

Delegate Handbook

Volume 1

Ver September 26th, 2017

Instructions and Schedule



**Diocese of the West
Orthodox Church in America
2017 Diocesan Assembly
October 10-12, 2017**

Meeting at

**St Nicholas Orthodox Church
2210 SW Dolph Ct
Portland, OR 97219**

Version September 26th, 2017

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DATE: September 5th, 2017
TO: All Assembly Delegates and Observers
FROM: 2017 Diocesan Assembly Committee

Please read the contents of the four volumes of this report carefully and well in advance of the assembly. If necessary, print out a copy for your use at the Assembly. Have your questions prepared in advance. The following schedule is preliminary and subject to modifications.

Diocesan Assembly Schedule
 St Nicholas Orthodox Church
 October 10 - 12, 2017
 Portland, OR

Tuesday October 10, 2017	
Time	Event
3:00 PM – 5:00 PM	Diocesan Council Meeting – Church School Classroom
3:00 PM -5:00 PM	Registration of Assembly Delegates & Observers at St Nicholas Orthodox Church Parish Hall
5:00 PM	Vespers
6:00 PM	Meeting of the Diocesan Council, Departments Heads, and Deans (<i>Location TBD</i>)

Wednesday October 11, 2017	Event
	(Breakfast at Hotel)
8:00 AM	Registration of Assembly Delegates & Observers, Parish Hall
9:00 AM	Molieben and First Plenary Session
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Molieben -Welcome to Assembly – Archpriest Ian MacKinnon -Appointment of Assembly Officers and Secretariat -Acceptance of Minutes of 2016 Diocesan Assembly - Address of His Eminence, Archbishop BENJAMIN -Address of His Grace, Bishop DANIEL -Chancellor’s Report – Father Ian -Diocesan Budget, Presentation and Approval – Ms Dorothy Nowik -Treasurer’s Report – Mary Caetta -Diocesan Life Highlights #1
12:00 PM	Lunch
1:15 PM	Deanery Meetings
	Second Plenary Session
2:30 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Diocesan Life Highlights #2 -Report of the Metropolitan Council – Archpriest John Dresko -Communications – Fr John Dresko -Charities – Archpriest Lawrence Russell -Pension Board Update – Archpriest Matthew Tate -Monastic Life in the Diocese – Archbishop BENJAMIN -Orthodox Church Capital Investment Fund (OCCIF) -Deanery Reports – Deans -Diocesan Life Highlights #3
4:00 PM	Break

5:00 PM	Vespers
6:00 PM	Dinner – Parish Hall

Thursday October 12, 2017	
Time	Event
7:30 AM	Hours
8:00 AM	Hierarchical Divine Liturgy
10:00 AM	Brunch
11:00 AM	Third Plenary Session
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diocesan Life Highlights #4 -Elections of Diocesan Council -Adjournment -Clergy Meets with Archbishop BENJAMIN in Church -Laity Meets with Bishop DANIEL in the hall
	End of Third Plenary Session and Assembly
12:30 PM	Brief Meeting of the Diocesan Council

2016 DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY MINUTES
DIOCESE OF THE WEST
October 11-13, 2016

The 2016 Diocesan Assembly of the Diocese of the West was called to order on October 12 at 12:18 PM.

1st PLENARY SESSION

Credentials:

- 2 Hierarchs
- 52 Clergy
- 40 Lay
- 9 Observers

Opening Housekeeping: Archpriest Ian MacKinnon

Appointment of Assembly Officers:

- First Session Chair: Archpriest David Lowell
- Second & Third Session Chair: Lynnell Brunswig
- Coordinator/Chief Teller: Archpriest Matthew Tate
- Parliamentarian: Archpriest John Dresko
- Secretariat: Archpriest Damian Kuolt & Priest Andrew Smith

MOTION to accept all appointments: Dorothy Nowik

SECOND: Archpriest John Pierce, **PASSED Unanimously**

The floor was given to First Session Chair, Archpriest David Lowell

Minutes of the 2015 Diocesan Assembly approved and posted on the Diocesan website

Address of His Eminence, Archbishop BENJAMIN (posted in full on the Diocesan website)

Address of His Grace, Bishop DANIEL: Offered words of thanks to the Assembly and gratitude for Abp. BENJAMIN for being our shepherd and the hope, instruction and pastoring. More importantly, to express gratitude for His Eminence's concern and commitment to proclamation, the spirit, and zeal being brought to the Episcopal office. This enables all of us to proclaim the Gospel. This is in addition to His Eminence's constancy and contribution to the care of the OCA. Archdeacon Kirill was asked to intone Many Years, and all rose to honor His Eminence.

