



## **St Matthew Orthodox Church Parish Council Meeting**

Meeting: January 13, 2026

Zoom meeting called order at 6:00 pm

### **Opening prayer was given by Father John**

Council members attending: Father John Thetford - rector

Paul Novak – president

Matt Tomac - vice president

Tom Julian – treasurer

Vera Limberopoulos - recording secretary

Noah Becker – corresponding secretary

guest: Danny Panella

Paul made a motion to approve the November 11<sup>th</sup> and December 9<sup>th</sup> council meeting minutes. Approved by all.

### **Priest's report – Father John**

-We continue to get new people. Our Door Keeping Ministry and greeting seem to be going well.

-The February liturgical schedule has been sent out.

-Waupaca services have been scheduled. We will be renting a conference room at the Ramada Inn which will be paid for on a month-by-month basis. We have enough contributions from the chapel to cover that. We'll see how January and February go and then take it from there.

-This Sunday after church, Father will be leaving for trip to St Paul's Monastery. The monastery is in the process of joining our diocese. A group of twelve will be going.

-There will be a couple of baptisms and receptions coming up as announced.

-Jennifer Kribbs had inquired if some of the women could meet informally at the church. Father approved so they will have their first meeting in Founders Hall on Thursday, January 29<sup>th</sup> in the afternoon.

-St John's meals will be on January 27<sup>th</sup> and February 14<sup>th</sup>. Father will continue to coordinate with Melissa A and try to get others involved. Fr John will also reach out to Will T to assist in getting volunteers. We had over \$1,000 that was donated towards the December meal. The meal cost about \$250, so we have some extra funds in the ministry fund.



-March 22<sup>nd</sup>, we will have a guest speaker from St John's Shelter come and give a presentation after liturgy, at around 11:15.

- Saturday, March 28<sup>th</sup> we will receive approximately 20 people into the church, families with kids. On April 4<sup>th</sup> we will receive an additional 7 – 8 adults into the church.

- Our spring retreat will be May 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. Mother Seraphima from Transfiguration Monastery, PA will be this year's speaker. We will cover the flight expense from Pittsburg to Green Bay and her lodging on May 8<sup>th</sup>. For her return trip, we will drive her to Milwaukee on May 9<sup>th</sup> where she will be visiting with family while in the Midwest. Also, we will make a monetary donation to the monastery thanking her for coming. Also, she is an excellent choir director so she will be able to share input for the choir.

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#### **President's report: Paul**

-The church gardener requested that the trees on the upper back of the property be trimmed and thinned. Paul received a quote from the person that previously had worked on the trees. The quote for work on seven trees is \$1100 for trimming and removal of wood. **Paul made a motion to have the trees trimmed with a cost not to exceed \$1100. Approved by all.**

#### **Vice-president's report: Matt**

-Matt discussed the flickering lights with Quinn (one of our in-house electricians) who believes the issue is the dimmer switch needing replacing. We might need to rent a ladder for the 30-foot ceiling to access one of the lights.

-Tom requested that Matt arrange a lead person and a group of people to paint the outer north wall this spring (April/May). Matt will bring it up at the annual meeting.

#### **Treasure report: Tom**

-The income for 2025 was \$257,259. We had budgeted \$204,900. Our out of pocket was \$298,501. Our actual expenses were \$237,000. We exceeded our expenses by \$20,000.

-2026 budgeted income is \$277,000. This includes the expense for the kitchen remodel (at \$30,000). Expenses budgeted at \$242,000. There was an increase in housing. Father's 3% COLA (tax exempt) went into housing.



-The refinance on the mortgage is coming due. Our goal is to pay \$2,500 a month towards the mortgage. In 2025, we paid \$2,187 a month towards the mortgage. This is a feasible goal.

-We increased our ministries budget. We had previously not done a COLA increase for ministries. Our total giving to ministries and benevolence will be approximately \$16,000 for 2026. We currently have about \$6,000 in that budget fund.

-The seminarian budget currently has no outflow. We were able to give Pedro tuition plus \$1,000 for his seminary graduation.

