

**ST. MATTHEW THE EVANGELIST  
ANTIOCHIAN  
ORTHODOX CHURCH  
MARCH, 2022, NEWSLETTER**

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

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**SATURDAY VESPERS—5 p.m.  
SUNDAY MATINS—8:50 a.m.    SUNDAY LITURGY—10 a.m.  
CONFESSION—after Vespers and during Sunday Matins**

**OUR LENTEN SERVICE SCHEDULE FOR MARCH**

(regular Saturday Vespers and Sunday Matins & Liturgy not included)

- FORGIVENESS VESPERS ON EVE OF LENT: Sunday, March 6, 6 pm**  
Preceded by potluck meatless meal at 5. At this service, we both ask God's forgiveness and forgiveness from each other as the Fast begins.
- MONDAY, TUESDAY, THURSDAY, MARCH 7, 8, 10--- 6:30 pm: Great Compline with Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete**
- WEDNESDAYS, MARCH 9, 16, 23, 30, 6:30 pm: Pre-Sanctified Liturgy. Followed by potluck meals, Mini-sermons on "Christ's 7 Words on the Cross".**
- SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY PAN-ORTHODOX EVENING VESPERS: MARCH 13, 5 pm. HERE AT ST. MATTHEW'S THIS YEAR.**
- AKATHIST TO THE THEOTOKOS: FRIDAYS, MARCH 11 & 18: Parish potlucks at 6, Services at 7, Saints Alive class in hall at 8 pm.**
- VESPERS & ARTOKLASIA FOR FEAST OF ANNUNCIATION: Thursday, March 24, 6:30 pm.**
- FEAST OF ANNUNCIATION, FRIDAY, MARCH 25: Matins, 9 am, Liturgy, 10 am; Friday Parish meal (fish okay), 6 pm; Vespers with 3<sup>rd</sup> Akathist Stasis, 7 pm; Saints Alive class, 8 pm.**

**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.

**ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL (usually once a month):** Sunday, March 13. Samuel Harmon. “A Christian Ending”—About death and dying in Orthodox Tradition.

**NORTH BIBLE STUDY**---Not meeting in March—because host family, the Parkers, will be out of state.

**WOMEN’S PRAYER GROUP**—Friday, March 4, 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, March 19, 6 pm at the church. Studying Wisdom of Sirach.

**SOUTH BIBLE STUDY**—Tuesdays, March 1 & 15, 6:30 pm at Craig & Cindy George’s, 9451 Sherwood Trail, Brecksville. All are welcome. The study will be on the book of Ruth.

**NEXT TEEN CLUB MEETING**---After liturgy on March 27.

**ST. HERMAN’S MINISTRY TEAM**—Sunday, March 20, is our parish’s next monthly turn to provide a meal to the poor at St. Herman Orthodox Homeless Shelter in Cleveland. If you can help with either the providing or cooking or serving of the meal, please contact Deacon Basil, 440-665-3591. Thank you to Deacon Basil and Matt Roach for cooking the February meal and to those who served the meal: Veronica Scanlon, Colton Bose, Craig & Cindy George, and Sondra Palivoda & Rob.

**OUR PARISH’S MINISTRY OF DELIVERY OF FOOD, CLOTHING, ETC. TO THE HOMELESS ON THE STREETS OF CLEVELAND WILL BE ON SUNDAY, MARCH 20.** Alms box to help fund is by hall entrance.

**HOMESCHOOL SUPPORT GROUP**---Friday, March 11, 9 a.m.

**ANOTHER MISSION TO HELP THE POOR WILL BE HELD ON SATURDAY, April 30.** The plan is for lunches, food, etc. to be given to the homeless in both Cleveland and Akron, helping various homeless shelters in their work. More details soon.....

**NEW PARISHIONERS IN FEBRUARY**

**ALINA SKRYGIN**

Sophia, Constantine  
5801 Burns Road  
North Olmsted, Ohio 44070  
445-600-2396  
[alinaskrygin@live.com](mailto:alinaskrygin@live.com)

**SAMER & SAMANTHA EADEH**

Yasmeen, Elias  
35582 Drake Street  
North Ridgeville, Ohio 44039  
317-313-9475  
[lilamira2@yahoo.com](mailto:lilamira2@yahoo.com)

**JAMES & KATIE BUNCH**

Liam, Matty, Nolan, Oaken, Phaedryn  
6851 West Ridge Road  
Lorain, Ohio 44053  
James---740-606-2184  
Katie---740-606-7089  
[JimLbunch@gmail.com](mailto:JimLbunch@gmail.com)

**VICTORIA THORP**

14818 Clifton Boulevard  
Lakewood, Ohio 44107  
440-364-5490  
[VICKIETHORP@gmail.com](mailto:VICKIETHORP@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.

