

2012 Carolinas Deanery Report

St. John of the Ladder Orthodox Church, Piedmont (Greenville), SC

Archpriest Marcus C Burch, Rector

Priest Thaddaeus J Werner, Assistant Priest

Average Divine Liturgy attendance: 130

Membership: 90 adults

High Sunday Attendance: 150

Low Sunday Attendance: 100

Average Great Vespers attendance: 25

St John of the Ladder has a weekly schedule of Wednesday Daily Vespers, Saturday Great Vespers, and Sunday Divine Liturgy. We also celebrate some of the “major” saints days and all of the major feasts with Vigil and Liturgy. In addition we celebrate a full Lenten and Holy Week. Fr Marcus has been traveling more as he is serving as the Chancellor of the DOS, and Fr Thaddaeus had been serving once a month at St Nicholas Mission in Fayetteville, NC, which is now being turned over to be served by Fr Samuel Gantt.

Fr Marcus continues to serve the Furman OCF and Fr Thaddaeus the Clemson OCF.

We presently have 4 Catechumens and several inquirers, and are having biweekly classes with them at this time.

As of May 31st, we paid off our mortgage on the Roper Mountain Road Ext property. We took out a mortgage of \$299,000 on Feb 7th of 2011. We currently have contracted with an architect to design a new building for 250 and are moving forward toward breaking ground.

We hosted Fr Thomas Hopko who lectured on Human Sexuality at Furman University this past late winter, and Fr John Behr for the Sunday of Orthodoxy, which was celebrated with the local Greek and Antiochian parishes. Among other missionary endeavors we continue to support the work of OCMC Missionaries Floyd and Ancutsa Frantz whom the parish hosted in October of 2012. Fr Marcus also visited their programs in Cluj, in February of this year.

Fr Thaddaeus spoke at the SC Governor’s School for Arts and Humanities at the Annual World Religions Symposium on the topic of iconography.

Holy Apostles Orthodox Church, W. Columbia, SC

Archpriest Thomas Moore, Rector

Over the last 15 years we have shown continuous growth until the last two. We have hit a "numbers" plateau that we can't seem to break through. Our city is very transient; Military base, college students, etc., and although we have new people coming all the time (three catechumens currently) it seems just as many leave to join OCA parishes in other towns. We currently have 81 members, but that really does not reflect the 75 to 100 attendees currently at a Sunday liturgy or those who have moved away. Vespers and weekday liturgies as always are attended by the faithful few, but we continue to keep a full cycle with vigils on major feasts, Lent and Holy week. I continue to lecture at USC Columbia and Aiken, as well as Columbia International University and hold regular scripture and reading groups at the Church. We have had several outreach speakers ranging from Fr. John Behr to Dr. Catherine Howard (“Christian themes in Harry Potter”). We continue to be focused on charity locally (Food Banks, Deanery support, and

Cooperative Ministry) and internationally (IOCC, OCMC, SAMP) and specifically supporting and visiting Floyd and Ancutsa Frantz in Romania through our Annual St. Nicholas Festival and monthly special appeals. We also have recently started a biweekly men's group. We continue to improve our facility adding a Narthex, adult baptismal font, and new Iconography in the altar this past year. We are currently in a building fund drive to build a large bell tower to connect our two buildings and have more "curb appeal". We are making our future hall building available for local organizations until we can afford to refurbish it. Currently we host NA and AA meetings, a large group of Irish dancers, and we are considering an ESL outreach. Dennis Poole has finished the Diaconal Training program and is awaiting Synodal approval for ordination. We continue to be blessed by the Military Chaplains visiting regularly from the Ft. Jackson training program. Fr. Timothy Yates and his family have just moved to Columbia to take a Chaplaincy internship for 2012-2013 at a local hospital. Not only can he help as second priest, but I am hoping his newly trained SVS eyes will see some areas in which we can improve. We have a great Parish Council and we enjoy our meetings and work together.

