Holy Ascension
ORTHODOX CHURCH

Annual Parish Meeting • November 15, 2026

AGENDA

1) Call to Order and Invocation - Fr. Kosmas

2) Approval of the Minutes of the 2025 Annual Parish Meeting

3) Pastoral Report – Fr. Kosmas

4) Chair's Report – Shawn (Sbdn. Thomas) Ashley

5) Committee Reports – Monica Kroier, Vice-Chair

6) Treasurer's Report – Greg Waters

   A. Approval of 2027 Budget

8) New Business

   A. Election Results

   B. Parish Council Pastoral Appointment

   C. Adjournment

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Annual Meeting Minutes
From November 9, 2025

- **Call to Order:** Meeting called to order at 12:25PM by Fr. Kosmas

- **Opening Prayer:** Led by Fr. Kosmas

- **Meeting Minutes for Annual 2024 Meeting:** One adjustment to minutes, remove hyphen to read: Archiepiscopal Vicar. With that adjustment Katy Powers mt. to approve minutes - Mary Howkins seconds; all in favor, mt. passed

- **Pastoral Report - Fr. Kosmas:**
  - 34 new members the past year
  - Had baptism for newest member of Charette family yesterday, and we have a wedding next weekend, and several memorials
  - Have not have had a funeral since August 2024
  - Over 50 catechumens
  - Wonderful season of growth for the church; 225 people in church today, and 110 cars in the parking lot today
  - Hoping to grow the Sunday school ministry to 2 ministries, we were able to send a bus of kids to Camp St. Raphael with the help of the Joseph Asper Memorial Fund, we have a Junior Bible Bowl team - which won third place at the Bible Bowl at the PLC this year
  - OCF is going very well - the topic of focus being "Finding Christ in _____"
  - PLC was very successful, and is still being talked about - PLC made us stronger as a parish; we are transitioning the PLC Committee team to the Building Committee

- **Chair's Report - Ashley Charette:**
  - We started the year off with the 2nd Annual Share Fair - congratulations again to the Maintenance Committee for their win at the Share Fair
  - We welcomed Archiepiscopsal Vicar, Fr. Calinic during Cheesefare and held an Ask Abouna session during coffee hour
  - We celebrated a very full and joyous Pascha together
  - In June we had the honor of hosting 2025 the PLC - we were very grateful to have been so well received by the parishes in attendance for our hospitality - thank you so much to Katy Powers and those who selflessly gave their time to make the PLC so successful
  - We are grateful to our parishioners for the other events that are made possible by their efforts to include: Annual Festivals, St. Nicholas Fund Raiser, Mothers' Blessings, and the addition of our Orthodox Kids Corner

- **Vice Chair's Report - Johnna Collett:**
  - **Orthodox Christian Fellowship:** Attendance has been very good, hosted Tuesday nights at the Powers house
  - **Children's Education and Fellowship:** This year we merged Sunday School and Children' s Activity. Kids are enjoying the activities and it has been successful

- **Flower Beds:** New system implemented to have the person responsible for flower beds for the week listed in the bulletin has been helpful
- **Christian Services Committee**: Has been well attended this year
- **Hospitality:** Mother's Blessing held yesterday, festivals have been well attended
- **Building & Maintenance:** 100 tons of gravel added to the parking lot, plan to expand parking lot further in the next year

- **<u>Treasurer's Report - Greg Waters:</u>**

Balance Sheet

- Operating Account: $45,397
- Building Fund: $600,855
- Joseph Asper: $78,295
- Emergency Reserve: $7,789
- Side Walk CD: $7,789
- We have paid off the mortgage!!

