

Diocese of the South (OCA) 2013 Annual Assembly Appalachian Deanery Report

The Appalachian Deanery is composed of 9 churches, 4 of which are parishes and 5 are missions. The Deanery covers the geographical region made up of the states of Kentucky, Tennessee, and most of Virginia (the Northern Virginia suburbs of Washington, DC fall under the Archdiocese of Washington, DC). We have one parish (St. Andrew's) and two missions (St. Tikhon and St. Maria of Paris) under the care of Deanery clergy and at various stages of looking for a part or full-time priest to serve them.

Over the past year we held one teleconference meeting but did not maintain a regular teleconference meeting schedule. We will make this a continued priority over the coming year. In addition to our fellowship during the Pastoral Conference (2013) we gathered in a mountain cabin outside Gatlinburg, TN, for a retreat over Bright Thursday/Friday. Fr. Stephen Freeman directed our attention to the need for self care, making that a high priority for our well-being and effectiveness, keeping a schedule that allows time for personal fulfillment and disciplines as well as the necessary pastoral responsibilities. We hope to have a meeting this year with a guest speaker to help us focus on preparation and delivery of our homilies.

Dormition of the Theotokos Church, Norfolk, VA

<http://www.dormitionnorfolk.org>

General Information

Parish Name: Dormition of the Theotokos

Location: Norfolk, VA

Established: 1978

Clergy: Fr. John Cox, Fr. Paul Pynch - retired attached

Relevant Statistics

Norfolk Population: 242,628

Regional Population: 1.6 million

Reachable (within 45 min) population: 500,000 est.

Other Parishes in Our Area: 3 (2 GOA, 1 ROCOR)

Total Parish Size: 85-90

Avg. Sunday Attendance: 60-70 (50%+- 2 yr. increase)

Avg. Monthly Income: \$6,700 (40% 1 yr. increase, 60% 2 yr.)

Building: Rental

Priest: Full time

Avg. Services per Month: 14

- Sunday Liturgy
- Festal Liturgy
- Daily Vespers
- Great Vespers
- Fuller cycle for Dormition, Advent, & Lent

Parish Activities:

- Sunday School (K, Elementary, & Middle)
- Weekly Adult/Catechumen Class
- Bi-annual bake sale
- Lenten charity dinner
- Weekly choir rehearsal
- Occasional social activities

Additional Priest Activities:

- Involved in OCF
- Guest lectures at Regent U. & Old Dominion
- Web director for OCAMPR
- Administrator parish website & Facebook page
- Blog

2012 Highlights:

- 3 weddings
- 1 Baptism
- 0 Funerals
- 1 Catechumen
- 5 Inquirers
- School Supply Fundraiser for Afghan children
- Raised over \$5,000 for St. Nicholas Uganda Children's Fund w/St. Nicholas GOC & \$1,000 for the same at our Lenten Charity Dinner
- 1st Annual Lenten retreat with Dn. Mark & Elizabeth Barna
- Hosted St. Joseph (ROCOR) for Sunday of Orthodoxy Liturgy
- 2nd annual blessing of Chesapeake Bay on Theophany
- New hand crafted Tomb

2013 Goals:

- Improve the beauty/quality of our implements and serving/singing (underway)
- 20% increase in monthly giving (currently equivocal)
- Begin work on new iconostasis (underway)
- Find new space (no success)
- Increase our building fund (underway)
- Make the best use of the space/resources we have (underway)

Challenges:

- High rent area (limits relocation possibilities)
- High cost/low availability of land (Norfolk is 95% developed)
- High degree of population turnover
- Facility
- Cooling unit can't keep up during the summer
- Small worship space (90ish max)
- Fellowship space for 25
- No bathrooms in our part of the building
- No running water in our part of the building
- Street parking only
- Limited income/savings
- High parishioner disbursement (from parish)

Summary:

While parish life is often two steps forward and one step back my sense, and that of the parish council, is that Dormition is making positive steps toward establishing itself as a permanent part of the community here in Norfolk. Like all parishes we face challenges, especially related to financial and human resources, and things sometimes proceed

more slowly than we hope but we have a strong core and a growing group of young families around which to build and I have faith that God will provide the right opportunities if we are prepared to meet them.

St. Andrew's Church, Ashland, VA

<http://www.firstcalled.org>

Fr. Ian Shipley completed a very productive year at St. Andrew's, Ashland, VA. His wife, Priscilla, suffers from Lyme Disease and this contributed to their decision to return to the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania where a treatment facility is available. Their family is already missed at St. Andrew's, and his ministry will be a benefit for the DOEPA.

