

**REPORT ON METROPOLITAN COUNCIL  
2017 Diocesan Assembly  
Diocese of the West  
St. Nicholas Church, Portland, Oregon**

The Metropolitan Council of the Orthodox Church in America met twice (February 2017 and September 2017) since the last diocesan assembly. Archpriest John Dresko and David Lane represent the diocese. David was appointed by His Eminence after the relocation of Wesley Smith. Father John serves as Chairman of the Finance Committee and also serves on the Human Resources Committee. David Lane replaced Wesley on the Legal Committee and also serves on the Human Resources Committee. In addition to the routine work of the Metropolitan Council of administrating the Central Church between the All-American Councils (including confidential legal matters), we would like to highlight the following:

**Metropolitan Tikhon's Vision for the Church.** His Beatitude continued developing what he calls the "Four Pillars of the Church: The Spiritual Life, Stewardship, Evangelism and Outreach, and External Relations." He has distributed to the Council members a draft of a publication showcasing this vision entitled "Of What Life Do We Speak." The Council members have been asked to review it and make comments before he finalizes it.

**Chancery Operations.** There has been ongoing internal tension and concern over the day-to-day operation of the Central Administration. The Metropolitan is in the midst of a complete review of the Chancery operations, including possible (probable?) staff changes. He has appointed a "consultant" from the outside (but from within our Church) to work with him in that review. His Beatitude hopes to have the review and any changes announced in an expedited manner, but no later than six months, when funding for the consultant runs out.

**Archives.** The archives of the OCA have been closed for the next few months to public use while the quarters undergo extensive remodeling and repair. This will provide a much-needed renovation to preserve and protect the marvelous heritage and documents of our Church. Many scholars from around the world come to Syosset to use the archives in study. The Funding for this project has been provided from outside the OCA Operating Budget.

**Finances.** The transition to the proportional giving system implemented a year ago continues with very little problems. Some dioceses have ended up forwarding more in proportional remittances than anticipated. We anticipate a small surplus in the operating budget at the end of this year. As we move forward, the percentages from each diocese continue to adjust, mostly downward, but it is hoped that the system will generate more in actual dollars as diocesan income increases.

We passed a balanced \$1.845 m budget for 2018, which is an increase of \$67k from the 2017 budget., possible because of the anticipated growth of diocesan proportional remittances A proposal is also being examined to fund the Department

of Missions in an innovative investment plan for a \$1 m endowment given two years ago. We are waiting for details before taking action on the proposal.

The financing of the All-American Council, held every three years, has been changed from a per parish assessment based on reported membership to a percentage assessment on each diocese. For example, the DOW supports ~13% of the assessment to the OCA annually. So we will be asked to support ~\$42 k of the AAC budget for 2018. That is included in our diocesan proposed budget and will, in the future, be escrowed one-third of the total each year before the next AAC in 2021.

**Human Resources.** The HR Committee continues working on two large projects: first, the review and revision of the HR Handbook for the employees of the OCA, and the Metropolitan Council Member Handbook. Neither have been revised in over ten years. The HR Handbook revision requires a re-writing of the job descriptions for the employees and Officers of the OCA. The work on the job description for the Chancellor, Secretary and Treasurer has been completed and the drafts are awaiting the approval of His Beatitude. The hope is to have them approved before the Spring Session of the Metropolitan Council.

**All-American Council.** The next All-American Council, to be held in July 2018, in St. Louis, is now in full preparation mode. Local committees and clergy and lay chairmen have been appointed, and the theme set: *For the Life of the World*, focusing on Fr. Alexander Schmemmann's seminal work.

**50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Autocephaly.** Work is just now beginning to determine a calendar of events commemorating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the granting of autocephaly to the OCA by our Mother Church of Russia, and the canonization of St. Herman of Alaska, as the first canonized American saint. In addition to any national event(s) planned, His Beatitude is encouraging each diocese to plan local events for this special anniversary. More information will be disseminated in the coming months as plans take form.

All decisions and recommendations are, of course, presented to the Holy Synod of Bishops for their approval.

Respectfully submitted,

*Archpriest John Dresko*  
*David Lane*