Profit & Loss

- General Donations: $223,689 - $18,641 per month
- Bookstore Income: $2,891
- General Expenses $228,406 - $19,034 per month
- Direct Donations: $35,829 (Building Payoff/OCF/Benevolence/Baptism Cert), Building Fund: $71,447 (Money for future building expansion projects), PLC Net Gain: $20,520 (PLC income used to pay off building loan)
- Interest Income: $19,107

Budget

- Proposing $20,681 per month budget for 2026
- Key features:
  - $5,000 Building Fund contribution in lieu of mortgage payment
  - Outsource accounting to a professional firm - Larry Pace & Co.
  - Altar supplies - Altar Server Vestments and Altar Coverings
  - Background Checks - required by Archdiocese
  - Storage Space Rental
  - 5% Payroll increase, 15% Archdiocese Assessment increase and other small adjustments

John Mark Dutt mt. to approve the new proposed budget for 2026, Mary Howkins Seconds; all in favor, mt. passes

- **<u>Building Committee - Katy Powers:</u>**
  - Focusing on our community and who we are
  - Committee consists of: Fr. Kosmas, Eric Affsprung, Subdeacon Shawn Ashley, Fred Bidwell, Michael Powers, Greg Waters, Sara Gae Waters

- **Announcements:** Fr. Kosmas offers "*Spiritual Transformation of Giving*" book to help give guidance for the spiritual aspect of giving - promoting a healthy relationship with money

- **<u>Election Results for New Parish Council:</u>**
  - Greg Waters won the vote
  - Pastoral Appointed Candidate: Alex Burdge

- **Closing Prayer:** Led by Fr. Kosmas

- **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 1:20PM by Fr. Kosmas

Holy Ascension Annual Meeting
Sunday, November 15, 2026
Pastoral Report

What follows is a brief summary of my remarks at the annual meeting.

I want to thank the parish for its zeal and love for Christ and His Church. It is a joy to hold this meeting in the nave, since we have outgrown our hall. After five years at Holy Ascension, I continue to see new faces every week: visitors, inquirers, and families walking in for the first time. This is a gift from God, the fruit of the faithfulness of many, and a testimony to the witness of the Orthodox Church.

The Year in Sacraments

- Weddings and Marriage Blessings: 6
- Baptisms and Chrismations: 48 (about 30 adults and 18 children)
- Funerals: none since the summer of 2024

New and Growing Ministries

- **Diaconal formation:** Lukas Wilson, Jeff Bishop, and Alex Burdge are participating in the St. Stephen's Diaconal Program, and Shawn (Sbdn. Thomas) Ashley is completing the catechist certificate program through St. Vladimir's Seminary.
- **Teen SOYO:** A new teen ministry is up and running, along with a teen-run coffee shop.
- **Care Portal:** A new ministry through the Christian Service Committee serving the Norman and Cleveland County community.
- **Social Committee:** Relaunched in February to build friendships outside of Sunday worship.
- **Committees and teams:** I want to thank all of our committees and teams, as well as their chairs and members: Children's Education and Fellowship, Christian Service, Flowerbeds, Hospitality, Icon Adornment, OCF, Building and Maintenance, Social Committee, and our Teen SOYO leaders. This daily work behind the scenes adds greatly to the life and good order of our parish. If you are not on a team, I encourage you to get involved somewhere. We cannot do this without you, and there is a place for you whatever your gifts are.

Looking Ahead

With a building originally built for about 120 now hosting 250-300 on a typical weekend, the Building Committee and Parish Council have spent two years researching our options. A presentation on their findings and the path forward we are prayerfully considering will take place next Sunday during coffee hour. Each of you will receive a printed prayer card with "A Prayer for Building a New Church," written by Bishop Basil of Wichita, and I asked that you pray it daily, since the real work begins with prayer.

Holy Ascension Annual Meeting
Sunday, November 15, 2026
Chair Report

Greetings in Christ,

I have begun my chair's report to the Parish Council the same way almost every month: Our attendance continues to exceed our capacity. As you know, we have taken several steps to address that situation over the past year, including expanding into the narthex, moving back the iconostasis and making the video stream available downstairs. That's the work you can see. There has been work done that you haven't seen, but you will later today.

I also frequently mention that our increased attendance can be seen in practically every aspect of our community and its activities. That can create challenges at times, but I believe that the Parish Council, our committee chairs and those responsible for the various activities and events have risen to meet those challenges.

I want to thank you all for the support you have given Holy Ascension. You will hear a report on our church's finances and our plans for the coming year later in the meeting.