St. Timothy Orthodox Church, Toccoa, Ga

Archpriest Jacob Lee Kulp. Rector

Average Divine Liturgy attendance: 38

Membership: 24 adults (up from 23)

High Sunday Attendance: 46

Low Sunday Attendance: 15

Average G.Vesp attendance: 17

Pascha attendance: 48

Highlights of Spring 2011 – Spring 2012

- * Concluded our contributions to support our former parishioner, Fr. James Bozeman, now graduated from St. Vladimir's and assigned to the DOS.
- * Completed a standing kiot of St. Herman of Alaska with relics of Saints Herman, Innocent, Tikhon, and Seraphim.
- * Continued to regularly host students visiting from Toccoa Falls College.
- * Presented a check for approx. \$800 from alms collected during Great Lent and Holy Week to Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry (over and above our local alms box fund). Currently designating alms collection to the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians United to Serve
- * Fr. Jacob recognized and at a meet-&-greet held by the Stephens County Chamber of Commerce as a valued senior member of Toccoa clergy.
- * Designated December 2012 as our deadline to complete a new entrance-way to the church able to support a set of bells & emphasize Orthodox identity.
- * Running a full-page add in special local newspaper July supplement: "Who's Who: Getting to know the Churches in Toccoa."

Holy Transfiguration, Raleigh, NC

Priest Edward Rommen, Rector

Our Sunday attendance continues to grow with an average of around 90. Membership also shows a slow but steady increase. So after just a few years we are on the verge of outgrowing our facilities and have initiated discussions about possible expansion, move and rebuild, or start a daughter parish. New initiatives this year included supporting an OCMC missionary, the IOCC Race to Respond, a very successful class for teenagers, and remodeling our sanctuary. In addition to the work at the Church I continue to teach at Duke Divinity School.

Holy Resurrection Orthodox Mission, Augusta, GA

Priest Robert Royer, Priest in Charge

Statistics (+/- from previous year's statistics):

1. Members: 41 (+5)
2. Average Sunday Attendance: 38 [21 children] (-5)
3. Baptisms: 2 (+1)
4. Chrismations: 2 (+1)
5. Enrolled catechumens: 0 (same)
6. Mariages: 1 (same)
7. Deaths: 0 (same)

Synopsis:

The 2011-2012 ecclesiastical year continued to be a period of growth for Holy Resurrection Mission. We gained two new infant members through baptism and chrismation. People continue to be attached to the parish by way of relocation, word-of-mouth, and internet access. One significant draw back for our community is the relocation of several of our members by way of military reassignment. This reassignment occurs on a tri-annual basis and this summer HROM will lose 9 persons through this relocation process as well as another 7 who will be relocating for economic and job related issues.

This same time period was important financially for HROM because it continues to be the beneficiary, for the second of three possible years, of the OCA Mission Planting Grant for 2012 and intends to apply for continuation of this grant for the 2013 calendar year, its final possible year of participation.

A normal liturgical schedule of Saturday evening Great Vespers, Sunday morning Orthros and Divine Liturgy, as well as festal celebrations, continues to provide the necessary liturgical basis for other parish ministry and growth. Along with the liturgical schedule, we continue adult parish education, on a once per month format. We are continuing to study *In the Spirit of Happiness* by The Monks of New Skete. The study was put on hold for the Lenten and Paschal periods.

All events continue to be listed and announced on the parish website, www.holyresurrectionmission.org.

St Nicholas Mission, Fayetteville, NC.

Priest Thaddaeus J. Werner, Assistant Priest, St John of the Ladder Orthodox Church coordinating.

Priest Samuel Gantt (retired) attached to Holy Apostles in Columbia, serving on weekends.

Our attendance for the newly started Bible Study rose from an average 4 per class to 9 per class. With that our attendance for Great Vespers has also doubled. Our giving and Sunday morning attendance have stabilized and we hit a new monthly average of 25 people per Sunday, which includes the Sundays when we have a readers service which is approximately 80% of the time. This year we had one funeral and 2 baptisms/Chrismations. We have entered into negotiations to purchase the lot next door as this would allow us to double the size of our facilities. We have also created a Facebook page for the church and are using it to share information about the faith to those we are connected to in the area. It is a great joy for the community to welcome Fr Samuel Gantt, who recently retired to our area, but is willing to conduct weekly Vespers and Liturgy. It is our hope that under his care the mission will continue on its trajectory of growth becoming a vital parish of the DOS serving the Fayetteville area.

