



Volume 34, Number 4  
**APRIL 2025**

# The Cathedral Messenger

*A Publication of St. George Antiochian Orthodox Christian Cathedral*

## The Significance of our New Cathedral Icons



Our beloved St. George Cathedral was adorned with new icons during the last week of February and into the first week of March.

The first of these new icons is the Annunciation which is behind the iconostasis and split into two parts on either side of the altar. On the north side of the altar the Archangel Gabriel is shown in movement from heaven to earth, pointing across the altar to the Most Holy Virgin. The Mother of God is depicted on the south side of the iconostasis receiving the word from the Archangel.

The unique "split" format of this icon presents a "bridge" of sorts: just as the icon is a bridge across the space of the altar, so too did the Most Holy Theotokos become the "bridge" from heaven to earth by her obedience to the will of God to bear the Christ.

On the south side of the church are found the icons of the Prophet and God-seer Moses at the burning

bush and receiving the law. Moses had fled from Egypt and was shepherding sheep in the wilderness when God appeared to him in the bush on Mount Horeb and commanded him to return to Egypt and free the Hebrew people. This bush, while burning, was miraculously unburnt, and the Church has always seen this as a prefigurement of the Most Holy Virgin who, while giving birth to her Son remained a virgin. This is why the bush in the icon has the Mother of God holding Christ in her womb.

We also see depicted Moses removing his sandals as commanded to him by God "for the place where you stand is holy ground" (Exodus 3:5). The next scene is of Moses receiving the Law on Mount Sinai. One peculiar feature in this icon is the gap in Mount Sinai. This comes from the story where Moses asked to see God's glory, and God said "You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live" (Exodus 33:20) but in-



## New Cathedral Icons



stead commands Moses to hide in the “cleft of the rock”, by which God will pass and Moses will see his “back”.

On the north side, near the choir, we find the icon of the Transfiguration. Christ took his three closest disciples, Peter, James, and John, up Mount Tabor where “He was transfigured before them. His clothes became shining, exceedingly white, like snow, such as no launderer on earth can whiten them” (Mark 9:2-3). Then, the Prophets Moses and Elijah (Elias) appeared and began conversing with Jesus. The radiance of the light was dazzling, and the disciples fell to the ground hiding their faces from the light. Finally, the voice of

God the Father spoke from a cloud, saying, “This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!”

The last set of icons are the hierarchs facing the altar and solea from the north and south. Bishops from every generation of the Church are represented, from the Apostle James, the Brother of the Lord, to 20th century bishops such as St. Nektarios of Aegina, St. Tikhon the Confessor, St. Nikolai Velimirovich, and St. John the Wonderworker of Shanghai and San Francisco, of whom the latter three labored in the United States. As the 14 hierarchs look down upon the altar and the liturgizing priests, may we have their prayers before God to make our worship acceptable in His sight!





## Bulletin Board

### MABROOK! BLESSINGS!

#### Baptisms

Ronald George Elkouri, III, 3/1  
(son of Ronnie and Monique)

Eliana Helen and Kalaya Katherine Franklin, 3/22  
(daughters of Ian and Christine)

#### Chrismations

Monique Elkouri, 3/1

MANY YEARS!



### MEMORY ETERNAL

Doug Spencer, 3/14  
father of Jim Spencer

Roe Messner (father of Ron) 3/16



The Right Reverend Father Calinic  
invites the children, teens, and their families to

## LAZARUS SATURDAY

### Outing At The Chancery

April 12 from 12:30p - 3:00p

There will be no parking at the Chancery. Please park at the Cathedral. Buses will be available to provide transportation.

Admission to the outing is a gift to the Treehouse. Please see the back of the flyer for a list of suggested donation items.



Should there be inclement weather, activities will take place at the Cathedral from 12:00-2:30p

April 12, 2025

On this special day  
please bring  
an item for



#### Items requested:

Diapers & Pull-Ups  
(size 5, 6, & 7)

Similac Formula  
(Orange & Blue containers)

Boys 0-6 month outfits &  
New Laundry Baskets

The Treehouse offers mothers and babies a brighter future through sharing God's love, basic necessities, education and genuine personal care.

