PARISH NEWS

108 East Main St | PO Box 134 | Clinton, CT 06413

Highlighted Charity

Advent Seminary Appeal

St. Vladimir's Seminary - http://www.svots.edu/support/giving-FAQ

St. Tikhon's Seminary - http://stots.edu/support.html

St Herman's Seminary - http://www.sthermanseminary.org/donate.html

Each of these Seminaries also participate on the AmazonSmile charities site.

At the suggestion of our Outreach Ministry, we will also be holding a special collection during the Advent season, the proceeds of which will be distributed between all three seminaries.

Pastor's Note

Glory to Jesus Christ!

The following article, "*Beyond the Plateau: Is your parish focused on Mission or Maintenance?*", was written by Fr. Jonathan Ivanoff as part of the "*Reflections in Christ*" on the OCA website.

Clergy and members of parishes that are beginning to decline will tend to notice something happening. At first, what begins to happen is very subtle, hardly noticed. It comes up during warm conversation, perhaps during coffee hour, and may even be, at the beginning of this period, something that is undertaken with joy and laughter as parishioners engage in it during their conversations with one another. It is nostalgia.

And it always begins with the words, "Remember when...?"

Nostalgia is a killer. Many people in our churches sometimes speak rhapsodically about those "good old days" in the forties, fifties, sixties, or whatever decade is in vogue. We reminisce about

Celebrations and Commemorations

This month we celebrate the birthdays of:

Natalie Kurcharski, Thomas Brubaker, Alexei Hoehnebart, and Daria Krawchuk

God grant you all many years!

Prayer Requests

Please continue to pray for the servants of God:

Our catechumens - Albert Kelly, Kyle Hollis and Stephen Wexell

And for the health and well-being of - Glenn PenkoffLedbeck, Evelyn Leake, Robert Pavlik, Luba and Alex Martins, Joan Novarro, June Sacatos Bronen, Alla Hamesevich, Olga Kucharski and Daria Krawchuk

and yearn for full churches and full Sunday schools, but what we don't realize is that society itself has changed. We no longer live in the "churched culture" of many of our childhoods. A "churched culture" is not so much characterized by the numbers of those actively participating in the life of the Church, but rather by a very noticeable feeling throughout society that the Church is important, that it matters. To an awful lot of people today, the Church not only does not matter, it matters less and less as the years go by. It's not that they see the Church as harmful or hurtful; they see the Church as not really relevant or helpful.

Yet, many of us in the Church, at various levels of involvement and ministry, act as if nothing has changed. We continue to act as if the general population is seeking us out (churched culture, maintenance mindset) rather than acting like the Church we find in Acts, and seeking the world out (mission mindset). It is for this reason that we have as many declining and dying parishes as we do.

And why do we prefer to see one way over the other? Because the parish of a churched culture is calm, peaceful, organized. Think "Ozzie and Harriet." (Anybody under 50 immediately is asking, "Who are they?" And that, in part, proves the point.) The parish of the mission mindset, however, is going to be none of these things. It is going to be hectic, challenging, disturbing even—not exactly everybody's cup of tea, which is why many people don't want it and why we have trouble seriously imagining what it would be like.

What the "maintenance" mindset leads to is a preoccupation with whether our churches are growing, rather than whether our mission to the world is flourishing; whether our churches are able to manage their accounts, rather than whether we can fulfill our God-given directives. We have been preoccupied with maintenance when we must be preoccupied with mission. But church growth is not about growth alone. As one church growth author has noted, "Our current problems cannot be conveniently reduced to whether the church membership statistics are growing or declining. Our current problems have more to do with mission than membership, more with service than survival, more with the planet than the church plant (i.e., facilities), more with the human hurts and hopes of the world than the hemorrhaging of a denomination.... We are called to share the Kingdom, not to

Special Request

Watson Family

I have recently been in touch with Sharon and William Watson. While they have found another Orthodox Church, they have not yet fully integrated into the community there. They express their greetings and would like us all to know that they miss the St Alexis community.

Overall, things remain challenging for the Watson's, and they could use our support. Here are a few things that Sharon said the children could use:

-Snow boots for Zeke in kid's size 13- it needs to open very wide and have longer velcro tabs to fasten over his ankle braces.

--Snowsuit for Evie in 18-24 month size, 18 month if in single sizing as 24 month or 2T will be too big. They have a regular coat/jacket for her but she needs something that covers her legs when the snow comes. They do have boots that will fit her. The boys' coats and snow pants from last year will fit again this year.

-Birthday cards for Zeke's birthday on Nov 30th. He would love nothing more than to get a bunch of his own mail.

