

ST. GEORGE *Chronicle*

Rev. Christopher Morris
Pastor

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF ST GEORGE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH
KEARNEY, NEBRASKA

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SAVE THE DATES

DIAPER SHOWER - Feb. 14
Torri (Maloley) McCracken

BAPTISM - Feb. 20
Albert Dimitrie Neamu

PASCHA - May 1

Our Beloved Icons *by Subdeacon John Wolf*

This month's icon is the **Theophany of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.**

The event depicted in the icon is that described in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke; here is Matthew's version:

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. And John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?" But Jesus answered and said to him, "Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he allowed Him. When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matthew 3:13-17)

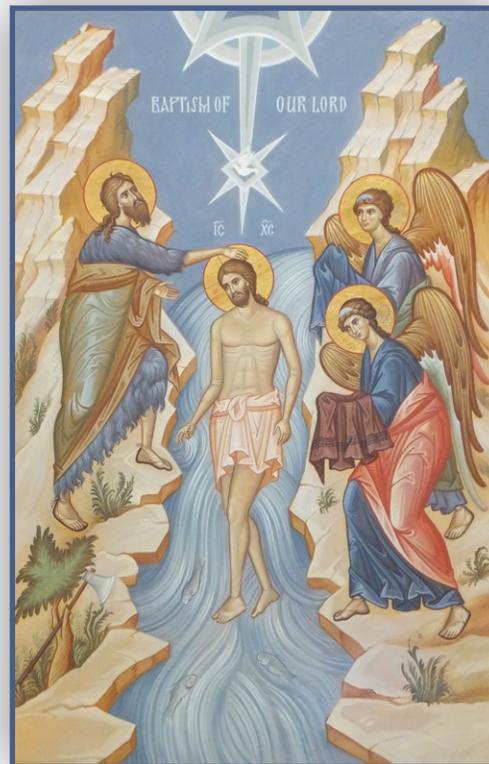
This, then, is the **Theophany**, which literally means a "revelation of God" in Greek (Θεοφάνεια).

The paradox that Jesus Christ might be revealed as God through an act of submittal to a mere man, John, is shown well in the Icon.

Though John is baptizing Christ, it is the former who is shown bent over in reverence to the latter. In other icons, John is shown with his face turned toward heaven and beholding the miracle of the Theophany; either way, despite being the baptizer, he is not central to the scene. Near to John is a tree with an axe laid at the root, recalling John's own preaching

to those who came to him: "And now

also the ax is laid to the root of the trees: therefore every tree which brings not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." (Matthew 3:10)



Sponsorship of the Baptism of Our Lord icon at St. George Kearney, was offered in Memory of John & Miriam Morris by the John Morris family

(continued on page 2)

(continued from page 1)

Present in the icon, this shows that whilst the Baptizer must now “**decrease so Christ may increase**”, John’s teachings and role are not done away with now that the Holy Trinity has been revealed. On the opposite bank to John the Baptist, angels wait invisibly to receive the newly baptized Christ and clothe Him. And so, on the left is the forerunner of Christ,



The icon of the Theophany, as well as depicting the Holy Trinity, also answers the question of John the Baptist: I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me? The answer is in what Jesus does with His hands. Whilst in Western art Jesus is shown as submitting to John’s authority, in Orthodox icons Christ’s hands are not shown in prayer, but in a sign of blessing. Rather than the waters of Jordan cleansing Christ, **it is Christ Who cleans the waters.**



John, with his sermon of repentance represented by the tree and axe; on the right, the angels wait with reverence to accept the newly revealed Son of God. In the middle – the moment of revelation itself.

This is the depth and profundity of the Baptism of Christ; the feast of lights which revealed the Holy Trinity, and cleansed the waters of baptism so that we, like the fishes shown in the icon, may swim in pure waters.

Jesus Christ, despite being the one submerged in the Jordan, is shown as though standing up and staring straight at us. His body is depicted as strong and beautiful, as it is understood classically, and in older icons He is naked. Christ appears almost as wide as the river Jordan itself; indeed: it is as though it is Jesus Christ, rather than the river, which cuts a swathe through the rocky wilderness on either side.



*Of old, the river Jordan,
Turned back before Elisha’s
mantle at Elijah’s ascension.
The waters were parted in
two, And the waterway
became a dry path. This is
truly a symbol of baptism, By
which we pass through this
mortal life. Christ has
appeared in the Jordan to
sanctify the waters!*

 **A note from Fr. Christopher . . .**

Dear Friends of Saint George,

At the beginning of this month, we celebrate the feast of the Presentation of the Lord. It is here that we meet one of my favorite people in the Bible—Saint Symeon the God-receiver.

