



Volume 31, Number 2
FEBRUARY 2022

The Cathedral Messenger

A Publication of St. George Antiochian Orthodox Christian Cathedral



20th Anniversary Blessing



then

On the Feast of Theophany, January 6, 2002, the Antiochian Orthodox parishes of Wichita reached a milestone. The The Treehouse, the first social service agency sponsored by the Wichita Orthodox community, opened its doors to faithful supporters. Frs. Paul O'Callaghan and Christopher Holwey assembled with Director Renee Croitoru, the Board of Directors, and supporters to bless the facility.

The first Treehouse facility was a small leased property located at 2601 E. Central, (near Central and Grove). It contained a thrift store, a storage room for baby supplies, an area for fellowship and relaxing, a small classroom, a room where small children can play, an office, and a small kitchenette. It was equipped and decorated by friends and parishioners who lovingly gave of their goods and their talents.

The Treehouse is a ministry designed to assist new mothers who have experienced a crisis pregnancy and have decided to bear and keep their babies. For too long, critics of the Christian stance on abortion have asked the churches, "You condemn abortion, but what do you do to help needy mothers who keep their babies?" The ministry of The Treehouse was conceived to help see that moms in need get off to a good start with their babies, and that resources continue to be available to them as their babies grow.

& now

Fr. Paul and Fr. Chris sprinkled holy water throughout the building that day as the faithful repeated the troparion of Theophany, "When thou, O Lord was baptized in the Jordan." Then on Monday, January 21, The Treehouse officially opened its doors for the work of ministry.

Twenty years later, on Friday, January 21, Fr. Paul, Fr. Calinic, and Fr. Aaron Warwick again assembled with Director Karey Padding, staff members Jaleen Claassen and Cristin Coats, Board members and supporters to perform an anniversary blessing of the Treehouse facility. Once again, the priests sprinkled holy water throughout the building as they chanted the troparion of Theophany. The current Treehouse property, located at 151 N. Volusia, is owned by the agency. It was acquired in 2008 thanks to a generous donation by Mr. Harvey Najim in memory of his mother, Jamelia Najim, a faithful parishioner of St. George Cathedral.

At the conclusion of the blessing, Fr. Paul shared some words about the vision of The Treehouse, gave thanks for its 20 years of fruitful ministry to moms and babies, and implored God's continued blessing for the next 20 years.

Dean, V. Rev. Paul O'Callaghan • St. George Orthodox Christian Cathedral

7515 East Thirteenth Street • Wichita, KS 67206-1223 • (316) 636-4676 • <http://www.stgeorgecathedral.net>



MEMORY ETERNAL

Kevin Coons, 1/27

Pauline Charles Abraham, 12/29
(mother of Bobby Abraham)

MANY YEARS!

MABROOK! BLESSINGS!

baptism

Kevin Michael Abreme, 1/30
son of Abrehe Debas & Kidisty Enof



St George Orthodox Cathedral 2021 Annual Parish Meeting

to be held Sunday, February 6th, 2022
immediately following Divine Liturgy

Online viewing will be available,
but one must be present in person to be able to vote:
Check your email for link.

To view the report visit: stgeorgecathedral.net
and find Annual Report 2021 - top right.
An email will be sent with the password to view

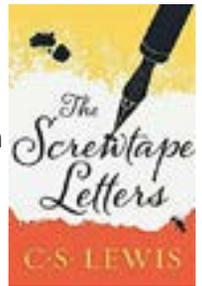


Women's Faith & Growth

Join us Thursday
February 10th, 7:15p
in the Youth Center

for an evening of fellowship & faith
Beth Buerge is leading discussion

Studying "The Screwtape Letters"
book by C.S.Lewis



congratulations

New Board Members

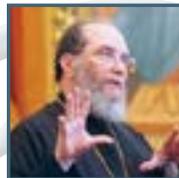


St George PARISH COUNCIL

Glenn KUBINA	New Member
Andrew LEDELL	New Member
Nick POHLENZ	New Member

St George Cathedral ENDOWMENT FOUNDATION

Michael MALONE	New Member
Andrew HOURANI	New Member



Commemorating Bishop BASIL's 30th Anniversary

Preserve, O Lord, our Master and Chief
Priest and Grant Him Many Years!