He expressed his gratitude for the prayers of the faithful during the illness and repose of Protodeacon Alexis Washington. Continues to serve as Rector of St. Peter and Paul, leads the Desert Deanery. Has had the pleasure of representing the Archbishop at numerous parish feast days. Observations: 1) His Grace fully understands why the Archbishop enjoys parish visits so much – wonderful opportunity to support other communities in the diocese and learn from their unique qualities. 2) Each community truly is unique to itself. However, at the same time, every parish has an energy and character that reflects Diocese of the West. Energy in the sense of dedication to Christ and His Church. His Grace serves on the canonization committee of OCA, advises on matters of Canon Law, and serves as

liaison with Department of Military Chaplains.

Chancellor's Report: Archpriest Ian MacKinnon reminded the assembly that his report is in the delegate handbook but also offered some additional reflection on what His Grace said in gratitude about our Archbishop, and the heavy burden His Eminence carries. He also thanked Archpriest Nazari Polataiko for hosting the assembly at Holy Virgin Mary Cathedral.

Treasurer's Report: Ms. Mary Caetta noted that the Diocesan financial reports are available on the website, then went through various items included in her written treasurer's report. She took some time to update the assembly on the new Diocesan Proportional Giving system and how well it is working. Tasks have grown, so there are some improvements to handle them. Mary then went through some of the challenges ahead: 1) creating new QuickBooks data file for 2017, 2) new issues with reconciliation of 2016 Financial Reports received in 2017 with the Total Assessments Received in 2016, and 3) at the beginning of the year, separating 2016 assessment income from 2017 assessment income. Mary reminded everyone that rectors are responsible for understanding treasurer reports and making sure the annual reports are submitted. In response to a question about growth, Mary notes that when she came on as treasurer 25 years ago there were 34 parishes, now there are 58. Mary informed the assembly Lynnell Brunswig has been busy putting together a Diocesan Insurance Committee. She notes that the Diocesan Quickbook records are now online. Mary introduced the new assistant treasurer, Matushka Theodora Blom, from St Gabriel Orthodox Mission in Ashland, OR.

Deanery Reports have been submitted by the Diocesan Deans:

Archpriest Lawrence Russell – Pacific Southwest Deanery

Archpriest Anthony Karbo – Rocky Mountain Deanery

Archpriest John Pierce – Pacific Northwest Deanery

Archpriest Basil Rhodes – Pacific Central Deanery

Bishop DANIEL – Desert Deanery

Archpriest Matthew Tate – Mission Deanery

Finance Committee: Archpriest Matthew Tate reported that the Diocese of the West lives within the budget that is passed. It is monitored through the year, and if something is going to exceed the budget it is brought to the Diocesan Council for action. Budgets passed at the Assemblies are followed, and when there is a surplus it provides for unforeseen contingencies as we have seen this year. Of note, St. John of Shanghai Monastery has nearly paid back the loan from the Diocese and has refinanced with OCCIF and are servicing it. Simultaneously, the Diocese invested \$200,000 interest free and \$100,000 at 3,5% for 5 years, to help OCCIF get off the ground

Diocesan Life Highlights #1: The history of building of the Monastery Church in Santa Paula, CA, was presented by Mr. Mitch Deny who is serving as the Project Manager.

2nd PLENARY SESSION – convened at 7:30PM

Credentials:

- 2 Hierarchs
- 53 Clergy
- 33 Lay
- 12 Observers

Diocesan Life Highlight #2: Youth Trip to Serbia, by Macrina Karbo.

