

Semi-Annual Parish Reports – July 2026

Annunciation Orthodox Church Natick, MA

Chairman's Update

The Parish membership voted at our annual meeting earlier this year to suspend the in-person semi-annual meeting. In light of that decision, Father Gregory and I are providing a written update to the membership. In addition, we have asked our new Treasurer, Greg Peters, to include our semi-annual financial results through June 30, 2026.

Without repeating all the details from our Annual Meeting, I would like to provide a brief update on some of the key matters the Parish Council has been engaged in this year. (Father has included a separate, important update which you can read on the other side of this document):

First, as you know, Father Joseph Gallick passed away earlier this year and the sadness and grief we experienced continue for us all. In honor of his decades of service as our Rector, the Parish Council established a Memorial Scholarship Fund at St. Tikhon's Seminary, from which Father Joseph graduated. The Annual Scholarship has been established at \$5,000 per year and will be awarded to a married seminarian who intends to minister as an OCA parish priest upon graduation from St. Tikhon's. Anyone who is interested in making a contribution to this annual scholarship fund may do so at any time. Scholarship contributions from parishioners and friends should be clearly indicated on a check or other payment method. The Scholarship Fund Committee will review all applications in the February – May timeframe of each year, with disbursement occurring in June (beginning in 2027). Annual award decisions will be made by a Scholarship Fund Committee comprised of the current year's Parish Council, Nancy Gallick, and advised by our Parish Priest. Please see a copy of the scholarship overview document that is posted on our website.

Second, we continue to make progress, albeit slower than we would like, on both the elevator repair and renovation of the second bathroom. The bathroom renovation will require significant foundation work, including new concrete footers to support the area beneath the stairs, hallway, and bathroom. We will continue to provide status updates each week during Sunday announcements after Liturgy.

As noted above, Greg Peters has taken over Treasurer duties from Brian Verdy and we are all excited to have Greg's expertise in his new role. At the same time, let me expressly thank Brian for his outstanding work as our Treasurer for more than 20 years! Our finances and bookkeeping have remained rock-solid under Brian's leadership.

In closing, let me also thank all my colleagues on the Council for their tireless work in support of our parish, Father Gregory for his ministry, and all of you for your support of the parish, whether through donations of your time, talents, and/or financial resources.

Sincerely,

John Fedak

Parish Council Chairman

A View from the Middle – Pastoral Update

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

For many people, it is at this time of the year that in some way, and on some level, rest is sought and we attempt to find relief from the stresses placed upon us, whether from work, or life, or personal condition. It is not unusual to look for a place, or people, an event, or routine, that will grant relief to us from the mundane, or chaotic conditions in our lives, that can become overwhelming or frustrating to us, to the point of mental and physical exhaustion. In those brief samplings of relative peace “away,” it is not uncommon to gain new perspective on life, and be able to remember our purpose and gain strength to meet life’s challenges with renewed vigor and understanding. Standing at the mid-point of the calendar year is a natural time for spiritual introspection. The Orthodox Church frequently reminds us that Christ is the beginning, and the end, and most importantly – the One who dwells continuously in our midst, turning our focus from worldly metrics of time toward eternal growth. But, whether we feel we are at the peak of our spiritual strength or struggling in a valley, Christ finds us there. He does not wait for us to reach the finish line of the year to offer His grace. He meets us right here, in the often messy and exhausting middle of our own lives. Taking stock at this 2026 year Mid-Point, Annunciation Church, like every parish in our Holy God Protected Albanian Orthodox Archdiocese, we continue to operate within the paradigm of being “within the World, but *not* of the World.” As the Church is “within” the world it must be subject to certain demands of its civil law and authority, as well as the natural law, that makes its members vulnerable to the influences of sin, evil, and death. As it is “not of” the world, we must strive to live “in Christ,” and surpass those limitations the world tries to impose upon us. As such, at Annunciation we have recently seen the passing of our beloved Father Joe Gallick as well as other long time members, who are remembered as true pillars of this congregation. Likewise, we are compelled to face the expected need for building repairs, which always seem to impose multiple demands simultaneously. However, we have also seen a most pleasant increase in newly born and or newly baptized children, who can soon take their places at Sunday School; a regular presence of altar servers, a swelling of Choir membership, larger Sunday congregations, the annual visitations of our new Hierarchy, the renewed vigor of the Vetrina Society, and refreshed management of the church’s needs and involvement in Archdiocesan affairs through a dedicated Parish Council. Therefore, during this Mid-Year glance at the goings-on of our beloved community, I can say without hesitation that we are responding to Christ’s promptings of us to be with Him in all that He is doing (no matter what time of year), even in the “middle;” whether we work or seek rest, and ever striving to be about His business both in our lives and in His Church. God bless and keep you.

Fr Gregory Harrigle, Priest-in-Charge, Annunciation Orthodox Church