

WELCOME TO ST. GEORGE Orthodox Cathedral



ST. GEORGE CATHEDRAL manifests the love of God to the greater community of Wichita, Kansas. Worship is offered regularly, and the Orthodox Church prays for the whole world. The Cathedral is home to a vibrant community that carries on many of the traditions of the early Church.

The Cathedral architecture is patterned after the early church temples of Byzantium and the Christian East. Built in 1990, St. George Cathedral is the only Byzantine-style structure in Kansas.

The Cathedral's Byzantine features include domes and apses, a tile roof, mosaics, and arched brickwork. The downward curve of the domes and arches bears witness to the grace of God pouring down from heaven through the incarnation of Jesus Christ.

The west-facing **mosaics** depict Christ, the Theotokos ("Mother of God"), St. John the Baptist, and St. George. Each mosaic is composed of thousands of pieces of colored glass.



St. John the Baptist mosaic

Entering the Cathedral

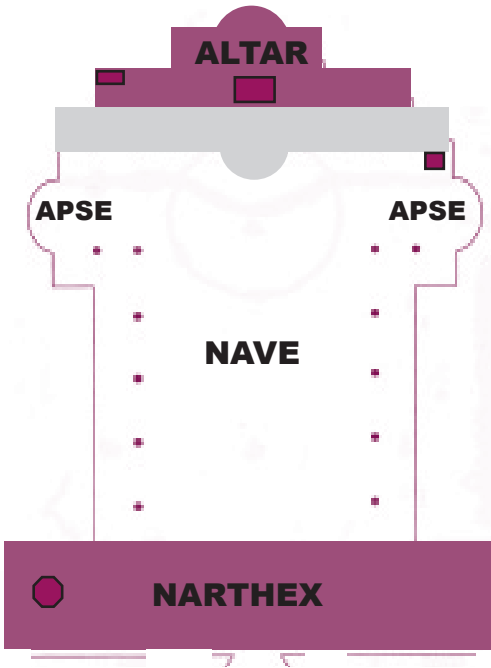
The interior of an Orthodox church reflects the glory of God and His creation. The rich decoration, fragrant incense, bells, and chanting offer a foretaste of the heavenly kingdom.

In keeping with ancient Christian tradition, the Cathedral floor plan is a **cruciform basilica**. The side apses of the central basilica complete the outline of a cross, with the dome located at the intersection of the cross's arms.

Worshippers enter the **Narthex** from the west (symbolic of darkness) and leave the world behind them. Before services the faithful light candles in the narthex and offer private prayers. The narthex also contains an eight-sided **baptismal font**. A Christian enters the Church through the mystery of baptism, participating in Christ's death and resurrection through a three-fold immersion in water.



Above: As the faithful return to the world via the narthex, the **Parable of the Judgment** (Matthew 25:31-46) is a reminder of the Church's mission: feeding the hungry, caring for the needy.



Worship takes place in the **Nave**, facing east toward the rising sun. From the side apses choirs chant and sing praises to God. The bishop presides from the wooden throne near the south apse (“cathedra” means “seat of a bishop”). A carved wooden partition called an **iconostasis** (icon screen) separates the nave from the most sacred part of the temple.

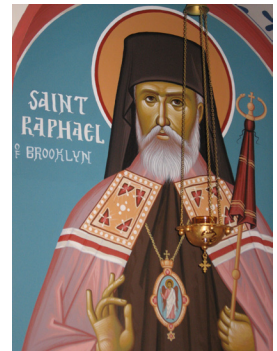
The **Altar** area behind the iconostasis corresponds to heaven and the Holy of Holies. At its center stands the **holy table** with a Gospel book, candlestands, and an eternal flame. The priest stands before the holy table on behalf of the faithful. During the Divine Liturgy, bread and wine are carried in procession from the **table of preparation** to the holy table to be consecrated as the Body and Blood of Christ

The Iconography

An **icon** is a sacred image of Jesus Christ, the saints, or scenes from Scripture. The church temple itself can be understood as an icon of the new heaven and the new earth.

Byzantine icons are highly stylized. They make present a spiritual reality that is beyond time. An icon has no shadows, no depth, no night and day. Faces are calm and serene. The color schemes conform to centuries-old tradition.

All of the iconography in the Cathedral was executed by the monks of Dormition Skete in Buena Vista, Colorado. The paintings are unsigned, for they proclaim the Church’s message—the good news of Jesus Christ—rather than an original artistic vision.



Icons of St. Ignatius of Antioch and St. Raphael of Brooklyn (above) appear on the nave’s west wall. Born in Syria, St. Raphael tirelessly ministered to Arab Christians in America in the early 1900s.

The Dome. At the highest point of the Cathedral is a large icon of **Christ Pantocrator** (Almighty). This powerful yet compassionate image shows Jesus holding the Gospels in one hand and blessing with the other. Inscribed in English, Arabic, and Greek is the time-honored **Jesus Prayer** (“Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me”).

Sixteen **prophets** of the Old Testament (e.g. Moses, Elijah, Ezekiel, Isaiah) ring the base of the dome. These prophets foretold the Incarnation and the coming of the Messiah.

