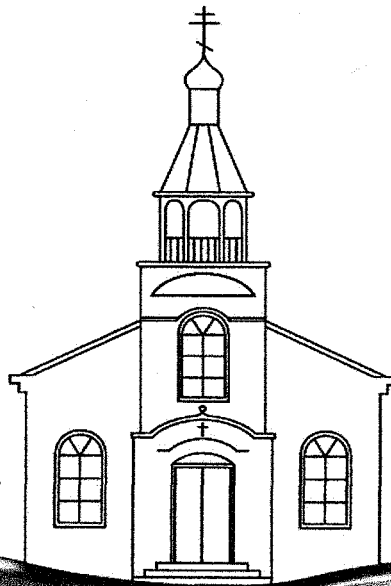


**russian  
orthodox  
church of**



**saint  
nicholas**

**newcastle**

**ABN 71 384 615 722**

# **Annual Report 2015**

## INTRODUCTION

The Parish Council of Saint Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church, Wallsend, is pleased to present its 2015 Annual Report.

According to the Normal Parish By-Laws ('the By-Laws') of parishes of the Russian Orthodox Church outside Russia, it is the objective of each parish to assist the faithful by making available Orthodox Christian prayers, sacraments, teaching and discipline, and by facilitating worthy activity. To this end, the aims of the parish encompass care for the church building and its material needs, provision for the clergy and support for the higher church authorities, work to help others in need, and Orthodox Christian educational work.

For the information of parish members, the Diocesan authorities, and the wider church community, this Annual Report summarises and reviews parish life and administration for the period from 1 July 2014 until 30 June 2015, considering the achievements of our parish in relation to the objective and aims set out in the By-Laws. It also provides an overview of other activities and looks at needs and challenges in the immediate future and in the years ahead.

## THE PARISH COUNCIL

The By-Laws allow for a Parish Council that is made up of the rector and other assigned clergy, the Warden, and such lay members as are elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the parish. The By-Laws indicate that five lay members of the Parish Council should be elected in addition to a warden and a Head Sister.

The only clergyman assigned to our parish is the Rector, Priest James Carles. Father James was appointed to our parish in December 2002. During this time, he has also served the parish of Saint Panteleimon in Gosford.

During the year under review the Warden, elected in 2014 for a fourth three-year term, was Nikolai Goura. Nikolai has fulfilled his duties faithfully, attending every service and working steadfastly for the good order and improvement of our parish. The other lay members of the Parish Council elected at the AGM convened in December 2014 are Anna Morhun, Irene Lupish, Olga Bogacheva, Lucea Szabunia and Anu Kinnunen. Subdeacon Vitaly Lupish holds an honorary position on the Parish Council but because of illness no longer participates in its work. Mrs Morhun has served on the Parish Council since the late 1950s – service of over 50 years – and Subdeacon Vitaly has served since the late 1970s. Both have rendered long and valuable service to our parish.

Our parish has no formal Ladies' Auxiliary or "Sisterhood". The work of the Ladies' Auxiliary is undertaken informally.

## PARISH ACTIVITIES

### ***Making available Orthodox Christian prayers and sacraments***

#### *Background*

For some years now it has been our custom to serve Matins on Saturday evenings and Divine Liturgy on Sunday mornings of the second and fourth weekends of each month. In addition, All-night Vigil and Divine Liturgy are served on certain Great Feasts. On the weekends and Great Feasts when there are no services in our parish our rector serves in Gosford.

We use both Church Slavonic and English in our services. At evening services the mix of the two languages depends on the capabilities and needs of those present. At Divine Liturgy the choir sings in Church Slavonic and the litanies and readings are in both Church Slavonic and English.

In November 2013 Nataliya Rahim was appointed conductor of our choir. A graduate of the Sokolovsky College of the Arts in Gomel and the University of Arts and Culture in Minsk, both in Belarus, Nataliya has done much to improve the standard of singing in our small church.

Sermons are given at every Divine Liturgy and delivered only in English. They generally focus on a practical theme drawn from the appointed readings from the Holy Scriptures or the liturgical commemoration on the day.