Nativity of the Holy Virgin, Charlotte, NC

Priest William Mills, Rector

1. Our parish sponsors many outreach ministries which we continue to maintain. This Summer we will once again have our Annual Back to School Back-pack project where families purchase backpacks and fill them with various school supplies such as paper, pencils, markers, rulers, and so forth. They are then blessed in August and then distributed to the local school system. We also continue to sponsor our Loaves and Fishes food ministry and our monthly meal at the mission where we serve a hot lunch for about 100 men. We also participate in the Lenten OCMC Coin collection and collect canned goods for the Loaves and Fishes food bank. Throughout the year we also have other ministries such as our Project Linus Program where we make blankets for children.
2. Our parish has two missionaries with the first even OCMC Mongolia Mission trip. They are spending three weeks in Ulanbatar, the capital of Mongolia helping with evangelism and outreach.
3. Currently we have four catechumens and recently installed new catechumens. We had two baptisms this year as well.
4. We plan to have the coffee area painted as well as re-paint the parking lines and fill in the pothole in the parking lot, install new bulletin boards in the coffee area, re-paint the front porch, power-wash the side of the building, and plant new bushes around the Education building.
5. Due to the new Rock Hill Mission in SC as well as several families leaving for work or for personal reasons we currently have 54 adult members in addition to 20 or so children. However we continue to maintain a positive outlook and look forward to welcoming new families to the parish and having more catechumens. We struggle but the general parish outlook is positive as we continue the Lord's work.

6. Due to the recession which hit Charlotte very hard our budget is also down yet we continue to maintain paying our bills and sending in our tithe to the DOS as well as give to local charities.

Holy Cross Orthodox Mission, Greensboro/High Point/Winston-Salem, NC

Priest Christopher Foley, Priest in Charge

-We completed the three year OCA planting grant which means we are no longer being funded by any outside contributions. We passed a budget last year to make up for the income we were receiving from the OCA and we made up for this difference which is very encouraging as we continue to grow. This is our second year without any outside assistance and we are maintaining and meeting our budgetary goals.

-We have had a number of Orthodox families relocate to the area and join the church. We have continued to receive converts to Orthodoxy, Orthodox from other local parishes and have welcomed lapsed Orthodox back into the life of the church. To date (in the last 6 years) we have baptized/chrisdated 42 souls into the Church. We currently have 6 catechumens and 4 inquirers and are continuing our bi-monthly Inquirers and Catechumen classes.

-We continue to grow and our average attendance has increased from 80 on Sundays to well over 90. We average 20 at Great Vespers. We have around 90 adult members and 40 children.

-We give to our neighbors in need by supporting our Deanery Mission Fund, FOCUS North America, Open Door Ministry, and a seminarian family totaling \$2400. We have also disbursed over \$3500 in alms this year. This money has gone to help members and friends in our community who have had emergency needs for utilities, groceries, housing and other emergency expenditures.

-We continue preparing and serving a meal at a local outreach to the poor called Open Door Ministry. We have volunteered there for over 4 years, but this year began preparing the meal ourselves. The Holy Cross community has really been supportive of this endeavor both through volunteering and donating money towards this important outreach.

-The Sisterhood of the Holy Myrrhbearers continues to be a great source of fellowship and study, meeting monthly. Recently, the sisterhood has begun reaching out to those parishioners who, because of sickness, distance or job are no able to attend often by sending cards of encouragement.

-The men's group continues to meet monthly for fellowship and encouragement. We were also able to help some families out with renovation work and moving. We are trying different activities in different locations in order to allow everyone to be involved in the group.

-We continue to raise money for the building fund and bank it with the Diocesan Custodial Fund. We began 2011 with \$21,500 in the building fund and by June of this year we have \$37,000 in the fund. We continue to look at land and buildings within our target area and have been given a "soft" pre-approval with a local bank for 11% down on a \$500,000 - \$600,000 loan

with the diocesan managed debt program. We have recently asked Christ Presbyterian, whom we rent from, if they would be interested in selling us their property as they are currently in serious decline. They are considering it and will let us know. This would be great as they have a nice sized building and it sits on about 4 acres which would have a lot of room for growth and future development while allowing us to still have a building to use.

-We have been trying a new fundraiser this year which has allowed us to raise funds completely outside of the parish by working concessions at Greensboro Coliseum . We have had a good group of volunteers and as of June we have already brought in over \$4400 which is ear marked for outreach and the building fund. We also made \$1400 on a yard sale this year.

