

## THE WORSHIPPING ASSEMBLY

Orthodox Church Services, by their very design and structure, involve three “performing entities” — the clergy (their petitions, *ekphrases*, and occasionally, chanting certain hymns); the choirs and chanters (those “set aside” because of their special talents and abilities, and degree of preparation to sing certain hymns); and the people (*laos, liudie*), who respond on, well, responses, refrains, and other common, oft-repeated elements of the services. Together, these three constitute the “worshipping assembly,” which also lifts its collective voice at appropriate moments (such as the Creed, the Lord’s Prayer). It seems that when the proper relationships among these three groups are observed (as seems to be suggested by a careful reading of the service books and musical books), all the “requirements and desires” — doxological, aesthetic and didactic — of Orthodox worship are fulfilled, including the pronouncements of various councils, etc. There is a time to sing, and a time to listen; a time for complexity, and a time for simplicity, a time for “high vocal/choral art” and a time for “lowest-common-denominator” vocal utterance.

The other fact is, of course, that at various times and in various places, due to a variety of complex, real-life circumstances, the above “triad” has been skewed in a number of ways — choir sings everything, congregation sings everything, in places, even, the clergy sing everything or nearly everything — resulting in the not surprising con-

clusion on the part of some individuals that “this is the way it is and has always been.” The historical record, through the efforts of scholarship (and common sense) tells us otherwise. The true challenge of an Orthodox church musician’s work “on the ground,” in any given parish, is to discern the ethos of a particular community and to work slowly and carefully with the clergy and the community towards achieving a mode of public worship that edifies, uplifts, and evangelizes both the regular parishioners and those who might happen to wander in from the outside. This, my friends, is a subtle, pastoral process, and it is not an easy task. Sometimes it succeeds, often it does not, again, for a whole host of reasons.

But even the lack of success in a particular time and place does not alter the reality, that the Orthodox liturgy (and by this I mean all the various offices as well as the Divine Liturgy) stands before us, designed by wise church fathers acting under the guidance of the Holy Spirit as a perfect, harmonious expression of the common worship (common labor) of the community of believers. We should, it seems, do our best to discover those dimensions that our particular, perhaps limited experience has hidden from us, and strive to implement them as best as we can in the time and place where God has put us to serve. —*Dr. Vladimir Morosan, from an internet discussion, used with permission.*

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## Seek God, and your soul shall live

Where does spiritual dryness come from? A person does everything he is supposed to do—he goes to confession, recounts all of those things that he knows are called sins, reads the prayer rule, approaches the chalice; and the further he goes, the more this seems to be formalism, a mechanical action of “reading,” “standing through the service,” and “telling something at confession.” What should he do? In Holy Scripture it is stated very expressly how to revive the soul, how to make the soul young and alive again. *Seek God, and your soul shall live* (Ps. 68:32). *Seek God*, no matter what! Stubbornly and persistently. Then the promise of the Lord Jesus Christ will be fulfilled: *Seek, and ye shall find* (Mt. 7:7; Lk. 11:9). But if the search for God, the thirst for God, the desire to attain Him disappears, this is cause for very serious alarm. You have to labor and use any means to restore this desire in your soul. Without it, nothing good can come. Or, you may have to wait, as the parched earth waits for rain, for trials that shake up the soul, sickness, serious wounds, and temptations. As Fr. John (Krestiankin) said, in our days, strong Christians are saved in the world, while weak ones are saved in monasteries. When you confess parishioners or talk with them, you see what amazing *podvizhniks* (ascetical laborers) there are among the laity, and we who call ourselves monks should learn from them. I remember once during the mid 1980’s, I was walking with Fr. John (Krestiankin) in the Pskov-Caves Monastery. Suddenly, an agitated young man ran up, “pale, with a heated gaze,” and began complaining loudly, “Batiushka, Moscow is such a disgusting city, a new Babylon! People are godless and terrifying!” Then Fr. John covered the man’s mouth with his hand and said sternly, “What are you saying? In Moscow, forty Divine Liturgies are served every day, in forty churches! There are such amazing *podvizhniks* living unknown to the world, somewhere on the

## INFORMATION

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Our Parish Secretary—Fr. John Ramos—may be reached at the Church office Mon., Tues. and Wed., 9 AM to Noon, at 584-9491. Fr. Lawrence Margitich may be reached at the Parish office phone, or at [Lmargitich@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Lmargitich@sbcglobal.net). He is available Tuesday–Saturday, from noon onwards each day.

