

**MINUTES OF THE DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY
OF THE DIOCESE OF NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY,
ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA**

Wednesday, November 2, 2022

The clergy and lay delegates of the Diocese of New York and New Jersey met for the annual Diocesan Assembly, on Wednesday, November 3, 2022. The Assembly was held at Saints Peter and Paul Orthodox Church, Endicott, New York.

Prior to the convening of the Assembly business session, His Eminence ARCHBISHOP MICHAEL celebrated the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy, with His Grace BISHOP ALEXEI, Bishop of Sitka and the Diocese of Alaska, and Diocesan officer clergy members concelebrating.

The Assembly was opened with the singing of “O Heavenly King” at 1:05 PM. “Memory Eternal” was intoned by Archbishop MICHAEL for all the clergy and matushki of the Diocese who have reposed in the Lord since the last Diocesan Assembly.

Appointments

His Eminence Archbishop MICHAEL announced the following officers appointed for the Diocesan Assembly:

- V. Rev. JOSEPH LICKWAR (SS. Peter and Paul Church, Jersey City, NJ), Clergy Vice Chair
- Mr. JAMES KORNAFEL (SS. Peter and Paul Church, South River NJ), Lay Vice Chair
- Rev. JOHN MORRIS (Christ the Saviour Church, Paramus, NJ), Secretariat
- Archdeacon MICHAEL SUVAK (Holy Virgin Protection Cathedral, New York, NY), Lay Secretariat
- Mrs. TRUDY ELLMORE (Holy Cross Church, Medford, NJ), Lay Secretariat
- V. Rev. STEPHEN EVANINA (Holy Resurrection Church, Wayne, NJ), Credentials Monitor
- V. Rev. DAVID GARRETSON (SS. Peter and Paul Church, South River, NJ), Credentials Monitor
- Rev. JOEL BRADY (Holy Apostles Mission, Lansing, NY), Ballot Tabulator
- Dn. STEPHAN KARLGUT (SS. Peter and Paul Church, Endicott NY), Ballot Tabulator

Address of the Diocesan Hierarchy

V. Rev. JOSEPH LICKWAR then introduced Archbishop MICHAEL, for whom “Eis Polla” was sung.

His Eminence presented his Address to the Assembly.

Approval of the Minutes of the 2021 Diocesan Assembly

MOTION: Archbishop MICHAEL entertained a motion to accept the Minutes of the 2021 Diocesan Assembly. V. Rev. DAVID GARRETSON (SS. Peter and Paul Church, South River NJ), made a motion to accept the 2021 Diocesan Assembly minutes. The motion was seconded by V. Rev. STEPHEN EVANINA (Holy Resurrection Church, Wayne NJ). There were no comments.

The motion passed unanimously, by vocal acclamation.

Report of the Credentials Monitor

V. Rev. JOSEPH LICKWAR invited V. Rev. STEPHEN EVANINA, the Credentials Monitor, to give his report. Father Stephen reported the following:

Hierarch	2
Clergy	34
Lay Delegates	17
Observers	6
Total Participants	59

It was determined that there were sufficient numbers for a quorum.

OLD BUSINESS

Report of the Treasurer – Mrs. JAN VAN DUYN Presentation and Approval of 2022 Financials

V. Rev. JOSEPH LICKWAR invited Mrs. JAN VAN DUYN (St. John the Baptist Church, Rochester NY), Diocesan Treasurer, to offer the Treasurer’s Report, covering January 1 to September 30, 2022 – nine months of the year. Seventy-eight percent (78%) of parish tithes have been sent to the Diocese. Income and expenses are at seventy-five percent (75%) of budget. All financials are posted monthly on the Diocesan website. She reported there are six (6) Diocesan-supported seminarians currently enrolled at St. Tikhon’s Seminary. She invited comments or questions.

Question by V. Rev. DAVID GARRETSON: Why was unrealized loss taken out of income? Were any income accounts liquidated?

Answer: No accounts were liquidated. We are going to change how unrealized losses are presented next year, to provide more clarity.

Question by V. Rev. JONATHAN IVANOFF (St. John the Theologian Church, Shirley NY): What does the \$94,000 indicate on the line noted as Youth, Music, Educational retreats?

Answer: That \$94,000 is a stray number on the printout; this will be corrected. The amount of \$94,000, where it properly appears on the Financial Report, is the subtotal of the “actual” transfers out of Distinguished Diocesan Benefactor funds to cover the expenses for Parish Revitalization, Seminarian Scholarships, Mission Establishment, and As-Needed ministry expenditures, i.e., the ministry categories designated by DDB donors.

