

**ST. MATTHEW THE EVANGELIST
ANTIOCHIAN
ORTHODOX CHURCH
SEPTEMBER, 2021, NEWSLETTER**

**10383 ALBION ROAD, N. ROYALTON, OH 44133
P.O. Box 33183, N. Royalton, OH 44133**

Father Andrew's Contact Info: fatherharmon@outlook.com

**cell: 440-539-1116 home: 440-826-0662 church: 440-582-5673
Website: www.stmattroyalton.org**

**SATURDAY VESPERS—5 p.m.
SUNDAY MATINS—8:50 a.m. SUNDAY LITURGY—10 a.m.
CONFESSION—after Vespers and 9:45 a.m. on Sundays**

EXTRA WORSHIP SERVICES IN SEPTEMBER

**---THE NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS: SEPTEMBER 8
Vespers with Artoklasia: Tuesday, September 7, 6:30 p.m.
Matins at 9 and Liturgy at 10: Wednesday, September 8.**
**---THE ELEVATION OF THE CROSS: SEPTEMBER 14
Vespers with Artoklasia: Monday, September 13, 6:30 p.m.
Matins at 9 and Liturgy at 10: Tuesday, September 14
*This is a strict one-day fast day.***

POTLUCK LUNCHES AFTER THESE SERVICES?---We can do that if someone is willing to be meal coordinator. Contact Fr. Andrew. Fasting food required on both days.

**PARISH ORGANIZATIONS, STUDY GROUPS, MINISTRY
TEAMS**

PATHWAYS TO PEACE—BOTH IN PERSON AT CHURCH AND BY ZOOM—Each Monday, 7:15 pm. “A gathering place for those who are broken from hurts, hang-ups, or habits. Join us as we renew our minds and encourage each other through the love of Christ.” Call Deacon Basil, 440-665-3591, for Zoom information.

NORTH BIBLE STUDY---Thursday, September 16, 6:30 p.m., at the Parkers’, 1350 Elmwood Court, Rocky River. We are studying the book of Isaiah.

WOMEN’S PRAYER GROUP—Friday, September 17, 1 pm. All women welcome! The location is at Tara Reidy’s, 274 Elmwood, Berea. For more info, call Sandy Tolbert, 440-773-9162.

WEST BIBLE STUDY—Saturday, September 11, 6 pm at the church. Studying Wisdom of Sirach.

SOUTH BIBLE STUDY—September 7 & 21, 6:30 pm at Craig & Cindy George’s, 9451 Sherwood Trail, Brecksville. All are welcome. The study will now be on the book of Jonah.

NEXT TEEN CLUB MEETING---After liturgy on September 26. Discussion time with Father Andrew.

ST. HERMAN’S MINISTRY TEAM—Sunday, September 19, is our parish’s next monthly turn to provide a meal to the poor at St. Herman Orthodox Homeless Shelter in Cleveland. The meal will be cooked at St. Herman’s kitchen that afternoon and then served at 5:30. If you can help with either the cooking or serving or donating for the food on September 19, please speak with Deacon Basil. Thank you to those who served the August meal—the Blazek family.

OUR PARISH’S MINISTRY OF DELIVERY OF FOOD, CLOTHING, ETC. TO THE HOMELESS ON THE STREETS OF CLEVELAND has been suspended for a long time due to the virus. It will resume on October 3.

PARISH FOOD PANTRY WELL-STOCKED RIGHT NOW, SO NO ADDITIONAL FOOD CURRENTLY NEEDED. BUT GROCERY GIFT CARDS CAN ALWAYS BE USED!

A WEEKEND WITH BISHOP ANTHONY

Our diocesan bishop His Grace Bishop ANTHONY, will be with us the entire weekend of October 17. Details not yet known, but please keep the weekend open so you can participate.

ICON PAINTING CLASSES—The classes were not held during the summer months but it is planned for them to resume this fall. More info later---The classes are taught by Dennis Bell, who painted our beautiful iconostas.

SUNDAY SCHOOL UPDATE

We are resuming classes for the 2021-22 school year! Join us on September 12 for an open house. At the end of liturgy, Father Andrew will say a special blessing to begin our new year. During coffee time, everyone is welcome to visit the classrooms and talk to the teachers. Classes will begin on Sept. 19. Students and teachers will be dismissed right before the announcements. Classes are as follows:

Room 1- Preschool: Ages 3-5, Teacher: Lisa Palivoda

Room 2- Elementary: Ages 6-8, Teacher: Gail Malaniak

Room 3- Intermediate: Ages 9-11, Teachers: Joanne Vazquez, Kendra Hunter

Room 4- Middle/High School: Ages 12-18, Teacher: Patrick Allen

Adult classes- once a month, details to follow.

