

## Fall Session of the Metropolitan Council

The Fall Session of the Metropolitan Council of the Orthodox Church in America met in the Chancery, at Syosset, New York on November 5-6, 2003. Archpriest Michael Westerberg, Diocesan Clergy Representative and George Ludko, Diocesan Lay Representative were in attendance.

### *Metropolitan's Address*

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, expressed his thanks to the members of the Metropolitan Council for their dedication and commitment to the Metropolitan Council and to the Church.

His Beatitude reviewed his travels since his election as Metropolitan:

- \* In June, 2003 His Beatitude traveled to Russia to visit his Holiness, Patriarch Aleksy. Our relationship with the Church of Russia is on solid foundation.

- \* In July, 2003, His Beatitude traveled to Turkey to meet with His All-Holiness, Patriarch Bartholomew. It was a cordial visit, even though Constantinople doesn't recognize our autocephaly and will "never" recognize the autocephaly granted by the Russian Church.

- \* Visits were also made back to Russia to participate in the centenary celebration of the glorification of St. Seraphim of Sarov; to the Ukraine, where His Beatitude was received by Metropolitan Volodymyr; and in September, His Beatitude traveled to Poland at the invitation of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Sawa.

In 2004, His Beatitude is planning trips to Georgia, Slovakia and the Czech Lands. The Metropolitan also recounted several visits to our Church's dioceses.

His Beatitude talked about the financial challenges that face our church and the "donor fatigue" that all non-profit organizations seem to be experiencing. As a result, free-will offerings have fallen. Additionally, the Diocese of New York and New Jersey has faced financial difficulties and has been delinquent in forwarding assessments for the last seven months.



COUNCIL TO 7

## Groundbreaking in Southbury

Christ the Savior Mission, currently celebrating services in Woodbury, Connecticut, celebrated a milestone on Sunday, November 16, 2003. Following the celebration of the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy by His Grace, Bishop Nikon, everyone went to a lovely piece of property in neighboring Southbury.

His Grace, and the Rector of Christ the Savior Mission, Priest Vladimir Aleandro, were joined by Fr. Michael Koblosh, first pastor of the parish,



*Fr. Vladimir Aleandro helps plant the Cross at the place for the new altar in the new temple. (Photo: Sarah Cole)*

Fr. Alexis Vinogradov, the architect for the new building, Fr. Michael Westerberg, Chancellor of the Diocese of New England, Fr. John Dresko, Dean of the Connecticut Deanery, Fr. John Kreta, Dean of Missions, and numerous clergy and faithful from throughout New England. All the clergy processed in front of the bishop from the parking area to the location of the new building. Under a rainy, cold sky, the Service for the Groundbreaking

SOUTHBURY TO 8

**O.N.E. (ORTHODOX NEW ENGLAND)**

Diocese of New England, Orthodox Church in America  
Published monthly except for July-August

*His Beatitude, Metropolitan HERMAN, Administrator*  
*The Very Reverend John J. Dresko, Editor*

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## ON THE DOCKET

A listing of upcoming events in the Diocese.  
Please forward any dates you wish to be included to the Editor.

January 11, 2004

*Yolka Benefit Dinner-Dance, 1:00 P.M.*  
*at Greek Cultural Center*  
*Ss. Peter & Paul Church, Springfield, MA*

February 4, 2004

*Diocesan Council Meeting, 6:30 P.M.*  
*Holy Trinity Church, New Britain, CT*

February 10, 2004

*Connecticut Deanery Meeting, 7:00 P.M.*  
*Ss. Peter & Paul Church, Meriden, CT*

February 22, 2004

**FORGIVENESS SUNDAY**

February 29, 2004

*Orthodoxy Sunday Vespers, 4:00 P.M.*  
*Nativity of the Holy Virgin Church, Waterbury, CT*

March 7, 2004

*Connecticut Deanery Mission Vespers, 4:00 P.M.*  
*Ss. Peter & Paul Church, Meriden, CT*

March 14, 2004

*FORCC Mission Vespers, 4:00 P.M.*  
*TBA*

March 21, 2004

*Connecticut Deanery Mission Vespers, 4:00 P.M.*  
*All Saints of North America Church, Salisbury, CT*

March 28, 2004

*Connecticut Deanery Unction Service, 4:00 P.M.*  
*Three Saints Church, Ansonia, CT*