Mariya Butt

Jamie & Lucas Domonkos

Stephen Kulchar

Michael Palmer

Victoria Shaker

**CONGRATULATIONS----**

---to James & Katie Bunch who entered the Orthodox Church by Holy Chrismation on February 6.

---Victoria Thorp who entered the Orthodox Church by Holy Chrismation on February 27.

---to Larry & Jennifer Holmes on the baptism of their son, Mathias, on January 22.

---Gino & Jessica Karam on the birth of their son, Luca, on February 12.

---Daniel & Abbey Samson on the birth of their son, Abel, on February 14.

**ST. MATTHEW'S MESSAGE BOARD**

*Contact Bonnie Harmon if you wish to submit a message.*

This message board can be used for various situations. For instance, if your child (or you) are going to be in a school play or concert or even a big sporting event, you can inform the church of the details through this message board so that whoever is interested, can come to the event.

Another example is-- let's say you have a passion to go hiking, but don't have anyone to go with, you can advertise for a hiking partner through this message board.

Thanks! I hope to hear from more of you.

### **THE LENTEN FAST**

Great Lent is a time to especially work on spiritual disciplines to help us grow in Christ. These disciplines include such things as extra worship services, beginning or strengthening the habit of daily prayer, Confession, more Bible reading, almsgiving, and fasting.

Fasting is a discipline meant to help us in several ways: learning self-denial, gaining self-control, helping us to focus more on God and less on food, allowing us to spend less money on food in order to give more to the poor, etc.

The Lenten fast involves both eating less and giving up certain types of food. Throughout Lent, we should eat less and avoid snacks: in addition to abstaining from some types of food.

Lent this year is from March 7 through April 15. During Lent, we give up meat and animal foods (such as eggs, dairy, and fish) plus wine and olive oil. Shellfish are eaten. On Annunciation Day, March 25, wine, oil, and fish are consumed. And wine and olive oil are used on all Saturdays and Sundays in Lent. During Holy Week, April 16-23, the fast is the same as in Lent itself, except that wine, olive oil, and fish are used on Palm Sunday. Also, Holy & Great Friday and Holy & Great Saturday, April 22 & 23, are to be observed as especially strict fast days, with as little eating and drinking as possible.

As with all fasting, the Church's Lenten fasts allows for adjustments for children, pregnant mothers, nursing mothers, and those with health problems that require certain foods. Also, those who are new to fasting may need to begin with a less strict fast and then gradually "tighten up" year by year. However, we should also remember that unless we fast strictly enough to make it hard, it will be of little value to us. One should always feel free to speak to one's spiritual father about how to personally observe, and make the best spiritual use, of the Lenten fast.

The Bible and the Saints are clear that fasting is not a way to earn salvation, but is a tool to help us grow. We must guard against pride when we fast and concentrate most on fasting from sin—gossip, pride, lust, etc.

The prescribed Lenten Fast is sometimes called "the black fast" to distinguish it from less strict fasting. How strictly each person follows the recommended fast is not any one else's business. We should only be concerned with our own fasting, not judging others for what they eat. *A good rule of thumb: fast yourself as strictly as you can; and pay no attention to what anyone else eats. However, when we gather together during Lent as a church family, we should abide by the Church's Lenten fast—so we should keep any parish meals or coffeetimes during Lent "black fast".*

#### ***STILL FAR AWAY .... BUT LENT GOES FAST, SO: HOLY WEEK DONATIONS NEEDED***

Needed: Lilies, carnations, palms, congregational candles, olive oil, eggs, large Paschal candles, etc.  
Contact Subdeacon Richard Sahley---216-513-9738/440-457-7089

### **THE PRE-SANCTIFIED LITURGY**

Canon law does not permit celebration of the liturgy on weekdays during Lent due to the solemnity of those days and the joyous nature of the liturgy. However, due to increased spiritual struggle in Lent, Holy Communion is needed! Therefore, our Orthodox Tradition allows the receiving of Communion from the reserved Host (from Sunday) on Wednesdays and Fridays in Lent, and occasional holy days. The most common Antiochian practice is to have it on Wednesday nights only due to our having the Akathist services on Fridays. This ornate and solemn service is one of the most beautiful of all. We will have it at 6:30 p.m. **No Pre-Sanctified service** on March 24 because that night there will be Vespers leading up to Annunciation Liturgy the next morning. In order to receive Holy Communion, the minimal preparation is to fast after a light lunch if one is not able to fast from after breakfast or for the entire day.