We are still looking for volunteers for the following: Substitute teachers, assistance with special projects, assistance with special needs students, speakers for the adult class. Please see any teacher if you are interested.

CAMP COUNSELOR REPORT

By Fuad Zogheib

The only way that I can put my experience this summer into a few words is by describing it the same way that Fr. John Namie, the first camp director at the Village, described the Village, it was awesome. The Village was awesome to me as a camper, but being able to experience it as a counselor was even more awesome. I found out this summer that not many other things give me greater joy than serving others in the way that I did as a counselor. I was lucky enough to have eight different cabins throughout the entire summer, if it was a normal year I would have had only four cabins. I was also lucky enough to work with two other co-counselors the first four weeks and I was with one other co-counselor the last four weeks, which is also something that would not have happened in a normal summer at the Village. I mention this because that allowed me to meet so many new people and get close with others that I was around with a lot. However, the coolest part of being a counselor is being able to be a leader and a role model to those around me. I grew so much as a leader and as a person this summer, so I am forever grateful for this summer and the Village for everything that it has given me throughout my time there.

SISTERHOOD MEMBERSHIP DRIVE 2022

Our parish's Sisterhood's annual membership drive is now underway and wraps up on October 3. All women in the parish are encouraged to join! Annual dues are \$3. You can give it to Vice President Georgette Dye or Treasurer Camille Patrick at church or mail to the church. The Sisterhood will end the drive by hosting Coffeetime after liturgy on October 3.

**ALL AGE INSTRUMENTAL RECITAL
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 3
6:00 P.M.
at
ST. MATTHEW ORTHODOX CHURCH**

*Anyone who plays a musical instrument is
Welcome to sign up*

If you wish to take part, please contact Bonnie Harmon 216-258-4837 or Lisa Amer 216-415-9126 before September 26.

NEW PARISHIONERS

JAMES & CATHY SAGE

4029 Croydon Drive N.W.

Canton, Ohio 44718

James--- 330-815-2738 jimsage23@gmail.com

Cathy--- 330-495-6952 csnyder@gmail.com

Please welcome them to our parish and add them to your directory!

OUR CURRENT CATECHUMEN LIST---We pray for them at each liturgy. Please pray for them during the week as well as they prepare to enter the Orthodox Church.

James, Katie, Liam, Matram, Nolan, Oaken, & Phaedron Bunch

Colton Bose

Jacob Burgos

R. J. Cook

Anya Daydyuk

Jaimie & Lucas Domankos

Stephen Kulchar

Michael Palmer

Victoria Thorp

LANDSCAPING HELP NEEDED---Anyone interested in weeding or other care of the church grounds, please contact Olivia Harmon. Could be one time or ongoing, at your convenience. 440-220-2624
oharmon15@gmail.com

FALL CHURCH CLEAN UP---We need all hands on deck to clean up the temple inside and out. There will be jobs for all ages and ability levels. Please mark your calendars: **Sat, Oct 2, 9am-?** Light refreshments provided. Bring your own lunch. Come and do what you can to help our beautiful temple shine!

Jobs include window washing, dusting, wax removal, HVAC filter replacement, kitchen cleaning, weeding, and bush trimming. It will help if you can bring any tools you may have for the job. The following items will definitely be needed: rags, gloves, buckets, rakes, hedge clippers, step ladders, dusters.

If you have questions, contact Olivia Harmon (440-220-2624), Lisa Palivoda, David Glaser, or Tony Latina.

MISSION TO HELP THE POOR---is being led by parishioner John Scordos and will culminate on Saturday, October 2 with the distribution to the needy in inner-city Cleveland of food, clothing, gift cards, etc. Please donate generously to this good work! To donate, contact John at 216-618-8007 or joninchrist888@gmail.com You can also contact him to volunteer to help with preparation, distribution, etc.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY MEET-UP

Pam Stephanoff was born on June 14, 1961, at Lakewood Hospital. She grew up in North Olmsted until 7th grade when her family moved to Rocky River. Her dad was an engineer and her mother was an executive secretary. They divorced when Pam was a child, mostly due to her dad's alcoholism.

