



Volume 26, Number 11
December 2017

The Cathedral Messenger

A Publication of St. George Antiochian Orthodox Christian Cathedral

Of Peddlers, Bishops, and Bell-Ringers:

The Saga of the St. George Bell

In 1918 Wichita's Lebanese families at last acquired a place to worship together. Three patriarchs of the community—N.F. Farha, Shaker Cohlma, and Jabour Ablah—donated \$550 (\$9,000 today) to purchase a small frame church on South Handley Street from the Episcopal Diocese of Wichita.

But finding a priest to serve the Divine Liturgy would prove to be a much greater challenge for the young parish. During its first decade St. George was assigned just one resident priest, Fr. Elias El-Khoury, whose tenure ended in 1925.

As a result, the community often relied on visiting priests such as Fr. Shukralah Shadid from St. Elijah in Oklahoma City. Inevitably, there were Sundays when the new church had no priest to celebrate the divine services.

All that was about to change in 1933 when George Cohlma, a pious Wichita merchant and former medical student, would now be ordained to the priesthood. At long last the St. George

community would have a priest to call its own.



Fr. George Cohlma served St. George from 1933 to 1947

A Church Without a Bell

Church members waited with great anticipation for the arrival from New York of Bishop Emmanuel (Abo-Hatab), who was to perform the sacrament of ordination. Elected as Bishop of Brooklyn in 1931, he had also served as archdeacon under St.

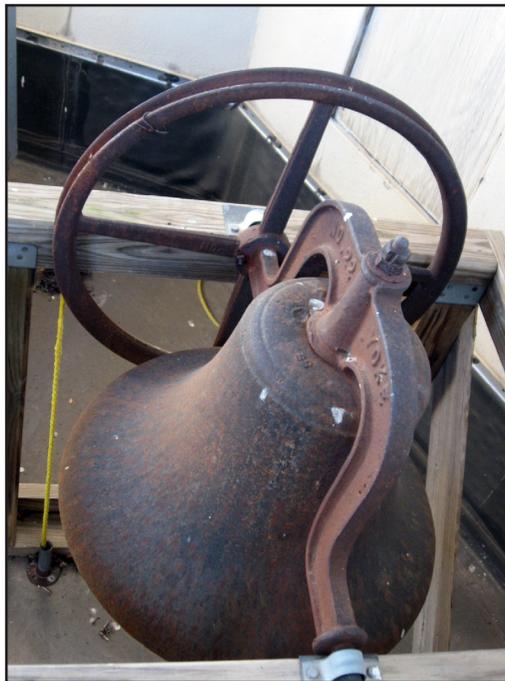
Raphael Hawaweeny. (The two bishops would one day share the same grave at Antiochian Village.)



Few of the faithful in Wichita had ever met an Orthodox bishop, let alone witnessed an ordination. There was one difficulty, however. Upon the arrival of a bishop, the receiving church was to ring its bells in continuous welcome. But the modest little church on Handley had no bell.

Being an itinerant peddler, Sim'aan "Sam" Ayesh remembered seeing a steel bell on a farm he had visited in Kingman, Kansas. Like most farm bells of that era, it had been manufactured by the C.S. Bell Company of Hillsboro, Ohio. Its main use was to call workers from the field at the end of the day.

The next time he peddled in that area, Sim'aan suggested to the farmer that he would barter some of his goods for the farm bell. The farmer agreed, and he and Sim'aan loaded the 22-inch bell, which weighed 50-60 pounds, into Ayesh's Model-T.



The original St. George bell, now installed in the Cathedral's north tower.

The bell was installed in the tower of the Handley Street church in time to announce the arrival of Bishop Emmanuel. During Fr. George Cohlma's subsequent 14-year tenure as parish priest, the bell became a regular fixture at St. George services.



Bishop Emmanuel (Abo-Hatab)

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His Eminence
The Most Reverend
Metropolitan JOSEPH

The Right Reverend
Bishop BASIL



Archbishop of New York and
Metropolitan of
All North America

Diocese of Wichita and
Mid-America

**ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE
OF NORTH AMERICA**

The Nativity of Christ – 2017



The interior of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem (built in AD 372 by St Helen)

To the Christ-loving Priests, Deacons, Monastics and Lay Folk of this God-protected Diocese of Wichita and Mid-America:

I embrace and greet you with a holy kiss and the joyous festal proclamation:

Christ is born – المسيح ولد –
Χριστός Γεννᾶται – Χριστός рождается
Hristos se rodi – Hristos se nastje

May God the All-holy Trinity grant you and your households the happiest of Feasts and a New Year filled with His abundant and rich blessings. With assurance of my continued love, prayers and blessings, I remain

In Christ the Incarnate Word of God,

+ Bishop Basil

+Bishop Basil

"The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch" (Acts 11: 26)

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MEMORY ETERNAL

Stephanos Anthemides, 11/25
John Karagianis, Jr. 11/24

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. See one of our Mission Support Team Members at the table in the hallway starting November 5th through the end of the month. Make checks payable to "St George Cathedral and earmark "Bishop Basil Endowment", and take this opportunity to honor Bishop BASIL.

