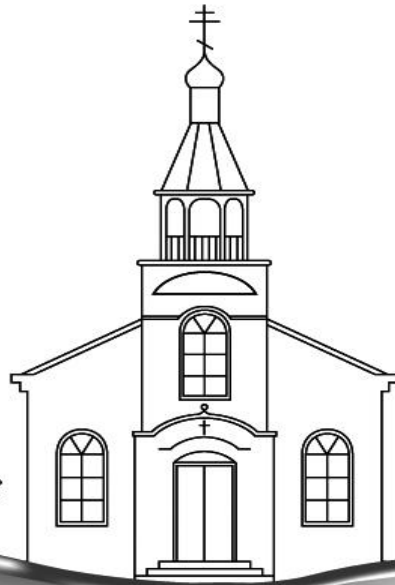


**russian  
orthodox  
church of**

**saint  
nicholas**

ABN 71 384 615 722



**newcastle**

**2007-08**

**Report and Accounts**

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## RECTOR'S MESSAGE

It gives me great pleasure to present to members of our parish this 2007-08 Report and Accounts summarising our activities in the course of the past year, and our financial position at the end of it.

Three trends in parish life are evident. The first is that of changes within the parish. We have seen a number of new faces in the past year, and for various reasons some of our long-term and older parishioners are less often seen. Further changes have flowed on from this: new activities because of new energy and ideas, and some changes in our services in order to respond to those who have joined us.

The second is that of closer links with the Russian Orthodox Church of the Theophany in Mayfield and the Serbian Orthodox Church of Saint Naum of Ochrid in Broadmeadow. This is a positive step for all of us who value a strong, united Orthodox Christian presence in Newcastle and throughout the Hunter Valley.

The third, flowing on from the first two, is that of investment in our future. New icons and service items, plans for improvements, and a sound financial position are all evidence of a renewed confidence in our distinct identity and our future as a parish.

The Parish Council is to be commended for facilitating and supporting these pleasing developments.

In 2009 we will observe the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Russian Orthodoxy in the Hunter Valley. As we do so, may God grant us to build on the foundations laid by those who came before us, making possible Orthodox Christian life and worship here for 60 years more, and beyond.

In Christ

Rev. James Carles  
Parish Priest  
September 2008

## **ABOUT OUR PARISH**

Saint Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church is the oldest Orthodox Christian parish in the Hunter Valley. Established in 1950, our parish has served the needs of Orthodox Christians of many and varied backgrounds for nearly 60 years.

We work together to maintain an Orthodox Christian parish of Russian tradition in which we and others can pray, receive the Sacraments, and grow in Orthodox Christian faith and fellowship.

Our heritage is important to us. We value the labours of the founders and builders of our small parish and seek to preserve both their work and their memory. We value our relationships to other lands, but recognise that Australia is our home and the place that God has given us to work out our salvation. We value our Russian Orthodoxy and the Church Slavonic language, but also seek to give our Orthodox Christianity living expression in a new context.

We are a small community, but one that welcomes others. We strive to be an open and friendly parish.

We have services on the second and fourth weekends of each month – on Saturday at 6.00pm and on Sunday at 9.00am – and on major feast-days whenever possible.

In our present circumstances, gathering for services approximately thrice-monthly is the main expression of parish life. Although limited in such a way, we continually seek to develop the life of our parish and to care for and adorn our church.

## **THE PARISH COUNCIL**

In parishes of the Russian Orthodox Church outside Russia, the Parish Council consists of the parish priest and other assigned clergy, the Warden, and such lay members as are elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the parish.

Since December 2002, the parish priest has been Father James Carles. The Warden, Nikolai Goura, was elected for a three-year term at the 2005 AGM. Nikolai also fulfils the duties of parish Treasurer. By virtue of his long and significant association with the parish Subdeacon Vitaly Lupish holds an honorary position on the Parish Council.