Metropolitan Council: Archpriest John Dresko reported that the Metropolitan Council has met twice since the last Assembly (February and September). In addition of routine work, the Metro Council, some highlights include: 1) Metro Tikhon's vision for the Church, 2) staff changes including Archdeacon Matusiak promoted to full-time, 2/3 time as secretary for the Metropolitan and 1/3 time as SOCA Director, 3) mechanics of the AAC resolution for funding the archdiocese is running fairly smoothly (with a slight problem of timing of payments, cashflow, etc.), 4) a balanced budget for 2017, 5) AAC assessment has changed to a percentage-of-general-support basis from a per capita basis (for the DOW it will be approximately \$40,000), 6) a continuing assessment of current lines of authority and organizational chart for leadership and officers, and 7) St Louis, MO has been chosen for the site of the 2018 AAC.

Internship Program: Archpriests Ian MacKinnon and David Lowell have begun an Internship Program for training and evaluation newly ordained clergy. It is being implemented on a deanery basis, with parishes that can provide housing. Fr. Ian spoke about the internships of Fr. Theodor Svane in Santa Rosa, Dn. Erik Timothy Winegar in Sacramento and Fr. Stephen Osburn in Las Vegas. Financial support from Diocese is targeted at \$1,000 per month, so it is important that the parish help with resources for housing and any other needed financial support.

Archpriest David Lowell also mentioned an ongoing study on clergy compensation within the Diocese to develop a better way to determine appropriate clergy compensation.

Adoption of SHRB (Sincerely Held Religious Belief): Bishop DANIEL reported on SHRB, giving background on the need for the following resolution. The Legal Committee of the OCA helped document a statement that expresses the OCA's Sincerely Held Religious Belief on marriage. The Holy Synod has asked that each diocese and institution also adopt the SHRB at their annual meetings this coming year, so there is no confusion that all parishes and institutions hold this SHRB in common.

MOTION to adopt SHRUB Resolution: Archpriest John Dresko

SECOND: Archpriest Matthew Tate, **PASSED Unanimously**

Adjournment of 2nd Plenary Session at 8:43PM

3rd PLENARY SESSION –convened October 13 at 8:37AM

Credentials:

- 2 Hierarchs
- 40 Clergy
- 32 Lay
- 8 Observers

Diocesan Charities: Archpriest Lawrence Russell opened with a reflection of the Diocese’s record of investing our time and treasure into the right places – mission deanery, monastic institutions, OCCIF, etc., including charities – Mary and Martha House, St Petersburg Hospice, Raphael House, Project Mexico, Gobezie-Goshu House, and more. Fr Lawrence called the assembly’s attention to the department’s discretionary fund. All one need do is apply for special needs

Fr. Lawrence reminded the assembly about the Lenten Appeal; that by the blessing of His Eminence, Archbishop BENJAMIN, every parish should participate in the appeal each year. It is also noted that the Christian Humanitarian Services department has two new articles on end of life issues on OCA website

Monasteries: Archbishop Benjamin reported that the DOW has more monasteries per capita than any other American jurisdiction. This includes: 6 monasteries, 5 for women - a new monastery in Harrison, MT (no community yet), a new Monastic Community in Montclair, CA (Mother Silouana), a Brotherhood formed from ex-Copts in Arizona.

Diocesan Life Highlight #3: Priest David Morrison reported on the growth of St Anthony Orthodox Church, Bozeman MT, its acquisition of property and a construction of a Church facility over the past few years

OCCIF: John Della Monica reported on the progress of OCCIF and the latest funding projects completed (e.g., St John Monastery, St. Raphael Orthodox Church (AOCANA), St. Seraphim Orthodox Church, Santa Rosa) and in process (e.g., St Barbara Monastery). OCCIF has also received the blessing of Met. TIKHON to present the OCCIF program to other Dioceses and Jurisdictions. OCCIF’s prayers for additional professional expertise have been answered and been joined by key advisors and staff.

OCCIF is a funding organization for our Church, to deal with capital improvements, serving Parishes, Monasteries and Institutions. Mr. Della Monica then showed an OCCIF testimonial video to further illustrate what OCCIF can do. Mr Della Monica encouraged each parish to devote a (small) line item into each parish budget to support OCCIF

OCCIF is looking at new program: “Multiplication of Seven”, and on October 31st the board will present to Farah Foundation in AZ for \$100,000 grant to start selling annuities (Please keep OCCIF in your prayers on the 31st at 8:30 AM). The Goal of OCCIF is \$20,000,000 to fund about 6 or 7 projects annually across the country.