You can also support  
The Treehouse through a  
donation. To donate, scan  
the QR code or visit us at  
[www.wichitatreehouse.org](http://www.wichitatreehouse.org)



Join us at St. George Cathedral:  
Orthros - 8:30a  
Divine Liturgy - 9:30a  
Brunch to follow in the Fellowship Hall



### Egg Hunt

1:05pm  
1:20pm  
1:40pm  
2:00pm  
2:15pm  
2:25pm

2 years & younger  
3-4 years old  
5-6 years old  
7-8 years old  
9 years old  
10 years old

## CLASS OF 2025

Gabriel Abou-Faissal  
Elijah Abraham  
Ava Baranivsky  
Charolte Buerge  
Grace Camden  
Thomas Earles  
Roman Hourani  
Sophia Mandanis  
Bitania Merawi  
Preston Sebts  
Nicolas Zayat

**Join US! May 18th**  
to Honor Our Cathedral Graduates and for the  
presentation of the Kouri/Cohlma Scholarships

## TEEN SOYO

### Grill N Chill

PLEASE JOIN US FOR THE

APRIL 23, 2025

6:00PM TO 8:30PM

### APRIL FASTING

There is an allowance for fish and wine on Palm Sunday, April 13. Fasting resumes during Holy Week with abstinence from all meats, dairy products, flesh fish, with allowance for wine after the Liturgy on Holy Saturday morning. Bright Week, April 20-26 is fast-free, and an Antiochian tradition allows for fast-free observance during the 40 days of Pascha.



## Pan-Orthodox Pot-luck Supper

Hosting St Mary Church  
Wednesday, April 9  
following the Presanctified Liturgy

**An abundance of Lenten foods are needed for this Supper:**

- Rice & Bean dishes • Hummus
- Baba Ghanouj • Tabouleh • Salads
- Potato dishes • Pastas • Chili
- Rolled Grape Leaves • Lenten Desserts

Soup-like dishes should be kept to a minimum.

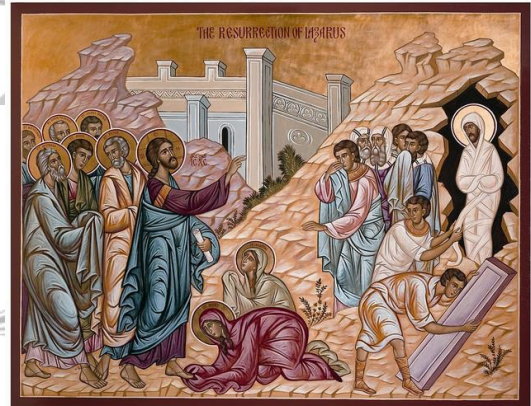
## Antiochian Archdiocese Scholarships are available

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese  
of North America

Applications available at:

<https://www.antiochian.org>

## GREAT FRIDAY VIGIL



**All are more than WELCOME**  
to participate in the Holy Friday All Night Vigil!  
**A sign-up board will be placed by the Chapel**

## Holy Saturday & Pascha



Apr 19 • 9:30a *Vespertal Divine Liturgy*  
11:00p *Paschal Service*  
followed by *Paschal feast*  
Apr 20 • 1:00p *Agape Vespers*

## Paschal Baskets



You are encouraged to bring a basket of your favorite desserts, meats and wines with you to the Paschal Liturgy. They are to be placed in the baptismal area and will be blessed at the conclusion of the Liturgy.

## Food for the Hungry



We urge you, during this season of prayer, self-discipline and fasting, to be very generous in your contribution to this campaign. As we practice the virtues which cleanse our souls, let us not forget or refrain from the “greatest of the virtues.” As important as prayer and fasting are, they are of no avail to us if we fail to give to those in need.

If you would like to give, please make your check payable to **St. George Cathedral - earmark “FFHP”**

“When you see a poor person, remember the words of our Lord Jesus Christ by which He declared that it is He, Himself who is fed. For though that which appears be not Christ, yet in that person’s form, it is Christ Himself who receives and begs.”

--St. John Chrysostom,  
“Homilies on Mathew” #78.

