

St. John of Damascus Orthodox Mission
12989 CR 1113
Tyler, TX 75709
30 January 2022

2022 Annual Parish Meeting

~ Fr. David opened our meeting with a prayer, and called the meeting to order. I (Zachary Carnes) certified that a Quorum was present.

~ Deacon Theophan Alvarez made a motion to accept the annual meeting minutes for 2021, and Connie Russell seconded that motion. The motion passed by a voice vote.

~ Fr. David then briefly presented the priest's report. He noted that we have had an interesting, yet challenging year. This past year we received many people into the church, but we experienced some tough losses. Fr. David thanked the members of the parish for our faithfulness.

~ Fr. David also briefly presented the objective plan for our parish. He spoke about our debt and the timeline for paying off our debt. He said that at the rate that we are going, we will be working on paying off our main debt for the next eight or nine years. Fr. David also addressed our iconography plans. We have started to have our iconography installed over the last year, and our festal icons have been ordered. Fr. David then proceeded to explain the next phase of our iconography to the parish. Also, Fr. David spoke about the need to make our schoolhouse more livable. Since a parish hall will not be a reality for quite a while, we will need to make some quality-of-life improvements to the existing structure. Finally, Fr. David briefly went over some additional potential improvements to our church grounds, such as: expanded parking areas, a playground for the children, a new sign for our entrance (along with lighting), and improved cemetery access.

~ Parish Council Warden Gerald Hook spoke about some of the church maintenance and improvements over the last year, and he thanked everybody who has dedicated time to providing maintenance, improvement, and mowing. He invited people to join our mowing and lawn maintenance team. Deacon Theophan asked if we have the proper equipment for lawn maintenance at the church. Gerald answered in the affirmative. Also, Gerald spoke about having some church workdays in the near future.

~ Ross Flowers inquired about the line item labeled "Pass Through" on the financial summary handout, and Fr. David explained what that item referenced.

~ Fr. David spoke about our parish's status as a "regional church." Many of the members of our parish travel quite a distance to attend. We have the St. Ephraim mission in Longview and the St. Paisios mission in Nacogdoches, our members from Longview and Nacogdoches constitute a significant portion of our membership and income. Our parish relies on the continued involvement and support of our members in Longview and Nacogdoches.

~ We also spoke about the possibility that Deacon Thanasis Kombos will return to our area as a supply priest for a year starting this summer. Fr. David told the parish that this is why our

budget is increasing this year. While this could change, having a second priest in our area could open many opportunities for our area. Summer Richards asked Fr. David to explain the concept of a supply priest. Fr. David explained what having a supply priest would entail.

~ Phil Letzo asked if we are supposed to pay mileage or a per diem for a supply priest. Fr. David explained that the diocese has supply priest compensation guidelines, but if it is Deacon Thanasis who comes to our parish, we have already set up a stipend.

~ Deacon Theophan asked if Deacon Thanasis would be expected to travel to DFW or Shreveport as needed if he is attached at St John's. Fr. David answered that that is a possibility.

~ Amy Hook asked where Deacon Thanasis and his family would live if attached to our parish. Fr. David answered that he did not know.

~ In light of the previous discussions about this church as a "regional church," Jeff Russell stated that this parish has always been seen as a starting point for Orthodoxy in East Texas.

~ Next, Fr. David expressed his thanks to the parish council members for the past year. He especially thanked Lillia Longar for her service, and he officially nominated Stephanie Fuller as our new parish council member. Also, Fr. David said that we are asking Anya Hoats to join the parish council as we expand our Treasurer position into a Treasurer/Bookkeeper arrangement. Xenia is remaining on the parish council, and they can divide the responsibilities of the new positions. Summer Richards made a motion to accept the new parish council, and Ross Flowers seconded that motion. The motion passed by a voice vote.

~ Fr. David presented the budget for 2022 and reviewed the 2021 financial year in detail. Later this year our tithe credit will be going away, so by September of this year we will be making a full debt payment along with our tithe to the diocese. However, we have built this into our budget. Fr. David explained that our parish budget is pretty modest, but we will need to increase our income as a parish to be able to build up the operations of the St. Ephraim mission and the St. Paisios mission. Harvey Durham made a motion to accept this year's budget, and Bart Fuller seconded the motion. The motion passed by a voice vote.

~ Fr. David also reminded our parish that the All-American Assembly is going to be held in Baltimore in July. He will be going, and Fr. David suggested Deacon Theophan Alvarez as our delegate to travel with him to this event. Ross Flowers made a motion to accept Deacon Theophan as our delegate, and Seraphim Gockley seconded that motion. The motion passed by a voice vote.

~ Finally, Summer Richards made a motion to adjourn the meeting. We stood and we sang "It is Truly Meet," to end our meeting.

Zachary Carnes, Secretary