### **THE AKATHIST SERVICE FOR THE HOLY THEOTOKOS**

The Little Compline with the Akathist Hymn, commonly simply called "Akathist Service", was written in Constantinople in the 600's A.O. At that time the city was besieged by the non-Christian Avar barbarians. The people put their hope in the Protectores of the city, the Holy Theotokos. Through her prayers to God, the city was saved. This hymn of thanks to God and the Virgin was written and the people gathered to sing it. In joy, they stood for the whole service----thus, the name "Akathist", Greek for "not sitting." Antiochian practice is to have this beautiful service on the first Friday nights of Lent. We will have it at 6:30 p.m. (No meals ahead of time as of now like we do other years---due to the virus restrictions.)

### **LENTEN CONFESSIONS**

All Orthodox Christians should go to the sacrament of Confession during Lent or Holy Week. Confessions at St. Matthew's will be held at 5:45 p.m. most Saturdays (after 5 p.m. Vespers), during Sunday matins before the liturgy, or before or after the many other services. And it is possible to make an appointment for confession at other times. If you have questions about the sacrament, please feel free to contact Father Andrew .....

### **THE GREAT CANON OF ST. ANDREW OF CRETE**

The Great Compline of St. Andrew of Crete is a penitential canon of hymns written in the 600's A.O. by St. Andrew, bishop of the island of Crete. It is served in the first week of Lent to assist in our repentance as we begin this season of spiritual struggle and growth. The service is broken down in different ways in different parishes. We will do it in 3 sections in conjunction with the service of Great Compline at 6:30 on Monday, Tuesday, & Thursday evenings in the first week of Lent. The service is done in its entirety later in Lent during April. *(After the first week of Lent, Great Compline without the Great Canon will be done each Monday at 6:30 p.m.)*

## OUR CHURCH FAMILY MEET-UP

I want to tell you about someone who whenever the church is open for services, he is there. He probably doesn't realize how valuable that is to our community, but I believe that people like him are essential to building up the Church.

Lloyd Michael Lieberman was born on July 7, 1953, in Chicago. He later had 3 younger sisters. His grandparents had immigrated from Poland and the Ukraine in the 1920's. They were Jews from the tribe of Levi. Michael's father worked as a physical education teacher for the Chicago schools for 35 years. He also had a home repair business on the side. Later on in his life, he purchased an apartment building on the north side of Chicago which ended up making him a wealthy man.

The family lived in a Chicago neighborhood that was mostly Catholic. When Michael was in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, they moved to Skokie, a suburb with a heavy Jewish population. This was important to his dad who wanted to be near a synagogue. On Friday nights at home, they would light a candle and say prayers. His mother would prepare a home-cooked Sabbath meal.

After moving, Michael started attending Hebrew school which was four days a week right after his regular school day. When he was 13, he had his Bar-Mitzvah. He had to chant a portion of the Torah in Hebrew. He had learned how to read Hebrew, but had no idea what he was reading. He remembers thinking afterward, "Now I am through being religious."

Michael and his dad did not get along well. His dad was critical of him and constantly cutting him down. It seemed to Michael that his passion in life was the all-consuming desire to make a lot of money.

The situation worsened as Michael got into high school. He was arrested at 16 for smoking pot, but was able to get out of it with minor consequences.

In September of 1971, he started college in Chicago—just because it was the "next thing to do" in life. He was not happy. He had no ambition and no idea what he wanted to do with his life. He continued to live at home. At this college, there was a student lounge on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the student union where every day the stoners would sit and smoke dope. No one stopped them. Michael became a regular. His classes were neglected and he quit school after the first quarter.

Meanwhile, his life at home with his father got worse and worse. Here he was freeloading at his parent's home, not working, having no ambitions, and feeling miserable. Finally, it came to a head with his father. One day in March of 1972, Michael with his very long hair, a cigarette in his mouth, stood glaring hatefully at his father. His father had had enough and he threw Michael out of the house. Michael looks back on that day as the beginning of his journey to finding Christ.