April 4, 2004

*Connecticut Deanery Bridegroom Matins, 4:00 P.M.*  
*Holy Transfiguration Church, New Haven, CT*

April 11, 2004

**HOLY PASCHA**

## ONE STEWARDS New Address

Please note that ONE STEWARDS, our diocesan voluntary giving program, has a new address for donations:

**ONE STEWARDS**  
**PO Box 1182**  
**Torrington, CT 06790-1182**

# Around the Parishes

## *Bridgeport, Connecticut*

The following were elected and installed after they were blessed by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman: Peter Hristov, President; Christopher Savisky, Vice President; Mary Kowalchuk, Secretary; Sophie Rogers, Assistant Secretary; Marion Gulash, Treasurer; Mary Fomenko, Assistant Treasurer; Susan Maugeri, Financial Secretary; Audrey Stabler, Assistant Financial Secretary; Virginia Chittem, Lawrence Kosh, and Albin Kaimer, Trustees; William Savisky, Auditor. Following the election, past-president Joseph Curran received a standing ovation for his services for many years. He will serve as a Trustee.

The “holy rollers” spent several weeks preparing for our annual food fair, held on December 6<sup>th</sup>. Nut and poppyseed rolls, piroshki, piroghi, and cheese blintzes are our specialties. The ages of the holy rollers range from 65 years to Helen Hamilla, age 92.

On Sunday, November 16<sup>th</sup>, some of our members attended Divine Liturgy at Christ the Savior Mission in Woodbury. Gregory Curran, son of our past president, was ordained to the sub-diaconate by His Grace, Bishop

## OUR DIOCESE

PEOPLE  
PLACES  
EVENTS

Nikon. Following the liturgy, the groundbreaking for the new church was held. We wish God’s help to Fr. Vladimir Aleandro and his flock in building the new church.

The theme of this year’s Adult Education Institute held at Holy Transfiguration Church in New Haven was Tradition in the Orthodox Church. A number of our parishioners participated. The lectures were informative and interesting in explaining the difference between “Holy Tradition” and “traditions.”



*Seminarian John Strickland, his wife Elena, and daughter Elizabeth*

We have been fortunate in having visiting celebrant who preached dynamically – inspiring, informative, related to the daily readings, and understandable. We are thankful for Deacon George Coca, who has since been ordained to the Holy Priesthood, Peter DeFonce, now ordained a Deacon, and Seminarian John Strickland, who served as an intern in our parish. He, his wife Elena, and daughter Elizabeth have visited us twice since.

Welcome home to Doris Johnson, who unfortunately fractured her leg while visiting in Pennsylvania. She stayed at her daughter’s home for six weeks while recuperating. She is glad to be home again and continues to attend rehab therapy.

Vera Zastenchik, who was known to many “R” Club members in the Atlantic District, passed away in November. She was a soprano in our choir for over sixty years, and a member of Luke Bakoota’s Balalaika Orchestra. We will miss her voice. Memory Eternal!

Our parish helped raise \$500.00 for the annual OCA Christmas Stocking Project.

Archimandrite Daniel Byantoro, of Indonesia, visited our church and celebrated Divine Liturgy with Fr. Vadim Pismenny, our pastor. At coffee hour, he told us of his mission in Indonesia, started in 1988. He has a membership of 2,000, served by eleven priests. He was raised a Muslim, but after studying and researching a number of religions, embraced Orthodoxy. He attended Holy Cross Seminary, where he and Fr. Vadim met. Currently, he is working toward a PhD at Ohio State.

In speaking about the situation of the Church today in Indonesia, a fundamentalist Islamic country, he informed us that the three Orthodox Churches that had been there are now closed. The people have to worship in private homes and he compared it to the catacomb churches of the early Church.

Twenty-three of our shut-ins have received Thanksgiving trays prepared by Nancy Savisky, chair-lady of the Myrrhbearers. Volunteers have visited the shut-ins and bring the trays to them. This is done at Pascha, Thanksgiving and Christmas.

*– submitted by Lydia Garasimowicz*

## *Clinton, Connecticut*

Our annual meeting was held in November, focusing on items to be completed prior to the consecration of our church building in May. Father Steven’s report emphasized that ‘as parish community we are called to increasingly become the image of Christ as the gathered community celebrating the Eucharist, and bringing that celebration into every aspect of our lives personally and in community. It is through our evangelistic outreach that we can be the beacon for others to find and discover

## My Romanian Adventure

“Dad, Mom, after much prayer and hoping for your blessings, I have decided to go to Romania to live and work with abandoned babies!” Initially our hearts sank when we first heard these words from our daughter Kathy, because of what we had heard about conditions in Romania. We very soon realized, however, that we really should not have been surprised, for Kathy has always had a “heart” for the less fortunate and needy of our planet. Even as a young child she was always interested in the orphanage that existed near the town of Aurora, north of Toronto, which now no longer exists....