Elections: Archpriest Matthew Tate conducted elections for Diocesan Council and other representation. Nominations were opened for 3 year terms to Diocesan Council:

Clergy Representatives

Fr Andrew Cuneo

Fr. Stephen Soot

MOTION to Accept by Acclamation by Fr John Dresko,

SECOND by Fr. David Thatcher, **PASSED Unanimously**

Lay Nominations

Mary Cayetta

Dorothy Novik

David Lane

ELECTION by Secret Ballot: Dorothy Nowik and Mary Caetta elected.

Auditor Nominations

Maha Adronly

Mike Wagner

Fr. Andre Paez

MOTION to Accept by Acclamation by Fr. Lawrence Russell,

SECOND by Fr. Barnabas Powell, **PASSED Unanimously**

Metropolitan Council Nomination

Fr John Dresko

MOTION to Accept by Acclamation by Fr. David Morrison,

SECOND by Fr David Thatcher, **PASSED Unanimously**

Communications Report: Archpriest John Dresko requested stories, sermons, and news items for posting to the website. The Diocesan Facebook page is not updated as faithfully at this point however, Fr. David Lowellis going to work on the Facebook Project. There is a plan to create parish subpages so that parishes can post things.

2017 Budget Approval: Dorothy Nowik submitted the 2017 Budget (see Diocesan Website). One new item is the need to fund the All-American Council from the Diocesan operating budget, which is not provided for in the current budget as presented. The Diocesan Council, through the finance committee will work to make adjustment for what is expected to be an approximately \$40,000 expense over 2 years.

MOTION to Accept by the 2017 Budget by Dorothy Nowik,

SECOND by Fr. John Pierce, **PASSED Unanimously**

OCA Pension Plan: Archpriest Matthew Tate spoke the to current weak market causing earnings to just keeping up with expenses. The current goal of a 7% annual income is being looked at and other adjustments are being made, as planning needs to consider that people live longer now and average retirement age in OCA is now 72. The Plan is looking to be fully funded in the future, but that is dependent upon the stock market.

MOTION by His Eminence, Archbishop BENJAMIN to send a congratulatory letter from the Diocese to His Grace, Bishop TIKHON (FitzGerald) on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of His Grace's consecration next year.

SECOND by Fr. Damian Kuolt, **PASSED Unanimously**

MOTION by His Eminence, Archbishop BENJAMIN to Adjourn: "It is Truly Meet" at 10:16 AM

Minutes submitted by,

- *Fr Damian Kuolt*  _____

Archpriest Damian Kuolt, Secretary

Rev Andrew Smith

Priest Andrew Smith, Secretary

ADDRESS OF THE RIGHT REVEREND DANIEL, BISHOP OF SANTA ROSA, TO THE
2017 DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY OF THE DIOCESE OF THE WEST
SAINT NICHOLAS CHURCH, PORTLAND OREGON
OCTOBER 10-12, 2017

Your Eminence, Archbishop BENJAMIN

Very Reverend and Reverend Fathers, Honorable Deacons, Venerable Monastics,
Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

GLORY TO JESUS CHRIST!

I am pleased to offer a few words on the occasion of the 2017 annual Diocesan Assembly of the Diocese of the West. It is both a duty and an honor to be able to begin these brief words by extending the thanks and gratitude of the entire Diocese of the West, its clergy, monastics, and faithful to our Archpastor, His Eminence, Archbishop BENJAMIN, who, in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, High Priest and Good Shepherd, has been entrusted with the oversight of this Christ-loving Flock within this God-protected Diocese. I wish to thank you, Your Eminence, for the guidance and care which you give to all of us, dispersed throughout a large territory but always close in faith and service to Christ and, wherever we live and in whatever temple we gather for worship, are united in worship of the Triune God whenever we gather before the One Throne of God. But, Your Eminence, on behalf of all the clergy, monastics, and faithful of the Diocese, I would also like to express our gratitude to God for your personal concern for all of us, for your commitment to the proclamation of the Gospel throughout the Diocese, for the special spirit of concern which you bring to the episcopal ministry. Every parish and monastery, all the clergy and so many of the faithful in this Diocese have experienced your personal support and encouragement in so many ways and on so many levels - as well as the challenge you place before us to grow in our service to Christ and His Holy Orthodox Church and to expand the work of evangelizing throughout this corner of the Lord's vineyard. Your Eminence's commitment to the Diocese- and to all of us- is even more greatly appreciated in light of your many other duties and responsibilities: your commitment, as one called to exercise the fullness of the apostolic charism, to the wellbeing of the entirety of Christ's Holy Orthodox Church, and your service to our Orthodox Church in America, as a member of the Holy Synod of Bishops. May the Lord grant you many more blessed years as Shepherd and Archpastor of our beloved Diocese of the West!