He didn't know where to go. He ended up finding shelter with a Jewish friend who lived in a dorm at Northwestern University. This friend had a roommate who happened to be a Christian. Michael knew absolutely nothing about Christianity. His family had told him that Jews don't believe in Jesus, and that was all he knew. The roommate was Ron Kauppi from Ironwood, Michigan. As the weeks passed and Michael got to know him, he saw that Ron was different. This puzzled Michael. He thought, "What's with this guy? He seems to really care about me." Ron gave Michael a Bible and told him to read the gospel of John. As Michael read about the miracles of Jesus, he wondered if this was really true. Ron invited Michael to come with him to the college Christian fellowship group and there Michael was even more amazed. He kept asking, "What in the world! Who are these people who actually care about me?"

Michael took some tracts that were given to him, read them, and found that they explained how to receive Jesus into your heart and gave the words to do so. Michael prayed this “sinner’s prayer” and made his first commitment to follow Christ. Gradually his heart began to change. He started feeling remorse at how he had treated his parents. It wasn’t long before he asked his parents for forgiveness and then moved back home. His father, however, was not happy about his son becoming a Christian. One day Michael was leaving the house and his dad was talking on the phone to his mother. His dad said to her, “I gotta go now. I have a Jesus freak on my hands!”

That fall Michael went back to college, avoiding the 4<sup>th</sup> floor lounge this time. However, it was not easy for him. He would do well in the Christian life for a while and then he would backslide, feeling absolutely miserable again. As Jerry Morrision said in the January newsletter, “Not walking with the Lord equals misery.” This back and forth seesawing between living a Christian life and going back to his sinful life continued until one day he went to a Jesus Rally at the big convention center in Chicago. Corrie Ten Boom was the speaker. They had brought in a swimming pool and offered to baptize anyone who wanted to turn their life over to Jesus. Michael felt a powerful pull to go up front and he describes what happened next as the Holy Spirit whisking him up front to be baptized. The baptism totally changed his life. He felt like he had received the Holy Spirit.

After that incident, he joined a campus fellowship group and was discipled by a guy from the group. Michael felt like this discipleship really grounded him in his faith.

In 1976, he graduated from Eastern Illinois University with a B.S. degree In Geography.

He came back a few years later to visit his friends in the fellowship group and there he met Mary. They were married in 1980.

Michael worked at several different jobs over the years. He worked at Rand McNally for a short time, for Jews for Jesus, in maintenance jobs, and office work, He also worked as a pizza delivery man. He got robbed twice doing that. In Pasadena, he was beat up with a baseball bat while being robbed. In Chicago, he was robbed at gun point.

He has lived in several different places after leaving Chicago—San Francisco, Sacramento, Indianapolis, Bloomington, Tucson, Columbia, SC, and Berea.

We met Michael and his family in 1987 at our Evangelical Orthodox Church neighborhood in Indianapolis. He and his family had moved there to become part of that community just as they were splitting off from those who were becoming Orthodox. The Liebermans met the Vazquezes who were leaving to become Orthodox. Michael ended up following our lead and they were chrismated at St. George in February of 1988, Fr. Andrew and I being their godparents.

Michael and Mary eventually moved to South Carolina where they settled for over 20 years. In 2013, Mary divorced him. He was pretty devastated so he moved back to this area to find comfort with his friends.

In 2014, Michael married Kelly who is an evangelical protestant Christian. He brought her and her three children here and they now make their home in Parma.

Michael has 5 children with his first wife. They are: Leah (1985) who is married with one child and two step-children. She is a nurse. Aaron (1987) is married and works as a realtor in Tucson, AZ. He practices the Hare Krishna faith. Ruth (1990) is married and has two sons. Michael (1993) recently got married and serves as a subdeacon in an Antiochian church in Florida. He works as a commercial airline pilot. Hannah (1996) works as a security guard.

Michael feels that being here at St. Matthew's has helped to stabilize his life. He has found much help from Pathways to Peace (a support group at our church). It has made his emotional and spiritual life much more stable. He says, "It helps me stay sane."

When asked what his goals are for his remaining years, he answered, "I want to follow Christ and do His will. I want to serve Him, other people, and the Church."

To me, Michael Lieberman is a witness to the power of Christ to change a miserable life into something beautiful for God.