DOWAMA PLC

St. George Cathedral - Wichita, KS
June 15 -18, 2022
www.dowamapl.org



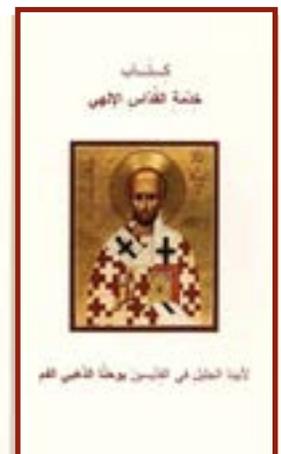
FEBRUARY FASTING



The traditional fasting (from meat, poultry, fish, eggs and dairy products) is observed on Wednesdays and Fridays. February 13-19 is fast free. Meatfare Fast begins February 27, we abstain from all meats, though fish and dairy products are allowed.

Arabic Divine Liturgy

Saturday,
February 12th,
10:00a



WINTER CAMP 2022

by Anna Mosley



“WAMP (Winter Camp) is a time of year where teens come together to commune together within our Orthodox faith. The unity at WAMP is unforgettable and the relationships built are unlike anywhere else. We experience the rush of adrenaline when trying to sign up and get a spot. There is great anticipation of what feels like the longest bus ride of your life and overwhelming joy when you see friends from all over our diocese. There is a peace that comes with being with one another for meals, games, discussions, and church. All these things make WAMP a second home.

Every year, campers and staff wait for the beloved day of seeing your friends once more. Over the past 2 years, the pandemic has restricted us from seeing our church friends in other states, which made this year all the more special. We were at a new location and while the rickety, old beds of Camp Takatoka will be held close to our hearts along with the innumerable precious memories from over the years, Cross-Point Camp in Kingston, Oklahoma is a fresh start for Camp St. Raphael. We put down our phones for three days and forget about the pile of school work you know is waiting at home when you return, and come together as the body of Christ for this weekend.

This year at WAMP, we heard from Dr. Greg Abdullah. He spoke of the Divine Liturgy and how we come together through the church. For the first time, I was able to personally understand the process and meaning of Liturgy. He engaged with everyone and invited us to learn how to experience community in our “church neighborhood”. We learned that we are invited into the church through Baptism, we are taught through Chrismation, and we put our mission into action. Through these three steps we learned to build a relationship with Christ and with our communities. Greg challenged us with questions regarding who our communities are and what our relationships look like. In the end, we knew strength in unity allows us to understand and experience our Orthodox faith.

WAMP is my happy place where I learn about God and His amazing ways and I take the things from WAMP home with me to apply to my life and share with my family. WAMP is a place of growth and change. It is truly a life changing experience. I cannot begin to thank all the staff enough for the effort they put into this year of WAMP. I am so blessed to be able to be a part of the DOWAMA diocese. I cannot wait to see future generations enjoy such an experience for years to come and yell “YABOY”!



As we come into a new semester of Church School at St. George, it's an excellent time to check in to make sure we are all on the same page for what participation in Church School lessons can look like from week to week.

We have kind, knowledgeable, and energetic kids in our community, and it has been a joy to be with them this semester as they grow in the faith. The Church School atmosphere naturally has a different structure from a Monday to Friday classroom environment, but still requires some time listening and some times in active participation.

Students can...

- Listen attentively during lesson times
- Participate in group discussion
- Do their best on crafts and in activities
- Pray for our Church School

As parents we can...

- Briefly talk over expectations on the way to church.
- Project joy about the gift of learning with church peers about the faith.
- Refrain from using Church School participation as a punishment or removing Church School participation as a punishment.
- Be as active as you can with your children in the Church School cycle.
- Pray for our Church School

As teachers we can...

- Be prepared with our lessons so we are focused on kids.
- Move at a pace that recognizes the nature of children and the factors above
- Respond to disruptive behavior with kindness and consistency
- Pray for our Church School

You, as parents, are ALWAYS welcome in our Church School classes and activities! We look forward to this semester with your children!

In Christ,

Jenny Farha



Welcome Home



Logan Tracy

I started becoming interested in Orthodoxy in February 2021. I found myself constantly getting confused of what was true and untrue in the world of self-interpretation amongst protestant teachings. When researching online I found out that the Orthodox Church was the only truly Apostolic Church and that it had stayed true to its traditions and doctrines over the course of two thousand years. After researching it a bit more I decided to attend a Divine Liturgy at St. George. I marveled at how different it was and the sense of a deeper spirituality. From there I had my heart set on becoming Orthodox and worshipping in the traditional way.

