

**St. Mary Magdalene Orthodox Church Monthly Meeting
February 23rd 2025 Minutes**

Members Present: Fr. Stephen Osburn, Mark Guyer, Ron Somich, Charlene Griffin, Paul McCollum, Sasha Karbovska, Dn. Vassily Kocher (Guest)

Call to Order: 12:40 PM

Rector's Report

Fr. Stephen stated he and his family are getting settled in to their new home and are pleased with the move.

He stated goals for our parish to be the Savannah area Orthodox Church with exponential growth of parishioners.

He spoke of a new hall anticipating our church growth in the future.

He spoke of the conference he recently attended with fellow OCA clergy as a good experience overall and spoke with Bishop Gerasim about a future visit to our parish.

Warden's Report

Mark Guyer stated bathrooms had been painted with several coats of paint and that new vanities and tile floors will be donated and placed in both bathrooms to enhance the overall attractiveness.

He stated he had added new rows of chairs to accommodate our parishioners.

Deacon Vassily suggested we keep the toilets during bathroom renovations due to issues with water flow and the septic tank.

Treasurer's Report

Ron presented Financial Dashboard Summary

He stated collections to date for February were shy of income goals and we received an additional revenue of \$2656 in January which he attributed to a possible insurance payment from a parishioner.

He stated all moving expenses were completed.

He stated total assets were \$53,482 and Ron, Paul and Father Stephen discussed what options would be best for the greatest returns. Father Stephen describes OCCIF as the best options instead of CD's.

Motion: Paul McCollum moved to accept financial/budget report, Mark Guyer seconded. Report, budget, and financials accepted unanimous decision.

Report Parish Activities

Father Stephen stated the youth event board game went well and could be held every two weeks.

He discussed Sunday of Orthodoxy with Father James, of the St. James Orthodox Church in Beaufort, SC and stressed the importance of attendance.

He discussed up coming movie night and donations for making homeless bags.

Sasha asked about a sign up list for products to include in the bags to determine what needs to be purchased. Father Stephen states he will make a list and add it to the bulletin.

New Business

Safety Awareness During Services-

Paul stated concerns for safety during services.

Deacon Vassily discussed possible LEO moonlighting options for parking lot and building.

Father Stephen discussed reaching out to parishioners, Dan and Van, who have LEO experience to possibly help with security concerns.

Discussed internet options for security cameras instead of security detail.

Nomination process-

Father Stephen stated going forward the process will be more stable and will look into bylaws.

Sasha states nominees should be vetted.

Old Business

New Hall-

Father Stephen asks about building committee and Mark states the committee never officially met. Father Stephen states he will email all parishioners who initially volunteered and ask if they can still serve on committee.

Deacon Vassily discussed AC options for existing hall and Mark states the small inexpensive units remain in place with possible additional units purchased until new hall is built.

Mark states back stairs and play set can be torn down.

Discussed the possibility of purchasing new acreage in different location or talking with landowners adjacent to church property. Father Stephen states new hall should remain on property and during completion tents may be used for coffee hour. Deacon Vassily suggests surveying land to locate boundary pins. Father Stephen agrees and asks Deacon Vassily to get surveyors estimates.

Discussed moving kiosk and tables by existing hall entrance to help with seating. Charlene asks about table donations. Father Stephen stated he does not have any new information regarding the possible table donation.

Brainstorming

Social Media-

Paul asked about the use of photos of parishioners on FB church page. Father Stephen states that the photos are beneficial to our parish and understands the reluctance to have photos shared online. Father Stephen will place an OCA placard in the narthex stating that photos taken may be used for online church webpages and parishioners may ask for photos to not be used.

Sasha asked about chairs used in the church and the possibility of removing them and leaving reserved seating for those who need it. Father Stephen states that would need to be voted on by the entire Parish and it is a historically contentious issue within the church at large.

Council asked about creating a room for crying children. Father Stephen states we do not want separate children from Liturgy and offers suggestions how to remain focused during services. Sasha suggested that Father Stephen could discuss with parishioners the significance of children remaining during services.

Call for adjournment/Closing Prayer- 1:50 pm

Motion- Ron moved to end meeting, Mark seconded. Unanimous decision. Meeting adjourned.

Signed:

Charlene Griffin, Secretary