### **"SAINTS ALIVE" MEETINGS AGAIN ON FRIDAYS IN LENT**

We will again have this Lent our "Saints Alive" meetings on the first 5 Friday evenings in Lent. They will be in the hall at 8 p.m. after the 7 p.m. Akathist services. These meetings are led by a lay person who teaches about a Saint of their choice. And then we have questions & answers and discussion.

Here is the list for the three Fridays of Lent in March:

March 11---Colton Bose teaching about St. Andrei Rublev

March 18—Kristina Tartara teaching about St. Patrick

March 25---Cindy George teaching about St. Romanos the Melodist

### **PARISH MEALS ON LENTEN FRIDAYS**

There will be parish potluck dinners on the first Fridays in Lent. They are held at 6 p.m. before the 7 p.m. Akathist service. Strictly Lenten fasting food, please, except that fish is eaten on March 25<sup>th</sup>, in Celebration of the Feast of the Annunciation.

Here is the list of the parish groups coordinating the 3 Friday potlucks in March:

March 11—the Sisterhood

March 18---the Women's Prayer Group

March 25---the Brotherhood

**HOME ALMS BOXES---** Giving to the poor is one of the main spiritual disciplines of Lent. To aid you in this, the archdiocese home alms boxes will be available in the narthex. Take one home, fill it with money (fasting should save some money from your grocery budget!), and then bring it back to church at Pascha—The monies will be distributed by our archdiocese to the poor around the world.

**LENTEN PSALTER GROUP---**It begins on March 7. If you wish to participate, it involves reading one Kathisma (takes about 15 minutes) from the book of Psalms each day from March 7 through April 15. You read in your own home and whatever time of day works for you. Interested? Contact Khourie Bonnie at [bonniewharmon@gmail.com](mailto:bonniewharmon@gmail.com)



Greater Cleveland Council  
Of Orthodox Clergy

## Sunday of Orthodoxy Great Vespers

March 13, 2022  
5:00 P.M.

All the Orthodox Parishes in our area will worship together celebrating restoration of icons in the 800s after the iconoclast heresy.

Saint Matthew the Evangelist  
Antiochian Orthodox Church  
10383 Albion Road  
North Royalton, OH 44133

**Chief Celebrant and Homilist**  
His Eminence, the Most Reverend Michael,  
Archbishop of New York and the Diocese of  
New York & New Jersey (OCA)

Children are invited to bring Icons and  
participate in the procession

Fellowship and refreshments in the Church Hall following the services

Join us for Fellowship, Friendship, and worship!

**SAINT GEORGE**  
ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH  
Grand Rapids, Michigan  
Invites you to join us for the



2022 Parish Life Conference  
June 18 to June 19, 2022

**HOTEL NOW ACCEPTING RESERVATIONS!**  
at [https://groups.yahoo.com/ghwyp](https://groups.yahoo.com/group/ghwyp)

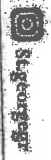
Single Room Rates \$99  
Double Room Rates \$129 (Room Rates)  
Includes Continental Day Breakfast & Evening Reception



**EVENT WEBSITE IS LIVE!**  
[www.athochnyevents.org](http://www.athochnyevents.org)

Please visit to register your "AD" in our Savannah Journal  
in Celebration of Bishop Anderson's 100th on the Ministry of the John Wesley

Find us on Socials!



**FAMILY CAMP OUT, SATURDAY, MAY 28 & SUNDAY, MAY 29**

All are welcome! You can either come and go, or you can bring a tent and camp out at the church. Sack Races, softball, egg tosses, water balloons and more, combined with Orthodox talks and services. Ends with pizza after Sunday liturgy. NO COST. There will be a free will offering but only if you feel led by God to give. More details later.....

**THANK YOU!----**

---To all who helped with the amazingly successful Chili Cook-off, Bake Sale, & Silent Auction Fundraiser on February 19. All the proceeds go for church camp scholarships for our Children. \$3,483 raised! Many thanks to all who worked on it and participated! Special thanks to Kendra Hunter for having the idea and leading it to great success!

--to those who donated to the parish in memory of Butch Drozdowski:

The Daher family, Craig & Cindy George, Jack & Lisa Palivoda, Father Andrew & Khourie Bonnie, Thomas & Patricia Roob

**St. Matthew Orthodox Church**

**10383 Albion Road**

**North Royalton, OH 44133**