Saint Symeon was a righteous elder who waited for the Lord’s consolation for a very long time. As a young man, an angel had promised him that he would not depart this life until he had held in his arms the Messiah born of a virgin.

One day, after very many years of waiting, Saint Symeon was inspired to go to the Temple. There, he saw an elderly man (Joseph the Betrothed) and a young woman (the Theotokos) carrying an infant (the Christ Child). By the Holy Spirit, the elder perceived that this Child was, indeed, the long-awaited Messiah.

After receiving Christ into his arms and prophesying about Him, Saint Symeon besought God to let him depart this life in peace. His mission was fulfilled. As we “wait upon the Lord” during this sojourn of our earthly life, let us take Saint Symeon as our example.

Let us offer our lives in holy service, as did the righteous elder. Let us come very often to the Lord’s temple—our holy church—in order to meet Him and receive His divine consolation. Let us live with faith and longing for the Lord all the years of our earthly life. And, when our time comes, let us depart this life in peace, having found and fulfilled our very purpose in Christ Jesus. By the mercy and grace of God, and by Saint Symeon’s intercessions!

Through your prayers,
Fr. Christopher



THE LENTEN TRIODION



The weeks of preparation, and especially the Sunday gospel readings, serve to **exercise the mind**, whereas the fasting of Great Lent focuses on **the body**, and Holy Week's services exercise **the spirit**. Each has its own distinct theme which is expressed in the Gospel readings appointed for the Divine Liturgies on these days:

1. Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee (Luke 18:9-14), This Sunday emphasizes humility as a key attitude for repentance. The Greek word for repentance is metanoia, which means a change of mind.

2. Sunday of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32), This Sunday teaches us about our need to return from exile.

3. Sunday of the Last Judgment (also called Meatfare Sunday; Matt 25:31-46) This Sunday emphasizes the Last Judgment.

4. Sunday of Forgiveness (also called Cheesefare Sunday; the expulsion of Adam from Eden is also a theme of this day); Matt 6:14-21. This Sunday emphasizes forgiveness.



The Church eases us into the Lenten fasting discipline during this period. The week following the Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee is fast-free. The week following the Prodigal Son is a normal week -- we fast as usual on Wednesday and Friday. In the week following Meatfare Sunday, no meat is eaten; eggs, fish, and dairy are permitted on any day.

Forgiveness Sunday brings the period of preparation to an end. The next day, **Clean Monday, begins Great Lent**. The Vespers service served on the evening of Forgiveness Sunday includes the Rite of Mutual Forgiveness and is the first service of Great Lent.

Great Lent is the period that the Church has in her wisdom set aside for us to intensify our own spiritual growth through fasting, prayer and worship. **If you follow the Church guidelines on fasting, make time to attend the services and intensify your own prayer life, you will be rewarded with a greater closeness to God.** Each Sunday of Great Lent has it's own special theme:

- **1st Sunday** is the Feast of the Triumph of Orthodoxy
- **2nd Sunday** is the commemoration of St. Gregory Palamas
- **3rd Sunday** is the Veneration of the Holy Cross
- **4th Sunday** is dedicated to St. John Climacus
- **5th Sunday** recalls the memory of St. Mary of Egypt

HOLY WEEK

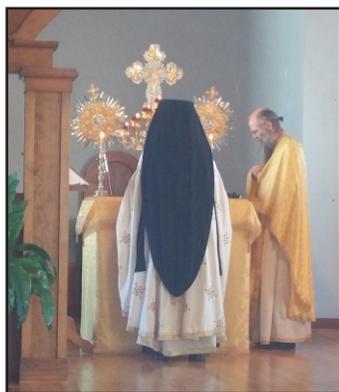


Great Lent is followed by Holy Week, the week beginning with Palm Sunday and preceding Pascha. More info for Holy Week will be offered in the March issue of the Chronicle.

Archbishop Michael's Visit - A Learning Experience for Our Family

by Amanda Denny

Who is an archbishop? How is an archbishop different from a bishop? How is he addressed? What's the etiquette in the Orthodox church? How do I ask for a blessing? Do I kiss his hand? What? Why? How do I teach my children about the importance of his visit? All of these questions seemed to cloud over my head as I heard about the exciting upcoming visit from this very special and busy man. Hello, my name is Amanda and these types of questions are a normal part of my life with our wonderful Orthodox faith. What I didn't expect is the personal lesson I would learn from Archbishop Michael's visit.