Sadly very few people attend our evening services, a trend that is observable in most parishes of our Diocese. Sunday morning services are usually attended by at least 40 worshippers, with more present on significant feast-days and during particular seasons. Age and infirmity have had a noticeable impact on church attendance over the last few years.

Four service schedules are drawn up by the rector each year: Summer, Autumn, Winter and Spring.

During the year under review a total of 82 services were held, slightly less overall than the previous year. There were 36 evening services, 36 Divine Liturgies, and 9 other services. Details are as follows:

| 2014-2015                           | Matins or Vigil | Divine Liturgy | Other services | Total     |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------|
| Winter 2014<br>July-August          | 6               | 6              | 1              | 13        |
| Spring 2014<br>September-November   | 7               | 8              | 2              | 17        |
| Summer 2014-15<br>December-February | 9               | 9              | 0              | 18        |
| Autumn 2015<br>March-May            | 12              | 11             | 1              | 24        |
| Winter 2015<br>June                 | 2               | 2              | 0              | 4         |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>36</b>       | <b>36</b>      | <b>4</b>       | <b>76</b> |

Other one scheduled service was not held. This service was cancelled because of bad weather.

The "Other" services conducted included akathists, vespers services during Great Lent, blessings of water, general anointing, and general memorial services.

Major services for the year included the Great Feasts of the Dormition of the Mother of God, the Entry of the Mother of God into the Temple, the Baptism of Christ (Theophany), the Annunciation of the Mother of God, and the Ascension of the Lord.

In August we had services for the first day of the Dormition Fast. On this day we blessed honey, a number of jars of which had been given to our parish. These were afterwards distributed amongst the faithful.

Although we had no services for the Great Feast of the Nativity of Christ this year, there were services on Christmas Eve and for the Sunday after the Nativity. On the Sunday a festive lunch was held, Christmas carols were sung, and the children received gifts from Father Christmas.

On the Great Feast of the Baptism of the Lord (Theophany) we had services and the great blessing of water.

Early in Great Lent this year we received a visit from the revered Kursk-Root Icon of the Mother of God, the "Directress" of the Russian Diaspora. In addition to many of our own parishioners, a great number of Serbian Orthodox faithful were present, together with members of an Anglican society dedicated to the Mother of God of Walsingham.

During Great Lent the customary General Service of Anointing was held, with 25 of our parishioners in attendance.

In 2015 we had a number of Holy Week services and a midnight Paschal Divine Liturgy. The Paschal services were particularly well attended.

Although we planned services for Radonitsa this year, Divine Liturgy and graveside services were cancelled because of a severe storm. Matins was served on the evening beforehand and a small general panikhida was served in church on the day.

In May 2015 a moleben and akathist to the Mother of God was served before the parish's treasured "Newcastle" Icon of the Mother of God. This icon was painted for our parish in 2009 to mark the sixtieth anniversary of both the first Orthodox services in the Hunter Valley – on the Great Feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God on 28 August – and the establishment of the first Orthodox church in the region – the church of the Protection of the Mother of God at Greta Migrant Camp – and shows the care of the Mother of God for the Orthodox faithful here over the decades since. Although it was hoped that this service would become a regular feature of parish life, this has not yet been possible. Attention will be given to this possibility in 2015-16.

In June 2015 many of our parishioners participated in activities in Greta organised to coincide with Refugee Week. There was a concert and exhibition at the Greta Workers Club and many people later took the opportunity to visit the site of the former Greta Migrant Camp, soon to be redeveloped. Our rector visited the Greta Cemetery and served a memorial service for Irene Solomko, a one year-old girl at whose funeral Archpriest John Lupish presided four days after his arrival in Australia in August 1949, and all Orthodox Christians there laid to rest. It has since been resolved that there will be a memorial services at Greta Cemetery late in August every year.

In the last days of Winter and during the Spring months we commemorate a number of events of significance to our parish. These are the arrival in Australia on 19 August 1949 – the Great Feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord – of Archpriest John Lupish and his family; the first Russian Orthodox services in the Hunter Valley on 28 August 1949, the Great Feast of the Dormition; the patronal feast of the Holy Protection Church in Greta, the first Russian Orthodox church in the Hunter Valley; and the anniversary of Father John's repose on 22 November 1977. The Spring months are thus a time of particular focus on the heritage of our parish.

