



The Fellowship of Saint John the Divine Diocese of Worcester and New England

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

Spring Delegates Meeting – Minutes April 8, 2006

Call to Order by President Jamil Samara at 10:35am

Opening prayer by Fr. Dionysios Wilhelm

Roll Call: *Jamil Samara, President; Elaina Matook, Secretary; Rich Plouffe, Treasurer; Fr. Michael Abdelahad Mary Ann Kourey, Gayle MacKoul, Brendan Ferguson, Robert Laham, Fr. Timothy Ferguson, Fr. Dionysios Wilhelm, Sharon Weiskerger, Debbie Laham, Christine Byron, Mary Winstanley O'Connor, J. Carl Bellinger*

Secretary's Report

Elaina reviewed the minutes from the executive board February Conference Call Meeting
Motion to accept by Brendan Ferguson, Seconded by Mary Ann Kourey

Treasurer's Report

Richard reported on the treasury since September. The current balance is \$8387.40. \$500 was donated to the Mini-OYO in Providence, RI. Within Footlamps expenses were Maggie Hock's travel and hotel expenses which were not covered by her department.

Motion to accept by Bob Laham, Seconded by Debbie Laham

Midwinter Meeting report

The 40th Anniversary for Metropolitan Philip is this year. He would like us to support the Al Kafaat fundraiser. The executive committee on the national level will be coordinating a Fellowship gift for him, but nothing is decided yet. Mission trips should be encouraged on the N. Am. and local level. A committee is looking into moving the Creative Arts, Bible Bowl, and Oratorical Festival outside of the Fellowship realm. Jamil will send out a report concerning the MWM meeting.

2006 Parish Life Conference Report

Elizabeth Votruba from St. George W. Roxbury delivered the report for the conference.

Footlamps Report

This is the end of the second year of the Footlamps Workshops Series. The mediocre attendance will be explored via a survey online (accessible via the email newsletter) in order to determine the factors involved (e.g. locations, times, topics, speakers). These workshops were created with the original intention of targeting specific groups on various topics within the realm of social and family ministry. Mary Ann Kourey asks if some of the Footlamps Workshops could coincide with the dates and locations of the Delegates Meetings, and Jamil stated that the Delegates Meeting should indeed be expanded to make them all-day gathering, but whether Footlamps becomes a part of the Delegates meetings will be explored.

OYO Report

Elana Jabbour, Teen SOYO VP, shared their experiences of their recent Mini-OYO trip to Providence. The Diocese of Worcester SOYO members, along with some Fellowship members, embarked on a day-long service trip to Providence, RI. The trip was a success, thanks in part to the generous donation from the Fellowship. OYO remains an integral part of the ministry of SOYO, as it creates a new form of alms-giving where the currency is time, not money. There will be a Mini-OYO slide show presentation after lunch, to be followed by a Habitat for Humanity presentation.

Sacred Music Report

David Franciosi reported that the Sacred Music Committee will be meeting after Pascha to discuss the Fall Workshop with the new Archdiocese Sacred Music Chairperson, Christopher Holwey. One project in the works is "Exchange Sunday" where choirs will swap parishes. CD's are currently for sale. There will possibly be two Christmas concerts this year, one in St. John of Damascus, Dedham, and one in St. George Cathedral, Worcester.

Future Conference Schedule

There was a mix-up in the schedule since the Danbury and Bridgeport were added to the schedule when they briefly joined NER, but then were removed once they returned to ER. Due to the confusion, 2007 was unclaimed. The unofficial schedule (will be publicized once finalized):

2006 W. Roxbury	2009 Lawrence	2012 Norwood
2007 undecided	2010 Worcester	2013 Cambridge
2008 Pawtucket	2011 Dedham	2014 Lowell

Fr. Michael offers Worcester's assistance to St. Michael's for 2007, and suggests that Weymouth joins as a co-sponsor in order to create some revenue for these new parishes. The suggested plan of having a commuter-conference one year and a larger conference the next, according to the Archdiocese Convention Schedule, has for the moment been denied but will possibly be considered in the future.

Missions – All Saints, 46 Derby Street, Weymouth, MA

The main request for others is to let people in the South Shore area know that this parish is there for them. Fr. Michael suggests that Fr. Dionysios contact the Word Magazine to access the mailing list for zip codes surrounding the church. Fr. Dionysios thanks the deanery for their support for Compline. A suggestion is made for the teens to assist by knocking on doors in the neighborhood of the church to find the Orthodox who have become unchurched. Fr. Timothy Ferguson suggests that each parish search their zip codes for lapsed members in the Weymouth area and send the list to Fr. Wilhelm. Fr. Wilhelm also invites active members from other parishes who live in the South Shore to occasionally visit All Saints. A list of needed liturgical items is on their website at <http://www.allsaintsma.org/>. They will try to create an information booth for this summer's PLC.

Missions - St. Elias, Fall River, MA

There is a large, Arabic-speaking Orthodox community, but they are inactive. They need a bilingual priest to minister to their needs at least a couple of times a month. Jamil hopes to see a group from our Diocese make another effort at visiting them and encouraging them to begin holding regular services there.

Mission Trip to Alaska

The Fellowship is going to Alaska from July 31st - Aug 8th or 11th (depending if you would like to be present for the Spruce Island St. Herman pilgrimage). Fr. Michael (and maybe Jamil) plan on attending the Alaska Mission Trip and are encouraging others to attend as well. The cost is \$825 for the trip, plus flight (\$800-\$1000). The main project is to run a summer camp for around 30 indigenous Orthodox youth. Fr. Michael expressed his excitement concerning the Fellowship's participation in mission work, since we are finally doing the work of the church and not just holding meetings. He is going to propose a trip to Project Mexico for 2007 in order to address "the need at our doorstep."

Mission Trip to El Salvador

There is talk about organizing a trip to El Salvador, as there are currently 100,000 Palestinian

Orthodox Christians there with no church. More of this will follow.

Next Year

We are looking for a full ballot for elections this summer for the Executive Board. We need people to help us lead our Diocese!

Parish Contacts

Whether or not parishes have formal Fellowship groups, their Parish Council President, clergy, and more delegates should be present at the meetings. Perhaps something should be sent to the parishes to inform them of who is expected to attend the Delegates Meetings. The problem concerning the obscurity of the mission of the Fellowship is discussed, and the suggestion is made that the organization be considered a Diocese Council on the diocese level. A suggestion is made concerning the officers of the Fellowship visiting different parishes, perhaps once a month, and hosting a luncheon following liturgy to inform the people of the role of the Fellowship.

Diocese Calendar

We NEED to keep a central calendar of events for our Diocese. With this central calendar, it will be much easier to schedule things without conflict. In addition, publicity of events will become easier.

Announcements

Mary Ann Kourey: Judging for the Sacred Arts Festival will be held on Saturday, May 13th at St. George, West Roxbury from 10am to 2pm

Fr. Joseph Purpura: received the support of all Parish Councils in the diocese concerning the creation of the position of Diocese Youth Director

Mary Winstanley O'Connor: Priests **must** perform background checks on their students who are applying for scholarships, since there has been fraud and embellishments

Sharon Weiskerger: St. George in Norwood is having a Mediterranean Dinner Dance on Saturday, May 6th, 6pm – 12am. Parish priests will receive flyers in the mail.

The **Closing Prayer** was said by Fr. Timothy Ferguson and Adjournment at 12:15pm

Respectfully submitted,
Elaina Matook
Fellowship Secretary