

# Minutes from the February 2nd, 2025 St. Matthew Orthodox Church Annual Parish Meeting

The regular annual meeting of the membership of St. Matthew Orthodox Church was called to order at 11:46 am CST. Father John gave the opening prayer.

The following Parish Council members were present: the Rector, Fr. John; the President, Paul Novak; the Treasurer, Tom Julian; and the Corresponding Secretary, Noah Becker. The following Parish Council members were absent: the Vice-President, Matt Tomac; and the Recording Secretary, Vera Limberopoulos. Noah Becker served as the secretary of the meeting.

It was determined that the quorum necessary to transact business was 56 members. 57 were in attendance, and the presence of a quorum was established.

A motion was made by Paul Novak to approve the minutes from the 2024 annual meeting, held on January 28th, 2024. The motion was seconded by Doug Bisbee, and carried unanimously by voice vote.

Father John gave the Priest's Report. (See Addendum #1 for details.)

Paul Novak gave the President's Report. (See Addendum #2 for details.)

Tom Julian gave the Treasurer's Report. It was noted that the budget would be amended to include new iconostasis expenses. (See Addenda #3 and #3a for details.)

A motion was made by Paul Novak to approve the three reports, constituting approval of the 2025 budget, as amended. The motion was seconded by Chuck Bayerl, and carried unanimously by voice vote.

It was noted that the positions of Parish Council President, Vice-President, and Treasurer were up for re-election. The floor was opened for nominations. All incumbents were nominated, and no other nominations were made. A motion was made by Paul Novak to elect the incumbent President, Vice-President, and Treasurer to the Parish Council. The motion was seconded by Jeff Zdrale, and carried unanimously by voice vote.

A motion was made by Paul Novak to elect himself as the lay delegate to the All-American Council, to take place in 2025, with Matt Tomac and Noah Becker as designated alternates. The motion was seconded by Jim Kribs and carried by divided voice vote.

New business was considered.

Upon questions surrounding a new parking lot on the upper level, the President, Paul Novak, answered that the current format could be expanded to fit 18 vehicles, compared to the 9 that it currently supports. The Parish Council has been considering solutions.

Peggy Roman noted that expenses for floral arrangements are covered by the parish, and that anyone interested in contributing to these arrangements is welcome to contact her.

Jeff Zdrale welcomed members of the parish to sing along during the Divine Liturgy, and noted that the repertoire has been reduced to accommodate congregational singing.

A motion to adjourn was made by Noah Becker. The motion was seconded by Paul Novak and carried unanimously by voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 12:58 pm CST, and Fr. John gave the closing prayer.

## Addendum #1 — Priest's Report

- Orthodoxy is growing, including here in Green Bay.
  - Father credits growth to the presence of a welcoming atmosphere at St. Matthew, and thanks the parish for their efforts in welcoming inquirers.
  - 23 catechumens have been received into the Church in the last year, with an estimated 25 more to come in the following year.
- 1 funeral and 1 wedding took place in the last year.
  - The funeral—Bonita Zdrale's—was for a founding member of St Matthew, who baked prosphora for 40 years, along with singing in the choir.
- Father thanked the founding members of St Matthew, and shared the Parish Council's plans to name the newly-renovated large room upstairs as Founders' Hall.
  - It was noted that Herrick Hall, where the meeting took place, was named after Fr. Michael Herrick—the first full-time priest of St. Matthew; Founders' Hall is a parallel to this, being named after the founding members of St Matthew.
  - Founders' Hall has seen many improvements, from painting, to lighting, to excellent woodwork by Mark Kotz.