-We continue our weekly Sunday morning children's church school with a director and volunteer teachers. We are currently renting 2 classrooms at Christ Presbyterian to provide Christian education for children ages 4 through 16 (3 classes) for 45 minutes each week. This year we had 27 kids registered for Church school.

-We continue to have weekly Great Vespers and Divine Liturgy and serve Great Vespers with Litya and Liturgy for the 12 major feasts. We also had a weekly Presanctified Liturgy during Lent and daily services during Holy Week as well as pre-feast services for Nativity.

-We have many who help out from organizing reading, to setting up choir books, directing, serving, cleaning, teaching, volunteering for fund-raisers, and all of the many areas needed to continue the life of the parish. This year has seen a lot more participation in all of these areas.

-We continue our weekly Adult study group and Small Compline which has proved to be a source of discussion, encouragement and fellowship. We began with a book study and have continued with a study on the Orthodox understanding and interpretation of Scripture and a Bible study on the book of James.

Asheville Mission Station, Asheville, NC

Priest Christopher Foley, Priest in Charge

A strong core committed group (10-15 people) has been meeting regularly together for about six months. They meet twice weekly serving Typica, Daily Vespers, sharing a meal and doing a book study. They are currently meeting in a kung fu studio of one of the members. They have a great temporary set up with a beautiful iconostas. They have many frequent visitors and are planning on beginning a series of lay led inquirer's classes. Asheville, NC is a unique place and they have a heart for outreach as an urban inner city mission reaching out to those who are spiritually hungry and seeking God. They prepare and serve a meal once a month at a local feeding the poor ministry which has volunteers from all of the areas other Orthodox churches. Fr. Christopher Foley and Fr. Thomas Moore are working closely with them to help develop the mission there.

Rock Hill Mission; Rock Hill, SC

Priest Paul Coats, Priest in Charge

The mission now has the blessing of remaining in our rented facility without setting up and tearing down for each service. We have matted and framed some beautiful festal icons that were given us by the monastery of St. John in Hiram, Ohio. Our membership has grown and it is not uncommon to have over 30 people at the Divine Liturgy, and visitors are frequent. We have Vespers and Divine Liturgy and typically a Great Vespers with Litya on the eve of feasts. In addition, Fr. Paul is holding a weekly catechism class on the Orthodox Church and the Orthodox faith. Our community is growing in love and support for one another, and after prayerful consideration and discussion are in the process of suggesting a name for our mission to His Eminence and petitioning him for mission status. Our first parish council (mission council) has been established and has already moved to support a priest with a half-time salary and benefits package, when the opportunity arises.

St. George Mission Station, Edenton, North Carolina

Priest Andrew Davis, (attached Holy Transfiguration, Raleigh) serving monthly for Saturday Vespers & Sunday Liturgy

PROGRAM:

\$1,200 monthly budget with pledges from members & benefactors

all other Sundays the Typica, with a priest's or bishop's homily

Sunday-school class for children during homily at Typica

lunch served every Sunday after services

visits twelve Tuesdays Jan.–Apr. 2012 by Fr. John Cox for Vespers and classes in two series early-morning Typica on all Great Feasts

three lay readers each competent alone to lead services in the absence of a priest

Nativity eve Vigil with Grand Compline; Nativity Divine Liturgy

Lenten Great Canon 4 nights, Acathist Hymn 1 or 2 Saturdays

Holy Friday vespers and matins, Holy Saturday vesperal liturgy

occasional further mid-week services (patronal feast, vespers some Sun. afternoons, etc.)

participants steadily growing in Christ

weekly newsletter & articles, with 120 local households subscribing

sponsorship of 2 foreign student members for in-State college tuition

periodic visits from priests or seminarians, toward finding a first resident priest

STATISTICS:

usual Sunday attendance (without priest), 8 (5 adults & 3 children)

high Sunday attendance (Nov. 13 and May 6, both Div. Lit.), 15

low Sunday attendance (Nov. 27, March 11, April 22, May 20), 2

usual monthly Vespers attendance, with priest & wife, 9

Paschal attendance (2012), 11

local communicants, 5 adults & 3 children

beach (60 miles away) communicants, 2 collegians & 1 child

current catechumens, 1

baptisms in past 12 (or 8) months, 0

HIGHLIGHTS OF YEAR (8 MONTHS) OCTOBER 2011 THROUGH MAY 2012:

