

Diocese of the South (OCA) 2015 Annual Assembly

Appalachian Deanery Report

The Appalachian Deanery is composed of 8 churches, 4 of which are listed as “church” status and 4 as mission. There are also two inactive Mission Stations. The Deanery covers the geographical region made up of the states of Kentucky, Tennessee roughly east of the Tennessee River, and most of Virginia (the Northern Virginia suburbs of Washington, DC fall under the Archdiocese of Washington, DC). We have one mission (St. Tikhon, Chattanooga, TN) under the care of Diocesan clergy. Interest for a continued Orthodox Christian presence in Farmville, VA helped to bring services during the weeks of Great Lent to a home on the College of Hampden-Sydney. A few seekers and faithful attended, along with some assistance from St. Cyprian of Carthage Mission. Efforts will continue here. Also, St. Athanasius Mission, Nicholasville, KY, has been attending to interest in Orthodox Christianity in Berea, KY. There will continue to be effort to reestablish the previous mission stations in Roanoke, VA and Charlottesville, VA. We welcome the Priest Sam Gantt (retired) who lives in Roanoke and will continue to assist the witness for Orthodoxy there (his home town).

Dormition of the Theotokos Church, Norfolk, VA

<http://www.dormitionnorfolk.org>

Priest John Cox

Voting Members: 36

Average Sunday Attendance: 65

Average Great Vespers Attendance: 10

Percentage Increase/Decrease in Tithes/Offerings from 2014-2015: Static

Total Parish (Active/Inactive/Seekers): 100

Attendance for Pascha 2015: 85

2015 was a solid year for our community. "Stable" is the word I would use to describe our status. Currently, we have a contract on a building in Norfolk that will mark a significant step forward in the life of our community. The new building will serve allow us to expand to about 130 and, God helping, will be a very good intermediate step for us as we work gradually toward a permanent home for Dormition. We hope to close by mid-August and occupy by Advent.

St. Andrew's Church, Ashland, VA

<http://www.firstcalled.org>

Priest Adam Sexton

Voting Members: 34

Average Sunday Attendance: 50

Average Great Vespers Attendance: 18

Percentage Increase/Decrease in Tithes/Offerings from 2014-15: NA
Total Parish (Active/Inactive/Seekers): 80
Attendance for Pascha 2016: 65

St. Anne Orthodox Church, Oak Ridge, TN

<http://www.stanneorthodoxchurch.com>

Archpriest Stephen Freeman

Voting Members: 90

Average Sunday Attendance: 110

Average Great Vespers Attendance 20

Percentage Increase/Decrease in Tithes/Offerings from 2014-2015: +10%

Total Parish (Active/Inactive/Seekers): 200

Attendance for Pascha 2016: 170

This past year saw a substantial increase in income and attendance. We have added a number of families both by transfer as well as by being received into Orthodoxy. There is a committee currently working on preliminary building plans. A study last year pointed towards building on our present site. This year (2016), the parish had its first parish festival, a festival of Celtic Orthodoxy, which was very successful. We look forward to doing it again next year.

Our growth continues to put pressure on our facilities. We are in great need of assistance, perhaps a Deacon.

St. Athanasius Church, Nicholasville, KY

<http://www.athanasiusoca.org>

Priest Justin Patterson

Voting Members: 81

Average Sunday Attendance: 110

Average (Vigil) Great Vespers Attendance: 33

Percentage Increase/Decrease in Tithes/Offerings from previous year: -10% (~\$130,000)

Total Parish (Active/Inactive/Seekers): 175

Attendance for Pascha 2016: 190

We served 7 Baptisms (combination of adults and children) and 6 receptions into the Faith by Confession/Chrismation. We also welcomed over a dozen people to our parish family, transferring from other Orthodox parishes (out of town moves.) At the same time, however, we saw 6 families--with almost 2 dozen souls--move away, usually for reasons of employment. Among those families who moved were some of our strongest givers, financially. Still, our attendance is strong and there is plenty of energy in our parish as we continue to draw new

members. We were honored to host His Grace, Bishop Alexander, for the Feast of Pentecost. We were pleased he was able to bless the opening of the Lexington-area Pan-Orthodox Vacation Church School, which St. Athanasius hosted for the first time this summer. We are excited to have our largest youth group ever--more than 15 youth participated this year. We are tweaking our Sunday School program to strengthen it for the many little ones we have entering the program this coming year. An interesting fact worth noting: we now have 12 households with at least one member born in the former Soviet Union. We have families with Romanian and Greek roots, as well.