Pam had a pretty rough childhood. Both parents were not there for her when she needed them. Because Pam has now forgiven them, she does not wish to bring up that part of her past.

Pam started on her path to alcoholism when she was 12 years old. She knew absolutely nothing about God. The only contact with Christianity was her grandmother who went to a Baptist church every Sunday, but was a very mean person. This led Pam to vow she would never have anything to do with Christianity or a church. She figured that God must be mean, too.

After high school, Pam moved to Norfolk, Virginia. There she worked as a pharmacy technician for 8 years. She also got married at that time. She remembers those years in Virginia as being not so bad. With her friends she spent time at the ocean doing fun activities. However, after 1 ½ years, she and her husband got divorced. She moved back to Cleveland when she was 29.

Pam had several different jobs over her early years. She worked as unit secretary in various medical settings. She tended bar some and also taught aerobic exercise classes for 18 years. She did well with these jobs, but she had always wanted to be a nurse.

In 1996, at the age of 35, she made the decision to go to nursing school. But before she started school, she made another life changing decision. She decided she was going to get sober. On August 11, 1996, Pam attended her first recovery group meeting. The next month she began nursing school.

At the recovery group, Pam had her first introduction to prayer. The prayer that each recovery group member is to pray is as follows: *God, I offer myself to Thee—to build with me and to do with me as Thou Wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness (to those I would help) of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of Life. May I do Thy will always!*

One day, Pam realized that she had reached day 54 of sobriety and wanted, above all else, to stay sober for the rest of her life. She knew in her heart that this success did not come from her own power, but from something higher, who the recovery group called "God." As she prayed that prayer every day and clung to the God this prayer spoke to, she saw God working in her life. She came to have a strong faith in Him, even though she knew very little about Him. She did know though that, without a doubt, it was He who was keeping her sober.

Pam graduated from Cleveland State Nursing School in 2000. Her first nursing job was at Lakewood Hospital.

In 2003, Pam's mother died while in a hospice. Pam visited her often and got to know the staff there. A year after her mother's death, the hospice called Pam and offered her a job as an in the home hospice nurse. She did that for two years and absolutely loved the work. She hopes to someday go back to hospice work.

Going back to 2000, another major event happened for Pam. One day, a former boss of hers invited her to a barbecue with the motive of introducing her to a man she thought Pam would like. The man was Christopher Stephanoff, a jeweler by profession who was 48 years old and never married. Both she and Chris were not happy with being the object of their friend's

matchmaking until they met each other. They were married 9 months later. Pam is very grateful for her husband who she says is wonderful, honest, and a blessing from God.

After 20 years of sobriety, Pam chose a new recovery group sponsor—Cindy George. She let Cindy know that she believed strongly in God, but wanted nothing to do with church. Pam said about Cindy, “She never pushed church on me. But the way she talked about God was intriguing to me.” The turning point came when Cindy and Craig invited her over to watch the movie “Jesus of Nazareth.” She knew very little about Jesus and now through this movie, she was overwhelmed with learning about the kindness of Jesus to people. This led to her wanting to be baptized. She met with Fr. Andrew who started catechism classes with her.

On August 16, 2020, Pam got baptized. She was our first adult baptism in our new adult baptistery. That was a special day for St. Matthew’s. We had just gotten into our new church and right away we got to witness this Pentecost of a new member into the Body of Christ.

Pam took the name Dymphna. St. Dymphna was a 15- year-old girl who ran away to Belgium from her abusive pagan father. There she opened up a hospice. She was also involved in helping the mentally ill. Her father found out where she was and had her beheaded. With Pam’s love for hospice, you can see why she chose this saint.

As of late, Pam enjoys two things in her life very much. One is the Tuesday night Bible study at the George’s. The other is her relationship with 7-year-old Ana Blazek. Pam had never been around kids much and was not comfortable interacting with them, until Ana. “When I walk into church, Ana comes to greet me with open arms. She is God’s blessing to me.”

To conclude, I asked Pam what her goal was for the remaining years of her life. She answered, “To work on my relationship with Christ and to learn more about Christianity. I have so much to learn yet.”

Pam has not let bitterness from her past take over her life. Instead, she has developed a grateful heart, giving all the credit to Jesus.

--Kh. Bonnie



ST. MATTHEW MESSAGE BOARD

EGG CARTONS NEEDED: The Blazek family needs egg cartons for their backyard chickens’ eggs. If you can save the cartons after using up the eggs please bring them to church. Thank you!