Supporting the dome are four pendentives adorned by the **Evangelists** Matthew, John, Luke, and Mark

(right). Each evangelist is shown inscribing the opening lines of his gospel. As eyewitnesses of the Lord, the Evangelists convey the message of salvation to mankind.



The Altar. The apse inside the altar displays the icon **More Spacious Than the Heavens** (left). The Virgin Mary stands between heaven and earth, which are now reunited through the Incarnation of Christ. She proclaims her Son as the salvation of the world. Below her are the **Apostles**, who carried the gospel to the ends of the earth. They also appear in the **Dormition** (Falling Asleep of the Theotokos) icon directly across from the altar, above the balcony.

The Iconostasis sets the altar apart as sacred space. Its oak carvings feature crosses, grapevines, loaves and fishes, and other

biblical motifs. Each panel icon is painted in egg tempera with a flat gold background to reflect light back to the viewer. The icon of **Christ the Savior** is flanked by John the Baptist and the Theotokos, a pattern repeated in the arched **Deisis** above the altar, and in the outdoor mosaics. Saints significant to the community include St. Barbara and St. Thekla of Syria, the ancestral homeland of the church's founders, and **St. George**, an early Christian martyr from Palestine.



A Christ the Savior/Christ Enthroned • **B** Theotokos (Virgin Mary) • **C** St. John the Baptist • **D** St. George (patronal saint) • **E** Archangel Gabriel • **F** Archangel Michael • **G** St. Thekla the Protomartyr • **H** Great Martyr Barbara.

SAINTS from SCRIPTURE

The lower register of the Cathedral ceiling is decorated with icons of holy men and women from the Old and New Testaments. The halos represent illumination, indicating that the saint is filled with the light of Christ.



Above Patriarch Joseph (Genesis) and Righteous Hannah (I Samuel). **Right:** St. Mary Magdalene, Equal-to-the-Apostles, and St. Nicodemus the Secret Disciple (John 3).



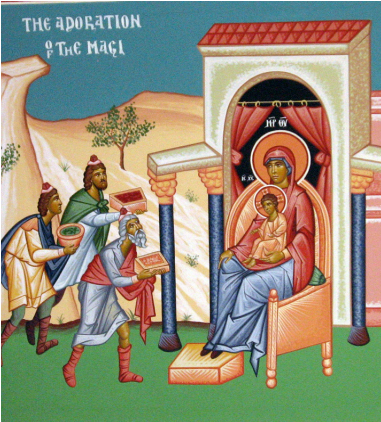
Ceiling Vaults ~ *Life & Ministry of Jesus Christ*

The four rounded **barrel vaults** in the ceiling of the Cathedral form a cross. The iconography follows the life and ministry of Christ in a clockwise direction starting in the south apse and ending above the altar, behind the iconostasis.



Jesus' public ministry began after His baptism in the Jordan, celebrated January 6 as the feast of **Theophany** (Epiphany). Theophany and the **Nativity** appear together in the south apse since they were considered one feast by the early Church.

1 SOUTH APSE ~ *Birth to Baptism*



- East side**
- The Circumcision
 - Meeting in the Temple
 - Adoration of the Magi (left)
- West side**
- Flight into Egypt
 - Slaughter of the Holy Innocents
 - Christ teaching in the Temple at 12

2 NAVE ~ *Christ's Miracles & Teachings*

UPPER TIERS Ministry & Miracles

- North side** Healing the demoniacs
- Blessing the five loaves
 - Healing the daughter of the Syro-Phoenician woman
 - The Samaritan woman at the well
 - Woman taken in adultery
 - Healing the man born blind

- South side** The wedding in Cana
- Healing of the multitudes
 - the leper
 - & the paralytic
 - Resurrecting the widow of Nain's son
 - Rebuking the winds & sea

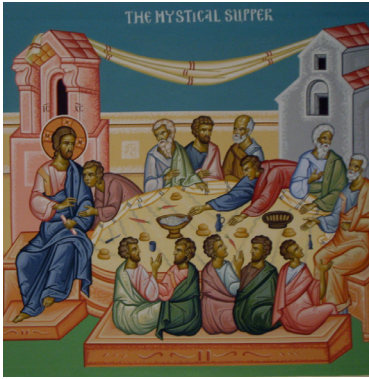
LOWER TIERS Parables

- North side** The Treasure in the Field
- House Built Upon a Rock
 - I am the Vine
 - Wheat & the Tares
 - The Sower
 - Ten Virgins

- South side** Publican & Pharisee
- The Prodigal Son
 - The Good Shepherd
 - The Good Samaritan
 - Rich Man & Lazarus
 - The Mustard Seed

3 NORTH APSE

Passion to Resurrection



Pascha (Easter) is the most important feast of the Church year. The north apse shows Christ conquering death and raising Adam, Eve, and all the righteous souls of the Old Testament.