I'm new to Orthodoxy. I spend much of my time watching how our timeless traditions are actually carried out in real life, because reading about them is much different than doing them. Am I doing this right? I'll just watch the people in front of me. Oh, wait, that person did it slightly different than the next person! Great. I guess I'll keep watching and trying. Oh, and I can always call my godmother. Phew.

My three young girls and I get to experience learning these beautiful traditions together. We practiced how to ask for a blessing at home before His Eminence came. We looked at his picture online so my two-year-old wouldn't get scared of him. We were ready and excited.

It's not every day that you get to meet an archbishop of our church, and a New Yorker all in one.

His Eminence joined us for the planned services that week. We attended the evening Vespers and Lenten dessert social.



The girls kept asking me during Vespers, "Where is he?" I would point him out, and they would smile. He spoke to us that night about Theophany and our iconography project. I had my best listening ears on because I knew that what we were hearing was as if it was from Christ Himself (our bishops are our

teachers and have an unbroken apostolic succession since the beginning of the Church . . . how wonderful!). After the service the girls loved kissing the cross and meeting Archbishop Michael. We all then went downstairs for the dessert social. His Eminence was introduced by Fr. Christopher and we were able to know a little more about what he does.

Archbishop Michael then shared with us a presentation about the Holy Trinity. It

(continued on page 9)

WE GET LETTERS ...



Please accept this donation in memory of our beloved grandfather, Father Nicola Yanney, brother and sister-in-law, James and Do Yanney, and our beloved son, Steven Michael David. We wish you and your parish a healthy and peaceful New Year with our dear Lord's blessings.

Sincerely,
Don and Phyllis David

To my beloved St. George parish, **What a joy** to have Fr. Benedict visit us during the week of the Nativity Feast! I was blessed to attend several of the services being offered and the chanting by Fr. Benedict and Sarah, moved me to joyful tears. I have never experienced a more beautiful and awe-inspiring Liturgy until I witnessed such reverence and piety in the altar, as he and Fr. Christopher served together, as true brothers in Christ.

Glory to God for our timeless Orthodox faith and for those gifted to serve St. George with such devoted Christian love.

Yours in Christ,
Joanie Klein



Our Sympathy
TO THE FAMILIES OF:

Paul Steinbrink, Rocky and Dione Steinbrink, in the loss of their brother-in-law and uncle, **Vernon Yanney**, who passed away on January 29, 2016.



**MAY HIS
MEMORY
BE
ETERNAL**



Birthdays

February 5
Paul Steinbrink

February 10
Bessie Shada

February 12
Darlene Liakos

February 22
Demetrios Theoharis

February 23
Kh. Anastasia Morris

February 25
Samaria Suleiman-Fulton

February 26
Tony Shada

February 26
Pete Theoharis

**HAPPY
ANNIVERSARY**

February 19
Nimir & Margo Maloley

February 27
John & Mary Maloley

In Memory of

Donation to **St. George Church**, in memory of Shirley Yanney from Dr. Donald and Lorraine Nemer

Donation to **St. George Church**, in memory of our beloved grandfather, Father Nicola Yanney, brother and sister-in-law, James and Do Yanney, and our beloved son, Steven Michael David from Don and Phyllis David

Donations
Gratefully Received

Donation to the **Chronicle** from Greg and Josie Awtry

Donation to **St. George Church** from William and Kathy Suleiman

Donation to the **Chronicle** from Anonymous donor

In Honor of

Donation to **St. George Church**, Merry Christmas, in honor of my Godfather Tony Shada, from Katie Ramsey

Donation to **St. George Church**, in honor of Vernon, Leena, Wayne, and Brenda Yanney from Drs. Evette and Robert Hackman

May God bless you all for your generosity!





Preparation for Phase II of the Icon project has begun. Cracked plaster has been removed from the side walls and altar and a week's worth of scraping was necessary before the sheet rock crew could begin their work, the week of January 25th. This work was necessary before Dmitry could begin the next phase of installation. Please continue to keep this project in your daily prayers and for the good health of our volunteers that have stepped up to do this work for St. George.

Our annual St. George parish Church Meeting will be on Sunday, February 7th after coffee hour. Please plan now to attend. We have some exciting announcements and news to share with you all.