To the inquirers, I want to say welcome, particularly if I have not yet had an opportunity to speak to you personally. To the catechumens, we are so glad you are here. We look forward to your baptisms and Chrismations. Please know that you are in our prayers. And please pray for us. To the members of Holy Ascension, those who began this journey even before the storefront to those who became part of this family during the year, thank you for all you have done here for the Glory of God.

On Friday we will celebrate, in anticipation of the feast on Saturday, the Entry into the Temple of the Most Holy Theotokos. It is one my favorite feasts. In the Prologue of Ohrid, Saint Nicolai writes, "Fifteen steps led up to the Temple. Joachim and Anna lifted the Virgin onto the first step, then she ran quickly to the top herself, where she was met by the High Priest Zacharias, who was to be the father of Saint John the Forerunner." That image of the Virgin Mary running up the steps of the Temple has always struck me, touched me. How she longed to be in the presence of God in the Temple, even though she probably could not yet express that. I pray that we all, myself included, find the presence of God in our temple and while we do not have steps, come running.

In Christ,

Shawn Ashley (Subdeacon Thomas)
Chair

Holy Ascension Annual Meeting
Sunday, November 15, 2026
Committee Reports

Hospitality:

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

It has been another wonderful year at Holy Ascension and we are so grateful for our growth and the opportunity to know and serve so many new faces. The Hospitality Committee is responsible for coffee hour, meal trains, mothers' blessings, and helping with the annual festivals and feasts. We provide opportunities for the parish to fellowship and grow closer together as the Body of Christ.

Hospitality is a gift we give to each other and we are incredibly grateful as a committee for all the support we receive from the members of our parish. Everything from bringing a snack to coffee hour, helping to sweep the floor, providing a family a meal through a meal train, or donating your time and energy to our annual festivals, all of this draws us closer to one another and ultimately Christ. Through your efforts and God's help we have enjoyed another wonderful year together here at Holy Ascension. I would like to extend a special thanks to those who have lead our coffee hour groups this year. I sincerely appreciate all your time and energy in making coffee hour a warm and welcoming tome of fellowship for our parish.

Please if you know of anyone in the parish in need of anything from our committee do not hesitate to let us know. You can email me at taylorwilson427@gmail.com. It has been a joy to serve as chair another year. Thank you so very much for all you do for our parish.

In Christ,
Taylor Wilson

Orthodox Christian Fellowship:

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Throughout the year, we have continued to meet at the Powers' house every Tuesday evening for some fellowship, snacks, and education. This semester's topic is "Come and See," an Orthodox show-and-tell to familiarize students with liturgical items, vestments, relics, and icons.

We also have been incorporating more fellowship activities, like a game night and arcade night.

Last December, we were able to give students an encouragement card, as well as a Starbucks gift card, as good wishes for their Fall semester finals and the Nativity season. In January, we welcomed the OCF members back with a chili dinner, which many of our parishioners were kind enough to assist with.

In the spring, we held an end of the year party, saying farewell to the seniors. We sent out another round of encouragement cards and coffee gift cards, before adjourning for the summer.

The OCF members returned in August to a welcome back dinner. This year, we have about 25 - 35 weekly attendees, all of whom we have enjoyed getting to know better throughout the semester.

In Christ,
Kh. Catherine

Children's Education and Fellowship:

Greetings Brothers and Sisters in Christ!

The Children's Education and Fellowship Committee serves to provide an enriching Orthodox Education with meaningful resources, activities, and fellowship for the children and families of Holy Ascension. Under the umbrella of the committee falls Orthodox Kids Corner,

Bible Bowl class, and various events throughout the year. We have welcomed many new families and children, especially this year—thank God! This committee has strived to creatively adapt to the growing numbers and limited space, while prayerful plans are made to create more space for our members.

Traditionally, we cohost a few events throughout the year with the Hospitality Committee. Due to rain, this year's Lazarus Saturday Festival consisted of a potluck and treat bags for the children but had plans to include a prayer trail walk, followed by families building a Little Book of Beatitudes (next year!). During Holy Week, the children enjoyed decorating candles for Pascha together. The annual Fall Festival took place in October, which included the pie contest, potluck lunch, St. Euphrosynos story and craft, relay races, calk walk, and corn hole. In December, we will help host the St. Nicholas Festival, anticipating the usual story of St. Nicholas, "gold coins" in children's shoes, and a service project for parish volunteers.

