

St. John of Damascus Orthodox Mission  
12989 CR 1113  
Tyler, Texas 75709

February 10, 2019

### **2019 Annual Parish Meeting**

The annual parish meeting was opened with a prayer by Fr. David Bozeman.

Fr. David Bozeman called the meeting to order and Secretary Terry Cowan certified that a Quorum was present.

Copies of the minutes from the 2018 Annual Meeting. Nasi Kombos made a motion and Theophan Alvarez seconded that the minutes be accepted and they were approved by voice vote.

Fr. David began by reading a poem by Gerard Manley Hopkins (attached). He noted that we had undergone a major transition and that it was a pleasure to serve here. He thanked the Parish Council, the church school teachers, our choir leaders, the readers Subdeacon Theophan and others. He noted that there had been 7 baptisms, 4 chrismations. We have 3 catechumens and also some other inquirers. We have in excess of 50 adult members in good standing, plus some others who have not turned in their forms.

Fr. David spoke of his objectives this year. He wants to go slowly, using this as a time of exploration of the parish, to determine our needs. He wants to focus on education: children, teenagers and adults. He noted that one of our challenges is due to our widespread parish members, then everything in terms of education needs to happen on Sunday. Fr. David noted that he wanted to build community as much as possible.

Fr. David spoke of the money that had been donated for our iconostasis and iconography. He plans to compile a dossier of iconographers who will prepare proposals for the iconography for the entire church. This will be an ongoing process during 2019 with plans for a decision to be made by the end of the year, and perhaps the installation of the iconostasis by that time as well.

Fr. David spoke of the need to proceed with the fenced play around for the very small children, but its location must be in conjunction with the location of the eventual location of the hall.

Other items include a weekly bulletin, an online giving app that will be linked on our revamped website, and obtain bells to note the beginning of services.

Council President Jason Milliken reported on the transition, saying that we could not have asked for a smoother transition or a better situation. He noted the continued progress on the grounds, and specifically commended Bill Billington for initiating so much of the work.

Fr. David spoke of the missions, noting that Longview was further along than Nacogdoches at present. He and Fr. Jason Foster will split their time between the missions at present.

Fr. David announced that he was asking the current Parish Council to stay in place for one more year, to ease with the transition. Next year we will begin to rotate members according to OCA practices. Fr. David put forward Lillya Longar to come onto the council to replace Nasi

Kombos. Fr. David noted that she brings deep Orthodox experience. Theophan Alvarez made the motion and Colton Carney seconded and she was elected by voice vote.

Treasurer Xenia Durham gave the Financial Report and the budget for the coming year (attached). She noted that the budget was tight, and that while pledges fell short, they were more than made up for by other giving. She noted the gifts to special project, the money in our discretionary fund, and encouraged the giving of gifts in memorium. Xenia noted that a \$7,000 “leap of faith” was included in the upcoming budget, and that Fr. David had worked with the DOS to change our 25% extra tithes to a flat \$2,500 per month.

It was noted that Nasi Kombos will be selling grounds-keeping equipment to the church. Fr. David also noted the need to support our seminarians and suggested Giving Tuesday in November.

Jason Milliken noted that we were proceeding with getting the cemetery in shape.

Fr. David thanked Xenia for her excellent work in maintaining our financial records. Summer Richards made a motion and Ross Flowers seconded and the budget was approved by voice vote.

Fr. David noted that we needed to elect a lay delegate and alternate to the annual assembly for the diocese on July 22 through 26 in Port St. Lucy, Florida. Jason Milliken ??? was elected our delegate and Philip Letzo our alternate.

Nasi Kombos noted our new office building and thanked Michael Williams for providing that. He noted the excellent construction work in the project.

Harvey Durham made a motion that we adjourn and Zac Carnes seconded.

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Terry Cowan, Secretary