More details as to how we might help the Watson's will be provided. If you would like to help personally, please talk with Fr Steven.

grow churches." We don't grow churches, only God can do that. When we confuse the two, we get the problems with which we are now struggling.

So maintenance or mission? Which is it? It can't be both; this preoccupation with maintenance, with census numbers, is self-defeating. The more we are concerned with maintenance, the less we focus on mission; the weaker our mission, the more we decline; the more we decline, the higher our preoccupation with maintenance. This downward spiral ends when the remaining remnant can no longer afford to keep the enterprise together.

Focusing on maintenance can be depressing, tedious, dreary, and discouraging. Focusing on mission can be uplifting, visionary, joyous, and inspiring. And, it's not difficult to change the parish's focus from one to the other: what's needed is a little trust (in God —this is what changes mere "belief" to active and powerful "faith"), cooperation (between priest and parish leadership; one or the other alone cannot do this effectively, let alone powerfully), education (on what can be done, as well as what shouldn't be done), and training and equipping.

The good news is that turnaround ministry is possible and can happen, but only if a declining parish's priest and parishioners are willing to commit themselves to the effort of turnaround ministry. Such an effort will require the entire parish working together as a team to turn the tide and make a full comeback to healthy witness and ministry. While moving forward often requires reflective moments of looking back, pure nostalgia for times gone by can slowly grind to a halt any efforts to move a declining church forward. Those wishing to move their churches to full health and growth must remember that memory of the past must be coupled with vision of the future and real mission in order to achieve a holistic approach to real church growth.

There will be more information forthcoming at the Annual Meeting.

Ministry Reports

Buildings and Grounds:

The ministry met on Sunday, October 9th during coffee hour.

Attendees included : Vinnie M., Greg, Susan E., Susan H., Victor and Sophia B. (liason). Absent were: Mike K., Christine-Marie F., and Daria K.

Greg will look into various types of wall mount first aid kits and their prices

Victor has been working on the sheetrock replacement and mold mitigation behind the fridge and is nearly done.

We are still waiting on the written estimates from the cedar roofer

Sophia hired Joe Sweeney of East Haven (203-468-8823) to take care of the squirrel problem. Susan E. mailed the first of 2 installments ($150).

Sophia cleaned the downstairs, office and bathroom in preparation for the upcoming baptism. The church still needs dusting and vacuuming.

We discussed switching to LED lights in and out since tubes and outdoor spots are now available at more reasonable prices. We decided to use up what we have on hand first.

The Brubakers donated an antique English draw leaf table with plate glass to replace the kitchen table. Sarah would like the old table

Fall clean-up TBA

25th Anniversary

The following ministry members Luba Martins, Marlene Melesko, Deborah Bray, Joan Scrobat and Phyllis Sturtevant were present on October 16.

It was decided that during the year of celebration, events would be planned every month for 12 months. A few of those events might include a speakers. One name was submitted was a orthodox priest another a school teacher to speak on the needs of local school children.

Other events could be a retreat, trip to St Tikon's, Akathist to St Alexis. Some of these events could take place at coffee hour and could be open to the greater Orthodox community and the community of Clinton.

It was decided that the year should end with a hierarchical liturgy. There will be a brunch served after the celebration. The date of the liturgy was suggested to b e close to May 7 2019 which is the feast of St Alexis. Pascha that year is April 28 making May 5 St James Sunday. The following Sunday is Mother's Day. Further consideration will be given to the date at the next meeting.

Ideas for racing funds for the costs of the yearly celebration were discussed and will be presented to the council at a later time. Some ideas suggested were movie and popcorn night, diner after Saturday vespers once a month. These events would start in the next year.

Outreach and Evangelism:

The Outreach Committee met on Sunday, October 2, 2016.
Members Present: Joan Skrobat, Phyllis Sturtevant, Luba Martins, Marlene Melesko, Demetra Tolis
The Following Programs were discussed and adopted:
A)OCF: St. Alexis college students : our goal is to stay in touch with our students

We will contact the parents to find out the following information:
1) college attending and student mailing address
2)birthdate and other significant dates
3)items the student enjoys or needs

Then we will compile a wish list for the parish to donate if they choose.
The following assignments were made to contact parents:
Conner Kuziak parents——Demetra
Kaitlyn Luft parents————Luba
Aaron and Luke Hosking parents——Marlene
Page's and Jankura"s——Joan

The packages will then be prepared and shipped to each student with cards or notes.
The Committee is requesting a $200 allowance for postage.