-The St Macrina specified tithing has been set aside, currently at \$6,000. Going forward, we can give our members the additional option having funds earmarked for St Macrina Chapel. Father or Tom could reach out to members regarding this. St Macrina Chapel services will now be held at the Ramada with rent \$500 a month. They are trying to negotiate possibly storing some items there while using their facilities.

-We're still finding our balance, improving our temple and increasing our outreach.

**Paul made a motion to accept the 2026 budget as has been sent to us and discussed, and to then be presented to the congregation at the annual meeting. Passed unanimously.** (see budget attachment)

(Matt exited the meeting.)

#### **New business:**

-Annual meeting: Father John and Paul reviewed our parish records and found that we have 127 members. Criteria for being a member in good standing (for voting): over 18 years old, make contributions to the church, and regularly attend services. The quorum for the meeting is 64 (for more than 50%). It was suggested that we utilize the teenagers as babysitters to help with the younger kids, during the meeting. They could be in Founders Hall while the meeting is in Herrick Hall. Father will discuss it with them and their parents.

-Remaining projects / Kitchen remodel: The people that have been doing the shelter meals have asked about kitchen improvements. Paul reached out to our contractor (that did the closet remodel) about a possible kitchen renovation, asking him to come and look and give us a bid. Paul made a motion to solicit bids for a kitchen remodel. Approved by all (including verbal approval by Matt who had exited the meeting).

The contractor replied to Paul earlier tonight with a bid not to exceed \$28,000 for the first option. The second bid option was \$34,000. Paul will bring the kitchen remodel up at the annual meeting. Two funding options: raise the earmarked funds or roll the expense into the mortgage refinance. Tom stated it would be easier if we could raise the funds. We currently have \$10,000 on hand and \$7,500 in commitments towards the project. We would only need to raise \$13,000. The improvements would include new cabinets, more counter space, a large commercial sink, better electrical, and a new stove with possibly a warming oven. This proposal included an



electrical allowance of \$2,500 for relocating electrical work. This portion could be done by our member electricians, reducing the expense. It was also suggested that the lighting was increased. Also, it would be in the existing footprint. Father agreed to the remodel but not to refinancing the project, considering it is not a need but something that we want. He agreed that we should raise earmarked funds.

**Paul made a motion to approve researching the kitchen renovation for 2026. He will bring it up at the annual meeting. The pre-approved bid is not to exceed \$32,000. The motion was approved unanimously, including an absent yes from Matt.**

-Paul spoke to Dmitry. He is putting our icons on the boards this week. Then he will stain the backs and ship them to Paul. He will call when it is complete.

-AED: Noah stated that it has been more complicated than expected. He found a grant that we might qualify for. The cost is approximately \$1,000. He will have more information for our March meeting.

-As of this point, we do not have any additional people running for council.

-David N will put a small system in Herrick Hall for the annual meeting. Also, Father will be using a lapel microphone during sermons.

-The floor in the nave will be installed Thursday and Friday this week.

Paul made a motion to adjourn the meeting, approved by all.

Father John gave the closing prayer.

The meeting adjourned at 7:09.



**addendum 2.3.26: credit card approval**

email from Paul Novak to parish council members:

Good day,

Danny and I are working with our bank, Fox Community Credit Union, on getting things switched over so Danny can have access to online banking, our accounts etc.

One of things that was discussed with the bank was the opportunity to get Father and myself a Church credit card. This will make things a lot easier for Father when he makes smaller purchases for Church school Supplies, office supplies, Church calendars, travel expenses etc. He and I would still need to have PC approval or least approval from the Treasury and President or Vice President to make larger purchases. Having Father and the President have a credit card also removes the practice of putting purchases on our personal credit card and then getting reimbursed at a later date which is problematic for our Treasury.

**I am then asking for your approval on the following:**

- 1. Allowing the President to sign up for these two cards.**
- 2. Cards would be in the name of Father John and myself.**
- 3. Each card would have a limit of \$5,000.**

Let me know if you have any questions,  
Paul

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**Paul Novak made a motion to allow the parish council president (currently Paul Novak) and Father John to sign up for two credit cards for church expenses, each with a limit of \$5,000. Approved by all council members unanimously via email on February 7, 2026.**

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To clarify, it stands that all purchases more than \$350 need parish council approval.

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