These commemorations had a special significance in 2014 as in August it was 65 years since Father John's arrival and the first Russian Orthodox services. On Sunday 24 August Bishop George, then visiting our Diocese at Metropolitan Hilarion's request, presided at Divine Liturgy to mark this occasion. Following Divine Liturgy our former Warden Mr Oleg Kolokolow was presented with a parish Certificate of Appreciation ("Приходская Благодарность"). A second award, to be presented to Anatoly Tarasenko, a steadfast friend of the parish, was also announced. These awards were the first under the awards policy that our Parish Council adopted in 2013. Bishop George was presented with a copy of the "Newcastle" Icon of the Mother of God.

In October 2014 we had services for the feast of the Protection of the Mother of God, the patronal feast of the former Greta Camp church. As these services were on a week-day only a small number of the faithful gathered. It was nevertheless important for us to formally observe the anniversary of the first feast-day of that small church.

In November 2014 we had our customary services to mark the anniversary of Father John's repose. A parastas was served on the evening of 21 November and Divine Liturgy was served on the morning of 22 November. Father John's two sons, Subdeacon Vitaly Lupish and John Lupish, were both present.

In November 2014 arrangements were made for one of the parish children, Mia Corbett, to formally make her first confession. Mia, a student at a local Catholic School, had been participating together with her classmates in the program of preparation for reconciliation, the name given to confession in the Roman Catholic Church. As there had been a formal service for her classmates to mark the end of this program of preparation, Mia – unable to participate in that service, of course – was keen to do something similar in our parish. She and her family came to church one Saturday afternoon at which time the formal Order of Confession was served, with Mia herself reading Psalm 50 and the Creed. Joining Mia and her family for this service were the Principal of Saint Patrick's School, together with some of Mia's classmates and their families. A number of our parishioners have since expressed an interest in having the formal Order of Confession served once or twice a year for children making their first confession. Work on this will continue in 2015-16.

During the year under review we continued the practice of serving general memorial services on certain Saturdays on which the church appoints commemorations of the departed. In addition, in May 2015 a memorial litia was served to mark the sixtieth anniversary of the repose of the ever-memorable Archbishop Theodore (Rafalsky, +1955), the Ruling Bishop of the Australian New Zealand Diocese from 1948 until his repose. On the Great Feast of the Ascension of the Lord, the anniversary of the signing of the Act of Canonical Communion between the Russian Orthodox Church outside Russia and the Moscow Patriarchate, the ever-memorable Patriarch Alexis (Ridiger, +2009) and Metropolitan Laurus (Skurla, +2008) were commemorated.

In addition to scheduled services, there are many services of 'need' in our parish. These include baptisms, weddings and funerals, services in memory of a departed family member, and services of intercession in particular circumstances.

There were five baptisms in the year under review, all of children. Those baptised were Florence (Anastasia) Crawford, Seraphim Rezk, Joshua Alfarah, Alexander Jardine and Sofia Marshall. Two adults, Kelly (Cecilia) Hailstone and Kenneth Cross, were received into the Orthodox Church by chrismation.

There were two weddings this year. In May 2015 the marriage of Alexander (Reza) and Nataliya Rahim was blessed, and in June 2015, that of Scott Jardine and Liudmila Kuztnecov.

There were two funerals at our church during the review period. The first, in July 2014, was of Frances Mursa, the wife of Benjamin Mursa and the daughter-in-law of the ever-memorable Mitred Archpriest Mychajlo Mursa (+1966), a priest of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. The other, in February 2015, was of Anastasia Szabunia. A third parishioner, Raisa Welowski, having reposed in June 2015, was buried in July 2015. May God grant them rest!

With Metropolitan Hilarion's blessing, the Romanian Orthodox Community of the Holy Apostle Andrew continued to make use of our church. This community is led by Father Theodor Postelnicescu, a priest of the Romanian Orthodox Diocese of Australia and New Zealand.

