

THE ORTHODOX PARISH OF ST.ANNE, NORTHAMPTON

PARISH MEETING

Sunday 2nd March at the end of Divine Liturgy

Attending the meeting:

Andrzej Bonda
Elizabeth Curtis
Deacon James
Peter Cousins
Sarah Faulkner
Fr Timothy
Elizabeth Nash
Joseph Gobbos
Elena Syneou

Apologies

Seraphim Alton Honeywell
Joshua Curtis

First item-Parish Priest's Report

Fr Timothy gave a blessing

Minutes of the last meeting approved and signed off

Meeting with Archbishop

Fr T and Dcn James met in London with the other priests and deacons of the deanery for the first formal meeting with our new Archbishop Job Getcha of Telmessos. It was a very full meeting but productive. There are four main points that Archbishop stated that he wanted to focus on:

1. Education of clergy, including new resources, visits to the theological centre Saint Serge and support for clergy wives
2. Establishing a fund for church property maintenance, and possibly for buying them
3. Improving communication, through making sure that the Archdiocese website will be in English, Russian and French (currently only in French) and publishing the Messenger in three languages
4. Orthodox Action, in memory of St Maria Skobtsova of Paris who was dedicated to social and community action, and died in the death camps of Nazi Germany. The Archbishop wants parishes to increase their social mission. We have started, and within the limitations of a new parish we already provide help through St Anne's Women's aid for Russian speaking women, through supporting individuals in the parish with bills etc, and with occasional homeless people who present themselves at St Anne's. We have a fund for this, and we are working with other local Christian communities to supplement their services. We encourage all our parishioners to offer something of service.

The parish continues to grow and develop. It is fantastic to see so many children and young families. There is a need to make the building more visible as a church, within the limits of the planning laws. The study weekend created an opportunity to meet with iconographer Aidan Hart who has a brief to develop a 'scheme' (a series of images) that would present a vision of the eventual interior and exterior decoration of the church, with frescos etc. There is a desire not to just add an onion dome on the existing 1930s frontage- it would not be authentic. We have a gold Slavic cross on the gate and a small sign on the door. Temporarily we can erect a canvas banner bearing our name, but there are planning laws that prevent large signs. We are allowed anything that doesn't contain words to cover the frontage, but any fresco or design needs to account for the fact that it could get damaged, and we are still only renting the building. More work needs to be done.

Progression re the Prayer book it is going well, need to get some illustrations to accompany the prayers

Second item-Financial Report

Current account is approx. £3600 and approx. £800 in the hardship fund and £300 in the general fund

Our subscription to the deanery has now been paid. Nearly all the expenses for the study weekend have been paid and a small "profit" will be made which we will split between the St Johns Fellowship, Hardship Fund and the General Fund.

This year we will pay for two delegates to go to the Conference in May and two places at the church camp.

Third item-Study Weekend

In Feb 2014, 35 people crowded into the new parish centre at St Anne's, Northampton for a study weekend organised by the Fellowship. The theme of 'Transfiguration: the Icon as Text and Mission' was spoken to by Metropolitan Kallistos Ware, Fr Andreas Andreopoulos, the well-known iconographer, Aidan Hart and Fr Timothy Curtis, parish priest at St Anne's. St Anne's is a new parish and have just recently moved into a new building, a former community centre. We had originally planned for 10-15 participants, but we delighted, if a little overwhelmed, at the challenge of squeezing some many people into our little chapel. Once everyone had found where the church was, we all got on in a cosy huddle.

As well as exploring the idea of icon as a text to be read and understood, looking at the language and structure of icons throughout the centuries, we also thought about the role of icons in the mission of the church. In addition, we all squeezed into a mini-bus and went to All Saints Anglican church, Brixworth, an Anglo-Saxon foundation, to venerate the relics of St Boniface. A molieben was served in the gathering gloom, and a flash of lightning and a thunderclap accompanied the veneration of the relics! We return to Northampton in bright sunshine and enjoyed an evening meal of haggis, neeps and tatties, in the tradition of celebrating the Scottish poet Robert Burns.

The Divine Liturgy was served by Metropolitan Kallistos, and even more people squeezed into the building for a blessing and lunch. St Anne's thanks OFSJB, the speakers and all the members for the making the weekend a blessed time.

Fourth item-Lenten Preparations

Please see website for all services, dates and times

Fifth item-Future Parish Events

On the 14th June Elizabeth Nash will be organising a Pilgrimage to Brixworth to see the relics of St Boniface

Any other business

Date of the next meeting

TBA

A reminder:

Divine Liturgy is at 10:30 every Sunday

Jesus Prayer an opportunity for quiet prayer 7:30 every Wednesday