Nativity Services

SUNDAY

December, 24
5:00p *Great Vespers*

MONDAY

December, 25
8:00a *Orthros*
9:30a *Divine Liturgy*



"Elder Orphans"

A Disturbing Trend – Something to Think About

As the baby boomer generation hits retirement age, America is experiencing a historic shift in demographics. Data shows that the baby boomers will have a higher percentage of "elder orphans" — seniors without family they can turn to for support — than any other previous generation. According to one study, 22% — almost a quarter — of American seniors are at risk of becoming, or are already, elder orphans.

DECEMBER FASTING

The Nativity Fast is observed through December 24th. From Nativity through January 4 there is no fasting.

MABROOK! BLESSINGS!

BAPTISM

Abigail Marie Koehn, 11/25
daughter of Chad and Christine Koehn

George Sam Jamal Farha, 11/24
son of Sam and Elizabeth Farha

Alazar Habtom Tesfahuney, 11/5
son of Habtom and Kewnit Naizghi

MARRIAGE

Matthew Leming and Jeni Gifford, 11/12

MANY YEARS!



THE ORDER OF ST. IGNATIUS



ST IGNATIUS SUNDAY is December 17th. On this day members of the Order are reminded that ours is a ministry of faith, love and sacrificial giving. All are invited to become part of this important ministry. We ask you to join us. Bishop BASIL will be inducting new members on this day. Members are asked to wear their crosses to church and help host at coffee hour. For more information call Jacque Kouri 683-8249 – Nancy Cohlmia 634-3999 or Brenda Farha 684-0056



THEOPHANY HOME BLESSINGS

If you would like Fr. Paul or Fr. Joshua to come bless your home during the Theophany season, please email Gina at gina@stgeorgecathedral.net or call her at the Cathedral Office 636-4676

by Thursday, December 28th

Sage Counsel for our Times

Intelligence, patriotism, Christianity, and a firm reliance on Him who has never yet forsaken this favored land are still competent to adjust in the best way all our present difficulty.

— From Abraham Lincoln's Inaugural Address

Women's Retreat 2017
2017 Women's Retreat
 by Rebekah Hubbard



Self esteem, or lack thereof, is something that many women struggle with, myself included. It starts somewhere around middle school and follows us most of our lives. On November 10th and 11th 25 women from all over the Diocese gathered to fellowship and to hear a christian prescriptive on self esteem or, more accurately, our personal value.

We stayed in the Cottage House in Council Grove, KS, ate at the historic Hays house, shopped on Main Street and shared with each other everywhere. I look forward to that every year, but for me that was not where I was faced with thought provoking truths that I either have never thought about or somehow missed the magnitude of before.

During this 7th annual Midwest Orthodox Women's Retreat Fr. David Fontes discussed topics from his Book In the Eyes of Your Creator. How we are made in the image and likeness of God, and if God is good, then our true selves are good, they are just covered with the "mud of sin" so that only our false selves can be seen.

Fr. David showed us that God alone is the source of our personal value. Pretty elementary right? Apparently not for me, after thirty years of feeling not good enough and worthless, it turns out that its not the fault of society, my background or even my own self loathing, its me not trusting God. Simple as that, life changed, things are wonderful now...nope, not even close. Instead, I underwent a reorientation and was given the tools to take steps toward actively trusting God and not just giving Him lip service.

Our calling is to become who we truly are the image and likeness of God in Christ Jesus. This means going to confession, our 2nd baptism, so that we can be continually washed clean of all the sin that covers our true selves; it means praying in order to develop a relationship with our Creator that, in turn, leads us to be more like Him; it means that our personal value is so much more than we can ever imagine when that value is seen through the eyes of our Creator.

2018 PLEDGE STATUS

So far only 88 pledge cards for 2018 have been turned in and they total less than half of our budget needs. If you are among the majority that have not responded, please turn in your new pledge by mail or bring by the office or leave at the bengari on Sunday (where blank cards are available if you have misplaced yours).

2018 PLEDGE PAYMENTS

If you would like the convenience of not writing checks, you may have your pledge payments automatically withdrawn from your account on the 15th of each month. Contact Steve Buxton in the office for more details.

YEAR END GIVING OPPORTUNITY

As you know, St. George Cathedral is preparing to celebrate its 100th Anniversary in 2018. As we enter into the next century of our history, this is an occasion for a major updating of our facilities and provision for our future. To this end, we will be undertaking a capital campaign during our centennial year. We will be asking our members to make a three year pledge to fund this project. Steve Cohlmiia is heading the effort.



Some of the individual projects we will be funding are:

- New kitchen equipment
- Exterior facility maintenance and repair
- Remodeling of the Fellowship Hall
- Replacement of HVAC units
- Painting and refreshing of the entire facility
- The next phase of iconography

Making a gift in 2017 would undoubtedly make financial sense for some parishioners. If you would like to donate toward our facility update this year, please speak to Steve Cohlmiia or Fr. Paul.

Continuing Catechesis Series

The Sacraments and You

Exploring the Impact of the Sacraments on Your Life

Initial Topics

December 6: Unction Fr. Joshua Burnett

December 13: Marriage Fr. Paul O'Callaghan

Presentations will take place on Wednesday evenings at 7:15 following Vespers.

The Cathedral Bell ... continued

When the congregation moved into its second location on Walnut Street in 1949, the bell went too. Every Sunday morning Bahij (B.F.) Farha, the parish treasurer, would pull the 40-foot-long bell rope to announce the start of services. After Bahij's health began to fail in the early 1980s, Howard Jett assumed the duties of bellringer.

The Cathedral Bells: A Legacy Renewed

Plans for the new church to be constructed on East 13th Street included not one, but two bell towers. A beautiful set of three bronze bells were cast in the Netherlands, each inscribed with a line from one of the most ancient Orthodox prayers: "The Father is my hope, the Son is my refuge, the Holy Spirit is my protection."

On November 6, 1990, the new bells were blessed by Fr. Basil Essey and installed in the south bell tower. In 1992, nearly 60 years after St. George's bell first rang out to welcome a bishop, these new bells joyously announced the elevation of Fr. Basil to the rank of bishop, with St. George Church now designated as a cathedral.

During the move to 13th Street, St. George's original bell had been carefully removed from its belfry by Ted Farha and installed in the cathedral's north tower. Howard Jett and Eddie Jabara eventually built a special wooden frame to suspend the bell in its new loft. A new synthetic rope was wrapped around the bell wheel and the original rope given to the Malone family.

Every year at Pascha the old bell is the first to ring out at midnight. Jamil Malone, great-grandson of B.F. Farha, faithfully carries on the family's bellringing tradition. Throughout the many changes of the past 85 years, Sim'aan Ayesh's farm bell has remained the one ecclesiastical furnishing still in use at St. George—as constant and unchanging as our Orthodox faith.

Special thanks to Bishop Basil, Howard Jett, Bill Ayesh, Brenda Farha, Jean Cohlmiya, and Jim Banks for their contributions to the research for this article. Any errors are the sole responsibility of the author.



Each year it gets worse than the year before -- if that's possible. The day after (or in some cases the day of) Americans join together with family and friends take note for their blessings, they join together at retail outlets across the nation with complete strangers in a melee over cheaper stuff that would make Euro soccer fans blush. Thanksgiving evening and Black Friday morning typified the growing trend in which folks camped out hours before doors opened only to find, in many cases, a black eye, handcuffs and even gunfire. Several retail locations were closed today after violence forced local police to curb any further incidents. Black Friday has well earned its name as human concupiscence is on display for the world to see. Is this a cultural reality that cannot be undone? God help us.

A series of WalMart TV ads that played over the Thanksgiving weekend added insult to injury. These commercials featured various adults and children opening Christmas gifts and then ecstatically hugging the boxes once they recognized the contents. The almost erotic passion expressed for material things had to be sickening to anyone with a Christian conscience. After all the talk about consumerism and Christmas, is this what we have come to? The celebration of the birth of the One who warned about the dangers of avarice, covetousness, and possessions has now become a celebration of those very vices – the all-consuming lust for material things.

— Excerpted from Conservative Alerts with commentary by Fr. Paul

FOR OUR ARABIC SPEAKING PARISHIONERS



The Divine Liturgy Of Our Father Among The Saints
John Chrysostom

خدمة القُدَّاس الإلهي لأبينا الجليل في القُدَّيسين يوحنا
الذهبي الفم

Copies of the Bilingual Divine Liturgy booklet can be found on the bengarri, together with bilingual printouts of the liturgical changes for the day.

Let's Talk About The **Hard Stuff** • The Relationship Project



On November 10th and 11th, teens and their parents were invited to a retreat at our Cathedral. "The Relationship Project" was created by Faithtree, which is an organization that provides educational programs from a traditional Orthodox context to equip families to live what they believe. Four presenters, Fr. Timothy Baclig, Michelle Moujaes, Dr. Philip Mamalakis and Anna Kalis, came to St. George to present this program to not only our parish family, but parents and teens from St. Mary (Wichita) and St. Elijah (Oklahoma City). Anna Kalis spent most of the time with our teens and spoke to them about their identity and how they should ground their identity in Christ. Dr. Philip Mamalakis and Michelle Moujaes spent most of their time with the parents and spoke to them about intentional parenting and their teens' identities. We are so grateful that we were able to bring this program to our parish and hope that everyone who attended benefited from it.

Jaleen and I really enjoyed the day! The speakers were excellent, especially Dr. Mamalakis. His insights into the process of raising our children to be lifelong seekers of God and to identify themselves first and foremost as Christians were eye opening. Both of us wish we could have continued the program to hear about all of the material that the Project is putting together. We're very excited to know that there is an Orthodox Christian organization that is actively working on material to help Youth Leaders, parents and our children navigate today's world while holding tightly to our identities as Christians. — Brandon Claassen

The Relationship Project was great. It brought me and my friends together and helped us identify what our lives are really for. We were brought closer to Christ and each other through the project. Speaking about self worth was the most interesting to me. It showed us how we don't decide our own self worth, but that God ultimately does. — Drue Ashton

Let's Go Caroling

TEEN SOYO CAROLING & LOCK-IN

❄️ Friday, Dec. 15 - Saturday, Dec. 16 ❄️

Please meet at the Cathedral by 5:00p on Friday.
The lock-in concludes with the Christmas Food Baskets Project on Saturday morning.

We will be sleeping in the Youth Center - Please bring sleeping bags, pillows & toiletries.

St. Nicholas Celebration

Wednesday, December 6
6:30-8:00p

Please bring new/gently used coats, hats, mittens & scarves to be donated to the Treehouse

6:30	Lenten Pasta Dinner
7:00	Crafts & Activities
7:30	Story and Visit from St. Nicholas

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

BY TRACI SPENCER

w'e'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

The Lord's Diner On Sunday, November 19th, St George volunteers helped serve hot meals to the homeless in our community. Please mark your calendars for the third Sunday of every month to help serve at The Lord's Diner. Please let Pat Milburn know if you can help with this wonderful ministry at 265-1380.

Cook Up A Storm / Feeding the Homeless On November 18th, St. George volunteers helped make frozen casseroles and cookies to serve the homeless on Tuesday, November 28th through the Warm Souls Center.

Next Meeting
Tuesday, December 12th
12:00 NOON in the basement Youth Room
We would love to have you join us!!



What's Coming Up ?

Food for Friends Christmas Food Baskets

This is our 34th year of giving Christmas Food Baskets to the needy. We will once again be adopting 100 Wichita families who are in need. Please donate to this project. Money collected will be used to buy over 10,000 pounds of food given to the families. Donations, made payable to "St. George" can be sent to the Cathedral office. Volunteers will pack and deliver groceries beginning at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, December 16th. We need everyone's help! Plan to bring the entire family to participate in this fun and worthwhile event.

Gifts for the Children Along with groceries given to the 100 families, we will also be delivering gifts for the children. If you would like to adopt a family, by purchasing one gift per child in that family, sign up during coffee hour beginning Sunday, November 26th following Liturgy. Gifts will need to be brought to the church by Sunday, December 10th. Contact Debbi Elkouri at 634-2525 or Cindy Abdallah at 648-9576 for more information.

Agencies for 2018 Be thinking of agencies for 2018 that we can serve! Please let Traci Spencer or any other Community Support member know of agencies that we can serve in the 2018 year. We will be making final decisions at the December 12th meeting.

The Cathedral Messenger

St. George Orthodox Christian Cathedral
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Wichita, KS 67206-1223
www.stgeorgecathedral.net

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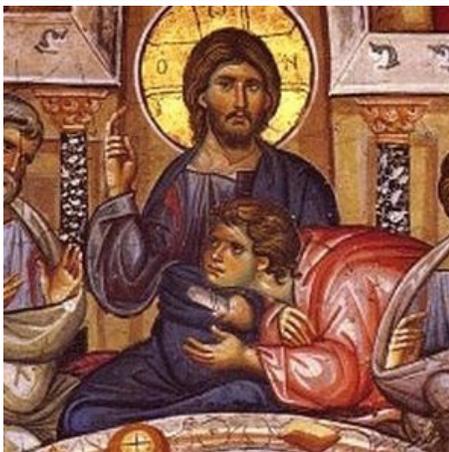
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Wichita, KS

PERMIT NO. 734

The Eighth Annual Eighth Day Symposium

STRANGERS & SOCIETY : Cultivating Friendship in a Fractured Age



Speakers include

Dr. Peter Kanelos - President of St. John's College

Ken Meyers - of Mars Hill Audio

Joseph Pearce and others will also be presenting.

Save the date now!

WHEN January 25-27, 2018

WHERE St George Orthodox Christian Cathedral

REGISTER www.eighthdayinstitute.org



CHRIST THE SAVIOR CHRISTMAS CONCERT

All are welcome on Friday, December 15th at 6:30p
to hear the sweet and lovely voices of the school children singing
Christmas carols as well as their talents on their instruments.