The lay members of the Parish Council elected at the 2007 AGM are

- Oleg Kolokolow (Deputy Warden)
- Hanna Lestone (Secretary)
- Anna Morhun (Head Sister)
- Raisa Zyza (Deputy Head Sister)

Members of the Parish Council are not paid for their work. Standards of conduct for Parish Council members – and indeed, all parish members – are set out in the 'Normal Parish By-Laws'. They must

- Confess their sins and receive Holy Communion at least once a year
- Pay agreed membership fees if able
- Tend to the moral and economic welfare of the parish
- Remain loyal to the Russian Orthodox Church outside Russia
- Remain loyal to their parish and cooperate with the parish priest and Parish Council
- Act in a way that promotes peace and unity within the parish

The Parish Council met formally five times during its period of office, generally on Saturday afternoons. Meetings were at times difficult to arrange given work and family commitments, and the

geographical distance separating Parish Council members. Those convened were nevertheless well-attended by members of the Parish Council and conducted in a positive spirit. Minutes were kept of all meetings.

## **SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN 2007-08**

### **July**

- On July 7, our parish joined the parishioners of Saint Naum of Ochrid Serbian Orthodox Church in Broadmeadow for the celebration of their 'Slava', or parish feast-day.
- Following on from the signing of the 'Act of Canonical Communion', Patriarch Alexis of Moscow and All Russia began to be commemorated in Divine Services in our parish.

### **August**

- Donation to our parish of an English-language Gospel book, used for the first time during the Great Feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord on August 19.
- Donation to our parish of two carved wooden processional candle stands, the work of Protodeacon Basil Hadarin.
- Annual General Meeting reviewing the 2007-08 financial year.
- Services for the Great Feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord.

### **September**

- A number of parishioners travelled to Sydney for the visit to Australia of the miracle-working "Reigning" ("Derzhavnaya") Icon of the Mother of God and of a delegation of the Moscow Patriarchate, afterwards attending a concert by the choir of the Stretensky Monastery in Moscow given at Sydney Town Hall.
- Services for the Great Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross.

### **October**

- A concert of the Russian Male Voice Ensemble of the Valaam Monastery, Saint Petersburg, was held in our parish hall, with nearly 100 people in attendance.
- Services for the Protection of the Mother of God, the patronal feast of the Greta Camp church, 58 years after the establishment of that church.
- Baptisms of an adult, Shannon (John) Martin, and an infant, Georgia (Anastasia) Taylor.
- Wedding of Shannon and Olga Martin, with the City of Maitland Pipes and Drums playing in the church yard before and after the wedding service.

### **November**

- Services marking the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the repose of Archpriest John Lupish, with Father Alexander Filchakov of the Theophany parish in Mayfield serving at our church for the first time.
- Father James and Subdeacon Vitaly Lupish participate in the 15<sup>th</sup> Diocesan Assembly in Strathfield.
- The first parish BBQ in many years is held.

### **December**

- Services in our parish for Saint Nicholas, with Fathers James and Alexander concelebrating once again.

## **January**

- Services on Christmas Eve (January 6) and Christmas Day (January 7), with a festive parish lunch and a visit from Father Christmas on the day of the feast.
- Father James' fifth anniversary of service in our parish.
- Services with the Great Blessing of Water for the Eve of Theophany, and blessing of parish homes.
- Visits to the Mayfield parish on the feast of the Theophany and again, with Archbishop Hilarion, later in the month.
- Parish website ([www.stnicholaswallsend.org.au](http://www.stnicholaswallsend.org.au)) significantly redesigned, and begins to be regularly updated.

## **March**

- Services on Forgiveness Sunday, followed by pancakes in the church hall.
- Service of Anointing the Sick, with Father Alexander concelebrating.

## **April**

- Services for the Great Feast of the Annunciation, and for the Resurrection of Lazarus.
- Services on Great and Holy Thursday, Great and Holy Friday, and Pascha.

