

:: Thanksgiving ::
By Abbot Tryphon, from his blog “The Morning Offering”

Thanksgiving has officially been an annual tradition since 1863, when during the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed a national day of thanksgiving to be celebrated on Thursday, November 26.

The word Thanksgiving has its roots in the Greek word, εὐχαριστία (*eucharistia*), where the Church gets the word *Eucharist*. For Orthodox Christians the ultimate giving of thanks to God comes when we offer the Eucharistic sacrifice, entering into the Heavenly Banquet, participating in the eternal Mystical Supper that is ongoing in the heavenly realm.

During the celebration of the Divine Liturgy we offer a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to the Lord for His mercy and loving kindness. It has become common practice in some areas for parishes and monasteries to celebrate the Divine Liturgy on the morning of Thanksgiving, having become a local American Orthodox custom to remember, with thanks, all that the Lord has given to His people.

During these difficult times, many among us will be eating Thanksgiving dinner in church halls, senior centers or Union Gospel Missions. Not since the 1940's have American families experienced such financial loss, and many do not feel particularly thankful. However, this gift of life was not bestowed upon us for financial security, or even good health. This life has been given to us as a time of purification, a period of preparation for the eternal life that God has promised us as our inheritance. Even when we struggle in hard times, or with health issues, we can see that all is allowed for our salvation.

The Heavenly Banquet, that eternal celebration taking place before the Throne of God is ours, here and now, whenever we participate in the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. This Eucharistic celebration (Thanksgiving) wherein Christ offers His Body and Blood for our spiritual and physical healing, is that moment in time when we are able to experience, and participate in, the Banquet that awaits us. The hope of eternal life is worthy of our struggle in this life, as we prepare for our life worshiping before the Holy Trinity. We have much to be thankful for.

With love in Christ,
Abbot Tryphon

Any announcements for the Sunday bulletin? Please submit by Friday each week to Fr. Andrew. If you do not receive the bulletin by email and would like to, let Father know.



**St. George Orthodox Church
of Spring Valley**

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Sunday, November 29, 2015

Third Sunday of Advent

Matins: 9:00 AM :: Divine Liturgy: 10:00 AM

Epistle Reader: George Forsa

Holy Bread/Coffee Hour: George and Lynette Forsa

Next Week's Holy Bread/Coffee Hour: Nick and Anysia Medawar

Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 1): While the stone was sealed by the Jews, and the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure body, Thou didst arise on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world. For which cause the heavenly powers cried aloud unto Thee, O giver of life: Glory to Thy Resurrection, O Christ; glory to Thy kingdom; glory to Thy providence, O Thou Who alone art the lover of mankind!

Troparion of St. George the Great Martyr (Tone 4): Since thou art a liberator and deliverer of captives, a help and succour of the poor and needy, a healing physician of the sick, a contender and fighter for kings, O great among martyrs, the victory-clad George: Intercede with Christ God for the salvation of our souls.

Kontakion of Preparation for Christ's Nativity (Tone 3): Today the Virgin cometh to the cave where she will give birth in an ineffable manner to the Word Who is before all the ages. Rejoice, therefore, O universe, when thou hearest it heralded: Glorify Him, with the angels and the shepherds, Who chose to be seen as a new-born babe, the God Who is before all the ages.

St. George is a parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese
The Most Reverend Metropolitan JOSEPH
The Right Reverend Bishop ANTHONY, Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest
www.antiochian.org

Epistle and Gospel Readings

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us. Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous.

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians (5:8-19)

Brethren, walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is a shame even to speak of the things that they do in secret; but when anything is exposed by the light it becomes visible, for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it is said, "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light." Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore, do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart.

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke (18:18-27)

At that time, a man came testing Jesus and asking, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery. Do not kill. Do not steal. Do not bear false witness. Honor your father and mother.'" And the man said, "All these I have observed from my youth." And when Jesus heard it, he said to him, "One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." But when the man heard this he became sad, for he was very rich. Jesus, seeing him sad, said, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." Those who heard it said, "Then who can be saved?" Jesus said, "What is impossible with men is possible with God."

O LORD, HOW LOVELY IT IS TO BE THY GUEST: BREEZE FULL OF SCENTS; MOUNTAINS REACHING TO THE SKIES; WATERS LIKE BOUNDLESS MIRRORS, REFLECTING THE SUN'S GOLDEN RAYS AND THE SCUDDING CLOUDS. ALL NATURE MURMURS MYSTERIOUSLY, BREATHING THE DEPTH OF TENDERNESS. BIRDS AND BEASTS OF THE FOREST BEAR THE IMPRINT OF THY LOVE. BLESSED ART THOU, MOTHER EARTH, IN THY FLEETING LOVELINESS, WHICH WAKENS OUR YEARNING FOR HAPPINESS THAT WILL LAST FOREVER, IN THE LAND WHERE, AMID BEAUTY THAT GROWS NOT OLD, THE CRY RINGS OUT: ALLELUIA!

~ *Kontakion 2 from the Akathist of Thanksgiving*

Announcements and Upcoming Events

For a full calendar of events and services at St. George, see our website, www.stgeorgeorthodox.org.

Upcoming Events and Services:

- **Today:** Sunday school, downstairs immediately after Holy Communion
- **Wednesday, Dec. 2:** Evening Prayers and anointing with Holy Water from the tomb of St. Nicholas, 6pm.
- **Saturday, Dec. 5:** No vespers. All are welcome to attend "The Most Wonderful Time of the Year," a Christmas concert at the IVCC Cultural Center, 7:30pm. (Khouria Patty will be singing in the choir!)
- **Next Sunday, Dec. 6: Feast of St. Nicholas.** Matins, 9am and Divine Liturgy, 10am. Epistle Reader: David Anderson. Holy Bread/Coffee Hour: Nick and Anysia Medawar

Today is the third Sunday of Advent in the Orthodox Church. We observe the 40 days before Christmas as a special time of fasting, extra prayer and generosity. Please make time each day for the Lord, and join us for any special weekday prayer services. **All are especially encouraged to make a confession at this time: Fr. Andrew will be available each Sunday after Liturgy, on most Wednesday and Saturday nights, or by appointment.** Feel free to talk to Father Andrew if you have any specific questions about fasting or the traditional disciplines of the season.

Join Fr. Andrew and other area clergy for **Prayers for the Valley: An Ecumenical Service of Prayer and Healing.** This is our response to the epidemic in our area of drug and alcohol abuse, depression, and suicide. We believe people of faith have something significant to offer, and that we should never discount the power of prayer. The service will take place **Wednesday, Dec. 9 at 6:30 PM, at the IVCC Cultural Center.**

Update on our Building project: This past week, a letter and an email went out to all members of St. George Church. If you did not receive it, please let Fr. Andrew know. We believe it is now time to hear from all of you! The letter contains a short survey, and it is very important that you respond to this, so we know how much support we can expect from all. Look for the survey this week, and as always, if you have any questions or concerns, feel free to talk with Father Andrew or with our building exploratory committee, Mark Kerasotes, Mike Kasap, and Matt Rowan.

October 2015 Income and Expenses:

Operating Income: \$2898.00
Operating Expenses: \$5393.68
Ending Balance: \$12296.83

If you have any questions about our church's finances, please talk to our treasurer, Anysia Medawar.