### Parish Contacts

Fr. Michael Margitich, Pastor Emeritus	473-0314
Fr. John Schettig, Assistant Pastor	318-1559
Fr. John Ramos, Attached	570-9849
Serge Anderson, Parish Council Warden	291-7452
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eighth floor of a twelve-story block building! True saints, such as you cannot even imagine.” I was amazed at the time, because I thought that *podvizhniks* only lived in distant monasteries, somewhere on Solovki or in Egypt. But now—and this is the truth—I myself see remarkable *podvizhniks*, simple laypeople, who teach and save me by humbling me, and showing me how it is possible to live in our time in a truly ascetic way, as Christians. —*conversation with Archimandrite Tikhon, Abbot of the Sretensky Monastery, in Moscow*

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## PARISH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

1. December 19, 2013. *Present:* Fr. Lawrence, Serge Anderson, Petar Griovski, Tom Pellizzer, Ole Kern, David Winterton, George Barsi, Lisa Moroz. *Absent:* Debbie Buse, Vipassana Esbjorn-Hargens, Bonnie Alexander, Kristine Tellefsen.
2. Review of November Minutes: Accepted, no corrections or changes
3. Rector Report: (a) Fr. Lawrence briefly reported on the Diocesan Council Meeting he attended last week. (b) Fr. Lawrence asked David Winterton to greet the Bishop before the Liturgy on January 2nd, St. Seraphim Day. (c) Fresco update: When the final angel (12th) is completed, then painting of the Prophets will begin. Hoping to finish everything, including decorative rings and inside the windows, in June. (d) Our thanks to Vladimir Baer for arranging the gutters on the Hall to be cleaned. (e) Redwood Awning is making a new cover for the baptismal font. (f) Fr. Lawrence expressed his gratitude to the Parish Council members for their service to the parish during the last year,

and for helping grow the membership spiritually and in number.

4. Treasurer’s Report: (a) The parish spent \$19,843.65 more than taken in this month. \$16,512 was spent on frescoes and rental of the scaffold. (b) Signature cards on the checking account need to be updated. The Parish Council officially designates and approves the following to co-sign checks: David Winterton, Tom Pellizzer, Serge Anderson, and Deacon Nicholas Carr. (c) Petar Griovski will retire as of February 1 and David Winterton is blessed and appointed to take over the position of Treasurer. (d) The phone bill for the parish office is too high (\$189/mo.). Bobbi Griovski, who volunteers on Fridays in the office, will investigate. (e) there was discussion on checks written in November, and possible duplicates. (f) Fr. Lawrence, David Winterton and Fr. John Ramos, who is the Parish Secretary, will review the weekly counting procedures. (g) Fr. Lawrence asked David W. to contact George Staykow and Lydia Nicholson to begin work on the yearly audit, in preparation for the Annual Meeting, Feb. 2).
5. Grounds and Maintenance: (a) Tom Pellizzer and Serge Anderson will look into options for a permanent heater in the Sunday school room. (b) Serge Anderson and Fr. Lawrence will discuss the proposed music and vestment storage systems so Serge can begin work on them in January. (c) Discussion on new doors for St. Seraphim. First bid was for \$12,000. Bidding will continue.
6. New Business: (a) Parish Council Nominations need to be made. Petar will investigate. (b) Project Mexico was discussed. George Barsi volunteered to help with organization. Fundraising for transport and room/board was discussed. Serge offered to help with a fund-raising dinner.
7. Old Business: (a) Property insurance, including the contents of all buildings, is adequate. We have adequate photo documentation of all contents. (b) Catholic Charities update—Denise and Tom Pellizzer are working with Fr. Lawrence to provide for the room at the family shelter. (c) Discussion on budget issues.
8. Closing Prayer, and reminder of upcoming meetings: January 9, Master Plan Meeting; January 16, Budget Meeting, and February 2, Annual Meeting.

## EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **CONGRATULATIONS:** Many Years to the Glanville Family. Elias Glanville, infant son of Evan and Marina, will be baptized on Sunday, December 29, at 9 AM.
- **SAINT SERAPHIM DAY, JAN. 2:** We celebrate the second of our Annual Parish Feast Days on January 2, the repose of St. Seraphim. Services: Vespers and Akathist, January 1 at 5 PM; Liturgy with His Eminence, Archbishop Benjamin, Jan. 2, at 9:30 AM followed by a festal meal.
- **IN PREPARATION FOR THEOPHANY:** We will have the Service of the Royal Hours at 9 AM, Friday, January 3. On Sunday there will be a blessing of Holy Water immediately after the Divine Liturgy. Then on Monday, January 6, Matins followed by Liturgy and Water Blessing for this Great Feast of the Lord's Baptism in the Jordan, and the revelation of the Holy Trinity.
- **PANIKHIDA:** Saturday, January 4, at 4:30 PM, in memory of Barbara McMillian and Natalie Hansen.
- **THE KAZAN SKETE** will celebrate Old Calendar Nativity, on January 7, at 9:30 AM. All are invited.
- **HOUSE BLESSINGS:** Father Lawrence will be doing House Blessings on and after Theophany (January 6). Please call to schedule.
- **TWO WEDDINGS:** All are invited to the Holy Mystery of Marriage for Eleni and Carl, Sunday, January 12 at 2 PM; and for Xenia and Paul, Sunday, January 26 at 3 PM.
- **THE PARISH ANNUAL MEETING** will be held on Sunday, February 2, after the Divine Liturgy.
- **RETIREMENT DINNER:** Petar Griovski, who has faithfully served as Parish Treasurer for decades, will be retiring on the date of the Annual Meeting on February 2. In honor of Petar Griovski's service to the Church, there will be a dinner on Saturday, February 1, immediately after Great Vespers. More info to follow.
- **FEAST OF THE MEETING OF THE LORD:** February 2. On Saturday, February 1, we will serve Great Vespers in honor of the Feast of the "Meeting of the Lord in the Temple" and on Sunday morning, Matins for the Feast, at 9:30 AM, followed by the Divine Liturgy.
- **POETRY AND MUSIC EVENING:** Friday, February 14, at 7 PM. More info to follow!
- **NEEDS AROUND THE PARISH:** Vineyard needs mowing. Roof of Protection church needs clearing, along with the gutters; help with maintaining garden drip system lines; help in cleaning both Churches on a regular basis. An additional Usher is needed for Sunday Liturgy, to serve once a month. Call Fr. Lawrence if you can help.
- **PROPHETS NOT YET COMMISSIONED:** Malachai, Habbakuk, Jonah, Jeremiah and Joel (Prophet Moses and Zephaniah just commissioned!). \$4,000 each. The monks are away right now, since we have our feasts of Nativity, St. Seraphim and Theophany. Then they will be celebrating the same feasts on the Old Calendar. We expect painting to continue after Jan. 20.
- **MASTER PLANNING:** The Parish Council has set the date of Thursday, January 9, 2014, to begin looking at the Parish Master Plan. The Master Plan includes buildings, gardens, walkways, the parking lots, Parish programs and events. If you would like to discuss and work with others on multi-level planning for our Parish, please join us on January 9 at 7 PM for a one and a half hour discussion. Sean Esbjorn-Hargens, who leads discussions of this sort at the professional level, will be our moderator. We hope to have some initial ideas to present to the Parish Annual Meeting, on Sunday, February 2, 2014.
- **PLEDGE BOOKS** are here: if you are interested in having a book of pledge/offering envelopes for each week of the year, see Petar Griovski. The books are a convenient way to remember to bring your weekly offering to the Divine Liturgy.
- **PROSPHORA / COMMEMORATION BOOKS:** Those who would like their Commemoration booklets to be sent to the Altar each Sunday, please arrange with whoever is working at the Candle Desk.
- **CATECHISM:** There will be a class on Saturday, Jan. 11, at 3:30 PM in the Protection Church on Reading the Scripture. The next class will be on Saturday, Feb. 1, which is the beginning of the second "semester" of classes. Topic will be on Confession.
- **READING THE BIBLE IN ONE YEAR:** A new calendar of readings is being prepared for a starting date of Feb. 1. I invite all of you to join with me in reading, or re-reading, the entire Bible in one year. The Catechism on Saturday, Jan. 11 will touch on this topic. — Fr. Lawrence

# PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN MARY ORTHODOX CHURCH

## JANUARY 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<b>New Years Eve</b>  • 5 PM, Great Vespers for St. Basil	<b>1 - St. Basil's Day</b> • 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy, Prayers for the New Year • 5 PM, Vespers/Akathist for St. Seraphim of Sarov	<b>2- St. Seraphim Day</b> • 9:30 AM, Greeting of Bishop and Hierarchial Liturgy, festal luncheon	<b>3 - Pre-Theophany</b> • 9 AM, Royal Hours of Theophany	<b>4</b> • 4:30, Pankhida for Barbara McMillian & Natalie Hansen • 5 PM, Great Vespers with the Forefeast Canon
<b>5 - Eve of Theophany</b> • 10 AM, Divine Liturgy and Blessing of Water <i>Ushers: Tom S. &amp; Alex S.</i> • Noon, Agape Meal	<b>6 - Theophany</b> • 8:30 AM, Festal Matins, Divine Liturgy and Blessing of Water	<b>7 - St. John the Baptist</b> • <i>At Kazan Skeete, Navidity, 9:30 AM</i>	<b>8</b> • 6 PM, Vespers	<b>9</b> • 7 PM, Master Planning Meeting	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> • 3:30 PM, Catechism, on <i>Reading the Bible</i> • 5 PM, Great Vespers
<b>12 - Martyr Tatiana/Sava of Serbia</b> • 10 AM, Liturgy <i>Ushers: Joe A. &amp; Tom S.</i> • 11:45 PM, Church School • Noon, Agape Meal • 3 PM, <i>Wedding of Eleni and Carl</i>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> • 6 PM, Vespers	<b>16</b> • Noon, Senior Fellowship Lunch	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> • 5 PM, Great Vespers
<b>19 - St. Mark of Ephesus</b> • 10 AM, Liturgy <i>Ushers: George B. &amp; Esther S.</i> • 11:45 PM, Church School • Noon, Agape Meal	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> • 9 AM, Divine Liturgy for Sts. Maximos the Confessor	<b>22</b> • 6 PM, Vespers	<b>23</b> • 6 PM, Vespers for St. Xenia • <b>7 PM, Parish Council Meeting</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> • 5 PM, Great Vespers
<b>26 - Sts. Xenophon and Mary</b> • 10 AM, Liturgy <i>Ushers: Joe. A. &amp; Sam C.</i> • 11:45 PM, Church School • Noon, Agape Meal • 2:30 PM, <i>Wedding of Xenia and Paul</i>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> • 6 PM, Vespers	<b>29</b> • 6 PM, Vespers	<b>30</b> • 8:30 AM, Matins and Liturgy for the Three Hierarchs	<b>31</b>	<b>February 1</b> • 3:30 PM, Catechism • 5 PM, Great Vespers for <i>Meeting of the Lord</i> • <b>6 PM, Retirement Dinner for Petar Griovski</b>

- HOUSE BLESSINGS: Please schedule with Fr. Lawrence and Fr. John Schettig
- DINNER FOR PETAR GRIOVSKI: Feb. 1, after Vespers. Info coming
- ANNUAL MEETING: Sunday, February 2 immediately following the Divine Liturgy