

FRACKVILLE DEANERY REPORT

CLERGY

Archpriest Michael Hatrak, Dean
SS. Peter and Paul Church, Minersville
Assumption of the Virgin Mary Church,
St. Clair

Archpriest John Onofrey, Secretary
St. Herman's Church, Shillington

Priest Stephen Vernak
Christ the Saviour Church, Harrisburg

Attached to St. Mary's Church, Coaldale
Archpriest Paul Ropitsky, retired

Attached to Christ the Savior Church, Harrisburg:
Archpriest Daniel Ressetar, retired

Priest Timothy Hojnicky
Assistant Dean
Holy Apostles Mission
Mechanicsburg

Archpriest James Jadick
Holy Ascension Church, Frackville

Priest Mircea Airinei
Holy Trinity Church, McAdoo

Attached St. Herman Church, Shillington
Archpriest Stephen Janos, retired

Attached to Holy Apostles Mission
Deacon Seraphim Reynolds

Two Deanery meetings were held this past year. The clergy discussed concerns of the deanery, diocese and national church.

Lenten Mission Vespers were held each Sunday during Lent in various parishes.

The clergy participated in the Lenten Retreat with Fr. Thomas Hopko at Holy Protection Greek Orthodox Monastery in White Haven; helped at the annual Monastery Pilgrimage over Memorial Day week end and also the continuing education programs.

Holy Ascension Church, Frackville, hosted the deanery Financial Practices meeting for church committees in June and several women attended the Women's Retreat at St. Tikhon's in August.

The deanery was saddened to lose its oldest priest, Fr. Michael Kovach, who fell asleep in the Lord in May, Memory Eternal.

Christ the Saviour celebrated its 50th anniversary in May; Holy Ascension, Lykens, its 100th in October and St. Herman's, Shillington, its 40th in October.

Deanery clergy participated in the 75th anniversary of St. Tikhon's Seminary in October.

Fr. Michael Evans retired from St. Michael's, Mt Carmel, at the end of October.

A FOCA outing to a park in Jim Thorpe and a deanery family picnic at Minersville were enjoyed.

In addition to liturgical services; classes, lectures, food and bake sales, dinner-dances, picnics, Chinese Auctions, raffles, dinners, community and FOCA activities are included in the life of our parishes.

2013 PARISH HIGHLIGHTS

Holy Ascension, Frackville

Parish Report – 2013

9 December 2013

RE: Annual Report for Diocesan Assembly

- 1- Began preparations for upcoming 100th Anniversary celebration in 2015 by having a program to refinish all the brass and gold liturgical re-finished.
- 2- Started a monthly parish newsletter, organized and produces by parishioners with guidance and input from Father.
- 3- Reorganized and established a new church school program which includes children and their families.
- 4- Continued with ongoing pierogie and paska bread sales.
- 5- Welcomed a new choir director and family.
- 6- Continued offering discussion groups during weekly coffee hour.

Holy Trinity Church, McAdoo

- 1) Great Vespers is celebrated every Saturday and the eve of a Feast day.
- 2) Sunday School is held in the Social Hall.
- 3) There are 26 Adults, 3 teens, 12 children.
- 4) Pirohi and Haluski activities are 3 times a year.
- 5) The parish picnic in July occurs for only 2 days.
- 6) The parish has 2 members that are shut-ins, 2 members in nursing home, and one distant commute.
- 7) Parish Council consist as follows: Michael Kurtz, Council President; Douglas Kurtz, Council Vice-president; Gregory Kurtz, Council treasurer; Melania Polli, Council Secretary.

SS. Peter and Paul, Minersville

Along with liturgical services our activities include a Pre-Lenten Dinner and a Thanksgiving Dinner along with holiday bake sales and participation in Minersville's Spirit Day. Also, improvements were made to property around the Church.

St. Mary's Church, St. Clair

Along with the liturgical services - seasonal bake sales.

Christ the Saviour, Harrisburg

For the community of Christ the Saviour, 2013 has been an historic year.

On March 23rd we welcomed His Eminence Metropolitan Savas (GOA), and our local Pan-Orthodox clergy and faithful for Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers. His Eminence gave a wonderful homily, and our parish provided a delicious Lenten meal following the service.

On April 21st we welcomed the St. Tikhon Seminary mission choir. The choir, under the direction of Benedict Sheehan sang beautifully and inspired us on our Lenten journey.

On May 18th we celebrated the 50th anniversary of our parish. His Grace, Bishop Mark led our parish clergy, many guests clergy, and the faithful for the Divine Liturgy. At the hours, His Grace tonsured Peter (Scott) Staller to be a reader. Also in attendance was His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, former Diocesan hierarch. A festive banquet was held at the Best Western Premier in Harrisburg.

On June 2nd our community honored Matushka Theodora Ressetar, who retired as our parish choir director after a distinguished 35 year ministry! Perhaps most impressive is that simultaneous to this position she gracefully ministered with her husband, Fr. Daniel Ressetar, as "Matushka" for 48 years, raised three sons, and for many years she served as Sunday School coordinator. She also continues to be active in the Altar Guild and local FOCA chapter, as well as countless other parish activities - many known only to a few, and some known only to God! We wish her many happy and healthy years!

On July 28th our community wished a fond farewell to Fr. Alexander and Kh. Olga Atty who were attending our church while he was receiving treatment at Hershey Medical Center. In their time with us we were blessed by many wonderful homily's from Fr. Alexander, as well as Kh. Olga's conducting of the choir for the two month transition between our directors. May God grant them many happy and healthy years back in their "old Kentucky home"!