## Welcome Home



## Welcome Home

Our family's journey to Orthodoxy began as a search to find a spiritual home that resonated deeply with our hearts and minds. Throughout 2023, we explored churches of various denominations, each offering something unique, yet leaving us with a sense that something essential was missing. Through online theological discussions and debates, we began to see the gaps in many arguments, which led us to question and seek further. This path eventually brought us to Orthodoxy, where we attended our first Vespers. From the moment we walked in, we felt a profound connection to the timeless traditions and unaltered truth of Scripture. There were no flashy performances or reinterpretations. Just a pure, unwavering faith that spoke directly to our souls. We were captivated, eager to learn more, and dove headfirst into the rich teachings of the Church.

The warmth and hospitality we experienced from the very beginning were overwhelming. Parishioners welcomed us with open arms, making us feel like we belonged from day one. Their genuine kindness and support affirmed that we were not just joining a church but becoming part of a family. This sense of community has been especially meaningful for our daughter, Kalaya, who started first grade at Christ the Savior this school year. Her growth has been nothing short of inspiring—she eagerly shares what she learns each day, and her enthusiasm for faith and learning fills us with joy. The integration of classical education with spiritual formation has been a perfect fit for our family, reinforcing the values we hope to instill in our children.

Today, our hearts are full, knowing we have found our home in Orthodoxy. The journey was not always easy, but it led us to a faith that is rooted in truth, tradition, and love. We are grateful for the strong foundation it provides, not just for us, but for the legacy we hope to pass on to our children. This is more than a church—it's a way of life, and we are excited to continue growing in this beautiful faith together.

*Ian & Christine Franklin*  
*Kalaya & Eliana*

## A note from Fr. Paul Email Solicitations

Many parishioners recently received an email purportedly from me requesting financial assistance on behalf of office staff. This was a **SCAM**. We are continuing to investigate how the scammers were able to hack our system to personalize the address of the individual messages. In this regard, please take note of the following:

- Any genuine email message from me concerning parish matters will always come via my church email address, either directly or through the Realm system. **ALWAYS** check the originating address of any email purporting to be from me.

- Any message from me soliciting funds for various causes will always direct donations to be made **TO ST. GEORGE CATHEDRAL** with a specific memo notification: e.g. Missions, Lebanon Relief, Project Mexico, etc.

- I **NEVER** solicit funds to meet individual needs by email. I **ALWAYS** do so by personal contact. Any email message requesting funds to help individuals for any reason is by default a **SCAM**.

Please be mindful of these guidelines so that no parishioner will be taken in by those who wickedly prey upon the good intentions of Christian people.



# Creating a Welcoming Atmosphere at St George Cathedral: Key Hospitality Roles in the Church

Orthodox churches across our nation are experiencing tremendous growth as new people discover our faith. How do we address such newcomers' questions and introduce them to the Church? How do we welcome them into our parish community? Due to the large number of visitors and inquirers, the responsibility cannot solely rest on the shoulders of the clergy. Everyone in our church community has a vital role to play in welcoming and supporting seekers and inquirers.

The St. George Outreach Ministry Team is dedicated to this task. It is comprised of various roles that ensure a welcoming and inviting experience for everyone who attends services. The team includes groups exercising key hospitality roles that are tasked with cultivating an inviting atmosphere for all, as follows:

**Ushers:** Ushers' primary responsibilities include maintaining order during services, managing the candle areas and offering, and helping attendees find seating. They embody quiet hospitality and service, creating an atmosphere supporting the church's mission and fostering a sense of community.

**Greeters:** Greeters are positioned at the entrances, offering a friendly welcome and setting a positive tone. They help orient visitors, distribute bulletins and visitor packets, and answer basic questions. They invite newcomers to attend the coffee social and encourage them to stop by the visitor table in the fellowship hall. Greeters play a role in easing any apprehension a newcomer may experience.

**Pew Pals:** Pew pals actively engage with newcomers during the service. They sit alongside visitors to



guide them through the flow of the service, introducing them to use of the service book and liturgical page. They offer brief comments explaining liturgical practices to ensure visitors feel included and supported. Pew Pals also invite newcomers to the coffee social and seek opportunities to make introductions to parishioners.