West side

- Christ raising Lazarus
- Entry into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday)
- Washing the disciples' feet
- Mystical (Last) Supper

East side

- Agony in the garden
- Betrayal by Judas
- Mocking of Christ
- On trial before Pilate



4 ALTAR

Resurrection to Pentecost

Front row

- Greeting the Myrrhbearers
- Road to Emmaus
- Touch of Thomas
- At the Sea of Tiberius

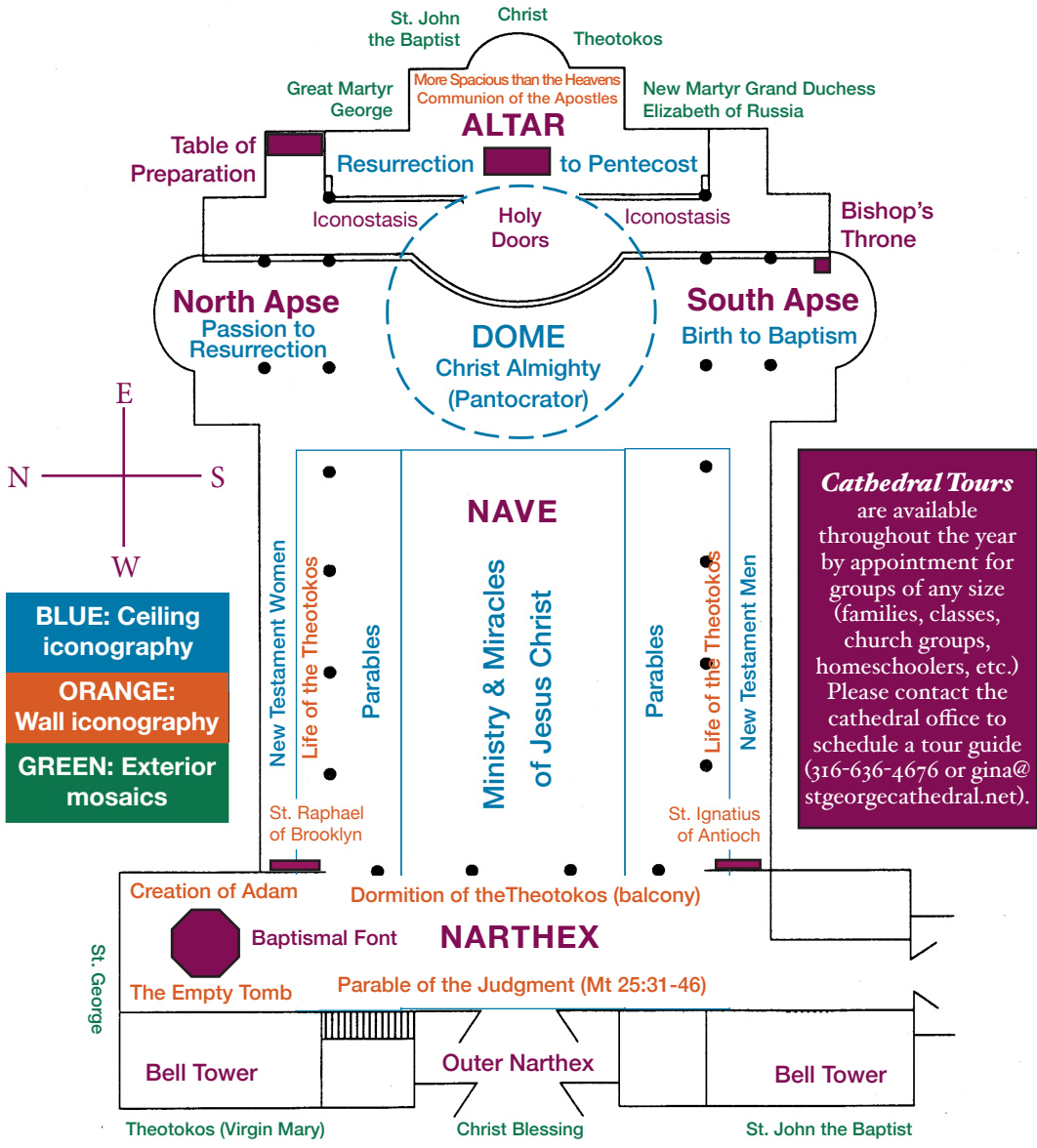
Back row

- The Ascension
- Descent of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost (*left*)

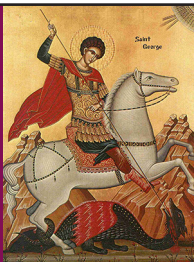
Life of the Mother of God

Scenes from the life of the Virgin Mary occupy the upper colonnade in the nave. Based on Scripture and Holy Tradition, they depict her birth (celebrated September 8), presentation in the Temple (November 21), and the Annunciation (March 25) as well as her final years in Ephesus.





We invite you to experience the timeless beauty of Orthodox worship at St. George Cathedral. Please join us for Sunday services, Saturday vespers, or one of the festal liturgies celebrated throughout the year.



ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CATHEDRAL
 7515 E. 13th Street • Wichita, Kansas 67206
 (316) 636-4676 • stgeorgecathedral.net
 Saturday: Vespers 6:00 p.m.
 Sunday: Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.