

# **St. George's Upper Darby, PA 2024 Parish Annual Meeting Minutes**

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+ Fr. Joel opened leading the assembly in prayer

## **Call to Order at 12:40 Sunday, February 04, 2024**

+ MOTION to accept Minutes from 2023 Parish Assembly

1. Joe Solomon Sr
2. Kerry San Chirico

### **❖ I: Parish Priest Report -Sacraments and Service** (Fr. Joel)

- New families- welcoming new Catechumens and likely Chrismations this year
- Twelve Baskets Project and contributing to local food bank ( Upper Darby ) and participating in FOCUS group forming to serve the greater Philadelphia area all part of St George's Philanthropic mission
- SOYO → Xmas cookies to neighbors and outreach well received in the community
- Growth in the number of Sunday School students a blessing but will need added space and financial resources will increase
- Icons- continued projects and additions will be forthcoming
- QUESTIONS
  - **Kerry S:** Where to find audit/records of Diocese Finances
  - Fr. Joel: Might be published in Word magazine

### **❖ II: PC Chair** (Gary S. [Vice Chair] for Alex I absent from the meeting)

- Thank you- particularly to Alex Ibrahim for his outstanding leadership along with Tony Nasr, Joe Solomon - younger and older for their hard work and dedication to parish improvement
- We are all encouraged to be " good stewards "
- Share your skills
  - Ghassan Haddad for engineering work
  - Tony Nasar for financial management and budget
  - Marsha Ibriham for legal advice
  - Readers, Greeters, Ministry Team
  - Coffee Hour help (thank you Michael, Ibrahim Faris, Lucy, and Issac etc)
  - Solomon family for fixing things

\* With Growth of the parish there is a growth in needs - parking, Sunday School Space , coffee hour volunteers - all good problems

\*Please note that the Parish Council has approved a housing stipend for Fr Joel to move out the rectory

\*Use of the rectory space to be determined - Long Range Planning

### ❖ III: Treasurer Report (Tony N.)

- Packet/detailed report available on request and presented on slide show
- Gross: \$211,018.14
- Expense: 243,245.24
- Plant improvements - new HVAC units and renovations/construction of women's and men's bathroom responsible for the gap - projects have been fully paid for with existing funds
- QUESTION
  - **Gary S.:** Refer document handed out - available upon request from the office
  - **Tony N.:** This other document is the packet/detailed report
- MOTION to accept Treasury Report
  1. Gary S.
  2. Sheri S.

### ❖ IV: Budget (Tony N.)

- \$262,000 for 2024 Budget
- QUESTIONS
  - **Matt G.:** clarify about \$262,000 increase
  - **Tony N.:** Housing stipend for Fr. Joel and family, also list of other projects
  - **Gary S.** How long does the discount switching from PECO to other electric company last?
  - **Tony N.:** Good until at least November 2024
  - **Bobby D :** OPEX vs FUND accounts- questions
  - **Tony N.:** OPEX locked for about 3-6 months range to use for ER funds

### ❖ V: Ministry Reports

#### 1. MUSIC

- **Chanting** –ProtoPsalti- ( head chanter ) - Anastasia Nicoloudakis- -

Life long experience growing up in the Orthodox faith and Priest's daughter

2024 goals to have workshops before or after Vespers

FWIW <https://antiochain.org/liturgicday>- translation used for vespers, matins and other services

Thanks expressed to clergy, Khamis and choir

**-Choir Director's Report - Karen Burke**

Choir has grown in numbers and knowledge of our sacred music hymnography and Byzantine traditions

-joyful to hear participation from parishioners during services

- encouraging anyone with a desire to join or inquire about choir -see Karen - no previous formal training required

-rehearsal schedule outlined

-planning more participation with Sunday School children particularly in preparation for the Nativity

**2. Icon Committee (Caroline Becker )**

Icons of Saint David of Wales and Saint Moses the Black have arrived and will be placed in their appropriate areas in the near future

Funds for the following icons have been commissioned :