This fall began our second year of Orthodox Kids Corner (OKC) for ages 4-9. The class begins after Communion, starting with a snack, then a lesson and activity. We currently have one classroom and have transitioned to floor mats and lap trays to accommodate the number of students, which has helped tremendously on saving space. The class continues to be well attended and enjoyed by the children.

Bible Bowl also takes place on Sunday at 9:10am for ages 10 and up. This year they are studying 1 Corinthians and 2 Corinthians, expected to compete in the Bible Bowl competition during a Deanery Day at St. Elijah. This is a great opportunity for the students to learn the scriptures together and meet students from others parishes.

Please join me in thanking all of our wonderful teachers for their efforts! We ask for your prayers for our teachers, children, and families. God willing, our children's ministry, alongside the families, will continue to grow and nourish our children so that they may embody the fruits of the Holy Spirit.

In Christ,

Ashley Charette

Flower Beds:

Greetings brothers and sisters in Christ,

This year, the flowerbed committee focused on further delegating the responsibilities necessary for maintaining the flowerbeds and adding structure to project scheduling, both of these were headed by Ginger Olympia, who has taken on a project coordinator role. As we continue to delegate based on the talents of the members of our committee, caring for the flowerbeds will become more of a communal, fellowship-edifying activity and less of a job or chore. We need our members to fully assume the roles that inclined them to join in the first place.

Thank you everyone for helping with this last planting project before Winter. I'm very thankful to have people who care so much for the beauty of our church. May this value for beauty be represented in the new building also.
God bless all of you.
In Christ,
Zachariah

Christian Services Committee:

Christian Service Committee will find it's next Care Portal request this month. We will announce it on November 15th. Food and Shelter will be on November 14th.
We will be putting a pause on the Care Portal for a month so the parish can focus on the toy drive for A Brighter Day.

Building & Maintenance:

The Building and Maintenance Committee has had a very productive and successful year. Throughout the year, we addressed several maintenance needs while also completing a number of improvements around the church.
Some of our major projects included expanding the gravel parking area, creating new entrance and exit access points by cutting curbs, installing curbs within the gravel parking area to maximize available parking, and updating our fire lanes by painting the south curb and refreshing the existing red fire lane markings.
We also addressed several maintenance issues, including replacing the elevator sump pump, completing various irrigation system repairs, and replacing all emergency lighting batteries along with several emergency light fixtures.
I would also like to recognize our mowing team for doing an outstanding job throughout the summer keeping up with mowing and weed eating and helping maintain the appearance of our church grounds.
None of this would have been possible without the dedication and willingness of our many volunteers. The majority of our maintenance and repair needs were handled by our own team and other members of the church, saving the church several thousand dollars over the past year.
Overall, it has been a very successful year, and I am grateful to everyone who has given their time, effort, and talents to help care for our church.

Social Committee:

Bringing parishioners together outside of regular worship services in a relaxed and welcoming setting that encourages connection and friendship.
The Social Committee was relaunched in February of this year at the Parish Fair Share. We currently have 8 committee members.
Guess Who's Coming to Dinner is an ongoing, monthly dinner event that consists of one or more host homes and several guests who meet to share a meal without knowing where they are going or who will be there. The host home provides the main meat or protein dish, and those who attend are asked to bring a dish which compliments the meal. The purpose is to encourage the building of relationships and community outside of existing friendships and interest groups. Our goal is to give people of all ages and stages an opportunity to interact in a meaningful way, as well as to provide a welcoming space to invite inquirers and catechumens to be embraced by the church family. It encourages our members to open their

homes to old and new faces, to practice hospitality and to entertain angels! Every dinner is unique so people can sign up for multiple meals throughout the year. This event has become particularly meaningful in our growing parish. With so many new faces coming in through our doors each week, it is difficult to get to know each other in a meaningful way. I have received only positive feedback from both guests and hosts, and many have become "repeat" guests and hosts We shared a total of 7 meals this year, and 75 participants! Praise God!
Women's Book Club was relaunched in June. This group meets monthly (usually the last Thursday of the month) for food, friendship, and meaningful conversation around a novel. Currently have 31 members from diverse age groups, stages of life and backgrounds. I have seen friendships form and blossom here, as women mentor and support one another. It has been great entry point for women, especially for those new to our church!