Preparing for the Preparation: The Pre-Lenten Sundays

“The Church knows our inability to change abruptly, to go from one spiritual or mental state to another”

— Fr. Alexander Schmemmann

As Orthodox Christians, we are all aware that the 40 days of Great Lent form a period of preparation for Christ’s Holy Passover – Holy Week and Pascha. Lent is a time of intensive focus on repentance, a, and purification, that we might be granted the grace of beholding the Light of the Empty Tomb.

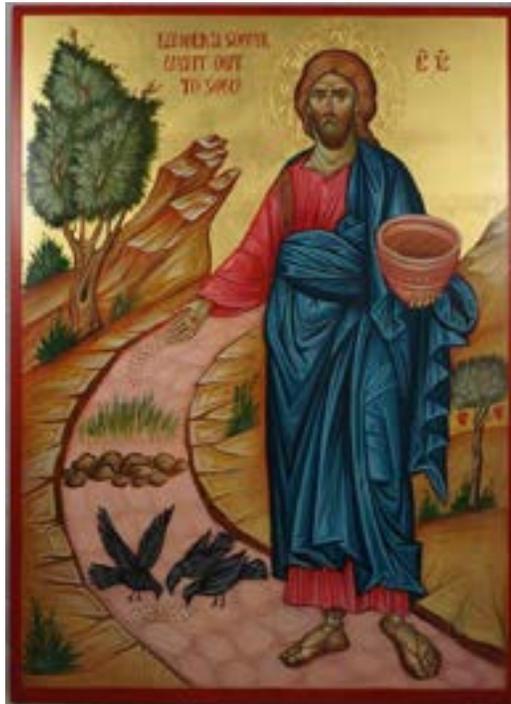
Yet as Fr. Schmemmann points out so wisely above, we do not enter the Great Lenten preparation suddenly and abruptly. Our initiation into the Great Lenten “mode of life” must take place gradually if it is to take hold. Otherwise, the spiritual shock of attempting to embrace too much all at once can lead to collapse: “I can’t handle this; I just have to quit.”

In her wisdom then, the Church has arranged a special pre-Lenten period of four weeks that lead us into the Fast. This, however, was not unique to the Eastern Church; the traditional Roman Rite embodied the same principle with a three week preparation period. Unfortunately it was abolished in the modernistic Roman Rite and replaced by the liturgically unprecedented and banal notion of “Ordinary Time.”

The Pre-Lenten Sundays in the Eastern Orthodox Church are as follows: the Sundays of the Pharisee and Publican, the Prodigal Son, Meat Fare, and Cheese Fare. Let us look at how the Church proceeds through this period and what she desires to impress upon us as we prepare for the Lenten Fast.

1. The Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee: Humility and Compunction

This Sunday is the beginning of the “Triodion” period – the book encompassing all the Pre-Lenten and Lenten services: We enter the Pre-Lenten period on this day. To begin our preparation for the Fast, we do



a fasting “re-set”: there is no fasting during the following week. We start from “Ground Zero” as it were; proceeding from no fasting at all to gradually increasing our fasting until we enter the Fast proper. In the gospel account, the Pharisee justifies himself by proclaiming he “fasts twice a week.” Eschewing his example, we do not fast at all this week.

Rather than justifying himself like the Pharisee, the Publican receives God’s justification by his humility, sorrow for his sin, and his cry for God’s mercy. These dispositions are the essential foundations of our approach to the Fast.

2. The Sunday of the Prodigal Son: Illumination, Remembrance, Return, and Unconditional Love

After utterly giving himself over to sin, the gospel tells us of the prodigal son: “But when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.’ And he arose and came to his father.”

Three spiritual themes stand out here.

- **Illumination** – “He came to himself”. He realized the extent of his degradation.
- **Remembrance** – “How many of my father’s servants have bread ...” He remember the beauty and plentitude of his Father’s home.
- **Return** – “I will arise and go to my father” ... “and he arose and went to his father.” He acted on the illumination he had received.

Illumination and remembrance are works of God’s grace within us, calling us back to him.

continues next page

Return requires the activation of the will under the prompting of grace. It is an ACT. These three themes summed up together reveal the nature of REPENTANCE.