**Visitor Table Hosts:** Visitor table hosts continue the welcoming experience after the service has concluded. Stationed at the visitor welcoming table, these hosts connect

personally with newcomers, answer questions about the church, and introduce them to other parish members. It is an opportunity to discover why guests have come to visit our parish and to greet this interest with genuine hospitality.

**Ambassadors:** Ambassadors are tasked with recognizing and connecting with repeat visitors. They are cued to people of similar demographics, to readily engage them in relatable conversation about the Faith.

Each of these hospitality roles contributes to the greater mission of the church: to embody love and acceptance in action. By ensuring that visitors - first-timers or regulars - feel welcomed, valued, and supported, a well-organized hospitality team transforms a congregation from a gathering of individuals into a thriving, connected community.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the hospitality team, please contact Valerie Learned [valearned@gmail.com](mailto:valearned@gmail.com) or Denise Distefano [bdistefano@rcn.com](mailto:bdistefano@rcn.com)

## Community Corner



Submitted by Mikell Awaad

### Next Meeting Tuesday, February 8th

12:00 noon in the Fellowship Hall.

We would love to have you join us!!

Please consider sharing your gifts and talents with our community. Carrie Camden at camden9492@gmail.com if you would like to be involved.

## What I Learned at the Lord's Diner

Lessons from a St George Cathedral Volunteer

— by Sally Buxton



On a recent Sunday evening I joined in a prayer circle with volunteers at the Lord's Diner, just before the serving time began. Our leader prayed for the diners and the food, and that our service would bring glory to God.

My job was to serve and replenish the iced tea, water, or coffee. This evening, as the tables slowly filled, I spotted two men sitting across from each other who were among the first to arrive. As I went to offer them their first drinks, one said that he would like some Chardonnay. I laughed and told him I would be right back...that I had to run down the street. When I returned with the pitchers of water

and tea, he remarked on how fast I was, but still hadn't brought the Chardonnay!

I returned later to see if he and the young man across from him needed refills. He said he had discovered that his tablemate was a plumber, as he was, and he listed some of the places he had worked—all big businesses in the city! I decided to join in the jovial spirit and told them a joke I had just read. He replied that whenever he meets anyone, he smiles and finds something good and encouraging or complimentary to say, because you never know when you're going to run into that person again.

He left the table before his tablemate, and as his place stood empty, I felt like a light had gone out of the room. I looked to see if I could greet him once more as he made his exit, but he was already gone. He had just exemplified Christ and His love toward others. I will remember him when I volunteer again, and as our leader prays, I will thank the Lord that His blessings on the evening will include those diners who bring a blessing to me!



## The Lord's Diner

April 20th, 5:00-7:30. Join St George and St Mary volunteers to help serve meals to those in need. Serving at the Lord's Diner is a great volunteer opportunity for individuals, couples, and families. Youth ages 12-17 are welcome to volunteer if accompanied by a parent or guardian. St George volunteers typically serve on the third Sunday of the month from 5:00 to 7:30 p.m. For more information or to sign up, contact Pat Milburn at patmilburn74@gmail.com.

## Dillons Community Awards

To earn money for St George Cathedral every time you shop at Dillons, designate St George Cathedral as your Community Rewards recipient. For more information go to <https://tinyurl.com/2p9zrezy>



# *The Cathedral Messenger*

**St. George Orthodox Christian Cathedral**

7515 East 13th Street North

Wichita, KS 67206-1223

[www.stgeorgecathedral.net](http://www.stgeorgecathedral.net)

*Return Service Requested*

## May 3, 2025

### Save the date!

Don't miss your chance  
to purchase select items  
in bulk to enjoy at home  
throughout the year!

### Pre-order Sale

Online orders must be  
placed on or before:  
Tuesday, April 22, 2025

Orders can only be picked up  
Wednesday, April 30, 2025  
9 am - 12 pm & 3 pm - 7 pm.

To pick up your order, please  
come to the back (east) of the  
church to the pickup window.



ST MARY ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
**MEDITERRANEAN FESTIVAL 2025**  
SATURDAY MAY 3, 11AM - 7PM

SPONSORED BY TOM'S WINE & SPIRITS **TWS**