Other On-going Events

Picnic at the Park at Ruby Grant

The hope is to have coffee hour at the park quarterly, weather permitting. We held one picnic this year on Aug 30 which was well attended, considering the hot day!

St Patrick's Day Party at the McCrone's

This event is ongoing and well attended. It took place on March 7

The social committee is currently looking into purchasing group tickets for the play, A Territorial Christmas Carol in Guthrie for Dec 14th .

It has been a blessing to facilitate a committee dedicated to fostering friendships in our growing parish! Cathy.

Holy Ascension Annual Meeting
Sunday, November 15, 2026
Financial Summary

Financial Positions:

Operating Account: $33,400
Emergency Fund: $16,000
Building Fund: $732,500
Joseph Asper Fund: $82,500
Sidewalk Fund: $8,175

Donations/Tithes:

General Donations: $250,000 ($20,833 per month)
Last Years Budget: $243,300 ($20,275 per month)
Building Fund Donations: $69,000 (Two gifts $50K & $19K)
Interest Income: $23,000

Expenses of Note:

Archdiocese Assessments: $13,600
DOWAMA Assessments: $1,225
Building Renovation: $33,740
New Church Benches $8,329
CPA Bookkeeping Fees: $0

(The numbers in this report have been rounded for simplicity)

Summary:

We had a strong year financially, glory to God! We hit our giving goal, made substantial contributions to our building fund, completed a renovation project, and managed our expenditures within the budget's limits. It all looks very clean and nice at the end of the year, but it never comes in a straight line. Our giving ebbs and flows, we receive gifts from unexpected places, and we have talented members who volunteer their time and talents to fix and improve things at a fraction of typical costs. There is a mystery in how it all works together! As we pray and dream about the future of our parish, we will need to keep this spirit of love and generosity active, knowing that all of us "moving parts" will have to work together to accomplish the work and fulfill the mission of Holy Ascension.

In Christ,
Greg Waters
Treasurer

2026-2027	Proposed Monthly Budget Average	Proposed Annual Budget
Clergy Expense		
Clergy Salary & Wages	6,879	82,548
Employer PR Taxes & Contributions	346	4,152
Supply Priest Honorarium & Travel	42	500
Bishop's Visit Honorarium & Travel	83	1,000
		-
Archdiocese/Diocese Expense		
Archdiocese Assessment	1,250	15,000
Diocese Assessment & Pledges	102	1,225
Archdiocese 3 Annual Trays	63	750
Services Expense		
Computer & Internet	120	1,440
Bank Service Charges	600	7,200
Conference Fees & Expenses	230	2,760
Accounting Fees	50	600
Security Expense	45	540
Coffee Hour Expense	450	5,400
Background Check Expense	40	480
Chanter Expense	21	250
Choir Expense	21	250
College Student Ministry	100	1,200
Children & Teen Enrichment	100	1,200
Miscellanous Expenses	428	5,136
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Supplies Expense		
Liturgical Supplies	300	3,600
Altar Supplies	250	3,000
Education Supplies	25	300
Office Supplies	200	2,400
Building & Insurance Expense		
Property & Liability Insurance	1,200	14,400
Work Comp Insurance	30	360
Storage Building Rental	100	1,200
Building Fund Contribution	5,000	60,000
Property Maintenance	1,000	12,000
Landscaping	200	2,400
Cleaning	600	7,200
		-
Utilitiy Expense		
Telephone	325	3,900
Utilities	850	10,200
Water	200	2,400
Known One-Time Expenses		
Service Books for Liturgy	250	3,000
Totals	**21,500**	**258,741**