Oct., acquisition (by gift) of first pair of hanging vigil-lamps (for icon-screen)

Nov., completion of restoration (by gift) of nave & sanctuary paneled walls in 1902 church

Nov., installation of new Berber carpet (by gift) in classroom and hallway
Nov., installation (by gift) of brick masonry border surrounding entrance courtyard
Dec., acquisition (by gift) of the six icons for (the first time) the icon-screen
Dec., acquisition (by gift) of eleven more icons, for the nave & sanctuary and elsewhere
Dec., installation (by gift) of outdoor St. George icon shrine for entrance courtyard
Dec., hosting of hundreds of visitors during Town's 2-evening Christmas Candlelight Tour
Dec., acquisition (by gift) of an Ark for the Altar in the Sanctuary
Jan.–Feb., 7-week class on Creation, the Fall, & Redemption—a patristic study of Gen. 1–3
Mar.–Apr., 5-week class, likewise by Fr. John Cox, on Ancient Christian Spirituality
Feb.-Apr., achievement of some competence in singing vesperal stichera in multiple tones
May, acquisition (by gift) of large India Agra oriental rug to fit the temple

SHORT-TERM OBJECTIVES:

posters for local community-college campus
development otherwise of better evangelism
encouragement of theosis in congregation for better evangelism
scheduling of further midweek classes by Fr. John from Norfolk
attracting of more attendance to such midweek classes
scheduling of some music rehearsals
scheduling of some singing for local nursing & rest homes
a preparation table for the sanctuary

CONCERNS:

attracting of more attendance to services
developing of an increase in monthly pledge income
discernment of & fostering of suitable charitable work
near-term need for a resident priest
long-term aspiration for ownership of a building & grounds

Holy Ascension Orthodox Church, Mount Pleasant, South Carolina

Priest John Parker, Rector

Since the last Diocesan Assembly:

2 Baptisms	5 Chrismations
0 Weddings	1 Death
2 Catechumens at present	
Average Sunday attendance:	75+
Average Great Vespers attendance:	20-25
Average Wednesday Vespers attendance:	15

This year Holy Ascension celebrates her 10th Anniversary. We enjoyed four full days of festivities with the Leavetaking of Pascha and the feast of Holy Ascension with Metropolitan JONAH, Archbishop NIKON, Abbott Gerasim, Fr Marcus Burch, Fr Thomas Moore, local Orthodox Clergy and faithful from neighboring parishes, friends and benefactors of our own Holy Ascension. The year ending with Holy Ascension 2013 will be devoted to special anniversary efforts and a major effort to reduce our parish debt.

Here are some recent highlights:

Missions

- ❖ Monthly Support of Carolinas Deanery Missions fund
- ❖ Monthly support of OCMC Missionaries
 - -Floyd and Ancutsa Frantz (Romania)
 - -James Hargraves (Tanzania)
- ❖ Supported by prayer and finances Rachel Barber, a parishioner on this Summer's OCMC trip to Uganda.

Outreach

- ❖ Christmas focus on the Florence Crittenton Home, for single, teenaged, pregnant women who have decide to keep their babies and to learn and grow
- ❖ 3rd Annual Music and Arts Festival held, including dozens of artists and musicians from around our town and parish
- ❖ Hosted Russian Quintet—LYRA. Concert and reception for 100 visitors.
- ❖ 2-twelve step programs meet here weekly (AA and SA)
- ❖ Numerous “Talks on Tap” on various spiritual matters

Christian Education

- ❖ Study of 1 John led by Fr John Breck (series of 5 lectures/discussions)
- ❖ Parish Hosted Clergy Mid-winter conference with Fr Thomas Hopko and Dr Albert Rossi, including the ordination of Fr James Bozeman, who is now the pastor of St James Mission in Beaufort (which our parish has established).
- ❖ Our Deacon Mark and his Matushka Elizabeth, continue to travel and speak about their book, “A Christian Ending” about tradition Orthodox Christian Burial. We have begun to reach out in our own community in this way, as well.
- ❖ Stronger church school, with developing Middle/High School youth group
- ❖ Parish to sponsor a dozen youth with a 1/3 scholarship to Camp St Thekla