“But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him ... the father said to his servants, ‘Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’”

The actions of the father reveal God’s unconditional love for us. It is always there for us no matter how far we stray for him. This provides the incentive for our repentance.

This week we return to normal fasting on Wednesday and Fridays.

3. Meat Fare Sunday: The Last Judgment and Compassion for Our Brothers

Remembrance of Judgment Day is also an incentive to repentance. On that Day, we will be accountable for our deeds. The Church is reminding us that fasting and other religious works cannot be pleasing to God if we turn away our brother in need. Fasting is nothing more than self-denial and a strange diet if it is not accompanied by good works. This is why “almsgiving” has been the traditional companion to fasting. Yet even more profoundly, the deeds we perform on behalf of our brothers and sisters in Christ are performed for Christ himself, because they are also members of the body of Christ: “In as much as you did it to one of these the least of my brethren, you did it to Me.”

This week we begin our abstinence from meat, but consumption of dairy products and fish are permitted.

4. Cheesefare Sunday: Forgiveness and How to Fast

“Cheesefare” Sunday is also known as “Forgiveness” Sunday. The Gospel selection tells us:

“For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father

forgive your trespasses.”

Jesus also gives this instruction about fasting:

“When you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting ... and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.”

These passages thus teach us that no fasting can be God-pleasing without forgiveness of those who offend us, nor when we draw attention to ourselves in our observances.

Thus we conclude this day and begin the Fast with the service of Forgiveness Vespers, in which we offer forgiveness to each other, that we may begin the Fast with pure hearts.

This week the Great Fast begins – abstinence from all meats, dairy products, and fish.



This is a photo of the Cathedral's 2022 Vasilopita which was baked and offered by Vasiliki Sherry.

Zachariah Sebits (Dn David's youngest child) got the portion with the coin.



Submitted by **Jenny Wall**, Community Support Team Leader
Next Meeting - February 8 - 12:00 noon
in the Conference Room



St. George Sewing Sisters began in the summer of 2021 as the brain child of Nancy Claassen and Martha Sturgill. Their hope was to invite women in the parish who sew to gather together weekly for fellowship, to benefit the St. George Parish with their sewing skills, or to work on personal projects during the summer. Creating baby quilts for newborn babies became their first venture. As a consistent group of women formed, first meeting in the church basement, and now in the fellowship hall, the vision grew to include making fleece blankets for those who are chronically ill. Someone even kindly donated tubs of fabric for our use!!

Since June 10 of 2021, St. George Sewing Sisters have made five baby quilts, one African quilt completed for Missions, and four tied fleece blankets. A Christmas lap quilt was also made and sold on Etsy for additional funding.

St. George Sewing Sisters' mission is "to build friendships among women and to serve others in our Parish." If you know of an impending birth in our parish, or of someone who is ill, or if you'd like to join the Sewing Sisters, please contact Nancy Claassen or Martha Sturgill. Sewing occurs at the St. George Fellowship Hall on Thursdays from 10 am – 1 pm.



Community Support Team Announces Agencies to Support in 2022

The St. George Community Support Team is grateful to start the 2022 year by identifying the following community agencies to provide funds and/or volunteers for this year:

- Carpenter Place
- Cash for Classrooms
- Co-Immunity Foundation
- DUI Red Ribbon Project
- Guadalupe Clinic
- Harbor House
- HopeNet
- Kansas Food Bank
- Lord' Diner
- Pando Initiative
- The Treehouse
- Real Men Real Heroes
- Ronald McDonald House
- Senior Center of Wichita

St. George members have long-term connections with some of these agencies, and some are new to us. Many of these groups will receive a monetary donation, but some involve volunteers. Watch the bulletin throughout the year for announcements of volunteer opportunities and join us in our efforts! You will find reports of Community Support activities in the monthly Messenger "Community Corner" section. May Christ be honored as we serve Him through these community agencies.



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**Join us as St. Mary celebrates 90 years!
This year's Mediterranean Festival will be
Saturday, May 14.**

We've combined our most popular dishes into two unique plated meal options, plus a dessert sampler plate. Meals can be purchased using our conveni-

ent and efficient drive-thru or carry-out located at the church. Our Marketplace and bookstore will also be open inside the church. Follow us on Facebook for the most up-to-date details about this year's festival, including our pre-order event and our charity partner, Wichita's Littlest Heroes!