

2023 St. Matthew Orthodox Church Annual Meeting

January 29, 2023

Opening prayer by Father John Thetford at 11:45am.

There is a quorum with 45 members in attendance.

Last year's minutes from the annual meeting were reviewed. Motion to approve by Paul Novak and seconded by Matt Tomac. Approved by all.

Report by Father John:

All of our work involves our Christian work. Today's Gospel was about Zacchaeus. He was exceptional in his repentance. Everything we have is because we are stewards of God. Zacchaeus showed we could be extreme with our donations. As a parish, we have looked at the needs of others and are working to meet them.

We have had a lot of progress and support this past year. We made a commitment to bolster our giving to Mission work. We are now supporting the McClanahan family in addition to our donations to both local and Orthodox sites.

This past year, there have been 12 people who were brought into our Church. We had one wedding. We had one funeral. There was one reader and another reader / Subdeacon tonsured. Deacon Spyridon has moved to the area and will be permanent to our church.

Paul made a motion to accept the above. Greg Kaseno seconded the motion. All in favor and approved.

Paul Novak's presentation:

Paul showed a slide show that included improvements around the church including the grounds and inside the building, a pilgrimage to the different monasteries in the area which was attended by 23 people, siding the church, a visit to Sister Bay for cleaning and a service, the Bishop's enthronement and a visit by him in November to celebrate St. Matthew dinner. There were improvements with a new cross and icons on the outside of the church. There is new outside signage. We had a fall festival with much success, painting and improved lighting in the narthex, a wedding and baptism. We now have outreach services in Waupaca with Deacon Spyridon. We had a Christmas concert with the young children.

There will be changes next year with new members of the Parish Council. Paul encourages anyone to attend the meeting if they are considering any of the council positions. Paul reviewed the positions. The counsel promotes a mentoring program with new members working with the present members in this transition. Anyone interested should contact Paul Novak. Paul is requesting to serve another term.

Pedro Sarsama has been accepted at St. Tikhon's for seminary in August, 2023. Therefore, his position on the council will be open and available.

Bonnie Zdrale suggested staggering the Parish Council terms in the future so that everyone does not come off the council at the same time.

At the January 2023 parish council meeting, a change was approved to build a wall in the entrance to 'hide' the bathroom. Paul was able to walk through the idea with slides. Discussion of options and suggestions were brought up to parishioners. The idea for some type of wall was well received by all. Tom Julian made a motion for the above change, seconded by Chuck Bayerl. One opposed. Majority approved.

Iconography: Six years ago, we started the first email to start our iconography planning. We have gone through two phases now. Paul Novak reached out to the iconographer regarding future plans.

Phase three would involve the following:

A large mural of the nativity with medallions – left upper wall.

Resurrection with prophets and saints - right upper wall.

Front wall space above the bell and up both sides of the second floor are other potential spaces. Per the iconographer, Dmitry Shkolnik, he would be available during the summer of 2024. Sometime this fall, we would have a 'kick-off' to start our fund raising campaign. Per Dmitry, he is not asking for a final payment until 01/2025. The estimate cost in total (including hotel and travel) is approximately \$50,000. We currently have \$8,000 in the iconography fund account. Paul made a motion to move forward to formally contact Dmitry to finish our project which was seconded by Doug Bisbee. Approved by all.

Frank Hurst brought up the subject of a chandelier in the nave. Paul had discussed this proposal with Dmitry who felt a chandelier would not be architecturally and/or aesthetically appealing in our church and would also be in line of site for the balcony.

Currently, the finances of the Mid-West diocese parishes are being reviewed as dues were not paid on a regular bases during COVID-19 shutdown.

We have a new hot water heater and will be installing a second dish water along with a second sump pump.

Tom Julian motioned to approve Paul's report, seconded by Matt Tomac. Approved by all.

Treasurer's report: Tom Julian

Tom discussed giving and tithing. We have needs other than money. We have many volunteers; readers, church cleaners, prosphora makers, altar boys, candle and oil maintenance, etc. We need to be sure we

have a common thought on things that need to be done. Giving time is just as important as giving money. These are the workings of the inner church.

See attached treasurer's reports.

We continue to have an outstanding balance for 2019-2020 Diocese assessment. We are otherwise caught up for 2021 and 2022. At this time, the amount due has not been determined by the Diocese.

\$3000 was borrowed from The Legacy Fund to pay the previous dues and will be fully returned in the next 1-2 months. \$6000 has been dedicated to Holy Transfiguration Chapel in Sister Bay.

The second long-term savings we have is the Iconography fund. This money was placed in a CD at 3.5% as it previously was at < 0.5%. This money will be available when we need to pay for the iconography project.

Total assets: \$15,215.00 as of 12/31/2022.

Budget:

We brought in > \$39,000 in donations for the siding project.

Our new budget is \$172,300 for 2023.

Tom has been able to add additional payments to the mortgage principal every month. He suggested that it would be helpful if everyone gave \$42 a month through the P42 contribution program to pay off the mortgage sooner.

We gave a bit over \$10,000 in donation funds which is about 5% of our budget.

A question from Jeff Zdrale to clarify donations from the Milwaukee benevolence of \$2400 was explained and discussed.

The budget mentions vestment and seminarian support which was clarified.

We increased the budget for flowers a bit.

Iconography expense for improvement on the inside of the church and alter was discussed. This is for miscellaneous icons and is not a part of the iconography project.

A question by Will Morgan regarding the Priest's salary was clarified. It was also mentioned that we increased Father's pension plan. We contribute 18% of his base salary to his pension.

Jeff Zdrale motioned to approve the 2023 budget, seconded by Charles Bayerl. Approved by all.

Election of parish council: there are no open positions at this time except for the Communications secretary position which will open in August. The parish council will be discussing staggering the cycles so not everyone exists at the same time.

Noah Becker had a question regarding election of council members which was clarified by Paul Novak. Sarah suggested that we ensure nominations from the general parish at the next annual meeting. There is an area in the agenda to address this issue and will continue to be addressed yearly. Sarah also reminded the council that if someone steps into a position because of an early withdrawal, they are finishing that term – not starting a new one.

Dioceses assembly will be this summer in Chicago – maybe around October. Father asked Paul to be the parish representative. Jeff Zdrale commented that anyone can attend the Diocese assembly program. Father made a motion to nominate Paul Novak as the representative, seconded by Charles Bayerl and agree by all. If Paul Novak is unable to attend, Matt Tomac will attend in his place.

Matt Tomac asked for more members to join the cleaning team.

We will be updating the directory for 2023. Linda Bisbee will be working on this update.

We are working on placing icons on the royal doors. We would like to replace the icon of St. Nicholas on the iconostasis with an icon of St. Matthew. That business that wrote these icons may be out of business. Paul will look further into this.

Another project is to paint the stairway leading to upstairs.

Jeff Zdrale asked if we can look at adding a second cross on the roof of the church. Paul Novak also mentioned a possible cupola. These will be discussed at parish council

There was a recommendation to consider purchasing an AED for the church. This will be discussed at parish council.

Jeff Zdrale suggested purchasing candle protectors during the procession at Holy Week. We are looking at purchasing \$125 worth of candle protectors. We currently have a donation for \$50. We are looking for donations.

No questions from the ZOOM viewers.

Paul made a motion for adjournment, seconded by Greg Kaseno. Two opposed. Majority approved.

Closing prayer at 1:36 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine Gavaras