Ecumenical Work

- ❖ Hosted ACNA-OCA bilateral dialogue in January

Parish Beautification

- ❖ With a memorial gift, purchased and installed our beautiful choros, inspired by Byzantium exhibit's Munich Choros
- ❖ Re-do of parish gardens

Growth Areas

- ❖ Delegation
- ❖ Integration of new members into the active parish life
- ❖ Development of Sponsorship program
- ❖ Development of parish-wide ministries
- ❖ Development of Street-preaching/outreach
- ❖ Need to move into next level of parish life (our size is no longer ‘mission’, but our mentality, in many ways is still based on that size)

❖ Parish Council as spiritual, practical leaders development

St James Orthodox Mission, Beaufort, South Carolina

Fr. John Parker, mentoring.

Priest James Bozeman, Priest in Charge

The St James Mission, newly named for the group meeting in Beaufort, South Carolina, has a long, steady history. We are excited to report that officially in May 2012, the Mission was named, and blessed by His Eminence, Archbishop Nikon, to have its first local priest, the newly-graduated Fr James Bozeman. Fr James and his wife, Matushka Katherine, and their sons Alex and Gabriel, arrived in early June, and will commence full-steam-ahead in July 2012.

A small group has been meeting in Beaufort on and off for the past five or six years, often in monthly meetings with supper, a catechism, and some time for prayers. In earnest, following then Deacon James' internship in the Lowcountry, a concerted effort was made to put together a strong core group in this colonial Southern town, where no Orthodox Church has ever been.

Through the winter of 2011-2012, this group came together, headed ably by Gary Burgess (a parish council member at Holy Ascension in Mt Pleasant, SC, but resident of Beaufort) and by David Homyk and his wife, Laura (faithful of St Mary Magdalene Church in Rincon, GA). The mission group sang a street-concert in Beaufort's annual waterfront Christmas Illumination.

By mid-spring, it was hopeful that the financial stewardship of the budding mission group, along with their zeal and faithful prayer, would allow for a pastor to be assigned, in residence, soon rather than later. By God's grace, that has come together, and St James is under way.

Presently, St James consists in about five Orthodox families/individuals, a catechumen, and several inquirers. The first Vespers service was held in the Bozeman's home on Wednesday, June 13. Twenty-three were present.

It is with joy that I report the official founding of this mission, and with great expectations for the Bozeman family and the faithful of St James.

Fr John Parker

I would like to add a few words to Fr John's report. My family arrived at our new home in Beaufort on June 1, 2012, and were greeted by a crowd of helping hands from not only St James Mission, but also from Holy Ascension and St Mary Magdalene Orthodox Church. It was a beautiful moment for us as we began our life and our ministry here in the Carolinas. We owe a great debt of thanks to Fr John Parker and his foundational work with our new family in Beaufort.

St James Mission held its first service complete with its own resident priest on June 13, 2012. Vespers was served in our home, followed by an wonderful time of fellowship.

We are in the process of securing a permanent worship space, but in the mean time have been given approval to use a beautiful building in Beaufort known as “The Arsenal”. At the same time, three other properties are being investigated, either for rent or for purchase.

We are excited by what we have already seen in these few short days since we entered into this community: a willingness to help and be involved in the church community, a giving spirit and an excitement about the future and how God will work in Beaufort.

Fr. James

Saint Basil the Great Mission - Wilmington, NC
Priest Peter Robichau

Our mission community continues to grow steadily, but slowly. Regular services include Great Vespers and Liturgy weekly, and Great Vespers with Litya for major feasts. We hosted Orthodox Speaker, Scott Cairns, for a well attended public event at the local library. Our worship and music has been an area of focus and improvement in 2012 (thanks to our dedicated Choir and director, Christopher McGarvey). Improvements to our temporary, leased, space have largely been completed, and we look forward to increasing attention toward worship and Christian education in the coming year. As a mission in a rather transitory town, we have struggled with attrition as members move because of family or economic issues. We hope to find ways in the coming year to reach out to the unchurched in addition to what has become our base - Orthodox who have relocated to the area.