



Saint Mark Orthodox Church

Archdiocese of Washington DC – Orthodox Church in America

Semi-Annual Parish Meeting – May 19, 2019

President's Report

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Christ is Risen! This is the third time that the parish has honored me by asking me to serve as the parish council president. These were three different seasons in my life and in the life of the parish. The first time was in the 1980's, and the big project was paving our parking lot for the first time. The second time was about 15 years ago, as we undertook the \$2 million expansion. We will see what this third term will bring.

In many ways we are a doing quite well. Many people are active in making the parish operate. First and foremost, we have our dedicated priest and our Matushka who tirelessly toil to shepherd the flock. There are numerous people who teach, clean, set up, decorate, sing, direct, work on the bazaar and other events and projects. Our membership is generous. We have spent almost \$230,000 on iconography, and still have almost \$27,000 remaining to fund the final phases. This was accomplished with minimal effort to raise funds – the committee described the needs, and the members generously donated. In addition, St. Mark has supported numerous charitable efforts outside the parish to benefit the community. The parish has significant funds in its bank accounts.

On the other hand, attendance at Vespers has declined over the years. At most Sunday Liturgies, there are many empty spaces in the pews. Attendance for Holy Week services was, to be realistic, not good. Then, Pascha was glorious! The building was packed beyond capacity at least a half hour before the service started, even though many members were out of town to celebrate with family. How do we keep that enthusiasm for the rest of the year?

Perhaps this will be our task in the next few years – re-building our spiritual commitment. I must admit that I am not a good evangelist. I fail to reach out to bring people into the faith, and do not adequately encourage those already in the church to be more dedicated. If each of us reached just one other person to learn about the Orthodox Church, or to return from a long absence – imagine how crowded we would be! And not for the sake of being bigger, but being more faithful, sharing our joy in Christ and in the Eucharist.

Indeed He is Risen!

Wayne Tatusko