

February 18, 2024

Christ is in our Midst!

He is and ever shall be!

Welcome to St. George! Thank you for attending today's Divine Services. If you are a first-time visitor, please register your visit by completing the guest book located in the narthex. We would appreciate getting to meet you after liturgy, so feel free to join us during Coffee Fellowship! Every Sunday we remember the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The word "*Liturgy*" means *work of the people* that means everyone participates through singing, praying, hearing the teaching, and opening our hearts to allow God's grace to enter. Anyone interested in learning more about our faith are encouraged to speak with one of our clergy.

Guidelines for Receiving Holy Communion for Orthodox Christians: Orthodox Christians fully participate in the celebration of the Eucharist by receiving Holy Communion in fulfillment of Christ's command *to eat His Body and drink His Blood*. In order to be properly prepared to receive Holy Communion, the faithful should fast (no food or drink from midnight the night before), the Sacrament of Confession (7 years and older) within the last 2 months, being at peace with others, and striving to always love God and their neighbor. Frequent communion and regular confession are recommended for all faithful Orthodox Christians.

For other Christians: We welcome you to this celebration of the Divine Liturgy. Unfortunately, we cannot extend to you a general invitation to receive Holy Communion. Orthodox Christians believe that the Eucharist is an action of the celebrating community signifying a oneness in faith, life, and worship of our community. Reception of the Eucharist by Christians not fully united with us would imply a oneness which does not yet exist, but for which we must all pray. All, however, are welcome to partake of the blessed bread (*antidoron*) which will be given when coming forward to venerate (kiss) the Holy Cross and receive the final blessing from the priest. Again, welcome!

Live Streaming of Divine Services

St. George is open for all parishioners and visitors. If you cannot attend, please pray with us through our livestream which can be seen on our YouTube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/SaintGeorgeOrthodoxChurchFlintMI>

If you have a smart TV, you actually have a web browser and YouTube app built in. All you have to do is start the browser app for YouTube and put the link in the address bar.

Holy Bread Offerings (*Oblations*)

- Karam and Aida Nassar for the health of their family and the health of **Gisele Farah and Family** and in loving memory of Gisele's sister **Nellie**.
- Wael and Kholoud Hayek for the health of their family especially **Zahra, Mariann, Reem, Qusta, and Matthew**.

BAPTISM/CHRISMATION DAYS

The Church School offers the Holy Bread for our students who are celebrating the day of their *New Birth* {Baptism and/or Chrismation} into the Church this coming week:

- **Levi Cooper** ~ February 19th

May they be children of the Light and heirs of eternal good things. {Baptismal Service}

- Prayers are offered for our parishioners who are ill, recovering, or in need, especially His servants: **Archbishop Nathaniel** (Romanian Diocese of the Orthodox Church in America), our **Bishop Anthony, Sahar Abdallah, Abeer Abuaita, Reader Fouad and Soad Abuaita, Philip and Janett Abuaita, Rasha Abuaita, Sami and Shafiq Abuaitah, Laila Abud, George Abueita, Georgette Abueita, Jane Abueita, Mary Abueita, Youssif Abousamra, William Alsahouri, Naila Banna, Vera Daoud, Said Farah, Joseph Gagne, Elias Gantos, Subdeacon George and Suad Gantous, Phyllis Good, Daisy Isaac, John Joseph, Karen Mortensen, Laura Nassar, Jeanette Nassif, Adam Odeh, Rahmeh Rashmawi, Elaine Shaheen, and Michael Silpoch; Abdulla, Amira, and newborn Yasmine Farah** (January 10th); Dr. **Matthew, Christine** (*daughter of Ayman & Wafaa Elias*), and newborn **Maximus Paisios** Krinock (January 21st); **John, Jacqueline** (*daughter of Anwar & Janet Abueita*), and newborn **Henry John Timm** (January 24th); **Matt, Ambur** (*daughter of Joseph Haddad*), and newborn **Ivy Grace Allison** (January 24th); **Athar Ghareeb and Boutros Abdalla** who are to be united in the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony.
- We also pray for the servants of God who have fallen asleep in the Lord: **Panayiotis Khair** (+January 12th, uncle of Husam Khair), **Nellie Makhlouf**, (+February 4th, sister of Gisele Farah), and **Housam Abousamra** (+February 13th) ~ *may their memory be eternal!*
- We also pray for our expectant parents: Drs. **Lindsey and Ryan Brunner, Casandra and Danial Burbar, Andrea and Josh Jones, Kari** (daughter of John & Theresa Farah) and **Panagiotis Mikroudis, & Vera and Luay Sababa**.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP is hosted by *Wael and Kholoud Hayek*.