## Addendum #2 — President's Report

- We all have time, talents, and treasures that we are able to contribute for the betterment of St Matthew. There's something for everyone to do!
  - Those who lack one or two of these can focus on one of the areas they do have, and use that to make St Matthew the best community and church that it can be.
- The library has moved to Founders' Hall, allowing for the bookstore to double in size.
- As many of the incumbents are term-limited after this term, Parish Council will need new members.
  - "Understudies", who attend Parish Council meetings to gain a greater understanding of what happens, are encouraged. Specifically, shadowing the President and the Treasurer may be fruitful for those wishing to take the position in the future.
- St Matthew has seen tremendous growth and generosity.
  - Many parishes, even some our size, are unable to pay a full-time priest, but we are well within our means to do so.
  - We have world-class iconography, and the plan is essentially complete, minus the iconostasis, which is set to be completed within the year.
    - The Iconography Fund has a surplus, which means that we have less fundraising to do for the iconostasis expenses.
    - Not only would new icons bring our church up to standard, allowing our church building to potentially be consecrated in the future, but they would also match the rest of our icons aesthetically.
      - A question was posed as to the necessity of replacing all 6 icons, rather than the two needed for consecration in the future. It was noted that replacing all six of them keeps the iconostasis looking aesthetically pleasing and similar to the rest of our icons, and that the icons we receive for the iconostasis will be exceptionally detailed, making it worth the cost.
      - In response to a question, it was noted that consecration is a future plan, and, if it does occur, it will not alter liturgical practice, including when the Bishop is visiting.
    - In response to a question, it was noted that there is no liturgical requirement for the iconostasis to entirely block the view of the altar, and that our current one works well for our parish.
- The lighter blue chairs with the silver-colored frames, which have reached end-of-life, will be replaced by plastic chairs, which are easier to maintain. The new "buy a chair" campaign encourages members of St Matthew to contribute \$30 (the cost of each new chair) to this project.
- Things are generally going very well, and members are encouraged to keep doing what they're doing, while also looking for any other opportunities to improve the parish.

### Addendum #3 — Treasurer's Report

- It was noted that last year saw a large surplus.
  - This surplus allowed loans, including on the roof, to be paid off, and also helped with paying down debts before refinancing.
- The Iconography Fund was able to entirely pay off the iconography project, with a surplus remaining in the fund. This surplus will be used for new iconostasis icons, as noted previously.
- Funds were used to complete and upgrade several maintenance projects, such as:
  - New blinds
  - New siding
  - The conversion of the large room upstairs into Founders' Hall
    - It was noted that everyone is encouraged to use Founders' Hall! It is a multi-use room, suitable for any appropriate use.
- A new vanity (sink & cabinet) may be required in the womens' restroom in the future. New paint may also be considered.
- The proposed budget includes a 35% increase in ministries.
  - The goal is that, as ongoing commitments are settled and maintenance projects are completed, 10% of our receipts can be dedicated to this line item.
  - Increasing seminarian support (for the Sarsamă family at this time) is a focus.
- The proposed budget does not ask for an increase in receipts—just notes how we will be spending money differently this year.
- The mortgage will be 10 years old next May.
  - \$260,000 was borrowed originally.
    - Selling the lot next door helped pay down some of this cost.
  - We have paid an excess of the required premium for 9 years straight, putting us in a good position for the future.
  - The original goal was to settle the debt within 15 years, but, as expenses have suddenly been incurred (such as on the roof replacement), some of these have added to the balance.
    - Tom believes we can get fairly close to this.
  - We currently owe approximately \$150,000, and the goal is to pay \$2,500/month.
    - It was noted that it's not always bad to borrow against equity, if the rates are favorable and it makes sense. However, as we are nearly guaranteed to see an increase of rate once required to refinance, it is important to pay down the remaining balance to the best of our ability.
- We clean our own church, and volunteers take care of our building, reducing expenses.
- P42 contributions are encouraged, as, if everyone did it, we could settle the mortgage within 5 years.
- It was noted, after a question, that the budget would be amended slightly, to accommodate the iconostasis expenditures.

Addendum #3a — 2025 Budget, as amended

<b>2025 Budget SMOC 01/08/2025</b>						
	<b>Income</b>	<b>2023 Actual</b>	<b>2024 Budget</b>	<b>2024 Actuals</b>	<b>2025 Budget</b>	notes
1	Weekly Contributions	\$106,287	\$110,000	\$130,280	\$130,000	
2	13th Month	\$1,920	\$2,000	\$760	\$0	
3	<i>Sub-total Contributions</i>	\$106,287	\$113,500	\$131,040	\$130,000	
4	Candles and loose cash contributions	\$8,785	\$8,000	\$11,233	\$12,000	directed to P42
5	Building Repairs & Maintenance	\$20,533	\$10,000	\$20,542	\$10,000	\$5100 to roof loan
6	Book Store	\$4,460	\$5,000	\$5,414	\$6,000	
7	Project 42	\$11,022	\$14,400	\$11,579	\$18,000	\$5000 to roof loan
8	Local Ministries	\$3,253	\$6,000	\$4,453	\$8,600	HOH,AA&A,St Johns, Martin, Red +, meals
9	Benevolence	\$925	\$2400	\$3620	\$3,600	large increase statistically
10	OCMC/IOCC world missions	\$1,200	\$1200	\$1200	\$1,200	\$50/\$50 monthly
11	Seminarian/Diaconate Support	\$2,400	\$4600	\$5,400	\$6,000	Sarsama Family \$4200 2025. Deacons
12	iconography project	\$19,565	\$30000	\$25876	\$4,000	\$60,000 on hand to be complete in 2025
12	Roof Project	\$0	\$0	\$14562	\$0	completed and loan paid off in 2024.\$32k
14	Fundraiser	\$3,627	\$3,700	\$3,449	\$3,500	Proceeds to ministries =\$3000.00
15	Legacy/Endowment Fund	\$10,800	\$3,000	\$1,500	\$2,000	\$5000 to roof loan
16	<i>Total Income</i>	\$239,868	\$201,500	\$236,483	\$204,900	
17	<b>Expenses</b>					
18	Priest Salary - Housing, Pension, Insurance	\$71,750	\$76,000	\$75,958	\$82,000	COLA and pension increase per OCA Policy
19	Diocesan Assessment	\$15,753	\$14,500	\$14,494	\$16,000	

20	Mortgage and Parking lot loan	\$20,500	\$18,000	15809	\$30,000	Goal to pay \$2500.00 a month
21	Property Insurance	\$8,320	\$9,000	\$7,980	\$9,000	
22	Phone and Internet	\$1,609	\$1,600	\$1,632	\$2,000	
23	Water	\$1,825	\$1,900	\$1,975	\$2,000	
24	WPS	\$2,090	3,600	2,950	\$3,000	
25	Lawn / snow plowing	\$4,045	\$4,250	\$5,355	\$5,000	
26	Building Repairs & Maint. Sidewalk assess	\$5,705	\$10,000	\$41,875	\$10,000	Roof project was \$32,000. L&E,P42,BFund
27	Candles and recurring supplies	\$2,630	\$3,000	\$5,336	\$6,000	Candle \$4136. Zoom,Toner, etc
28	Bookstore	\$4,915	\$5,000	\$4,361	\$5,000	Paid for book study, summer school costs
29	AAC / Assemblies - travel / Bishop	\$2,255	\$3,000	\$1,450	\$3,000	AAC in 2025
30	Web site & accounting and bank fees	\$2,236	\$2250	\$3,605	\$3,500	Roof loan fees were \$755.00
31	Liturgical Supplies/Summer Church School	\$1,385	\$2500	\$1,800	\$2,000	
32	Ministry Team Initiatives	\$1,200	\$2,400.0	\$3,042	\$5,000	Shelter meals, Wilson, Red Cross, etc
33	IOCC/OCMC	\$2,100	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$1,200	GeneralFund IOCC/OCMC \$50/\$50 monthly
34	House of Hope/AA Alexandria/St Johns	\$1,900	\$3600	\$3,600	\$3,600	\$300 a qtr HOH/ AA&A/ St Johns for 2024
35	Benevolence	\$925	\$2400	\$3,500	\$3,600	
36	Admin / flowers/postage	\$2,987	\$3000	\$1,355	\$2,000	
37	Fundraiser Supplies	\$362	\$1000	\$618	\$1,000	
38	Seminarian / Choir / Deacon/ Readers	\$4,500	\$4,600	\$5,350	\$6,000	Seminarian \$4200/Chapels/Deacon \$1800
39	Iconography expense	\$500	\$30,000	\$600	\$63,500	\$60,000 on hand to be completed 2025
40	<i>Total Expenses</i>	\$159,755	\$201,300	\$203,545	\$264,400	

41	Income	\$193,107	\$201,300	\$236,483	\$204,900	
42	Income / loss	\$46,115	\$20,807	\$32,938	\$0	Operating cash\$21,350/\$59,785 Icon