### ***Caring for the church building and its material needs***

As in previous years, a contractor regularly attended to basic maintenance of the parish grounds. Jenny Millard has cared for the gardens.

A small number of new icons were acquired this year. These were of Saint Sergius of Radonezh, the Nativity of Christ, the Mother of God, Saints Kyril and Methodius, Saint Silouan of Mount Athos, a number of saints who have been granted the grace of healing, Saint John of the Ladder, and Saints Peter and Paul. Where necessary, the customary wooden case ("kiot") was made for each of these icons before formal blessing and placement in the church.

New gold vestments for our altar-servers were obtained from the Presentation Convent in Bungarby in July 2014.

Our Ladies' Auxiliary has attended to the cleaning and decoration of the church and hall. Flowers were purchased and arranged for special occasions. Cleaning and the adornment of the church were undertaken under the direction of the Head Sister, Anna Morhun.

Matushka Marie Carles continued to bake proshpora for each Divine Liturgy and the five loaves blessed on Great Feasts. The flour for proshpora has for some years been generally donated by the Kfoury family from the Gosford parish.

### ***Undertaking Orthodox Christian educational work***

For many years, the primary means of formal educational work in our parish has been preaching. Sermons are given on every Sunday and major feast-day.

Significant emphasis is placed on learning in a liturgical context. All who wish to assist with the reading and singing in church are encouraged to do so, thereby becoming more familiar with the order of services and with the various books used in the Divine Services of the Orthodox Church.

To the extent possible the blessing of new candles, icons, vestments, and honey and other items – in addition to the regular blessings of fruit and Paschal foods – is incorporated into the common worship of the parish. The prayers of the Orthodox Church appointed for such blessings are theologically rich and instructive for the faithful to hear.

Services of need are also used as an opportunity to teach. For example, the scheduling of weddings involves some discussion of the calendar of the Orthodox Church, the cycle of feasts and fasts, and the principle of putting spiritual things ahead of worldly things. Similarly, preparation for funeral services provides an opportunity for the faithful to learn about the Orthodox response to death and the customs that reflect and reinforce our faith.

A major development in 2014-15 was the commencement of simple classes for the younger parish children during the time of the sermon. These classes were led by Matushka Marie Carles and generally involved an interactive presentation on the life of a saint or the significance of a feast-day. Importantly, Matushka Marie was able to use these presentations as an opportunity to present age-appropriate information to the children about their safety in church life.

In 2015 the Parish Council again provided parish families and households with a wall calendar in Russian and English that included details of feasts and fasts – including the rules of fasting – and the readings for each day. Besides being a warmly-received gesture, this has been helpful in ensuring that our parishioners understand what is happening in church life. The 2015 wall calendar, designed by Olga Bogacheva, was an attractive commemorative calendar marking the anniversary of the repose of three Ruling Bishops of the Australian-New Zealand Diocese: Archbishop Theodore (Rafalsky, +1955), Archbishop Theodosy (Putilin, +1980), and Archbishop Paul (Pavlov, +1995). Each of these three bishops visited our parish, the latter two many times, and the calendar included photographs of each of them at our church.

Our parish website and Facebook page, discussed elsewhere in this report, also assisted with Orthodox Christian educational work by sharing information about the practical aspects of the life of the parish, the Diocese, and the wider Orthodox Church. It is expected that this aspect of both the website and Facebook will be strengthened in the year ahead.

Two young mothers in the parish, Anastasia Harwood and Olga Bogacheva, continued to co-ordinate the Russian-language playgroup, "Teremok", established in September 2009. Meeting weekly in the church

hall, this playgroup gives mothers and their children an opportunity to gather for fellowship and learning in an Orthodox Christian environment. In September 2015 the playgroup celebrated five years of operation.

### ***Providing for the clergy and supporting the higher church authorities***

Our parish took the important step in April 2014 of making available to the parish rector an expense account – a non-taxable fringe benefit – that allowed him to reduce his secular work commitments by one and a half days each fortnight. This arrangement continued throughout 2014-15 and is, for the time being, ongoing.