## **May**

- Divine Liturgy, followed by visits to Wallsend, Sandgate and East Maitland cemeteries on Radonitsa, the "day of rejoicing".
- Services for our patronal feast of Saint Nicholas, with Father Milic Rakic of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Broadmeadow joining us.
- Archbishop Hilarion is elected First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church outside Russia, and elevated to the rank of Metropolitan.

## **June**

- Services for the Great Feast of the Ascension of the Lord.

## **PARISH COUNCIL REPORT**

### **Parish activities**

Service Schedules are prepared on a seasonal basis – Summer, Autumn, Winter and Spring. Services have been held on the second and fourth weekends throughout the year, with additional services held on certain major feast-days and during Holy Week. One festive service this year, that of All-night vigil on the eve of the Great Feast of the Ascension, had to be cancelled because of flooding in the church yard.

On average, there are six services per calendar month – three in the evening, and three in the morning. Although the services are primarily in the Church Slavonic language, English has been used over the past year in response to pastoral needs. The Holy Gospel is now generally read at Divine Liturgy in both languages, and some litanies and prayers during Divine Liturgy are in English. To a much lesser extent, English has been used for some of the readings during the evening services. We nevertheless remain committed to Church Slavonic as the primary liturgical language of our parish.

On the occasion of our feast-day of Saint Nicholas this year, we were joined by the priest and parishioners of the Serbian Orthodox Church of Saint Naum of Ochrid and parishioners from the Russian Orthodox Church of the Theophany (Moscow Patriarchate) in Mayfield. This greatly added to the festivity of the occasion, and reflected continuing improvements in relationships between the three parishes following on from the signing of the 'Act of Canonical Communion' in May 2007. We joined both parishes on their patronal feasts, in July 2007 and January 2008 respectively.

Services apart from those scheduled are rare in our parish. There have been two baptisms this year, one of an adult and one of an infant, one wedding, and three funerals.

The provision of items necessary for the divine services and adornment of the church building has remained a priority for us. This year, we purchased a number of icons of the Great Feasts and ordered vestments for our-altar servers. We also ordered four large icons from Russia, together with vessels and other items for use in the divine services.

We have met our obligation to provide material support to the church authorities. Diocesan levies have been paid in full. All mandatory Diocesan collections were taken.

Our parish priest is engaged in full-time secular employment and so the need for his remuneration has been significantly reduced. A small stipend is paid four times a year. Honoraria have been paid to our choir director and to visiting clergy.

A small number of people gather regularly after Divine Liturgy on Sundays and major feast-days for a simple meal and for fellowship. This social contact is valuable given our occasional services and the fact that a number of us live a great distance from each other. The opportunity to provide hospitality to visitors is also of importance. To these regular gatherings we have added occasional barbeques and special festive lunches. Of the latter, the most significant this year was on Forgiveness Sunday, with the Ladies' Auxiliary preparing pancakes and beautifully decorating the hall with Russian handicrafts.

Five issues of our parish newsletter, *News from Saint Nicholas*, were published this year. It is prepared by the parish priest when time permits. Copies are available in church and on our website, and are posted to parishioners and friends who are unable to make it to church. Our website was significantly redesigned in January 2008. Remaining simple in design and content, it is now regularly updated and provides access to parish history, service times, newsletters, parish reports, and other material of interest.

Parishioners and friends generously donated many things in the course of the year, including Christmas gifts for the children, cleaning items, a vacuum cleaner, new tablecloths, raffle prizes, Easter eggs, flowers, wine, towels, bedroom and office furniture, a heater, a new fridge, and kitchen items. This help has been invaluable.

Events in the life of the Diocese have been publicised, allowing our parishioners and friends an opportunity to be involved with seminars, concerts, services and conferences that are a part of the life of our Russian Orthodox Church here in Australia.

### **Broader concerns**

The Parish Council has continued to consider a range of issues of strategic importance. These issues include:

#### *Maintenance*

A contractor has been engaged this year to regularly attend to the parish grounds. Action has been taken in relation to the clearing of gutters and pest control. Agreement has been given to the purchase of equipment to allow parishioners to undertake lawn-mowing and maintenance. The need

to attend to church repairs has been noted. It has been proposed that a member of the Parish Council, in all likelihood the Deputy Warden, be given particular responsibility for co-ordinating maintenance.