Virginia clergy will work together to keep regular services at St. Andrew's until a priest is assigned.

St. Seraphim Church, Memphis, TN

<http://www.orthodoxmemphis.org>

Since the summer of 2012 we have baptized two infants and chrismated one adult convert. Three other adults were catechized at St. Seraphim but were baptized/chrismated in other churches. We had no funerals or weddings. In the current class there are two catechumens.

We had sixty five people for Pascha and have at least 30 each Sunday.

Our finances are stable and the Parish Board is building its capability to deal with parish business. The Board is currently working on five and one year goals and the development of practical commitment.

We host and support the local Neighborhood Association and will be participating in their events.

We were blessed to receive two beautiful ripidia from Russia.

We devoted time and attention to improving our worship practices. This included three Sunday homilies dedicated to an abbreviated catechesis on the Liturgy, discussions with parents and non-parents to build understanding about what accomplishes the goal of more attentive and unified worship, drawing up some guidelines that we would hold as a standard and changing the physical arrangement in parts of the nave and narthex. The results are definitely positive.

St. Anne Mission, Oak Ridge, TN

<http://www.stanneorthodoxchurch.com>

St. Anne has shown continued and steady growth during this past year. We recorded 15 Baptisms, 3 Chrismations and had 2 weddings. A number of families also moved into our area and became active in the parish.

We maintain a full schedule of services with Vigil and Liturgies for all major feasts as well as others of local interest.

Our Sunday School program continues to thrive, with great participation and leadership. Sunday's at St. Anne are filled with children!

The parish initiated an Evangelism and Missions group this year. It is exploring and implementing ways to enhance the parish's effectiveness at outreach and welcoming of new people. It is also exploring possibilities and requirements for initiating new mission work in the Knoxville area.

The parish supports the local Orthodox Christian Fellowship at the University of Tennessee. We have had tremendous maturing of our cooperation with St. George Greek Orthodox Church, particularly in the work with OCF.

Fr. Stephen suffered a heart attack in early June but is recovering well and working on his cardiac rehabilitation. The parish has been tremendously supportive of his ministry.

St. Athanasius Mission, Nicholasville, KY

<http://www.athanasiusoca.org>

Metrical Information August 2012-July 2012

6 Adult Baptisms

4 Child Baptisms

2 Orthodox households joined our parish (3 adults; 3 children—Hostetter & Saito)

1 Orthodox household transferred to another parish (2 adults; 2 children--Ball)

1 Orthodox person moved away (Jenae Legg)

1 household (2 adults—Brad and Alexis Vien) at St. Vladimir's Seminary in priestly formation

1 parishioner became a novice (Brother Nicholas Little) at St. Tikhon's Monastery

1 wedding scheduled for July (Logan-Sills)

No deaths

1 sub-deacon (Simeon Siskar) in the Diaconal Vocations Program and another (Bert Walther) applying

Average Sunday attendance has been 112 (median 100-130)

Average Sunday School attendance was about 45 (including adults and teachers).

Our parish budget grew this year, but less than expected. We experienced a shift in giving from our general fund to our building fund, which had a record year. We are now

entering year “3 of 5” in our Capital Campaign for the Building Project. We are on track with giving to this fund.

Parish Life Overview 2012-2013

Our greatest challenge this past year continues to be the problem of space. We are now addressing this problem through the construction of a new church (phase 1). To that end, the parish voted to sell our property located in the country and purchase a new property in Nicholasville proper. We paid this property off completely. We are awaiting final drafts from our architect. Bidding and arrangements with planning boards will take place in July. We plan to submit final plans to the diocese at or before the Assembly in Jacksonville. With anticipated diocesan approval of the loan package and plans, we are planning on a groundbreaking ceremony for the weekend of August 10-11 and, with Archbishop Nikon's blessing, have invited Bishop Mark of Baltimore to preside. We hope to have the bulldozers rolling immediately after the formal groundbreaking. Our goal remains to occupy the new church by Pascha 2014.

Additional Points of Interest in Parish Life

Ongoing ministries of service and outreach: Jail Ministry work continues; Bread-Gifting Ministry (teaming with Panera); Campus Ministry at Berea College; Greeters Ministry (started up this past year); Co-hosting of Community Expo with other churches;

Other ministries and events of note: Reorganized women's group into “St. Elizabeth Sisterhood;” revamped the website and started a parish Facebook page; expanded and developed our Youth Group work; record year of Vacation Church School attendance (summer 2013 with Pan-Orthodox Lexington VCS); St. Athanasius parishioners increased almsgiving 300% this past church year.