It all began three years ago, when Kathy spent her summer vacation in the town of Oradea, Romania, as a volunteer caregiver at the state-operated Ordea Children’s Hospital, looking after the many abandoned babies there. This is where she had first-hand experience in learning of the plight of these children, and it was this deeply moving experience which changed her life. After much prayer, she felt guided to return to full-time service, caring for these abandoned babies.

Romania was a communist country from 1948 until 1989, when Ceausescu was overthrown. Although a multi-party system is now in place, the communist influence remains strong. Kathy was at the airport in Budapest with a driver to take me to her apartment in Oradea. As one travels from Budapest, Hungary, to Oradea, which is approximately 13 K from the Hungarian border, there is evidence of dreadful states of decay on the Romanian side. As we approached the city limits there were Soviet style apartment blocks everywhere. This was a testament to the Ceausescu era, during which houses were destroyed and apartment blocks, which he had a love for, were erected. It seems that it was former Romanian leader Ceausescu’s programme aimed at doubling the population to better the economy, that led to the large number of abandoned children in the country. Poverty was so great at that time that people were not able to support them. The situation all these years later has not improved significantly.

We all know that visiting a country on vacation is entirely different from living in that country, taking part in daily life. My days were full to overflowing, helping Kathy care for the little ones – a privilege and an honour, and I was grateful to be able to help. We visited the open

outdoor market daily. Fresh fruits and vegetables in season were delicious and in abundance, though not so during the winter months. Considering everything, however, I found daily living in Oradea to be stressful.

There are days when there is no hot water. There are days when there is very little water pressure at all. Litter abounds in the generally unsanitary streets. It is difficult to dry the children’s clothing during days of rain, for clothing is hung up on clotheslines on a small outdoor balcony. And it goes on and on....But such is life in Oradea and must be accepted as such. The Romanian friends to whom Kathy introduced me were warmly welcoming and hospitable. Nevertheless, other families who have touched Kathy’s life are extremely destitute, living in squalid conditions in overcrowded quarters. Such poverty! Working hours are long, wages are extremely low, as are pensions for the elderly. My heart was greatly touched by the constant struggle to survive.

Kathy had returned to volunteer in the same hospital where she had worked three years before, and she laboured there for almost a year, caring for and loving these abandoned babies, many of them considered “hopeless cases.” I visited this hospital and was also greatly affected by what I saw. It was this experience that led Kathy to become state-approved, to open her apartment home to some of the babies from the hospital.

The first child to come to Kathy’s “Baby Apartment” was ten month old Florina who weighed just eight pounds. She was malnourished, had anemia, rickets and a staphylococcal infection. She improved immediately with good food and love. A few weeks later she was joined by Codi, six months of age, and then by Sylvia who was fourteen months old, being abandoned very early in life. Since that time, Florina has been adopted by a Romanian couple. Codi and Sylvia are still with Kathy and have grown into healthy, happy outgoing children – a great blessing! Both girls are now just over two and a half years of age. They understand everything in English, and for me this was wonderful, since I was able to bond with them. They answer in Romanian, and are such delights! Since international adoptions have once again been opened, these little darlings will have a chance for a much better life. They will be replaced by other abandoned babies from the hospital. Indeed, Florina’s crib now has little Andrea in it!

Andrea came to Kathy just a short while ago. She was a “failure to thrive syndrome” baby who was seven months old when Kathy first saw her at the hospital and she weighed six pounds. Andrea just lay in her crib at the hospital, motionless. What a change has come over her in the past month! She is gaining weight, plays with the toys in her crib, smiles, has had one tooth come through, and has found her voice in repeating continually her “da-da-da!” What a blessing to see this improvement in this little soul, thanks be to God! Her older “sisters” help look after her daily.

There are so many scenes that pass through my mind as I think about this little family. Forever in my heart will be seeing these two little girls with their hands clasped in prayer, their heads bowed as Kathy says grace before each meal. If these children were not here they would end up in one of the many orphanages in the country.