Report of the Diocesan Auditors – Archimandrite JOSEPH (HOFFMAN), Dn. DAVID MALINIAK, and Mrs. JESSICA ELIZABETH ANGHEL

V. Rev. JOSEPH LICKWAR called upon the Diocesan Auditors to make their presentation.

Archimandrite JOSEPH (HOFFMAN) (Transfiguration Church, Pearl River NY) of the Diocesan Auditors reported on behalf of Mrs. ELIZABETH ANGHEL who was unable to attend the Assembly. Mrs. ANGHEL's report read:

“The Internal audit of the Diocese of New York and New Jersey financial statements of 10/1/21 through 9/30/22: Based on my audit of financial statements, the financial position of the Diocese is good. As of 09/30/22, I found the books to be in good standing.”

MOTION: Matushka SHIRLEY LICKWAR (SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Jersey City NJ) made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report, the Auditors' Report, and the 2022 Financial Reports, seconded by V. Rev. GARY BRETON (Annunciation Church, Brick, NJ). There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Invited Guest Speaker

His Eminence Archbishop MICHAEL introduced His Grace, the Right Reverend ALEXEI, Bishop of Sitka and the Diocese of Alaska, who presented “The History and the Present Needs of the Diocese of Alaska.”

Question by V. Rev. PETER OLSEN (St. Basil Church, Watervliet NY): Would Your Grace be willing to share a digital copy of your talk with the parishes and provide a periodic online update on progress toward the goals you articulated? People do not understand that Alaska is the Mother Diocese of our Church.

Answer: Yes, those can all be done.

Question by V. Rev. MICHAEL MEERSON (Christ the Savior Church, New York City NY): Can the information you have shared be posted to the OCA website?

Answer: Yes, it will be posted on the OCA website and will be sent to all the priests of the OCA.

His Grace, Bishop ALEXEI, had to leave the meeting.

His Eminence Archbishop MICHAEL called for a 15 minute break at 3:00 PM.

His Eminence Archbishop MICHAEL reconvened the meeting at 3:15 PM.

Reports of Diocesan Officers, Departments and Institutions

The following reports had been distributed electronically prior to the Diocesan Assembly; some were presented with highlights by the persons reporting. Mr. JAMES KORNAFEL invited each department head who had submitted the above reports to give highlights and entertain questions.

- Report of the Chancellor (V. Rev. JOSEPH LICKWAR)
- Reports of the Deans:
 - New Jersey (V. Rev. GARY JOSEPH BRETON)
 - New York City (V. Rev. WIACZESLAW KRAWCZUK)
 - New York State (V. Rev. ALEXEY KARLGUT)
- Metropolitan Council Representatives (Archimandrite JOSEPH (HOFFMAN) and Mr. JAMES KORNAFEL) offered the following comments on their report:
 - Since the posting of the latest report on the OCA website, a meeting was held in the new OCA Chancery offices in Washington, DC. It was the first time the whole Council has met in-house.

- A survey taken following the 20th All-American Council (AAC) in July 2022 returned 325 responses. Most comments were positive. The most frequently mentioned negative comment was that there was not enough focus on the theme of the AAC.
- The 2025 AAC will most likely be in the western part of the country, but no specific place has been chosen.
- The OCA Chancery property in Syosset, NY has not been sold. The Property Committee is looking at more options.
- Moving the OCA Archives: The contract with St. Vladimir's Seminary to house the OCA Archives was signed in late June 2022. Construction has begun in the Florovsky Library to house the archives. The archives are currently being packed.
- OCA Treasurer Report: Income is behind, but expenses are down as well. The OCA Budget for fiscal year 2022-2023 was approved.
- Pension Board: The Metropolitan Council members were given a comprehensive report on the status of the OCA Pension Plan. A Pension Board representative was in attendance. A joint statement between the Pension Board and the Metropolitan Council was placed on the OCA website. An increase of two percent (2%) in the contribution of the parish or employer toward the pension of the clergyman or employee is mandated, beginning January 2023.

On behalf of himself and Archimandrite JOSEPH (HOFFMAN), Mr. KORNAFEL expressed thanks to His Eminence and the Diocese for allowing them to serve on the Metropolitan Council.

Question: V. Rev. STEPHEN EVANINA – In your deliberations about moving the Chancery, did you experience a lot of opposition to the move? And how did they rationalize moving without selling the property?

Answer: With respect to the first part of the question, there was some opposition but for the most part the idea of the move was welcomed. The Metropolitan felt that, in conformity with canonical tradition, he needed to dwell in his Diocese. We do not know the answer to the second part of the question, since it was discussed in Executive Session.