Specifics about our college students are:
Ellen likes tea, honey, coffee, gently scented candles. She loves music, art and outdoors. She has a Beta named Sebastian. She is a senior this year will graduate in May. Her BD: January 13
Address: Columbia University, 70 Morningstar Dr., New York, New York 10027

Alex loves to cook with lots of flavor. Likes herbs, spices. He cooks authentic Mexican, Indian, African, & Asian. He likes strong coffee, honey, cookies. He hikes and fishes. Likes to be outdoors, loves music.
His BD 5/3
Address: 63 Barton St., Rochester, N.Y. 14611

Katy likes: Reese's P.B. cups, M&M's Craisins, fuzzy socks, People Magazines.
Her BD: 9/12
Address: 83 Windham, 334 d Nutmeg Hall, ECS, Willimantic, CT 06226

Jack likes sour candy, sour patch kids, sports magazines, protein bars, spearmint gum.
His BD: 4/1
Address: Wentworth, MS 2251, 555 Huntington Ave. Boston, MA. 02115-5520

Connor likes sports,football
BD: 2/24
Address: CCU, Box 60062, 107 Founders Dr.,Conway, South Carolina 29526

Kaitlyn
BD: 8/23
Address: 527 Next Gen, Storrs, Ct 06269
Aaron likes almost all foods, snacks, granola bars,jerky, trail mix
BD: 1/2
Address: PO Box 907, 221 College Lane, Salem, VA. 24153

Luke likes almost all foods, snack, granola bars, jerky, trail mix
BD: 6/23
Address: 6 Greentree Dr., East Lyme, CT.06333-1217
Items will be collected until the Parish Annual Meeting November 13.

B) Advent Collection (Nov27, 2016 Through Dec.18, 2016)
All Donation from Parishioner will be made to our three seminaries:
St Tikhon's Seminary; St Vladimirs,and St Herman's in Alaska

C) Warm The Children Program of the Shoreline Communities
Local Family Services select families with children who need warm new clothing for the winter.
Donations can be made; and/or volunteer to be SHOPPER with a family at Walmart in Old Saybrook or Guilford.

Flyers are on display in plastic on the tables downstairs with information about this community program

D) Clean-Up Bucket Drive: IOCC.org/kits
This Outreach Project was undertaken by Marlene and Vinnie Melesko.
The purpose of this outreach drive is to fill 5 gallon buckets with a list of items from a checklist that can be used by Flood Victims in Louisiana and other areas.
Speak to Marlene and Vinnie if you want to fill a bucket.

Red House:

We have not completed the information gathering from the assessors office.

The Clinton Historical Society responded to our letter concerning the stone building behind the red house. On Monday October 17 I met with David Bautz president of the Clinton Historical Society and David Townsend the stone expert of the society. The society board is very interested in preserving the stone house by disassembling removing the house to their property at 103 East Main and reassembling the structure. If we decide to gift it to them they would take on the costs of the whole process including shoring the structure. The earliest the could remove the building would be in the Spring.
We could call for a resolution at the annual meeting to gift the stone house to the CHS.

Council Meeting Minutes

New Business:

The wall behind the kitchen refrigerator had been collecting mold for some time. This section of wall has now been completely replaced. Thank you, Victor!

A squirrel has taken up residence in the crawl space between the roof and ceiling of the corner of the church about the back altar door. Sophia will speak to Greg and Vinny about getting an exterminator to remove the squirrel and then hire a contractor to block any openings that contributed to this. The Council decided to authorize $500. for action on and repairs of this issue.

Susan Egan will make arrangements to have both the Parish and Red House furnace systems cleaned and inspected.

Fr. Steven is looking for a new supplier for the votive candles used. He will also look into the possibility of using a thinner bee's wax candle for the stands.

Highlighted Activities and Events

Annual Meeting	*Sunday, November 13th after Liturgy*
Apostle Philip's Fast begins	*Monday, November 14th* - also known as the Nativity or Advent Fast
Clinton Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service	*Sunday, November 20th - 7pm* at the Clinton United Methodist Church. Fr Steven will be the 'guest' speaker.
Thanksgiving Service	*Wednesday, November 23rd - 6:30p;* Service of Thanksgiving (Moleban)

Meet Our Catecumens

Kyle Hollis

The path that brought me to Orthodoxy has been long and winding with many stops along the way. I was raised American Baptist and left the church shortly after I had turned 20 for personal and spiritual reasons. I tried many different churches but nothing felt right so I decided to make my own path. When one is able to quiet your mind to the outside world, you are able to hear what your heart and soul want. It took a lot of trial and error to finally find my way home, but I feel that if I hadn't taken those paths, I wouldn't have come to find this beautiful faith and the community it surrounds.