In visiting one of these orphanages, one has only to see the “lostness” on the faces of the children to be thankful that these little ones are with Kathy. We praise God for this wonderful opportunity that she has to care for these children. However, this could not be accomplished without the loving donations which have been given by the people whose hearts have been touched, because the work of mercy and love which Kathy does is entirely voluntary. In such a poor, struggling country it has to be.

Donations to support her in this work (those requiring a tax receipt) can be sent to St. Olave’s Anglican Church, 360 Windermere Ave., Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M6S 3L4, with “Kathy Langston’s missionary support” on the cheque.

If a tax receipt is not needed, cheques can be sent to me, Kathy’s mother: Marina Mantle, #31, 8020 Silver Springs Rd. NW, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, T3B 5R6.

It has been said that some people come into our lives and quietly go. Others stay for awhile and leave footprints on our hearts and we are never the same. After my Romanian adventure, I know that I shall never be the same. May our Heavenly Father continue to guide, protect and bless us all.

*(Marina Mantle is a member of St. Peter the Aleut Orthodox Church in Calgary. This is reprinted from the Autumn 2003 issue of the Canadian Orthodox Messenger.)*

**PARISHES FROM 3**

Orthodoxy.’

In addition we were also asked to reflect on our individual spiritual growth and to commit to attend more week day services and Saturday Great Vespers with our families. Ray Boyd reviewed the parish short and long term goals along with our mission and vision statements.

During the season of Advent our church school students along with the rest of the parish community come together prior to the start of Liturgy to light a candle on a specially prepared Advent Wreath. Together we read text taken from the book *Feasts and Families* written by Connie Tarasar. This year for the Feast of St. Nicholas the youth gathered on the eve for pizza and the story of St. Nicholas read by Fr. Steven. They also learned to sing the troparion. Before Great Vespers the children left a shoe in our entry way and after service they discovered that St. Nicholas left them some treats. The children were encouraged to follow the example of St. Nicholas and over the weekend to extend a helping hand or do something special to help out someone who is in need.

Once again as community we gathered together prior to Vigil for the Nativity of Our Lord to share in a potluck traditional Holy Super.

– submitted by *Cindy Voytovich*

**Hartford, Connecticut**

Our church has a new roof, replacing one that was worn and beginning to leak. Thanks to all who contributed to this effort. The Russian-American National Center generously stepped forward to donate funds, allowing pledges already received to be used for our accessibility project.

The 30<sup>th</sup> Russian Tea Room and Bazaar was the most successful yet, with persons coming from the region to enjoy the great foods, crafts, religious and gift items, live music and church tours that contribute to making this event such a success. The event grossed close to \$30,000 to date with some foods and items still available for sale. Special thanks to co-chairs, Joan Holobinko and Val Olesnovich for their work, and to all the chairs of booths and workshops – too numerous to mention. Many Years!

Congratulations to Cathy Vargas on her re-election to the Rocky Hill Board of Education. Cathy is involved in many aspects of parish life and coordinates the Church School and is financial secretary.

Congratulation, too, to Scott Tingley, son of Jeff and Kim Tingley, on his election to the Evian Simcozitz Chapter of the National Junior Honor Society. Scott is an eighth grader at JFK Middle School in Enfield.

The parish is conducting its annual toy drive, coordinated by Nadia Lugo, collecting gifts for children from disadvantaged families in the area. Gifts are needed for children from infancy to 15 years of age. If you would like to contribute gifts or monetary contributions to buy them may be sent to All Saints Church at 205 Scarborough Street, Hartford, CT 06105. Gifts will be accepted after

Christmas also.

– submitted by *Fr. William DuBovik*

**Meriden, Connecticut**

We have been busy during the fall here at Ss. Peter & Paul Church and preparing for the Nativity feast.

The Church School once again donated Thanksgiving Dinner Baskets to needy families who live in the area. Parishioners generously donated non-perishable foods. The Church School added turkeys, stuffing, potatoes, and pumpkin pies to round out the baskets. Seven individual baskets were made up and Father Timothy and a group of Church School students delivered each basket.

On Sunday, November 9<sup>th</sup>, we were pleased to have Fr. David Koles celebrate Divine Liturgy while Fr. Timothy Lowe was on travel in Jerusalem. This Sunday also marked the first distribution of the CD “With the Voice of the Archangel.” This CD was directed and produced by Vladimir Morosan for the benefit of PSALM and was recorded at our church on 27 May 2003. Eight voices, including Vlad and Deacon Sergius Halvorsen, joined together to make this wonderful collection.