St. Cyprian of Carthage Mission, Richmond (Midlothian), VA

<http://www.stcyprianoca.org>

Our Mission has grown to 70 adult members and 39 children. Over the past year our Saturday evening attendance has averaged in the upper twenties and Sunday morning in the mid sixties. We have enjoyed several Sundays with attendance in the low eighties, and our Paschal Matins began with 121, a record number for us. While our building is now five years in use, those numbers allow us space for more in worship, but the coffee hour space and room for Church School is starting to feel inadequate. We look forward to paying off our commercial debt and what was borrowed from the Diocese of the South so that we can begin the next phase of our master plan – with anticipated revision.

When we began construction in 2008 of what serves and will serve as the main facility for Divine Liturgy (occupied in September 2009), we did so because of the dedicated sacrificial giving of founders and several families whose means were offered to God as a tithe and often as an offering above and beyond. Such giving made it possible to be free and clear of any debt on the Chamberlayne Avenue house, have enough savings to purchase almost six acres of land near Midlothian, VA, and negotiate construction financing for site plan development and the construction of phase one of our plan. We relied on a cash loan from the Diocese of the South that amounted to 11% of our total

capital project (land purchase, planning, site development and the building totaling over \$900,000). This loan allowed us to proceed confidently and feel like we would be able to manage the debt without encumbering ourselves beyond reason or putting those who had to cosign for our debt (those who then served as trustees before our incorporation) at greater risk. As we work to pay off our lenders over the next few years, we want to thank the Diocese of the South for recognizing our faithfulness to the Diocese and for supporting our capital campaign in such a significant way. As of April 30, 2013, we owed the Diocese of the South \$32,665 and SunTrust Bank \$98,150.

The coming year, 2014, marks the fortieth year since our mission was planted by the Diocese of New York and New Jersey in Richmond, Virginia. As we await the completion of a permanent Altar Table and the Consecration of that Altar in the coming year, it will allow us to celebrate our history, remember our dearly beloved founders and benefactors who have departed this life, and to mark the establishment of a permanent place of worship – petitioning for recognition as a parish in the Diocese of the South of the Orthodox Church in America. As our celebratory and sacramental events are planned, we will look forward to many of you coming to participate with us in this endeavor, in which you have played a part.

Statistics:

Adult Contributing Members: 70

Baptism/Chrismation: 8

Reception by Chrismation: 1

Crowning: 2

Burial: 2

Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary Mission, Clarksville, TN

<http://www.orthodoxclarksville.org>

Fr. Thomas Langdon and his family began their assignment in Clarksville July 2012. He has implemented an active weekly schedule of services, adult, youth, and catechetical ministry. The mission has seen growth to offset some of the usual coming and going of a military city. There have been 5 baptisms and 3 received by Anointing with Holy Chrism. In addition to a very active schedule for Great Lent and observation of the Great Feasts, they have averaged 19 at Saturday Great Vespers and 41 at Sunday Divine Liturgy over 9 months. They are looking for another meeting place as their host church wishes to make use of the chapel they have been renting. All in all, there is a strong record over the past year and every reason to believe that the Orthodox Christian presence in Clarksville is going to survive and continue to reach out to the soldiers at FT Campbell, KY, where their gathering was first organized.

St. Tikhon of Moscow Mission, Chattanooga, TN

<http://www.sainttikhons.org>

Baptisms/Chrimations: 1

Catechumens: 2

Weddings: 1

Highlights:

Sept. 2012 - Featured on front page of OCA and St. Vlad's websites for being first church to pledge 1 percent to a seminary each year.

Oct. 2012 - Visited by Fr. Eliah Khalife, Oxford and Harvard scholar for ancient Near Eastern studies.

c. Nov. 2012 - Began praying weekly an akathist to St. Tikhon.

January 2012 - Fr. Daniel Talley released from duties at St. Tikhons. Readers services begin. Deanery clergy begin monthly visits.

May 2012 - Pascha celebration with Fr. Athanasius Shaw

St. Maria of Paris Mission Station, Cleveland, TN

Deacon Kevin Rigdon, with the assistance and supervision of Archpriest Stephen Freeman, continues to work with the faithful and seekers who comprise the St. Maria of Parish Mission Station in Cleveland, TN. See their progress at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/St-Maria-of-Paris-Orthodox-Church/127851193914255>

The past year has been an exciting one for St Maria of Paris Mission in Cleveland, Tennessee. We have seen the reception of 3 converts, and 2 baptisms. We have also enrolled 12 catechumens with another 5 waiting to be enrolled in July or August.

At this time, we have no budget reports or minutes from our last meeting. We will have our annual meeting in September.