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

<http://www.stcyprianoca.org>

Archpriest David Arnold

Voting Members: 76

Average Sunday Attendance: 75

Average Great Vespers Attendance: 27

Percentage Increase/Decrease in Tithes/Offerings from 2014-15: +6%

Total Parish (Active/Inactive/Seekers): 131

Attendance for Pascha 2016: 137

The completion of the Iconography on the walls and ceiling of the Sanctuary, as well as the images mounted in the Holy Doors brings the Iconostasis and Sanctuary almost to completion. The Deacon Doors remain to be accomplished. Having the Holy Table in place and intending to celebrate the Order for the Consecration of a Church later this year, we are taking important steps toward the permanency of the Temple. We have paid the remaining balance of commercial debt for construction of the Temple, as well as what was borrowed from the Diocese of the South. Now, we are beginning to save for Phase 2, a building that will support our fellowship and education. Subdeacon Wes Patrick and Lauren Pulley, along with James and Walter, have joined us this summer, recently graduating from St. Vladimir's Seminary. They bring many gifts and we are grateful that they will make a stop in Virginia along their journey of vocation.

Protection of the Holy Virgin Mary Mission, Clarksville, TN

<http://www.orthodoxclarksville.org>

Priest Thomas Langdon

Voting Members: 30

Average Sunday Attendance: 35

Average Great Vespers Attendance: 12

Percentage Increase/Decrease in Tithes/Offerings from 2014-15: -14%

Total Parish (Active/Inactive/Seekers): 70

Attendance for Pascha 2016: 50

Our attendance and giving is down from the year before, but we do have a few new

catechumens along with other recent 'seekers' (seriously interested, but not yet catechumens). A continuing challenge is the 'revolving door' or transient nature of Clarksville with the military Post here. A few of our more committed members have also served deployments over the past year. We also continue to have a number of individuals and families attend on a very irregular basis, which is typical for Clarksville while being atypical for the state of Tennessee as a whole. They seem to be well intentioned and well disposed toward the Church, but for whatever reason have a difficult time attending on any kind of regular basis. While somewhat frustrating not only to myself but to some of our other core members, we continue to press on with the hope of a more stable membership and sustained growth.

St. Tikhon of Moscow Mission, Chattanooga, TN

<http://www.sainttikhons.org>

Mission served by Diocesan Clergy: Archpriest Peter Smith, Priest Daniel Talley

Voting Members: 25

Average Sunday Attendance: 25

Average Great Vespers Attendance: 7

Percentage Increase/Decrease in Tithes/Offerings from 2014-15: +10%

Total Parish (Active/Inactive/Seekers): 60

Attendance for Pascha 2016: 40

The faithful service of Fr. Peter and Fr. Daniel sustains the faithful who support this mission and the Orthodox Christian witness to Chattanooga. Participation in the 2016 Mission School will be a wonderful source of encouragement and helpful information.

St. Maria of Paris Mission, Cleveland, TN

<http://www.stmariaorthodoxchurch.org/>

Priest Kevin Rigdon

Voting Members: 37

Average Sunday Attendance: 40

Average Great Vespers Attendance: 17

Percentage Increase/Decrease in Tithes/Offerings from 2014-15: +10%

Total Parish (Active/Inactive/Seekers): 89

Attendance for Pascha 2016: 69

We've moved into a larger space and are looking forward to events and open houses for the community to come in and get to know us. Participation in the 2016 Mission School will be a wonderful source of encouragement and helpful information.