On Saturday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>, we hosted a daylong retreat and invited Fr. Paul Tarazi, Professor of Scripture at St. Vladimir’s Seminary to enlighten us with his great depth of understanding of the Bible. He logically connected verses from the Epistles of St. Paul and from the Gospels, being careful to cite the full passage and not taking statements out of context. He used the Greek text and descriptions of the history of ancient Rome to better help us understand the words of the New Testament.

On Sunday, November 30<sup>th</sup>, we bid adieu to Harry Kushpinsky, who is moving to Brazil. May God keep him safe in his travels and grant him many years! We were saddened to hear that John Shemet passed away in November. May his memory be eternal!

We are planning many events for the upcoming year, including a visit by Bishop Nikon in February for Meatfare Sunday. Come and join us if you have the chance.

– submitted by *John S. Nighyew*

**New Haven, Connecticut**

The Orthodox Christian Library Outreach (OCLO) is helping the autocephalous Orthodox Church in Poland to publish a children’s book on Icons in the Polish language.

Our youth coordinators, Martha Asarisi and Alexis Swan, held a Thanksgiving Craft Workshop for the Church School Children. Approximately 30 children attended the workshop, made turkey lollipops, bookmarks with psalms, and felt tote bags decorated with turkeys. A fun time for all.

Our FOCA (“R” Club) hosted the 70<sup>th</sup> Atlantic District Conference on Sunday, November 16<sup>th</sup>. Delegates

### PARISHES FROM 3

from our Chapter were Helen Cherniavsky, Toni Cherniavsky, Barbara Dixon and Gladys Kruchok. Barbara Pope was our Trustee,

Following the meeting, we enjoyed a Pasta dinner prepared and served by members Jean Cherniavsky, Shirley Farm and Alexis Swan. The dinner consisted of H'ors d'oeuvres, Pasta Primavera or Pasta Seafood, tossed green salad, bread, dessert and beverages. Great fellowship had by all.

Congratulations and God's blessings to the Prestash family on the joyous occasion of Holden Michael Prestash's Baptism and Chrismation on November 23<sup>rd</sup>. Holden is the infant son of Christine and Mark Prestash.

– submitted by Barbara Ann Dixon

### Salisbury, Connecticut

We at All Saints have been graced with many happy events over the past year. We were honored on June 22<sup>nd</sup>, when His Grace, Bishop Nikon, visited us for liturgy. Following the blessed occasion, parishioners and friends continued to celebrate – despite the rain – at the home of George Konomos. Every year, George graciously hosts the annual lamb roast in August. In honor of Bishop Nikon, our lamb roast came earlier this year.

With great joy in our hearts, we welcomed two new members to our faith. Engiellushe Hasani was baptized and chrismated in July and Elizabeth Goodwin was chrismated on November 9<sup>th</sup>. God bless them!

If one characterized this past summer and fall for the members of our church then “On the Road Again” rang true. Our members traveled quite extensively to attend the wedding of former member, Ed Tyler, in Cleveland on July 12<sup>th</sup>. Sandy Evans' daughter, Allison, was wed on October 11<sup>th</sup> in Rhode Island. Matushka Evelyn Kreta with the Kreta children participated in the Summer Youth Rally. This marked the first time that any of our children attended this event. Fr. John Kreta, as Dean of Missions, visited all of the mission churches in New England.

Our church is growing, too! Church school began on September 28<sup>th</sup> and we are proud to announce that we have three classes: a preschool taught by Nadia Stumo; an elementary class taught by Hope Mongeau; and a high school class taught by John Mongeau. We also have a biweekly bible class for adults led by Fr. John.

This fall, David Jardine organized the Crop Walk for us. Our church brought in \$400. On Columbus Day weekend we participated in the Salisbury Fall Festival – our largest fundraiser of the year. Our church ran a “Country Kitchen” which featured many ethnic treats made or donated by our talented members. Joan Jardine donated one of her impressionistic style paintings to raffle at the festival. Everyone's efforts helped to make it a huge success.

Recently, members have joined together to spruce up the inside of our church as we look forward to the holidays

and a glorious New Year. Glory be to God!