Honoraria are paid to hierarchs, deacons and sub-deacons visiting our parish on special occasions. As our parish rector has been present for every scheduled service, there has been no need to provide for clergy on a relief basis.

Parishes of the Diocese have a responsibility to financially support the higher church authorities – the Diocesan and Synodal administrations. Such financial support is collected from parishes for the Diocese in the form of a 15 per cent levy on both candle sales and the first collection plate, and for the Synod in the form of a 4.5 per cent levy on candle sales, the first collection plate, donations, membership tithes, prosphora sales, bank interest and other revenue. The levies on candle sales are applied by the Diocese when candles are purchased from the Diocesan Candle Store.

Levies are payable at six month intervals. In February levies are payable on income received in the period from July-December, and in August levies are payable on income received from January-June. Our parish takes seriously its responsibility to support the higher church authorities in this way.

During the year under review, Diocesan levies totalling \$2,434.96 were paid. A further \$1376.45 remains outstanding. In addition, we paid levies of \$269.00 on candle purchases. In November 2014 we also paid \$200.00 towards the Annual Diocesan Youth Conference and \$250.00 for the re-burial of Bishop Konstantin (Jesensky, +1996). The incorrupt remains of Bishop Konstantin, a former vicar bishop of the Australian-New Zealand Diocese, were moved from the site of a former monastery in Texas to the Holy Trinity Monastery in Jordanville, USA, late in 2014.

### ***Working to help others in need***

Each year the parish is asked to take up a number of collections for organisations and causes nominated by the church authorities. As with Diocesan and Synodal levies, our parish takes this responsibility seriously.

In the year under review, a total of \$2,279.00 was collected for charitable causes at the request of the Diocesan authorities. This is more than the \$1849.00 collected in 2013-14. The breakdown of collections is as follows:

| <b>Annual Diocesan Collection Beneficiaries</b> | <b>When taken</b> | <b>Amount</b>    |
|---|-------------------|------------------|
| Fund for Assistance to the ROCOR – Ukraine      | October 2014      | \$280.00         |
| Fund for Assistance to the ROCOR                | November 2014     | \$155.00         |
| Orthodox Action Sydney and Melbourne            | February 2015     | \$250.00         |
| Synod of Bishops – Kursk-Root Icon              | March 2015        | \$419.00         |
| Holy Trinity Seminary, Jordanville              | March 2015        | \$150.00         |
| Russian Ecclesiastical Mission, Jerusalem       | Palm Sunday 2015  | \$250.00         |
| <b>Total</b>                                    |                   | <b>\$1504.00</b> |

All of these monies have been paid on to the Diocesan authorities.

As in previous years, collections were advertised in advance and envelopes with details of the date and purpose of each collection were distributed in church.

| Parish Collection Beneficiaries | When taken    | Amount          |
|---------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Galina and Tatiana              | February 2015 | \$775.00        |
| <b>Total</b>                    |               | <b>\$775.00</b> |

The parish collection was taken up to assist an elderly woman and her daughter living in Leonidovka, Penza Oblast, Russia. The two women, Galina Kraushkina (77) and Tatiana Andreeva (57), were the aunt and cousin of a good friend and steadfast supporter of our parish. Their home and all their possessions were destroyed by fire on the evening of 24 December 2014. Both women suffered burns in the fire. The Parish Council increased the amount collected to A\$1000.00 from parish funds.

### ***Other activities***

#### *Improvements to the church and hall*

No new work on the church hall was undertaken in 2014-15.

Late in 2014 the foundations were laid for the small extension to our church and early in 2015 the brickwork was completed up to the level of the floor. A substantial beginning having been made, further work will be undertaken when other projects have been completed and funds become available.

In July-August 2015 quotes were obtained for the construction of a new staircase in the church and for the installation of air conditioning in the church and hall. The stairs to the choir loft are steep and narrow and as such are considered dangerous. Air conditioning in the hall, in particular, will improve that facility and make it more attractive to prospective hirers.

The quotes obtained formed the basis of an application for assistance under the NSW Government's Community Building Partnership scheme. If the application is successful these projects will be commenced early in 2016.

