



October 5, 2021

Dear Fathers and Friends,

We want to share with you some **important changes and deadlines for the OTSA annual meeting, most importantly the NEW DATES for the meeting.**

1. **OTSA ANNUAL MEETING DATES CHANGED TO JANUARY 13-15, 2022.** We recognize that a shift in the dates of the annual OTSA meeting is unexpected and most unusual, and emphasize that we took this step only after considered thought. The mission of OTSA includes the promotion and facilitation of scholarly study of important topics for Orthodox academics, fostering dialogue and reasoned conversation, and encouragement of the work of Orthodox academics in various institutions of higher learning, especially our seminaries. While it is impossible to select dates that do not coincide with other conferences and events, our intention is not to divide our members but to facilitate their participation in Orthodox scholarly endeavors. We note that our original time for the conference overlaps with another conference of significance to Orthodox. St. Vladimir's Orthodox Seminary is planning to host a major conference on Scripture, "Searching the Scriptures," on Nov. 11–12, 2021. (See below for details.) We hope that by moving our meeting our members will be able to participate in both that conference and our own, and this will help to support camaraderie among Orthodox scholars.
2. **OTSA Annual Meeting moved *online*:** After careful consideration of all the complications and uncertainties the pandemic continues to generate, the executive committee has decided to move the annual OTSA meeting to an online-only format. As with last year's meeting, the virtual only format will facilitate the participation of members from every location, without creating concerns about health, expense, or the vagaries of January weather.
3. **Annual Meeting Registration:** Registration for the meeting is now available on the OTSA webpage at: <https://www.otsamerica.net/2021-annual-meeting/> *All attendees must register.* Because we have shifted to the online format, members who are current in their

dues will register at no cost (dues will function as the registration fee), and members not current in dues, or those who are not members and want to attend, will have a \$30.00 registration charge. Because our meeting is now scheduled for January 13-15, 2022, dues from 2021 will be operative through those dates, and new dues for 2022 will not be necessary until January 16, 2022.

This is a great time to become current in your OTSA dues for 2021!

4. **Call for papers/panels—Deadline extended to Dec. 1: The change in dates for our annual meeting also extends the deadline for proposals for papers and panel. The new deadline is December 1st, 2021.** Please send proposals to Teva Regule at teva@mit.edu and/or Fr. John Jillions at jjillions@gmail.com. Proposals for both papers and panels include an abstract of less than 250 words and an abbreviated CV of the presenter(s). Presenters of papers have 20 minutes to give their paper and an additional 10 minutes for Q&A.

5. **Call for Panels:** Please consider putting together or participating on a panel for the conference. Panels run for approximately an hour to an hour and fifteen minutes and include brief presentations of about 7-10 minutes by three or four people, leaving about half the time for discussion. In addition to possible new panels, we are currently organizing panels around eight themes; please let us know if you would like to contribute to these specific panels. These eight topics are:
 - Mixed (Inter-Christian) marriages
 - COVID and the Church
 - Science and Theology
 - Ecumenism and Orthodoxy
 - The Diaconate (male and female) for the post-COVID world
 - The “Nones and Dones”
 - Reflections on portions of the Social Ethos document, “For the Life of the World”
 - Evangelical Theology and Orthodoxy.

6. **The Florovsky Lecture**, offered this year by Very Rev Dr. John J. Jillions, will be via the Zoom meeting format, with the working title “Orthodoxy and Pluralism: Reclaiming Catholicity.” There will be a separate registration and link for this lecture. The lecture, which is held in conjunction with the OTSA annual meeting, will be on Friday evening, January 14, 2022.

Very Rev Dr. John A Jillions is a Research Fellow and the founding Principal of the Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies (Cambridge, UK), former Chancellor of the Orthodox Church in America, and the author of *Divine Guidance: Lessons for Today from the World of Early Christianity* (Oxford University Press, 2020). He has also served as Associate Professor of Theology at Saint Paul University in Ottawa (with the

Sheptytsky Institute), Associate Professor of Religion and Culture at St Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, and as adjunct instructor at Fordham University. Educated at McGill University (BA), St Vladimir's Seminary (MDiv, DMin), and Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (PhD, New Testament), Fr John is a priest of the Orthodox Church in America and has served parishes in Australia, Greece, England, Canada, and the United States. He has published numerous scholarly and popular articles, and a children's book, *The Christmas Story: Mary and Joseph in Bethlehem* (Xist Publishing). He is Vice-president of the Orthodox Theological Society in America and currently serves as pastor of Holy Ghost Church in Bridgeport, CT. He is married to Denise and they have three grown sons and two grandchildren.

Please note that Fr. Jillions has a new essay posted to Public Orthodoxy, entitled "Outside the Camp: Opportunities and Opposition," found at:

<https://publicorthodoxy.org/2021/09/23/outside-the-camp-opportunities-and-opposition/>

7. **New Blog Post:** V. Rev. Dr. Peter Anthony Baktis has submitted a new essay to the Church and the Academy blog on the OTSA webpage, "Church of the Ecumenical Councils, Church-State Divided?" You can link to it here:
<https://www.otsamerica.net/2021/09/23/church-of-the-ecumenical-councils-church-state-divided/>
8. An important conference on Scripture will be held at St. Vladimir's Orthodox Seminary on November 11-12. The conference, "Searching the Scriptures," will feature Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeyev and several noted biblical scholars presenting their latest research. For more information, and to register, go to:
<https://www.svots.edu/events/searching-scriptures-featuring-met-hilarion-alfeyev>
9. Dr. Bradley Nassif has recently published a book through St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, entitled *The Evangelical Theology of the Orthodox Church*. For an informative interview about the book, see <https://www.antiochian.org/regulararticle/1039> , and for the SVS bookstore link: <https://svspress.com/evangelical-theology-of-the-orthodox-church-the/>
Please note that all royalties from the book benefit St. Vladimir's Seminary.

Respectfully submitted,

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