- Reports of the Diocesan Departments and Institutions:
 - Office of Communications (V. Rev. VOLODYMYR ZABLITSKY, Director of Diocesan Communications; Holy Trinity Church, Yonkers NY)
 - Commission on Liturgical Music – V. Rev. DANIEL SKVIR (Chapel of the Transfiguration, Princeton NJ), Matushka DOREEN BARTHOLOMEW (Our Lady of Kazan Church, Sea Cliff NY), Ms. CAROL WETMORE (Holy Trinity Church, Randolph NJ)
 - Commission on Mission and Evangelism (V. Rev. ERIC GEORGE TOSI, Commission Chair; St. Gregory the Theologian Church, Wappingers Falls NY)
 - Department of Youth Ministry – Ms. DANIELLE GEEZA, Department Director, was not able to be present; she is temporarily residing in Chicago. V. Rev. DAVID COWAN gave highlights of her report.
 - Department of Christian Education (Matushka TAMARA COWAN, Department Director)
 - Diocesan Publication, *Jacob's Well* (Presbyter MATTHEW BROWN, Director; St. Mary Magdalen Church, New York NY)
 - Saint Andrew's Camp (Matushka TAMARA COWAN, Program Director and Ms. DARIA YORK, Director)
 - Diocesan PSP Compliance Report (Rev. JOEL BRADY; Holy Apostles Mission, Lansing NY)

- Father Joel, who was appointed to this position in 2022, explained that once persons are in the system for background checks, the checks are automatically done every three years. However, when people leave positions, the database needs to be updated to stop their automatic background checks. This helps avoid unwanted fees. Parish priests are asked to send in names of those newly assigned to parish leadership positions where background checks are required, and to also submit the names of those who are no longer in those positions.
- Question: V. Rev. SAMUEL KEDALA (Retired) – Who exactly needs a background check?
 - Answer: Background checks are required for any adult in the parish who is working with children in any capacity in the parish, and any adult who has liturgical responsibilities.
- Blessed Matushka Olga Ministry: Matushka DENNISE KRAUS (Lay Director) was invited to speak on the new ministry. The initiative was born out of a need to minister, in particular, to women – to provide resources for women struggling with an unplanned pregnancy, pregnancy loss, infertility, abortion, sexual trauma, abuse, pregnancy, adoption and parenting.

NEW BUSINESS

Election of Deans

His Eminence, Archbishop MICHAEL announced the results for the Election of Deans. They are as follows:

New York State Deanery
 New York City Deanery
 New Jersey Deanery

V. Rev. ALEXEY KARLGUT
 V. Rev. WIACZESLAW KRAWCZUK
 V. Rev. GARY JOSEPH BRETON

Election of Members of the Diocesan Council

Mr. JAMES KORNAFEL announced that the current terms of the Diocesan Council Members, Metropolitan Council Representatives, and Diocesan Auditors have expired, and elections need to be held. Members of the Diocesan Council and the Auditing Committee are all eligible for re-election. However, the Metropolitan Council Representatives have reached their term limits, so new Metropolitan Council Representatives need to be elected.

Nomination of Diocesan Council Members

MOTION: V. Rev. ALEXEY KARLGUT, (second) V. Rev. DAVID COWAN to nominate V. Rev. PETER OLSEN as New York State Clergy and Mrs. MARIE GIOKAS as New York State Lay representatives.

MOTION: V. Rev. WIACZESLAW KRAWCZUK, (second) V. Rev. DAVID GARRETSON to nominate V. Rev. MARTIN KRAUS as New York City Clergy and Mr. GEORGE ELIA as New York City Lay representatives.

MOTION: V. Rev. GARY JOSEPH BRETON, (second) V. Rev. JOSEPH LICKWAR to nominate V. Rev. STEPHEN EVANINA as New Jersey Clergy and Mrs. TRUDY ELLMORE as New Jersey Lay representatives.

There were no additional nominations from the floor.

Mr. KORNAFEL called for a vote on the slate of nominees for Diocesan Council members. All nominees were elected unanimously by vocal acclamation.

Nomination of Diocesan Representatives to the Metropolitan Council

MOTION: The Diocesan Council nominated V. Rev. DAVID GARRETSON (Clergy) and Mr. MITCHELL VAN DUYN (Lay) to serve as Diocesan Representatives to the Metropolitan Council.

