

ARCHDIOCESE OF PITTSBURGH AND WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

MINUTES – 2020-2021 ARCHDIOCESAN ASSEMBLY

Saturday, June 26, 2021 ~ St. Nicholas Church ~ DuBois, PA

The annual assembly of the Archdiocese of Pittsburgh was held on Saturday, June 26, at Saint Nicholas Church, Du Bois Pennsylvania. The Assembly of Hierarchy, clergy and laity opened with the celebration of the Holy Liturgy, with His Eminence, Archbishop MELCHISEDEK, presiding, co-served by Chancellor, Archpriest William J. Evansky, Eastern Dean Archpriest Mark Meholick, other diocesan deans, and other deanery clergy. Following a light meal, the business portion of the assembly was called to order by the Hierarchy at 11:30 am.

1. CREDENTIALS REPORT

1 Hierarchy

12 priests

5 deacons

5 Archdiocesan Council Members

16 lay delegates

4 alternates

2 observers

Total Attendance: 45 Total Votes: 39 19 parishes represented.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRS AND SECRETARIAT

A. Clergy Vice Chair: Father Thomas Soroka nominated by Father Andrew Nelko

B. Lay Chair: Gregory Ohler nominated by Protodeacon Alexander Cadman

C. Clergy Secretary: Father Michael Senyo appointed by the Hierarchy

D. Lay Secretary: Dr John Schulz nominated by Gregory Sidorick

ALL AFFIRMED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of the 2019 Assembly were previously distributed.

There were no additions or corrections.

MOTION: “ To approve the 2019 Archdiocesan Assembly minutes as presented.” Made by Protodeacon David Rostcheck. Seconded by Deacon Seraphim Truckley. MOTION PASSED

4. HIERARCHY’S REPORT

One ordination to the diaconate (Dn. John Skowron) – attached to St. Nicholas parish, McKees Rocks. A majority of parish communities have been visited since the last assembly. Covid responses and directives were adapted to local parish situations and needs, and there were no major outbreaks within our parish communities. Two parishes have been closed: Masontown and Moundsville. The Masontown property is currently under contract. The Moundsville property has been sold. Growth within the Archdiocese can be observed via the LPAP program (Jeannette), the purchase of new building and property by Saint Nicholas parish in Dubois, and the initial phases of a mission parish in Waynesburg. The Annual Parish Forum will be held remotely this year. Education programs, seminars and retreats were postponed due to pandemic concerns, and are expected to be reorganized and resumed in the near future. The recent meeting of the Synod of Bishops was the first “in person” meeting held in well over one year. A new vicar bishop for the Diocese of the South, Archimandrite Gerasim, was elected.

5. CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

Report was distributed electronically. Copy Filed. Archpriest William J. Evansky greeted the delegates. He explained his daily tasks as prime administrator and advisor to the Hierarchy. He urged parishes to be diligent in updating the parish by-laws, so as to be in conformance with the Statute of the Orthodox Church in America and the By-Laws of the Archdiocese of Pittsburgh and Western PA – both having been updated during the past several years. He reminded the delegates that any parish's outdated by-laws in conflict with the OCA Statute and the Archdiocesan by-laws are superseded by these documents. He admonished parishes lacking in their attentiveness to update records and reports. The Chancellor also stressed the need for attentiveness to salaries and benefits for the clergy – including a minimum 3% cost of living raise annually. He also discussed the need for parishes to be aware of the OCA guidelines concerning computation of clergy salaries and benefits; it is most difficult to attract (or keep) clergy when these parish "packages" are substantially inferior to those offered by other OCA dioceses nationally and locally by other jurisdictions. He discussed the pilot LPAP initiative at Saints Cyril and Methodius parish in Jeannette. He discussed issues involved with parish closures and procedures related to parish closures, which underscored the need for accurate records, meetings, and up to date by laws.

6. TREASURER'S REPORT

Reports was distributed electronically, and copies filed.

Treasurer Alexis Parshook reported that all parishes that were in arrears with their obligations are now current.

Loans were extended to the chapel in Beavertown and the parish in DuBois.

MOTION: "To accept the Financial Report as presented." Made by Archpriest Elijah Bremer, Seconded by Priest David Smith. MOTION PASSED

MOTION: "To align the financial reports with the regular fiscal year." Made by Protodeacon Alexander Cadman, Second by Archpriest Elijah Bremer. MOTION PASSED.

7. AUDIT REPORT

Report was distributed electronically. Copy filed.

MOTION: "To accept the Audit Report." Made by Mr. Ray Steeb, Second by Priest Andrew P. Nelko. MOTION PASSED.

8. DEANS'/COMMITTEE/DEPARTMENT REPORTS

All department/Deanery reports were distributed electronically. Opportunities were offered to review and discuss each report. Father Thomas Soroka spoke on the use of the charitable funds to assist the ailing Igumen Patrick. Reports were accepted as presented.

9. BUDGET

The proposed budget was distributed electronically. Copy filed.

Proposed changes to the presented budget:

- a. The line item AAC Funding be removed from both the Expense and Income sections.
- b. A \$1,000.00 donation to the Holy Transfiguration Monastery in Ellwood City be made by the Archdiocese in memory of Metropolitan THEODOSIUS. This will be placed under the Expense Section titled Special Events. There was no corresponding addition to the Income Section.
- c. A \$1,000.00 donation to St. Tikhon Monastery be made by the Archdiocese in memory of Archbishop DAVID (a son of the Diocese). This will be placed under the Expense Section titled Special Events. There was no corresponding addition to the Income Section.
- d. Items b. and c. will change the Net Income/(loss) to (6,862.00)

ALL CHANGES ACCEPTED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT

MOTION: “To accept the Proposed Budget as amended.” Made by Archpriest Mark Meholick, Second by Ms. Imogene Muto. MOTION PASSED.

Discussion: Protodeacon Alexander Cadman requested that the funds needed for background checks be absorbed by the Archdiocese and not the individual parishes. The chancellor stated that will be taken under advisement by the hierarchy, diocesan administration, and the Archdiocesan Council for the future.

10. NEW BUSINESS

A. Archdiocesan Funding Method

There was extensive discussion regarding the method of funding the budget of the Archdiocese. The current method is set to expire this year.

MOTION: “That the current method of funding the Archdiocesan Budget be extended until July 2023.” Made by Mr. Ray Steeb. Second by Priest Nikolai Breckenridge. MOTION PASSED.

11. ELECTIONS

A. Election of Internal Auditors

The Chancellor offered two appointments to serve on the auditing committee: Archpriest Elijah Bremer and Mr. Paul Dille.

MOTION: “ To elect Archpriest Elijah Bremer and Mr. Paul Dille as members of the Internal Auditing Committee.” Made by Protodeacon John Oleynik . Second by Mr. Ray Steeb. MOTION PASSED.

12. MOTION TO ADJOURN

MOTION: “To adjourn the 2020-201 Archdiocesan Assembly.” Made by Priest Andrew P. Nelko, Seconded by Priest Ignatius Hunter. MOTION PASSED.

The meeting closed with prayer at 2:30 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Archpriest Michael Senyo
Clergy Recording Secretary

Dr. John P. Schultz
Laity Recording Secretary

Approved:

The Most Reverend MELCHISEDEK
Archbishop of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania

Archpriest William J. Evansky
Chancellor – Archdiocese of
Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania