Volume 30, Number 11
November 2021

The Cathedral Messenger

A Publication of St. George Antiochian Orthodox Christian Cathedral

1936 Then & Now 2021

On August 30, 1936, the St. George parish community gathered at Odd Fellow Hall with the visiting Archbishop Theodosius Abourjailey, Metropolitan of the Diocese of Tyre and Sidon in Lebanon, in which Marjeyoun is located. The parish of St. George had only been officially incorporated for 18 years, although its roots reached back 41 years to 1895, when the first Orthodox Lebanese family arrived in Wichita.

In the photograph of that banquet, one can observe a young George Cohlmia in the foreground. Fr. George Cohlmia was seated at the head table with Archbishop Theodosius, and Master of Ceremonies William Farha was standing nearby.

On Sunday, October 17, about 80 members of our "New Breed" young adult group (ages 25-45) gathered with our Bishop Basil in the very room our predecessors did with Archbishop Theodosius 85 years ago – the ballroom of Odd Fellow Hall. Bishop Basil and Fr. Paul were seated in the same spots as Archbishop Theodosius and Fr. George, respectively. Tim and Nathan Farha, great-grandsons of Fr. George, and W.G. Farha, grandson of William Farha were also at the head table. Austin Cohlmia, grandson of George Cohlmia, was among the participants.

With his retirement looming at year end, this was an opportunity for our New Breed group to gather with Bishop Basil. He spoke most movingly of the heritage of our parish, and of the blessing our current generation of young adults enjoy of carrying that heritage into the future. It was a truly inspiring evening and perhaps a historic event in the life of our parish. Many years, Master and thanks be to God!

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

Deanna Leinen, 10/10
(of Anchroage, Alaska)

Bishop Basil Endowment

Honor Bishop BASIL on his name day, the Feast of St. Basil the Great, January 1, with a gift to the Endowment Fund that bears his name for establishing and maintaining missions within the Diocese of Wichita and Mid-America. Make mail your check to St. George Cathedral - Wichita - payable to "St George Cathedral and earmark "Bishop Basil Endowment", and take this opportunity to honor Bishop BASIL.

2021 STEWARDSHIP SUNDAYS

Please remember to complete your pledge card for 2022 & either return it to the Cathedral office or bring it to Divine Liturgy on **Sunday, November 28th**

Fufill your pledge by Automatic Monthly Withdrawl

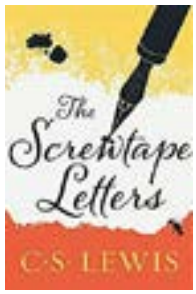
auto pay

Please contact Doren at the Cathedral office to obtain the form

Women's Faith & Growth

Join us Thursday
November 11th, 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



MABROOK! BLESSINGS!

MANY YEARS!

baptism

Ramzi Thomas "Basil" Wilson, 10/2
son of Jeffrey and Candace

George Rami Dahdal, 10/17
son of Rami and Becca

Samuel David Learned, 10/31
son of Alex and Caroline

birth

Lucia Elizabeth Farha, 10/5
daughter of Nathan and Vanessa

marriage

John Dixon and Grace Farha, 10/16

Annual Dinner Volunteer Appreciation Dinner

Tuesday, November 9 at 6:00p

Thanking those of you who helped and labored to make this year's dinner a success. Join us to celebrate.

NOVEMBER FASTING

On Wednesdays and Fridays prior to November 15, the normal fasting traditions are observed: abstinence from meat, poultry, and dairy products. The Nativity Fast begins Thursday, November 15th. The usual fasting regime is kept everyday during the Fast in November, except we are dispensed from fasting on Thanksgiving Day, and wine and in some traditions, fish, is permitted on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and weekends.

My Journey to Orthodoxy

by Adela Garton

Church has been a part of my life since infancy. I grew up in a small, independent Baptist church that fell apart when I was in high school. In college, I attended churches of various denominations with friends, and finally landed in a Presbyterian church that had a young singles ministry. When I got married, I joined my husband's Methodist church where his family had attended his whole life, and I loved the idea that we would raise our children there as well. After many years, things were happening that we simply could not support, and we eventually felt like we had to leave.

By the time we landed on our feet in another church of yet another denomination, I was feeling uneasy at the patterns I started to notice in evangelical churches: denominational names traded for more "trendy" names, hymns and organ music replaced by praise songs and worship bands. Sanctuaries adorned with stained glass, crosses, and candles were replaced by auditoriums with stages and set designs based on the current sermon series. In short, it felt as though modern American culture was shaping the churches instead of the other way around. For many years I tried to ignore my uneasiness, but as time went on, I felt more and more out of place. Rarely did it seem like the Sunday morning service was a space where I was actually worshipping God. Instead, it seemed like I was attending a concert and a lecture. It felt like shifting sand beneath my feet, and I desperately wanted to stand on something solid.

After visiting St. George with my daughter Rachel, I was drawn in by the sensory experience of the Divine Liturgy and the feeling of genuine worship. During my period of exploration, I came across a large timeline of Christian history. I examined that timeline for quite a while. I followed the line from the time of the apostles to the Great Schism and then to the Reformation. I continued to follow the line and found each of the denominations of which I had been part at one time or another. It was one break after another. I remember thinking that it was no wonder I felt so unsettled. After that, I started reading books about Orthodoxy, listening to podcasts, and attending catechesis classes at St. George. I spent a lot of time praying and asking questions. I had to critically examine all of the things that I thought I knew about God, church, and the Bible and consider them in a new light. It took a while for me to make it official, but it is an honor to now call St. George my church home.

Lebanon Appeal

Medical Mercy for Lebanon

[Amazon](#)
[Go Fund Me](#)

Dear Parishioners,

I pray you and your family are continuing to do well.

As I mentioned in my previous message, we indeed have much to be thankful for in our life here in Wichita, Kansas: grocery stores where you can buy any kind of food imaginable; electricity on demand around the clock; a pharmacy on nearly every corner ready to dispense necessary medications.

None of these are readily available to our family and friends in Lebanon. In particular, the need for medications, diapers, and formula is desperate.

As you know, we recently mounted a grassroots effort to collect medications and these other necessities to distribute to Lebanese families in need. We at St. George Orthodox Christian Cathedral have partnered with the Kansas Chapter of the International Lebanese Medical Association (ILMA-K) to collect in-kind and financial donations. All donations will be transferred to the Lebanese Red Cross (LRC), which will distribute resources among the 44 medical clinics it oversees.

The original concluding date for our drive was October 30. **I am pleased to announce that we are extending our drive two more weeks until November 15**, as we will be continuing to process donations during this period.

Our goal is to completely fill a shipping container with these goods. We have made great progress so far, but it still isn't completely full. So if you have not yet donated, please do so!

Attached you will see the various options for supporting **Medical Mercy for Lebanon**. Please consider how you might help us make a difference in this humanitarian crisis that is so personal to many in our community.

Thank you in advance for your support!

Fr. Paul

Medications and Medical Supplies needed:

- Aspirin
- Calcium 500 mg tab.+ Vit. D
- Ibuprofen
- Tylenol
- Vitamine D
- Voltaren gel
- Baby Formula
- Diapers (all sizes)
- Hand Sanitizer
- Ice Pack
- Surgical Mask
- Finger Pulse Oximeter
- Touchless Thermometers

All items will be distributed to the Lebanese Red Cross

Dr. Chady Saraaf with pallets of medical supplies destined for Lebanon

Donations from the surrounding Wichita community

A Lebanese Big Dinner For the History Books

by Jennifer Sebits

What do you get when you mix a Pandemic with one of the largest Wichita Church gatherings of the year?

A Drive-Through-to-End-All-Drive-Throughs….and a page in the Big Lebanese Dinner history!

After a two-year sabbatical, the 86th Annual Big Lebanese Dinner was back this past month – much to the cheers of the Wichita community and beyond.

"It's the best weekend of the year," said one man in the drive-through.

"Thanks for bringing it back. We've missed the Lebanese Dinner so much!" Another woman said.

One woman flew from Georgia just to pick up her pre-order items.

Another couple who had never eaten Middle Eastern food thought they'd give St. George's dinner a try. Phyllis Abraham assured them that they would like it so much that they would be back the next day for more. They were spotted in line again on Sunday.

One man even pulled into the parking lot to see what all the commotion was about. He didn't know St. George was having a drive-though Lebanese dinner. He just saw a long line and thought it would be fun to get in it. Note to next year's chairs: lines are actually an attraction, not a deterrence.

Parishioners were also excited to have the Big Dinner back. After a two-year sabbatical from the Annual Dinner, parishioners turned from "tired" to genuinely ecstatic. (The Dinner was cancelled in 2019 because of Cathedral renovations and in 2020, the Dinner was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.)

When Co-chairs Phyllis Abraham, Rhonda Castrisos and Jennifer Sebits started planning for the dinner in June, it looked like the pandemic was lifting and life was turning back to "normal." Parishioners eagerly signed up to chair various committees, and everyone was thrilled to BE together again. Record numbers of volunteers showed up to workdays and stayed all day.

However, as the COVID-19 diagnosis numbers began to rise in late August/early September, it became clear that doing the dinner in a traditional sit-down dining room format would be risky. As news that other Orthodox Churches around the country were cancelling their Dinners, subcommittee chairs formulated a plan to keep our dinner alive: Serve it entirely to-go!

Just when it looked like every hurtle had been cleared, the city of Wichita issued a Boiled Water Advisory due to a busted water main on the Eve of the dinner. A quick trip to Costco was made to buy bottles of water for volunteers, and the Cathedral was all set to serve its first Big Dinner ever entirely out the door!

Admittedly, the "86th Annual Big Lebanese Dinner" wasn't without a few hiccups. Cars lined up for an hour before the dinner even opened. The well-laid plans had to be modified on the fly. In the first hour of Saturday, St. George served 556 meals. By the end of the evening, it was clear that efficiencies could be gained. Ideas were shared on how to make the system just a little bit better the next day. By the first half hour on Sunday, crews served 409 meals – almost doubling the speed of the drive-through line. To put this into perspective, a meal was served every 22 seconds. Move over Chick-Fil-A!

In all, volunteers served a total of 4,822 meals, slightly down from year's past. Evaluated from a different perspective, however, volunteers served 1,302 more meals through the drive through than in 2018. That is a 27-percent increase in total traffic in the drive-through!

So, how does the bottom line look? Keep in mind, both the dining room and Country Kitchen (parishioner-made goods) were cancelled. Even with that cancellation, as the final numbers come in (and parishioners turn in their ticket sales), it appears The Big Dinner is on track to making close to a six-digit number – making 2021 one of the most profitable dinners ever! Thank you to the amazing volunteers who made the "impossible" possible and helped re-imagine an 86-year tradition!

The Church: A Sanctuary of Sanity

"A time is coming when men will go mad, and when they see someone who is not mad, they will attack him, saying, 'You are mad; you are not like us."

— St. Antony the Great

These words, spoken by St. Anthony in the fourth century, have proven to be uncommonly prophetic of the 21st century Western world, and of American society in particular.

In a recent interview CNN's Brian Stelter, (https://www.foxnews.com/media/bari-weiss-brian-stelter-world-has-gone-mad-cnn) ex-New York Times Bari Weiss uncannily echoed St. Anthony when she made the following comments: "Where can I start? Well, when you have the chief reporter on the beat of COVID for The New York Times (saying) … pursuing the question of the (Wuhan) lab leak is racist, *the world has gone mad*. When you're not able to say out loud and in public there are differences between men and women, *the world has gone mad*. When we're not allowed to acknowledge that rioting is rioting, and it is bad, and that silence is not violence, but violence is violence, *the world has gone mad*… When, in the name of progress, young school children, as young as kindergarten, are being separated in public schools because of their race, and that is called progress instead of segregation, *the world has gone mad*. There are dozens of examples."

Yes, examples can easily be multiplied. When same sex-marriage is considered normal, and those who call it unnatural are thought insane, *the world has gone mad*. When a popular fad among teens is to attempt to transition from one sex to another by means of hormones and surgery, and those who question it are immediately cancelled, *the world has gone mad*. When political elites and national media knowingly promote false narratives, hoaxes, and conspiracy theories, and censors those who disagree, *the world has gone mad*. What almost everyone considered normal at the conclusion of the 20th century, current media, academic, and political culture has now labeled abnormal. And much of the general public has gladly swallowed the Kool-Aid. In an incredibly brief period of time, reality has been upended and replaced by systemic cultural madness.

Those infected with the contagion of cultural madness undoubtedly see the Church as hopelessly out-of-step with the modern world. The more fervent among them are actively hostile toward any expression of Christianity. Yet in actuality, the Church is a threat to no one. In fact, it is a sanctuary of sanity, an island of hope, in the midst of a raging sea of madness.

In the Church, we are formed to respect the inherent dignity of all human beings, to alleviate the pain of those who are suffering, to exercise compassion for those whose lives have been trampled. In the Church, we learn that character is built on self-restraint rather than self-indulgence, that our passions do not constitute our personhood, that the cultivation of virtue is the true key to happiness. In the Church, we discover that this temporary life is not our final destination, that we are not simply the random products of a cold and impersonal universe, but that we were created by a loving God for eternal union with Him – a union we can begin to enjoy even in this world. In the Church, marriage and family are held to be sacred, and bonds of community forge relationships destined to endure forever. And such examples could readily be multiplied.

Yes, the Church is a sanctuary of sanity in a world gone mad. The Church is an inestimable blessing to those who are faithful to her ways. May we be found within the safety of her walls, doing our utmost to strengthen them with unfailing support.

Community Support

by Traci Spencer

we'd love to have you join us!

"for I was hungry and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me" — Matthew 25: 35-36

Completed Projects

Lord's Diner

On Sunday, October 17th, St. George volunteers served the homeless in our community from 5:00-7:30 p.m. Thank you for your heart for feeding the homeless in our community. Join us the third Sunday of every month to serve at The Lord's Diner. Please call Pat Milburn if you are able to serve.

HopeNet Landscaping Project

The Community Support Team paid Jakob Lawn Care to complete the landscaping project for Hope Net. We were unable to find sufficient volunteers due to busy schedules and preparing for the Big Dinner. We are waiting for Jakob to schedule to complete this project.

Wichita Family Crisis Center

St. George Community Support is providing $1,500 to allow them to use the funds toward the new shelter that they are building or to provide funds for hotels, cabs, hygiene, clothing, etc. to families in crisis.

What's Coming Up ?

Cook Up A Storm

On Saturday, October 23rd from 10-12 we had a wonderful turnout of volunteers to make casseroles and cookies for the homeless in our community.

Warming Souls Center

Community Support will be serving the casseroles, cookies, Texas toast, and salad at The Warming Soul's Center on Thursday, November 18th from 5:45-7:00 p.m. Please let Cindy Abdallah or Traci Spencer know if you can help with worthwhile project. Families can serve together in this project. See bulletin for address.

Next Meeting
November 9th

12:00 noon in the Conference Room.

We would love to have you join us!

We will meet in the St. George fellowship hall please join us in this worthwhile ministry of making a difference in our community.

Contact Traci Spencer at 371-5599 if you would like to be involved.

The Lord's Diner

On Sunday, November 9th , St. George volunteers will serve the homeless in our community from 5:00-7:30 p.m. Thank you for your heart for feeding the homeless in our community. Join us the third Sunday of every month to serve at The Lord's Diner. Please call Pat Milburn if you are able to serve.

DUI Red Ribbon Project

St. George volunteers will meet at St George on Tuesday, November 9th at 1:00 to write the names of victims of DUI on red ribbons that will be placed on police cars in their memory during the holiday season where there is the highest rate of drunk driving. Please let Jane Evans know if you can help with this worthwhile project.

Christmas Food Baskets

On December 18th, St George Community Support will be having their annual Christmas Food baskets project; which include four boxes of food and a gift per child per family adopted. Debbi Elkouri will be organizing this wonderful outreach again. Please look in the bulletin for when you can adopt a family and help with this amazing service project as a church family.

The Cathedral Messenger

St. George Orthodox Christian Cathedral
7515 East 13th Street North
Wichita, KS 67206-1223
www.stgeorgecathedral.net

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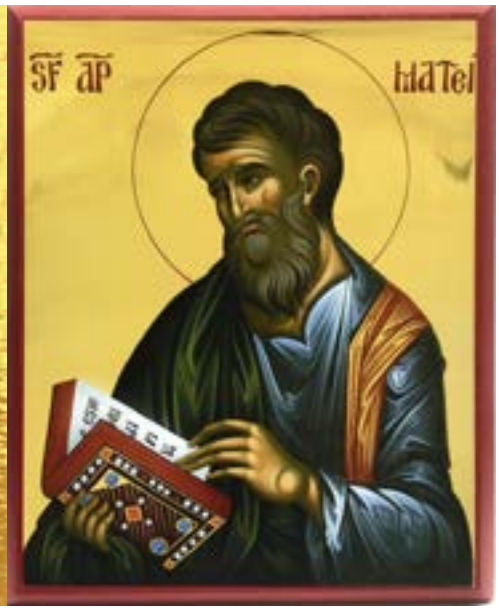
the Gospel According to St. Matthew



To livestream **Wednesday night's Adult Education** class at 7:15p,
go to www.stgeorgecathedral.net and click on the tab
Adult Ed Livestream It will take you to either **YouTube** or **Facebook** for viewing