At last year's Diocesan Assembly, I expressed just how truly blessed I am to serve in the capacity of auxiliary bishop to His Eminence and for this diocese. As is well known, although blessed with the title "Bishop of Santa Rosa," I also continue in my role as rector of Saints Peter and Paul Church in Phoenix, Arizona; and I am grateful to continue in that role, serving the faithful of Saints Peter and Paul Church as parish rector.

In my day-to-day life, I also continue to care for the faithful of Saints Peter and Paul Church, a sixty-six year-old parish in the northern part of the Sonoran desert, which includes the Phoenix metropolitan area, a metropolitan area that has a population of over five million. All of our parish priests as well as those in parish leadership certainly know what such duties might entail, so there is no need to rehearse them here. I am grateful to have the assistance of Priest David Balmer, a retired priest attached to our

church, who is able to fill in for me on those occasions when I need to be away from Phoenix. Last year at this time we were mourning the very recent repose of the ever-memorable Protodeacon Alexis Washington- Memory Eternal! But, by God's Providence, at that very time we received a new deacon, Deacon Andrew Maxwell, who transferred to the Orthodox Church in America, to our Diocese, and was attached to our church in Phoenix. His presence has been a great support and assistance to me and to the parish in general.

Throughout this past year, since the last meeting of the Diocesan Assembly, His Eminence has asked me to represent him at various parish feastdays and for pastoral visits to some of the parishes in our Diocese. And I can repeat what I reported to the Diocesan Assembly last year about these visits. I quote from last year's report: "1) I fully understand why His Eminence enjoys these visits so very much. They provide opportunities to offer support and encouragement to the clergy as well as to the local parish leadership as well as the opportunity to better understand the life of each individual parish. And to witness the "good stuff" (credits to Father Ian MacKinnon) of the Diocese firsthand. 2) In visiting the various parishes, one can see that each community is unique unto itself. At the same time, however, each parish and community within our diocese- whether old or young- has an energy to it that reflects the energy of the Diocese as a whole. And by "energy" I mean dedication to the life and mission of the Church, whether that community is old and established or new and just putting down roots. In these visits, I've been blessed to see the enthusiasm – sometimes expressed even in the midst of local challenges and trials—and the love for and dedication to the Orthodox Faith. What a blessing and joys these visits have been to me and I thank His Eminence for allowing me to share in the unique perspective which these visits provide. Without sounding too much like a cheerleader... our diocese is blessed in so many ways. And I hope that, whatever challenges any priest or parish might be experiencing, you may all see the bigger picture of what we are accomplishing in preaching the fullness of the Gospel in the territory that is the Diocese of the West. While each parish is unique and has its own blessings and challenges, so it is with our Diocese. And, suffice it to say, I am glad I'm here..." We are blessed, indeed.

Orthodox ecclesiology, our self-understanding based upon theological reflection, teaches us that each diocese, each local Church headed by a bishop in communion with the Synod of Bishops, contains within itself everything necessary for the work of the Church and provides for the fullness of Church life to be experienced and lived. With all the uniqueness and special gifts or characteristics any given diocese might possess, no diocese lives on its own or in isolation. As I have already noted, His Eminence, as a bishop of the Church and as a member of the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church in America, exercises duties and responsibilities that are above and beyond his very focused duties as the Ruling Bishop of the Diocese of the West. So it is for me, as well. Although I am an auxiliary bishop serving in this Diocese, and very pleased to serve in this capacity, in addition to specific service within the Diocese of the West, I am occasionally called upon to offer assistance to His Beatitude the Metropolitan, to the Holy Synod and to individual bishops as well, particularly in the area of canon law. I also serve in the capacity of His Beatitude, Metropolitan TIKHON's liaison to the military chaplains, assisting the Department of Military Chaplains in ministering to military personnel and their families. Of late, I have also been engaged in the area of external

church relations, with most of my focus in this area involving the relationship of the Orthodox Church in America with the Russian Orthodox Church and our presence in Moscow at Saint Catherine the Great Martyr Church.