Mr. KORNAFEL asked for nominations from the floor for Clergy or Lay Representatives to the Metropolitan Council. Archimandrite JOSEPH (HOFFMAN) nominated V. Rev. ALEXEY KARLGUT (Clergy). Father KARLGUT respectfully declined the nomination.

There were no additional nominations from the floor.

Mr. KORNAFEL called for a vote on the slate of nominees for Metropolitan Council Representatives. All nominees were elected unanimously by vocal acclamation.

Election of Auditing Committee Members

MOTION: The Diocesan Chancellor, V. Rev. JOSEPH LICKWAR, nominated Mrs. JESSICA ELIZABETH ANGHEL to serve on the Auditing Committee.

MOTION: The Diocesan Council nominated Deacon DAVID MALINIAK (Christ the Saviour Church, Paramus NJ) and Archimandrite JOSEPH (HOFFMAN) to serve on the Auditing Committee.

There were no additional nominations from the floor.

Mr. KORNAFEL called for a vote on the slate of nominees for Diocesan Auditing Committee Members. All nominees were elected unanimously by vocal acclamation.

Adoption of the 2023 Budget

The Treasurer of the Diocese, Mrs. JAN VAN DUYN, presented the Proposed 2023 Budget.

Question: Dn. ALEXANDER ANDERSON (SS. Peter and Paul Church, Syracuse NY) – I note that employee stipends have been raised by about 4.5 percent. Has consideration been given to raising them further, keeping pace with the recently released CPI data reflecting current inflation?

Answer: Yes. The Diocesan Council feels it will be more sustainable to give smaller, incremental raises over a few years, rather than one large increase at this time.

MOTION: Matushka MARY BULETZA-BRETON (Annunciation Church, Brick NJ), (second) V. Rev. STEPHEN EVANINA, to accept the 2023 Budget as presented.

There was no additional discussion.

The motion carried unanimously, by vocal acclamation.

His Eminence, ARCHBISHOP MICHAEL noted that the DDB Program is the way in which the Diocese has been able to accomplish its ministries and activities beyond administrative operations.

Diocesan Charity Appeal for 2023

His Eminence, ARCHBISHOP MICHAEL proposed that the Assembly adopt, as the Diocesan-wide Charity Initiative for 2023, financial support for the Diocese of Alaska Clergy Stipend Fund, as described by His Grace, Bishop Alexei during his earlier presentation.

MOTION: V. Rev. JOSEPH LICKWAR, (second) V. Rev. ERIC GEORGE TOSI (St. Gregory the Theologian Church, Wappingers Falls NY), made a motion to adopt the Diocese of Alaska Clergy Stipend Fund as our Diocesan Charity Appeal for 2023.

There was no discussion. The motion carried unanimously.

His Eminence, ARCHBISHOP MICHAEL invited Matushka MARY BRETON to make comments regarding the Pension Board. Matushka Mary urged parishes to send in their mandated pension contributions promptly and in one consolidated payment for all Pension participants in the parish.

Other New Business

There being no additional new business, ARCHBISHOP MICHAEL thanked V. Rev. ALEXEY KARLGUT and the faithful of SS. Peter and Paul Church for hosting the Diocesan Assembly.

His Eminence announced the following appointments.

Chancellor	V. Rev. JOSEPH LICKWAR
Vice-Chancellor	V. Rev. DAVID COWAN
Diocesan Treasurer	Mrs. JAN VAN DUYN
Assistant to the Treasurer	Mrs. STEPHANIE BURK
Diocesan Secretary	Rev. MATTHEW BROWN
Diocesan Council Secretary	Mrs. TRUDY ELLMORE

The Installation of Deans, Diocesan Council Members, Metropolitan Council Representatives, and Auditing Committee Members, and Appointed Officers

Archbishop Michael called forward the newly elected and appointed Deans, Diocesan Council Members, Metropolitan Council Representatives, Auditing Committee Members and Appointed Officers. He administered the Oath and blessed all members with Holy Water.

Next Diocesan Assembly

The 2023 Diocesan Assembly will be held at SS. Peter and Paul Orthodox Church, South River, NJ on Thursday and Friday, November 2 and 3, 2023.

Adjournment

MOTION: All Diocesan business having been concluded, Matushka SHIRLEY LICKWAR, seconded by Mrs. JAN VAN DUYN moved that the Assembly be adjourned.

The motion carried unanimously by vocal acclamation.

The 2022 Diocesan Assembly was closed with the prayer, “It Is Truly Meet” and the intoning of “Many Years” by His Eminence, ARCHBISHOP MICHAEL.

Respectfully submitted,
Mrs. Trudy Ellmore
Diocesan Council Secretary