– submitted by Hope and Heather Mongeau

### Woodbury, Connecticut

What an absolutely joyful and explosive month November was for Christ the Savior Mission! November 8<sup>th</sup>, marked the eve of our patron, Saint Nektarios' feast day. Vespers was celebrated by Fr. David Koles, Fr. Peter Karloutsis and Fr. Athanasios Akunda. Fr. Theodore Shevzov was also with us to process around the building with the relics of St. Nektarios and to pray for his intercession as we were anointed with oil from his grave. Fr. Athanasios spoke with the large group gathered following Vespers about his missionary work in South Africa. We were able to raise \$1700.00 for Father to bring back with him as he continues his momentous mission work.

Our own Kate Jellinghaus was also sent overseas with some funds to aid in missionary work. Kate is a student studying in Bulgaria, and is working closely with a group to aid teenaged orphans with vocations training and Orthodox catechism. We were able to raise \$1400.00 to help the Bulgarian youth project. In addition, Kate has enabled our teen group to become e-mail pen pals with some of the Bulgarian students involved in the vocations training project.

The “Live Wires” children in Sunday school held a delicious coffee hour luncheon on November 2<sup>nd</sup>. With much love and excitement the children reported raising \$563.00 for the OCA Christmas Stocking Project.

Our joyful month's culmination was on November 16<sup>th</sup>, a day which will forever be remembered in our mission history as the date on which the cross was planted and ground for our new church building was broken. (*See article on page one.*) After the ceremony, all traveled to the South Britain Congregational Church for a delicious, festive banquet. We ask for your prayers in the coming months as our community experiences the many emotions and challenges associated with such a project. Our prayer is that we may build a lighthouse of God's love to share with all who are near.

– submitted by Sarah Cole



The visit of Fr. Athanasios Akunda in Woodbury. (Photo: Sarah Cole)

**COUNCIL FROM 1***Review of the Fall Session of the Holy Synod of Bishops*

The Metropolitan Council received the minutes of the Fall Session of the Holy Synod of Bishops for information and review. Among the issues addressed by the Bishops:

\* The statutes of the Orthodox Church in America need review and revision.

\* A feasibility study to be undertaken concerning the possible construction of an appropriate archive facility.

\* Approved the 2004 OCA proposed budget as presented.

\* Election of Bishop Nikon as Bishop of Boston and the Albanian Archdiocese.

\* Election of Archimandrite Tikhon as Auxiliary Bishop-elect of South Canaan, PA.

\* Discussed the need for an auxiliary bishop for the Diocese of the West.

\* Reviewed and acted upon a number of clergy discipline cases.

*Report of the Chancellor*

Protopresbyter Robert Kondratick thanked His Beatitude for the opportunity to serve as Chancellor these past fifteen years. Fr. Robert reported on Episcopal matters:

\* The visits His Beatitude made this past year.

\* The Albanian Archdiocese nominating His Grace, Bishop Nikon, for canonical election as Bishop of Boston and the Albanian Archdiocese and the Holy Synod formally electing Bishop Nikon at its Fall Session. The date of his installation will be November 22, 2003.

Among other items Fr. Robert reported on were: the reception of non-Orthodox clergy, the 14<sup>th</sup> All-American Council, departmental meetings, finances, legal concerns, and statute revision.

*Discussion of Report on Church Ministries*

Father Robert Kondratick presented the report on Church Ministries.

Comments were made by members of the Metropolitan Council concerning the content of the report.

*Statistical Information Report*

Archpriest Jonathan Ivanoff presented his report. Fr. Ivanoff explained how statistical information is being received, analyzed and reported. Keeping statistical information is an important tool to help strengthen church ministry.

*Report of the Treasurer*

Archpriest Dimitri Oselinsky presented the Treasurer's Report. Fr. Oselinsky noted that the outstanding assessments for 2003 due from the Diocese of New York and New Jersey are the largest outstanding receivable at this time. The amount due is approximately \$160,000. The current level of voluntary gifts received thus far in 2003 as required in order to balance our 2003 approved budget, has also had an impact on the short-term finances of the church.

Fr. Oselinsky reported that we are operating within the 2003 approved budget. Also, it was affirmed that no reduction of the amount due from any diocese in 2003 can be forgiven. If all funds are not received by year's end, a reduction in staff will be required. His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman does not want this to happen. Every effort will be made to collect all required funds by December 31, 2003.

*2004 Budget*

The 2004 proposed operating budget for the OCA was discussed and approved. The balanced budget totals \$3,981,379.00.