#### *Air conditioning*

In-principle agreement was given to the installation of air-conditioning. This project will be advanced when the Parish Council considers that adequate funds are available.

#### *Improvement of the church interior*

The Parish Council agreed to obtain a quote for the replacement of the iconostasis, the icon screen that divides the sanctuary from the main body of the church.

Quotes will also be obtained for having the floorboards repolished and the frescoing of (or painting of icons upon) the walls and ceiling. Assessment of the suitability of the walls and ceiling for this work will be undertaken.

The Parish Council will consider the affordability of these works when quotes have been obtained. It is recognised that these are significant projects, and unlikely to be undertaken in the near future.

The acquisition of icons of important saints and events in sacred history, and of new vestments for the church, are ongoing projects.

#### *Improvement of the parish hall*

The Parish Council decided in principle in 2005-06 that the kitchen in the parish hall required renovation. The Ladies' Auxiliary is at present giving consideration to the cost of and options for this renovation work.

The bedroom in the church hall, and the hall itself, were rearranged, and a sofa bed was purchased, so to better accommodate the parish priest and his family who stay there when services are held in our parish.

#### *Record keeping*

Steps have been taken to significantly improve parish record-keeping. Unfortunately, there has in the past been no co-ordinated or consistent approach to record-keeping, and our records are deficient in many areas. Existing records have been gathered in the church hall, and work is ongoing to ensure their preservation, integrity and accessibility. Our parish records are important not only for historical purposes, but for planning and budgeting.

#### *Education*

We have partnered with the Gosford parish in making available a small store making available spiritual literature and DVDs in Russian and English. A large new television set was donated to the parish, and the acquisition of a DVD player will make possible the occasional presentation of spiritual and educational films. These initiatives supplement the regular teaching given during Divine Liturgy.

#### *Ladies' Auxiliary*

A great deal of work is undertaken under the direction of the Head Sister. Just as it has been proposed that the Deputy Warden take on specific responsibilities, thought has also been given to particular duties for the Deputy Head Sister. The Head Sister could continue to undertake cleaning and administrative tasks and the adornment of the church, for example, with the Deputy Head Sister taking responsibility for parish fellowship. The Parish Council will continue to consider this matter, and decide on an appropriate arrangement in due course.

## Saint Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church

### STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

For the year ending 30 June 2008

<b>Position at 1 July 2007</b>	<b>\$59443.63</b>
<b>Income</b>	
First Plate	3457.40
Second Plate	2566.40
Candles	6425.00
Prospora	1059.00
Tithes <sup>1</sup>	600.00
Newspapers	196.00
Diocesan collections	730.40
Donations	1149.30
Parish Collections	177.00
Sales	72.00
GST Refunds	834.00
Bank Interest	4719.31
Calendars	258.00
Fees	120.00
Miscellaneous	24.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$22387.81</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Priest	1320.00
Choir Director	960.00
Utilities	757.47
Telephone	427.49
Administration	276.10
Diocesan levies	2050.70
Insurance	3361.42
Repairs and maintenance <sup>2</sup>	1707.25
Church needs	78.90
Altar needs	183.90
Candles	1120.00
Collections	730.40
Newspapers	350.97
Special purchases <sup>3</sup>	810.00
Calendars	178.00
Miscellaneous <sup>4</sup>	589.55
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>\$14902.15</b>
<b>Profit (Loss)</b>	<b>\$7485.66</b>
<b>Investment</b>	<b>\$58000.33</b>
<b>Position at 30 June 2008</b>	<b>\$66929.29</b>
Cheque account balance 30.6.2008	6316.00
Term Deposit	58000.33
Cash on hand 30.6.2008	2612.96
<b>Total</b>	<b>66929.29</b>

<sup>1</sup> Tithes are the annual membership fees paid by parish members.