In 2014 we ordered a new memorial table at which candles for the departed are placed. This work is being undertaken for us by Protodeacon Basil Hadarin, a gifted carpenter and woodcarver who has done much to adorn our church. The new table, expected to be completed late in 2016, will replace the boxes of sand that we have used for this purpose for the past fifty years.

#### *Iconography*

Early in 2015 a decision was made to proceed with another stage in the iconography project, an ornate standing case holding a large icon of the Mother of God surrounded by saints. When completed, this case will stand on the right-hand side of the church and complement the Golgotha acquired in January 2014. It is expected that this project will not be completed until the 2016-17 financial year.

#### *Parish life*

A roster operated throughout the year to ensure that parishioners and friends had an opportunity for regular fellowship and to talk and relax over light refreshments after each Sunday service. Two ladies worked together each Sunday on which we had a service, with each pair on duty once every three months.

Our Ladies' Auxiliary also prepared gift-bags for our children at Christmas, and pussy-willows for Palm Sunday.



During the year, pilmeni, piroshki, vareniki, cakes and other items were prepared for sale by the Ladies' Auxiliary and friends. Jenny Millard continued to operate a small fundraising stall in the church hall. The Parish Council is grateful for her ongoing work raising money for the needs of the parish.

In February 2015 a successful pancake night was again held at the John Gebhardt Centre in Waratah, the home of the Newcastle and Hunter Region Ethnic Communities Council. Helped by Elena Ferguson from Northern Settlement Services and Russian, Ukrainian and Belarussian ladies from across the Hunter Region, our Ladies' Auxiliary raised over \$3,000.00.

Our parish website was redeveloped during the second half of 2013 with the assistance of a US-based company, Orthodox Web Solutions. The attractive site was designed by Olga Bogacheva and incorporates the imagery of our treasured "Newcastle" Icon of the Mother of God. It combines a blog-style home page with news of coming and recent events in the life of the parish and the Diocese with information about parish history and administration and practical aspects of baptism, weddings, funerals and other services of need. New content is being added to the website regularly.

Published in September 2013, the new site had by the end of June 2015 received over 30,000 visits, with over 21,000 in 2014-15. Contact with visitors to the site and the statistical data available to us indicates that it is not only our parishioners and friends who visit but also the faithful from around the world – over a third of visits to our site are from the United States and Canada, and many are from Russia, Ukraine and other Orthodox countries – and those interested in learning more about the Orthodox faith.

The parish also has a Facebook page that is fully integrated with the website and which presents photographs and less formal news items.

#### *Diocesan life*

Our small parish has been engaged in the life of the Diocese to the extent possible given our distance from the major centres of Diocesan life.

To the extent possible, Father James visited the parishes of Greater Sydney on the occasion of their patronal feasts. In 2014-15, this included the cathedral in Strathfield, the parishes in Croydon, Centennial Park, Wollongong, Cabramatta, Blacktown and Fairfield, and the monasteries in Kentlyn and Monkerai. Father James also participated in the festive services at the Archbishop's Chapel in Croydon on the second day of Christmas in January 2015, and served at the Service of General Anointing in Strathfield during Great Lent in 2015.

On 16-17 April Father James participated in the services at Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral, Strathfield, in honour of the installation of His Grace Bishop George as Bishop of Canberra and Vicar of the Australian-New Zealand Diocese, together with a great multitude of clergy and faithful from across the Australian-New Zealand Diocese. Our parish was represented at the festive reception afterwards by Parish Council members Irene Lupish and Lucy Szabunia.

Father James continued to serve as one of the clergy members of the 2013-2016 Diocesan Council and as Secretary of the Diocesan Council Governance Committee. He has participated actively in the work of both the Diocesan Council and the Governance Committee, undertaking work on a number of important Diocesan Council projects.

Father James actively participated in the Pastoral Conference held in Kentlyn in December 2014 to coincide with the Annual Diocesan Youth Conference and in the customary Great Lenten Pastoral Conference and Retreat. He also participated in the Divine Services held in conjunction with both conferences.

