

:: A Call to Reject Hateful Speech and Actions ::
His Eminence, Metropolitan JOSEPH

As Orthodox Christians, we take to heart the commandments of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ, especially the commandment that He has told us is the greatest, that is *“You shall love your neighbor as yourself”* (Matthew 22:39).

We have watched with dismay as several public figures have played on the fear which they assume has swept over this country. Specifically, a recent news release from the Trump campaign has called for “a total and complete shutdown of all Muslims entering the United States.” We reject in the strongest possible terms both this specific call, and all speech and actions which would encourage hate and persecution against any group of people. We call on all leaders, in the political arena and in the faith community, to also reject this call, and to remember that such an action would bring dishonor to all of the brave men and women of all backgrounds who have given their lives to uphold the core values of freedom and dignity which we enjoy.

We have seen an alarming rise in recent days in the number of hateful and violent actions which have been perpetrated against Muslims, or those who are presumed to be Muslims. There is no doubt that such hateful rhetoric encourages those who may be inclined to violence to act out this violence. We condemn in the strongest possible terms any act of violence against any human being, and we are reminded that all human beings bear the image of God, and are to be respected as children of God. We also unconditionally condemn all acts of terror, such as the recent one in San Bernardino, California which brought pain to so many people.

The Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America proclaims that all people must be treated with the respect and the dignity that is due to human beings. To single out people of an entire religion because of the senseless and horrific actions of terrorists actually assists the terrorists by reinforcing the divisions and fear which they wish to spread. We urge the civil authorities of the United States to use every effort to root out any threat of terror by legal and noble means.

As we journey through this Advent Season and prepare ourselves for the Lord to be born in a lowly cave in order to save us, we send up our prayers for all of the people who are suffering daily around the world, especially in the Middle East. We stand in solidarity with our friends and neighbors, and we will be of assistance to them in any way that we can. We ask our gracious and loving Lord to bring an abiding and lasting peace to the world, a peace that can only come from Him.

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, December 13, 2015

Forefathers of our Lord Jesus Christ

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

Epistle Reader: Matthew McNatt

Holy Bread/Coffee Hour: Bob Abraham and family

Next Week's Holy Bread/Coffee Hour: Sadie Malooley and family

Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 3): Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad, for the Lord hath done a mighty act with His own arm. He hath trampled down death by death, and become the first-born from the dead. He hath delivered us from the depths of Hades, granting the world the great mercy.

Troparion for the Holy Forefathers (Tone 2): Thou hast justified by faith the ancient Forefathers, and through them Thou hast gone before and betrothed unto Thyself the Church of the Gentiles. Let the saints, therefore, take pride in glory; for from their seed sprouted forth a noble fruit, and she it was who gave birth to Thee without seed. Wherefore, by their pleadings, O Christ God, save our souls.

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

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our Fathers.

For Thou art just in all that Thou hast done for us.

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Colossians (3:4-11)

Brethren, when Christ, who is our life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these, the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience. In these you once walked, when you lived in them. But now put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and foul talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its Creator. Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all.

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke (14:16-24)

The Lord spoke this parable: "A man once gave a great banquet, and invited many; and at the time for the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, 'Come; for all is now ready.' But, one by one, they all began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' So the servant came and reported this to his master. Then the householder in anger said to his servant, 'Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and maimed and blind and lame.' And the servant said, 'Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.' And the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the highways and hedges, and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet.' For many are called, but few are chosen."

AND I, A SINNER, HAVE BEEN TRYING TO LOVE GOD FOR MORE THAN FORTY YEARS, AND CANNOT SAY THAT I PERFECTLY LOVE HIM. IF WE LOVE SOMEONE WE ALWAYS REMEMBER HIM AND TRY TO PLEASE HIM; DAY AND NIGHT OUR HEART IS OCCUPIED WITH THAT OBJECT.

IS THAT HOW YOU, GENTLEMEN, LOVE GOD? DO YOU OFTEN TURN TO HIM, DO YOU ALWAYS REMEMBER HIM, DO YOU ALWAYS PRAY TO HIM AND FULFILL HIS HOLY COMMANDMENTS? FOR OUR GOOD, FOR OUR HAPPINESS AT LEAST LET US MAKE A VOW THAT FROM THIS DAY, FROM THIS HOUR, FROM THIS MINUTE WE SHALL STRIVE TO LOVE GOD ABOVE ALL ELSE AND TO FULFILL HIS HOLY WILL.

+ ST. HERMAN OF ALASKA

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.
- **Saturday, Dec. 19:** Vespers, 6:00 pm
- **Next Sunday, Dec. 20: 'Genealogy Sunday.'** Matins, 9am and Divine Liturgy, 10am. Epistle Reader: Matthew Rowan. Holy Bread/Coffee Hour: Sadie Malooley.
- **Also next Sunday:** December Parish Council meeting, upstairs during coffee hour.

Congratulations to our newly baptized children and their families! McKai Nicholas Malooley and Ryker James Thompson were baptized yesterday here at St. George Church. May God grant them many years!

Today is the Fifth 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.

Thank you to all who filled out and returned your building surveys! If you did not receive one, 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. 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. **Above all, PRAY for St. George Church, that the loving will of our good and holy God would be done!**

November Financials

Income: \$ 7,332.00

Expenses: \$ 8,755.31

Bank Balance: \$10,873.52 as of Nov. 30, 2015

Any questions? Please see our treasurer, Anysia Medavar for more information. Remember, donations to St. George Church are tax-deductible. Please consider an additional end-of-year gift so that our services and ministries may continue in the years to come!