<sup>2</sup> Repairs and maintenance includes lawn mowing, pest control, and any necessary maintenance.

<sup>3</sup> Special purchases included festal icons and materials for altar-server vestments.

<sup>4</sup> Miscellaneous expenses included feast-day costs and small gifts.

**Saint Nicholas Orthodox Church Ladies' Auxiliary**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION**  
For the year ending 30 June 2008

<b>Position at 1 July 2007</b>		<b>\$5699.94</b>
<b>Income</b>		
Donations for lunches	1421.00	
Other donations	777.00	
Sales	139.90	
Collections for flowers	206.05	
Catering	260.00	
Raffle	308.00	
Sale of pussy willows on Palm Sunday	69.00	
Miscellaneous	10.00	
Bank Interest	231.90	
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>\$3422.85</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Groceries for lunches & events	1736.97	
Repairs and maintenance	216.00	
Cleaning and bathroom needs	71.94	
Miscellaneous	74.35	
Flowers	143.00	
Special purchases <sup>5</sup>	190.00	
Gifts <sup>6</sup>	516.37	
GST	146.93	
<b>Total expenses</b>		<b>\$3095.56</b>
<b>Profit (Loss)</b>		<b>\$327.29</b>
<b>Position at 30 June 2008</b>		<b>\$6027.23</b>
Account balance 30.6.2008	768.21	
Term Deposit	5000.00	
Cash on hand 30.6.2008	259.02	
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$6027.23</b>

<sup>5</sup> Special purchases included a microwave oven.

<sup>6</sup> Small gifts were given to the Rector at Easter, on the anniversary of his appointment to the parish, and upon the occasion of a clerical award. Small gifts were also given to certain others on special occasions.

## DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

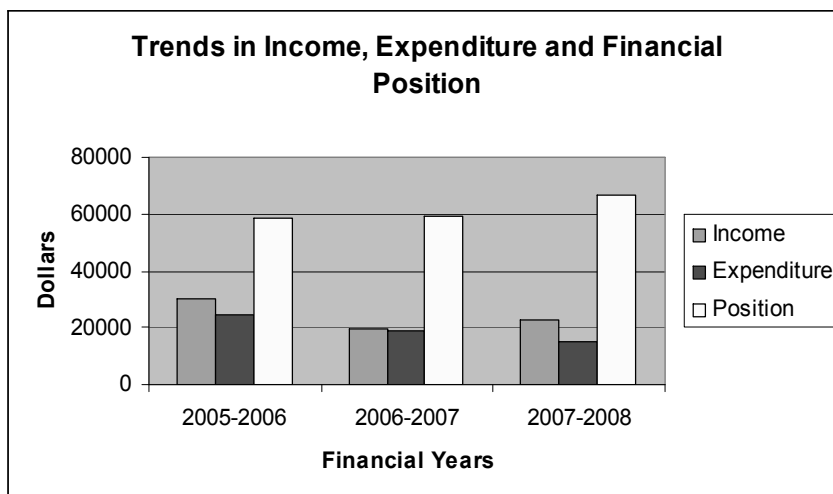
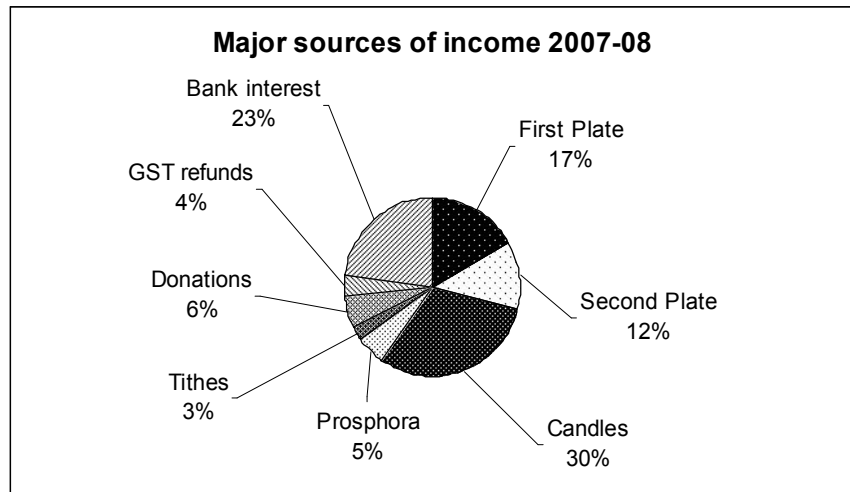
### The Parish