In January and April 2014 respectively Metropolitan Hilarion's Nativity and Paschal Epistles were read aloud in church. In this small way we have endeavoured to strengthen the links between the faithful in Newcastle and the hierarchy of our Church.

### ***Plans and challenges***

In 2014-15 we identified our key plans and challenges for the year ahead as the construction and fit-out of the extension to the church, the need to improve parish administration and financial record-keeping, and the strengthening of parish life.

We have continued work on the construction of the extension this year. Early in 2015 work on this paused as we agreed to further work on the church iconography project. Further work will be undertaken when other projects have been completed and funds become available.

We hope to obtain funding through the Community Building Partnerships scheme early in 2016 to replace the staircase in church and install air conditioning in the church and hall. These two projects will make the church safer and more comfortable and further improve the community facilities in our church hall.

Raising or otherwise sourcing funds to maintain and improve our small church is the key task for our Parish Council in the year ahead.

Work to improve parish administration and financial record-keeping continues.

We endeavour to strengthen parish life by ensuring an adequate number of services and social activities. Our parish is a diverse one that gathers people from across the Hunter Valley and beyond, and we recognise the importance of investing in our common life.

*September 2015*

ST NICHOLAS RUSSIAN ORTHODOX  
CHURCH WALLSEND

A.B.N. 71 384 615 722

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR YEAR ENDING 30 JUNE 2015

**Evan Nicholas FIPA, A Fin**  
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Registered Tax Agent

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**INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF  
ST NICHOLAS RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH WALLSEND**

**Scope**

I have audited the financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of St Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church Wallsend for the year ended 30 June 2015. The Committee is responsible for the financial report and has determined that the accounting policies used and described in Note 1 to the financial statements which form part of the financial report are appropriate to meet the requirements of and the needs of the members. I have conducted an independent audit of this financial report in order to express an opinion on it to the members. No opinion is expressed as to whether the accounting policies used are appropriate to the needs of the members.

I disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial report to which it relates to any person other than the members, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

The audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. The procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial report and the evaluation of significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion whether, in all material respects, the financial report is presented fairly in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 so as to present a view which is consistent with my understanding to the organizations financial position, and performance as represented by the results of its operations and its cash flows. These policies do not require the application of all Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements in Australia.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

**Audit Opinion**

In my opinion, the financial report of St Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church Wallsend presents a true and fair view of the financial position as at 30 June 2015 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year ended 30 June 2015 in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements.



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September 16, 2015

## **NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015**

### **Note 1: Statement of Significant Accounting Policies**

This financial report is a special purpose financial report. The committee has determined that the organization is not a reporting entity.

The financial report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of applicable Australian Accounting Standards (AASB's).

No other applicable Accounting Standards, Urgent Issues Group Consensus Views or other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board have been applied.

The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historic costs and does not take into account changing money values, or except where specifically stated, current valuations of non-current assets.

The following material accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous year unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of this financial report.

### **Note 2: Income Tax**

The organisation is exempt from Income Tax.

### **Note 3: Fixed Assets**

Plant, equipment and fittings are carried at cost less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation. The depreciable amount of all fixed assets is depreciated over the useful lives of the assets to the organisation commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use. Depreciation rates have been applied on a straight-line basis at rates of 20% per annum. Items, which cost less than \$500.00, are fully depreciated in the year of acquisition.

### **Note 4: Goods and Services Tax (GST)**

Revenues and expenses are recognised inclusive of the amount of GST. In these circumstances any GST is recognised and paid to/recovered from the Australian Taxation Office by the Church Diocese. The net amount is subsequently charged or remitted to the Parish Council.

### **Note 5: Revenue recognition**

Revenue is recognised when the organisation is legally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

### **Note 6: Donations and grants**

Donations and grants are recognised as revenue when the organisation gains control, economic benefits are probable and the amount/s can be measured reliably.

### **Note 7: Commitments for Works in Progress**

A project is underway to construct an ICON for the church. Contracts has been entered into with two parties for the work. Progress payments to-date totaling \$25173 have been made which reflect in the accounts. Outstanding commitments estimated at \$30,000 exist to complete the project, expected in the 2015/16 financial year.