On August 4th we welcomed our new choir Rdr. James Latimer, who came to us from North Carolina. May God grant him many years!

On October 23rd our parish welcomed Fr. Moses Berry, who gave a public lecture about the African Roots of Christianity. Over 100 guests attended and were moved by his compelling story and learning about Africa's ancient Christian roots!

On December 15th our parish hosted a Community Christmas Concert, entitled: "God is with Us". We welcomed well over 100 parishioners and guests for this free outreach concert. The Pan-Orthodox choir was directed by Fr. Christopher Rocknage, pastor of St. Nicholas Serbian Orthodox church, in nearby Steelton.

Holy Apostles Mission, Mechanicsburg

Holy Apostles Mission made a historic step this past March by purchasing 13.6 acres of land for a future church building. Plans for a "Phase I" multipurpose building that will house a chapel, hall, and classrooms (with the intent to build the Church proper next door in the future) are well underway. We hope to get this building up within the year.

We had a successful Dinner Dance this past October, the proceeds of which go completely to our building fund.

Our Church School has over 45 students participating with various activities planned throughout the year. Recently, in response to Typhoon Haiyan, our annual parish Gingerbread contest raised money to support the IOCC relief effort. With the money raised the Church School purchased items to assemble health kits to send to the IOCC for their ongoing work in the damaged areas of the Philippines and Vietnam.

There are many other events and activities taking place in Mechanicsburg. Check out our parish website for more detailed information: www.holyapostleschurch.org

St. Herman's Church , Shillington

2013 marked the 40th Year anniversary of the establishment of the Orthodox Church of St. Herman of Alaska in Shillington, and service to its faithful members, the Diocese of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania, and the Orthodox Church in America. The parish is pleased to report that the Membership of St. Herman's has been maintained at approximately 110 Adults and 30 Children. Fr. John Onofrey, beginning his twenty-ninth year as pastor of St. Herman's, continues to serve the faithful, who reside in five (5) Counties [Berks, Chester, Lancaster,

Lebanon & Montgomery]. St. Herman's is also blessed to have three priests, Archpriest Michael Slovesko [Retired, presently serving Holy Resurrection Serbian Orth. Church / Lebanon], Archpriest James LaLiberte [Retired, Greek Archdiocese] and Archpriest Joseph Toroney, who attend services, participate in parish events and offer additional guidance and inspiration to the faithful. Fr. Onofrey wishes to thank them, along with Fr. Michael Hatrak [Dean], Fr. Daniel Ressetar, and the Frackville Deanery Clergy who have helped him, especially during his recent illness.

2013 was a very busy year, liturgically and sacramentally, for St. Herman's Church in Shillington. Besides celebrating the normal weekly, Festal, Lenten and Paschal Divine Services, Fr. John had the joy of celebrating seven (7) Weddings. All seven Weddings were for "*children*" of the parish, but celebrated "*away*" from St. Herman's Church, four of them "*out-of-state*". The parish was also very busy participating in Diocesan, Deanery, and local Pan-Orthodox and Ecumenical Ministerium events. In October [19-20], St. Herman's welcomed, His Grace, our Bishop MARK, who led the parish's 40TH ANNIVERSARY celebration. Over one hundred parishioners and guests gathered in prayer at the Anniversary Liturgy, and "*broke bread*" at the Banquet.

St. Herman's Church is once again pleased to report that with responsible stewardship, faithful parishioner support and careful parish management, the 2013 Financial status remains positive. Despite living in an economically challenged area [Reading, PA is considered to be the second worst city (poverty-crime-employment rate) in the US, Detroit was rated the worst], the parish has been able to maintain financial viability without depending on fund raisers or special projects. In 2013 St. Herman's finished paying off, in four years, a \$30,000 internal loan, which covered a new Heating System and outside painting of the Church building. The parish has also started a much needed, "*Repair, Replace and Renovate Program*" for the Rectory. In December, all new Kitchen Appliances were purchased by the Sisterhood and installed.

Two important aspects of parish life at St. Herman's Church is the Church School and "*Our Lady of Kazan*" Sisterhood. The parish is blessed to have approximately 30 children, twenty of which are faithful and regular attendees. However, it has been and is a continuous struggle to maintain the Church School program and promote its various projects, with so many "*worldly distractions*". Special thanks are extended to our parents and teachers who take the spiritual development and growth of our children seriously. The "*Our Lady of Kazan*" Sisterhood, like the women who ministered to Christ and His Disciples, is truly the "*keystone*" or "*cornerstone*" of life at St. Herman's Church. Besides providing for our weekly Fellowship Hours, sponsoring various dinners and projects, making pierogies and cleaning the Church, the women (*and men*) of the Sisterhood have been a true example of parish stewardship. In 2013 the Sisterhood extended itself in various ways. They provided new "*golden*" Altar Cloths, Banners and Altar Boy Robes. As previously stated, purchased new appliances for the Rectory. Collected "*TOYS FOR TOTS*" during Advent (an annual project for over 10 years). And faithfully support the Nuns of Holy Transfiguration Monastery in Elwood City. In 2013, the Sisterhood and Parish donated over \$2,000 to the Monastery.

In 2014, the Parish of St. Herman's in Shillington and her faithful members will continue its spiritual struggle serving Christ and His Holy Church. Please pray for us!

St. Michael's Orthodox Church, Mt. Carmel

No resident pastor at present. The parish is being serviced by diocesan clergy.

Holy Ascension, Lykens

Being served by diocesan clergy

Nativity of the Theotokos, Coaldale

No resident pastor at present. The parish is being serviced by diocesan clergy.

Respectfully submitted,
Archpriest Michael Hatrak, Dean