will reach out to Father and Paul to confirm. To clarify, the expenses are covered by the church.

The Annual Fall Festival and Bake Sale will be on October 21 and Paul would like a co-chair. Also, someone will need to run the bake sale. Paul will approach some people for help.

The iconography fund raising project is moving along nicely. We have about \$19,000 in commitments. To clarify, details of the iconography project is posted on the information wall in Herrick Hall. It will include the two side walls above the saints, and on each side of the balcony,

a single icon on the wall when entering the narthex, the four saints of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John in medallions and St. Olga by the outgoing wall by the bells.

3. Vice presidents' report - Matt Tomac:

The toilet has been fixed in the bathroom.

There was some water noted behind the first toilet in the women's bathroom. He will continue to monitor.

4. Treasurer – Tom Julian:

Tom is currently on vacation.

New Business:

Frank Hurst offered to donate twenty new chairs to be used in Herrick Hall. Paul recommends that we switch out twenty chairs that look replaceable. A motion was made by Father and seconded by Matt. All approved. Matt will work to swap out the chairs.

Old Business:

The altar cloth coverings for Sister Bay have been completed and will be brought up to Sister Bay with the next service.

The new chairs in Father's office have been delivered.

The Herrick Hall roof has been repaired but will need to be replaced. Some additional gluing was done last weekend. The roof can be replaced for about \$30,000. We feel we will be fine to wait until next spring to consider this project. We received one bid and are attempting to obtain a second. We are having some difficulty finding roofers that can perform the needed replacement.

We had the picnic at Bay Beach which went very well. Vera Limberopoulos brought some games for the children. In the future, will continue to organize games near the eating area. Per Matt, we will need to ensure the electrical is working. Also, a few vehicles can park closer to the pavilion as some people did not come to the picnic due to concern regarding walking a long distance. May need some clarification on parking.

We continue to look at building the wall in the Narthex.

Placing icons on the altar doors is on hold as the four Apostles will be placed as medallions on the upper walls during the iconography project.

Noah Becker is actively working on digitalization music for lamentations during Holy Friday.

The Ukrainian community is participating in the Appleton Octoberfest. They asked to use the camp grill which was approved by the Council.

At the June meeting, it was documented by the Council minutes that we do not have either St. Matthew and/or John the Baptist icons on the iconostasis. We discussed purchasing an icon from Damascus Gallery to look at the quality of the icon. Damascus Gallery has icons from Dimitry Skolnick's works. The council voted to move forward with purchasing the icon which is currently hanging over the Table of Oblation. Then, there was additional work in moving forward to see if the icons on the iconostasis could be replaced and would then include St. Matthew and John the Baptist. In working with Damascus Gallery, they were able to produce icons, but they were not felt to fit rightly. Additional research was performed with another icon business, and they were able to send renditions. These showed different colorings which also did not fit rightly. Based on these discussions, Father John requested that the iconostasis project be tabled until Dimitry comes to St. Matthew this spring so that we may discuss an iconostasis that will be beautiful and fit our church. Father and Paul are proposing to send an update/note by email to place any further conversation on hold until Spring 2024. It will then be reflected in the next meeting in October.

Melissa also mentioned that there are several fund raisers at this time.

The next Council meeting will be October 10 at 6:00 pm.

A motion was made to adjourn by Paul and seconded by Father John, approved by all.

Meeting adjourned at 7:14 pm.

Father gave the closing prayer.

Addendum 09-15-2023

Per email from Father John, 09-13-2023:

At our parish council meeting last night, the topic of possibly getting new icons for the main six icons of the iconostasis was discussed once again, as it has been for the past several PC meetings. Again, the main issue is not the icons themselves as much as that two of them (St Nicholas and St. Herman) are not the icons that they should be. They should be St. Matthew and St. John the Baptist.

As you recall from other meetings, Paul had discussions with Damascus Gallery about supplying these

icons. As you recall, Damascus Gallery would be able to print us full size copies of Dmitry's icons, but the issue we faced, as I specifically remember Mark pointing out at the one meeting (I think in July) is that the color tints did not match well.

So then at the recommendation of Fr Moses Hibbard, Paul also reached out to Teshin Iconographics in California. But they do not have any Dmitry icons they use.

So, Paul and I discussed it before the PC meeting yesterday, and we brought it to parish council last night that we would like to propose to table this discussion until Dmitry himself comes in Spring 2024, when we can get his thoughts on the matter when he is here in person and actually in the worship space, and can get a quote from him as to what he would charge to paint these 6 iconostasis icons as a "Phase 4".

My thoughts, personally, are that after putting in nearly 200k of iconography and other improvements into our worship space over the past few years, we would be disappointed if we don't just get matching Dmitry iconography, with the matching palette and tints, for the main 6 icons on the iconostasis, and especially so because we can safely guess that it would not be that expensive. Dmitry is charging \$1850 for the icon of Saint Olga; these icons will be the same size, so we have a good idea as to the price being somewhere, I think it's safe to guess, not much more than \$12k total.

So all that being said, we couldn't make a motion last night because we didn't have a quorum after Matt had to leave early.

So by email, I would like to move that we table the discussion of the iconostasis icons until Paul and I (and whoever else on the PC who would like to be present) can discuss it in person with Dmitry in Spring 2024 when he comes to install Phase 3. Please reply all to let us know if you approve, and if at least four of us including me approve (assuming no one objects... and I'm assuming Tom will not reply while on his pilgrimage), then it will be recorded in the October 2023 minutes that we made this decision.

The above was approved by email.