I am pleased to offer this is a brief summary of my responsibilities and ministry as the auxiliary bishop of the Diocese of the West. Allow me to conclude by repeating that I am grateful for the ability to serve with and for His Eminence, Archbishop BENJAMIN and the clergy, monastics, and faithful of the God-protected Diocese of the West

Chancellor's Report – 2017 Diocesan Assembly

At the heart of diocesan life is the planting and ongoing spiritual health of our parishes and monasteries. It is good to report that in both instances the Diocese of the West appears to be doing well. Our Deaneries are in good shape. Clergy meet regularly to discuss pastoral and liturgical questions and concerns. These regular gatherings are vital to clergy wellbeing. The Mission Deanery continues to play an important role in the planting and mentoring of missions across the Diocese. Both Archbishop BENJAMIN and Bishop DANIEL make regular visitations to every Deanery...especially on parish Feast Days. All of our monasteries are living and vital places, receiving pilgrims on an almost a daily basis. The consecration of the new chapel at St Barbara's Monastery in Santa Paula during this past paschal season was a joy. The event gave evidence, once again, to how critical the monastic witness is to the Church.

Communications in our huge Diocese is always a challenge, but our Website is fulfilling its purpose as an important tool for information and outreach. Diocesan finances remain on a solid footing. Mary Caetta and the Finance Committee continue to steer us on a steady course. Over the past 18 months, the DOW became serious about establishing a financially supported Intern Program. The goal is for all newly ordained clergy to spend at least one year under the direction of an established priest, in an established parish. Then the Archbishop can make a more informed decision concerning a future parish assignment.

The establishment of the Orthodox Church Capital Improvement Fund (OCCIF) has been a game changer for our church. We now have the ability to essentially borrow from ourselves, and thereby apply accumulated investment monies towards the "next parish or mission" in need of development funds. Where we lack, as a Diocese, is the financial investment of more of our parishes in OCCIF. Please understand! By investing and thereby building up this Fund, we begin to free ourselves from depending on banks for our development projects....and the money we invest goes towards supporting other parish projects. It's a tremendous possibility! Let's get serious here, and invest in OCCIF as much as we can!

Have you ever wondered how the DOW is able to attract clergy from

other parts of the country and the world? Each Spring a team (headed by Fr. Matthew Tate), travels to St. Tikhon's and St Vladimir's to meet with seminarians. These meetings have been invaluable. We come to know future clergy and determine whether they are candidates for diocesan placement.

All that is written above reflects a Diocese that is continually planning for the future, not in terms of years, I would hope, but in terms of decades and even centuries. If we can easily look back in time to the establishment of Orthodoxy in America, we can surely try and project forward into this millennium. We also know, Brothers & Sisters, that the Church is under siege in this era. Let us fervently pray to Our Lord, that we remain faithful witnesses, no matter what may come.

This will be my last Assembly as Chancellor, having submitted a request last June to Archbishop Benjamin to be relieved. It has been a joy, since 2002, to serve in this capacity under two remarkable hierarchs....Archbishop BENJAMIN and Bishop TIKHON. Both men have contributed historic and lasting legacies. Both men are very different, and yet, under their respective episcopates we have all received tremendous blessings....in souls evangelized into the Body of Christ, in liturgical renewal, in teaching, in witness and in Archpastoral love.

What a privilege it has been to labor under these hierarchs, and also to serve along side my brother Deans, the Diocesan Council, the clergy and the faithful of Christ's Vineyard in the Diocese of the West.

Thank you for tolerating me, Brothers & Sisters, and please forgive me for any offense.

Respectfully Submitted,
Archpriest Ian MacKinnon