

Minutes of the 2006 Annual Business Meeting of the Orthodox Theological Society in America

1. The 2006 Business Meeting of the Orthodox Theological Society in America was held on Friday Noon, June 09 during the Society's Annual meeting held on the campus of Holy Cross Orthodox Theological Seminary, 07-09 June, 2006. The Annual Georges Florovsky Lecture was delivered by Norman Russell with the title "Theosis and Gregory Palamas: Continuity or Change?" The meeting was called to order at 12:40 P.M.
2. President Father John Behr extended a special thanks to Dr. Demetrios Katos for all his work as local organizer of the meeting and to Holy Cross Seminary for hosting the Society.
3. The minutes of the 2005 Business Meeting were approved.
4. The Treasurer's Report was distributed and Treasurer Katos requested that anyone knowing the current addresses for those members whose annual dues notice were returned to the Society to provide him with that information. The Report was accepted as presented.
5. The time and place of next year's annual meeting was discussed at length. The President pointed out that next year Fordham University will co-host a conference on "Orthodox Readings of Augustine" June 14-16. Although OTSA has attempted to coordinate its meeting in the past with the Orthodox-Roman Catholic Consultation, relatively few members of the Consultation have remained for OTSA's meeting. It was therefore suggested that in future this not play a role in the scheduling of the annual meeting. The Society is moving through a transition to a professional Society and objectives that had tied its annual meeting both to the Consultation, and to the faculties of the Orthodox seminaries no longer appear to be in the Society's own best interests. Further, rather than attempting to organize the Society's meeting with a specific "theme" in mind, the general call for papers has worked better. Papers from a broad spectrum of disciplines related to Orthodox theology and reflecting 'work in progress' have contributed to a much livelier discussion of issues. For these reasons, the Board suggests that OTSA time its 2007 meeting in such a manner that members can also participate in the Fordham conference. Observations from the floor asked that we consider meeting before the Fordham conference since clergy in particular would need to return to duties by Saturday afternoon. Members also asked about the Florovsky Lecture for next year and after determining that non-Orthodox speakers have been asked to serve as lecturers, the Board was requested to discuss the possibilities and arrange for next year's speaker. Motion was made, seconded, and carried that next year's meeting will be held in close proximity to the dates of the Fordham

conference and, pending their willingness to host the Society, on the grounds of Saint Vladimir's Orthodox Seminary.

6. The Board brought to the membership's attention the need to heighten the Society's visibility and to enhance the advantages of membership to increase participation in the annual meetings. Discussions ranged over the possibility of increasing the use of the website to include application for membership forms, the posting of news and upcoming events, and activities of members. The possibility of creating a newsletter if someone would serve as editor to forward updates to a listserv was raised. Father Gabriel Rochelle accepted the request by the President for someone to serve in this capacity as editor.
7. Father Behr also noted the high quality of the papers presented at this year's meeting and indicated that he wished to publish them in a special issue of Saint Vladimir's Theological Quarterly, by December if possible. Considerable discussion followed about the possibility of offering a reduced subscription to both the Quarterly and the Greek Orthodox Theological Review since members, even if unable to attend a particular meeting, would be induced to the prompt payment of dues with the advantage that they would receive the journal(s) and also hopefully be encouraged to attend the meetings for the live discussions of the papers.
8. Treasurer Katos also suggested that the Society consider whether instead of plenary sessions we might be advised to consider proposing smaller groups or round-table discussions around specific disciplinary foci—e.g. Scripture and Exegesis, Patristics, Historical Theology, Ethics, Pastoral Theology, Education. Members would not necessarily have to commit to a formal paper, but could propose a panel, or a session devoted to the discussion of a book. Vice President Vrame observed that the present framework seems to be working well; other comments from the floor questioned whether we were large enough as a Society to sustain multiple sessions meeting simultaneously. The general call for papers, it was observed, while not proposing simultaneous sessions, could still be expanded to invite proposals for a panel session.
9. Secretary Dn. Gregory Roeber presented the following candidates for membership in the Society:

Dr. Bruce Beck
 Dr. Charles Harvey
 Fr. Dr. Panayiotis Papageorgiou
 Deacon Nathanael Symeonides
 Hieromonk Dr. Gregory Woolfenden
 Fr. Dr. Philip Zymaris

All six applicants were approved for membership.

Secretary Roeber noted that another half-dozen application forms had been sent to those requesting them, but that they had not been returned.

10. Dr. Robert Haddad, chair of the Nominations Committee, presented the following slate of officers for election:

President: Fr. John Behr
 Vice-President: Dr. Tony Vrame
 Treasurer: Dr. Demetrios Katos

Secretary: Dn. Gregory Roeber

There being no further nominations, the slate was elected by acclamation.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Deacon Gregory Roeber
Secretary