The income of our parish is small – generally around \$20000 per annum – and this is almost entirely derived from the parish itself by means of collections, tithes and the sale of candles and prosphora. Increasingly, bank interest is significant source of income.

Additional sources of income are unlikely to be found.

Fundraising activity is limited by the present size and isolation of our community.

In the 2005-6 and 2006-07 financial years a modest profit was made. This increased significantly in 2007-08. Savings in certain area of expenditure and high interest rates helped in this regard.

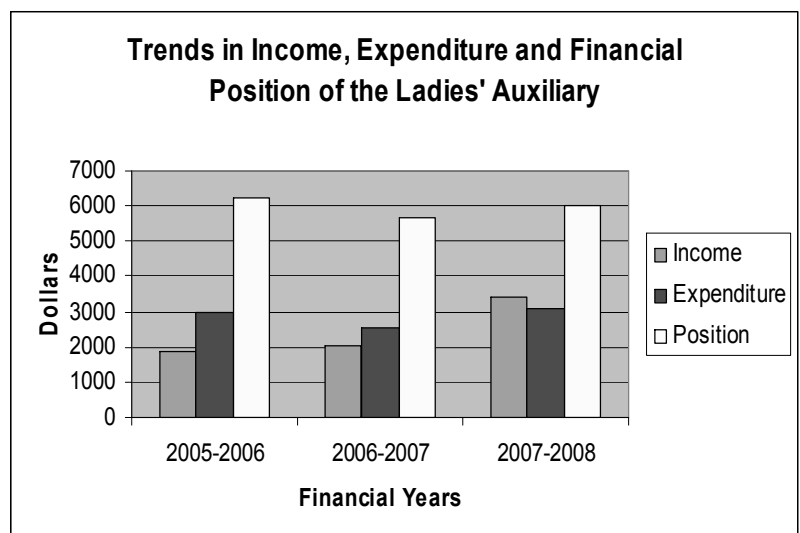


Certain items necessary for the Divine Services have nevertheless been purchased and the church has been cared for. Despite being a small parish with very limited income, the parish financial statements show that we are in a healthy position. Maintaining this position whilst continuing to improve the church building will be an important task for the incoming Parish Council.

### The Ladies' Auxiliary

Although a separate Ladies' Auxiliary account is maintained for historical and practical reasons, the Ladies Auxiliary is not an entity distinct from the parish, and these funds remain under the general supervision of the Parish Council.

A significant increase in donations, together with catering fees and the proceeds of special lunches has improved the financial position of Ladies' Auxiliary in 2007-08.



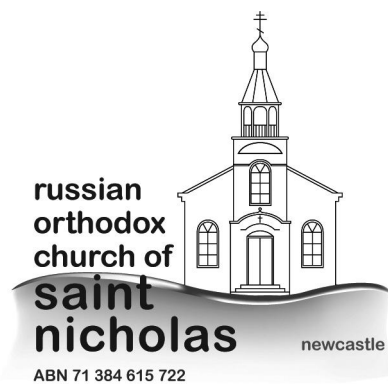
## **AUDITING COMMITTEE REPORT**

Having examined the financial records of Saint Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church and Saint Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church Ladies' Auxiliary, we confirm that the 'Statements of Financial Position' included in this report are accurate and complete.

Vitaly Korotkich  
August 2008

Linda Goura  
August 2008

Members of the 2007-08 Auditing Committee of  
Saint Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church



Saint Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church  
3 Irving Street  
WALLSEND NSW 2287

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