- i. St.. John Maximovitch
- ii. St. John of Damascus
- iii. St. Jacob of Hamatoura
- iv. St. Thekla
- v. St. Hripsime
- vi. St. Gregory of Armenia
- vii. St. Panteleimon

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**3, Long Term Planning (Joe Solomon Jr.)**

Survey of 32 parishioners regarding highest priorities for improvement

Extremely Important -Parking Lot expansion- 45% ,Handicap Accessibility/ Elevator

Installation

55 %, Sunday School Classroom Facility Improvement -23%,Great Hall Renovation 32%, ,East Wall Icon Project - 32% Upstairs Bathroom Installation - 3 %

- Review of necessity and challenges of each of these items reviewed and discussed -
- Note - 2 HVAC units replaced in 2023 and 2 more are in need of replacement

**4. Stewardship ( Jerome Burke )**

-Saint George cannot function if we only participate in church life once per week on Sundays from 10:30 to 12:00

-Many opportunities to share our time and talents - choir, chanting, reading the epistle, greeter, coffee hour help, food bank , 12 Baskets, Icon, St Katherine Women, volunteer on clean up days to name a few

-contributions to St George - with annual goal should be prayerful considered by all parishioners keeping in mind ongoing personnel expenses an upkeep of our church is nearly 100 years old

**5. Sunday School ( Caroline Becker - acting director )**

Number of Sunday school students is growing rapidly, especially in early grades .  
Adequate space for teaching is a challenge

Sunday School Teachers and Teacher Aides - always welcome

**6. Hospitality Ministry** (chairperson to be determined )

Activities include Annual Spring and Fall Picnics, Annual Trunk & Treat and Chilli Cookoff

**7. Adult Christian Education** ( Kerry San Chirico )

-Winter 2023-" Life of Moses " by St Gregory of Nyssa reviewed

-Spring 2023 - Lenten Retreat -" Into All the World " - exploring aspects of Orthodoxy in diverse areas of the world such as Kenya and East Asia

-Book group for early 2024 -" The Way of the Pilgrim " translated by Olga Savin

**8. Young Families Ministry** ( Matt Gordon)

Mission -To integrate families more fully into the life of the church and to strengthen and equip parents to raise children in the Orthodox Faith

- Launched fall 2023 with monthly Family Vespers and potluck
- Future plans include Pasch Picnic and egg hunt , parent book study,guest speakers and retreats

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**9. Teen Soyo-** ( Gabrielle Gillam and Randa Ibrahim - Adult leaders Alex and Kate Ibrahim

-Meatfare luncheon to raise funds for activities and charitable donations

-Soyo service projects

-Teen Soyo Phillies Game

- Neighborhood cookie bake

**10.. Maintenance Committee-** ( Gary Sarkessian )

-Conversion of old office to a Sunday School Room

-Weekly cleaning and supply purchases

-Quarterly " Clean up days" - collecting trash, gutter cleanup , kitchen cleanup and numerous interior projects

- responsible biweekly landscaping and snow removal

Projects for 2024

- Installation of final set of 2 HVAC systems
- Installation of return air duct systems for all 4 HVAC systems
- Support plans for Sunday School and parking expansion options
- Upgrade Church's electrical system
- -Investigate installing improved outside lighting for security
- **REQUESTING HELP- 2 NEW MEMBERS NEEDED - PLEASE CONTACT GARY S.**

**11. St. Katherine Women** ( Judy Glass )

-All women of the parish are members

-activities included Palm Sunday Bake Sale , Trip to the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Trip to Sight and Sound Theatre- - The Miracle of Christmas

## **VI: New Business**

### **Nominating Committee ( Gary Sarkessian )**

- 3 openings for seats on Parish Council
- Sheri San Chirico, Alex Ibrahim, Emma Ibrahim, and Ghassan Haddad
- Ballots collected and results to be announced

## **VII. Motion to Adjourn**

1. Kerry San Chirico
2. Karen Burke

## **Closing Prayer -FR. Joel Gillam**