*Office of Development Report*

Archpriest Joseph Fester presented the Office of Development Report. Fr. Fester commented on FOS and planned giving efforts and income for 2003. New fund raising software will be installed in 2004. David Lucs presented the special appeals report. We haven't met the goals for Mission or Charity Appeals. Part of the problem is due to inadequacies and limitations of our present computer system which will be updated in 2004.

*Discussion on Current**Office of Development Structure*

There is still no full time staff position for a Development Officer because of financial constraints. This need will be discussed at the January 2004 meeting of the Administrative Committee.

*Report on the 14th All-American Council*

Dr. Alice Woog presented the report. The next All-American Council will be held in Toronto, Ontario, Canada in July (17-22) 2005.

*Discussion of Need for Statute Revision*

At its recent meeting, the Holy Synod of Bishops affirmed the need for our statutes to be revised. Every care will be made to bring our statutes into conformity with civil law as well as the canonical tradition of the church. The initial process will take about one year. Suggestions were made during the discussion of this matter. Especially discussed were the Metropolitan Council and its role in the life of the church.

*Youth Update and Status on**Deanery Teams*

Father Michael Anderson presented this report. This is a deanery based movement to help local deaneries do activities with youth.

*History and Archives Building Project*

Mr. Alexis Liberovsky commented on the work of the Department of History and Archives. He spoke about the need for a new state of the art archive building. The Holy Synod has given its blessing for a feasibility study to be undertaken.

*Church Workers Life Insurance*

Mr. Michael Herzak presented an

**COUNCIL TO 8****PUBLICATION  
DEADLINES**

**March Issue  
February 1<sup>st</sup>**

**April Issue  
March 1<sup>st</sup>**

**SOUTHBURY FROM 1**

for a New Temple was celebrated. Construction of the new building was begun shortly after the celebration of the groundbreaking. It is anticipated that the building will be ready for occupancy in 2004.

In addition, various clergy and religious and political leaders from the local area were present for the service.

During the service, His Grace, Bishop Nikon, placed the cross at the spot where the new altar will be situated, blessed the cornerstone with oil, then placed a stake at each of the four compass points of the building. All the clergy assisted, including bearing and processing with relics of St. Nectarios Kephala of Aegina, patron saint of the community.

The exact dimensions of the new building were very easy to imagine, as they were outlined for everyone present right on the property. You could walk the perimeter, you could “enter” the front door, and you could, of course, “see” the sanctuary and the exact placement of the altar table.

Following the groundbreaking ceremony, everyone joined together for a festive lenten banquet in celebration of the joyous day.

The whole diocese rejoices with the parish community in Woodbury, soon to be Southbury. May the Lord prosper all the work done in this new temple raised to His glory!

**COUNCIL FROM 7**

oral report concerning Church Workers Life Insurance Program that is offered by the OCA. Previously the life insurance was offered by the Orthodox Society of America. That group was merged into the Loyal Christian Benefit Association. The present program will be strengthened and coverage will not be interrupted.

*Sexual Abuse Insurance*

Mr. Herzak also made a presentation concerning how to protect the parish community in this area of concern. Specific rules must be enforced. This is a serious matter that requires immediate attention. An additional insured endorsement statement that includes the OCA, the local diocese, the diocesan bishop, and the district dean must be incorporated into each parish’s insurance coverage.

The priest should be involved in maintaining all required confidential information. In order to be credible, the priest should be the first to volunteer to have a background check undertaken by the appropriate authority or agency.

*Report on the Benefits Program*

Matushka Bette Kondratick reported that the Pension Program of the OCA is very stable. The health insurance program has a \$900,000.00 surplus. Those managing the program are going to invest the surplus to help

strengthen this program and also help keep the premiums low.

*Papers on Autocephaly*

Mr. John Erickson reported on papers prepared by His Eminence, Archbishop Peter, and John Erickson. Professor Erickson commented on the global changes since our autocephaly since 1970. Multiple overlapping jurisdictions in the same territory have become a reality, not only in North America, but throughout the world.

*Second Marriages as an Impediment to Ordination*

Archpriest David Brum presented a report concerning this question to the Holy Synod. The Holy Synod accepted this report and reiterated that all cases involving marriage impediment to ordination must be referred to the Metropolitan as Primate of the Church for presentation to the Holy Synod for final determination.

The Spring Session of the Metropolitan Council will be held on Tuesday, March 30, 2004, at the Orthodox Church in America Chancery in Syosset, New York.

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