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP HOSTS Available dates: March 3rd, 10th, and 17th ~ sign-up poster and hosting information are in the Lounge. *Hosting includes bringing whatever you wish to serve, setting up, and cleaning up afterwards.* St. George provides coffee, cups, cream, and sugar at a charge to the host of \$30. **For more information**, please contact our coordinator Manal Abuaita 810-577-9870. *Cheese-Fare Sunday is March 17th (no meat) and during the Great Fast (March 18th – May 4th) no meat, poultry, eggs, dairy, fish, or their by-products are to be served.*

OUT-OF-TOWN Fr. Joe and Kh. Leslee are on vacation until February 27th. **For emergencies** while Fr. Joe is away, please call first Fr. Michael Bassett (St. George, 989-627-9580), then Fr. Peter Bistolarides (Assumption, 810-771-4611), Fr. Gabriel Bilas (St. Mary Magdalene, 810-750-1401), or Fr. Matthew Butrie (St. Nicholas, 810-744-0070). Please pray for Fr. Joe and Kh. Leslee's safe travels.

E-MEMO'S If you do not receive emails from Fr. Joe and would like to be added to our Parishioner Email List to receive our weekly St. George E-Memo, and things only related to the church, please send your e-mail address to Fr. Joe at nija@aol.com.

WEEKLY OFFERINGS Our average weekly parishioner offerings (not including other income) needs to be \$7,588 to meet our 2024 Budget. Last Sunday, February 11th, our offerings were \$4,115, we were short \$3,473 ☹️ **Please keep up with your offerings!** If you have not already, please fill out your *2024 Offering Form*. You can put it in Sunday's Offering Tray or send it to the church (5191 Lennon Road, Flint, MI 48507). Thank you for supporting St. George and offering as God wants for our spiritual health!

OUR STEWARDSHIP, OFFERINGS, & DONATIONS



Our stewardship, offerings, and donations are needed. PLEASE help your parish by continuing to offer your gifts! If you cannot come to church, you can simply go to our parish website (<https://saintgeorgeflint.org/>) and donate on-line (or use the QR code to the left) or you can bring or mail your offerings to St. George, 5191 Lennon Road, Flint, MI 48507. As always, THANK YOU for your generosity and love of our St. George!

PLEASE HELP ~ KIDNEY NEEDED!

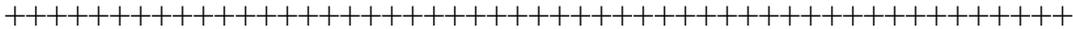
One of our parishioners is in desperate need of a kidney transplant. Everyone has 2 kidneys, but only need 1 to live. Both of their kidneys are not working properly. If you are inspired to see if you could be a donor and want more information, please speak with Fr. Joe ~ *thanks!*

CAMP ST. GEORGE SUMMER CAMP Like the program at the Antiochian Village, Camp St. George serves young people ages 9-17 who come from parishes throughout our Midwest Diocese (mostly the western part). After not meeting last year, they are hoping to bring Camp St. George back in 2024. But they need help. The most critical component in making it happen is sufficient staffing, particularly counselors. Will you consider being a candidate? Applicants should be at least 18 years old, have a solid grounding in the Orthodox Faith, and be regular in Church attendance. They also need to exhibit patience while leading children in a faith-based, natural environment. Staff applications will be available at CSGlowa.org soon. Some details: Camp St. George meets June 30-July 6, 2024 at Camp Ewalu near Strawberry Point, Iowa. Staff arrive two days prior for training. For more information or questions, contact Camp Director Fr. Fred Shaheen at shaheenf@hotmail.com.

COMING EVENTS

Fasting Discipline The traditional fasting discipline (*no meat, poultry, eggs, dairy, fish, wine, olive oil, and their by-products*) is observed on Wednesday and Friday.

TODAY **Teen SOYO Valentine's Party** after Church School
Saturday **Ghareeb/Abdalla Wedding**
No Great Vespers



The Sanctity of the Seal of Confession

~ Opening the Doors to Repentance

by Abbot Tryphon, head of All-Merciful Savior Monastery on Vashon Island, Washington

In the Orthodox Church, the seal of confession is absolute, and there is no situation that will allow for the revelation of anything said in confession. That said, if there is a case in which a priest hears a very serious confession, one that could become a police issue, the confessor must explain to the penitent that this must be brought before the authorities. If he meets with refusal, the priest should explain that he is not supposed to give absolution for that sin.

Confession is between God, Who is quick to forgive, and the penitent, with the priest as the witness, as well as the mediator by which absolution is bestowed. Without repentance, there is no salvation, and any priest who would endanger the integrity of the Sacrament of Confession by breaking the seal of confession, exposes himself to the possibility of being deposed from the priesthood, and excommunicated. In Imperial Russia, a cleric who violated the seal was liable to the civil courts and subject to the death penalty!

Refusing to pronounce absolution without the penitent agreeing to report himself/herself to the authorities, is really the only approach that a priest can take, without burdening himself with the knowledge that the molestation of either a spouse, or a child, will continue, or that a murderer will not pay the price for his crime.

The Church's strict insistence on the sanctity of the Seal of Confession has been handed down from Apostolic times, and is imperative because it keeps open the doors of repentance to so many people who would otherwise fear going to confession, lest their sins become common knowledge. Yet the penitent must also be made aware that an important part of repenting of one's sins, is the willingness to embrace the consequences under the law.