The **Women's Bible Study** group will meet Monday, Feb. 1st, 15th, and the 29th. Our meeting time lasts for approx. 1 hour, from 4:00 - 5:00 pm. Thank you Amanda Denny, for opening your home to us, for this fun hour of sharing. **Come join us!** We would welcome seeing you.



In January we met at the Hadley home. **Father Christopher blessed their new home** and we enjoyed snacks and fellowship. The children enjoyed finding all of the neat hiding places and play areas in the new house. Many thanks to the Hadleys for hosting the parish for a wonderful evening. It is always fun to build relationships with our church family. Stay tuned for announcements about our February meeting. Please see Levi Hadley **if you are interested in hosting the 20/40 group** or have ideas for future meetings.



ST. GEORGE YOUTH GROUP

The St. George Youth Group meets every Wednesday. We typically meet for daily Vespers and then enjoy snacks and discussions. In January we met for board games, discussions, and fellowship time. Please see Sarah Fothergill if you have any questions or would like more information about the group.



Please visit us today!
thank you



We are back in full swing in all Sunday School classes. We continue to meet every Sunday (with the exception of the 1st Sunday of each month). This spring we will begin to work on our projects for the **Creative Arts Festival**. The theme this year is "As for me and my house we will serve the Lord." All students are welcome to submit projects. The projects are submitted to a committee in the DOWAMA diocese and will be judged and displayed at the **Parish Life Conference in Tulsa, OK in June**. Teachers will provide students with more information about the projects. Also, teachers would like to **remind parents and students that we are lining up in the parish hall and walking to the Sunday School rooms together...**this means students should line up, then get coats on, and wait for their teacher to escort them to class. Thank you!



ANNUAL SPRING LEBANESE BREAKFAST

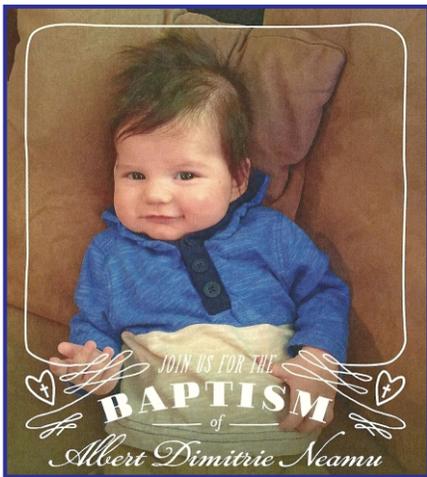
Saturday, March 5, 2016 at St. George Orthodox Church, parish hall. Tickets are available now, please see Tracey Shada. This is a fund raiser for St. George - be sure to thank your buyers for their generous support.

ST. GEORGE BULLETIN BOARD

You're Invited to the Baptism of:
Albert Dimitrie Neamu

Saturday, Feb. 20, 2016
at 11:00 am
St. George Orthodox Church
Reception to follow in parish hall

*In lieu of gifts please bring a new
pajama and/or new book*



Hello St. George family,

We are going to donate the new
books and new pj's to the:

Pajamaprogram.org

Pajama program is an organization
that provides new books and pj's to
kids in need, most of them are kids
waiting to be adopted.



Thank you!
The Neamu family

Let's Shower
Torri (Maloley) McCracken
With Our Love!

WHEN: Sun. Feb. 14, 2016
WHAT:  OR  Brand
Diapers and/or Card

* * * *

Bring to church. Cake and
Punch will be served during
coffee hour at St. George with
gift opening after coffee hour.
We hope you can join us!

* * * *



**meal
train**

The online "frozen meal" sign-up for the McCracken family is now open for anyone who would like to participate. This is a fun way to provide (frozen) home-made meals for Torri and her family, after their little one arrives. [Click here](#) to sign-up. **Be sure to click yellow "Review All Instructions" button before signing up.** If you prefer to sign-up at the church, there will be a paper sign-up sheet downstairs, on the entrance table. Thank you.

**God put me on earth to accomplish
a certain number of things.
Right now I'm so far behind, I
will never die.**




 *Congratulations!*
Grace Maloley
Grace was selected to take part
in **Sing Around Nebraska**. She will
have a concert Feb. 27th at
Lexington High School

**DON'T COMPARE YOURSELF TO OTHER CHRISTIANS.
COMPARE YOURSELF
TO CHRIST.
HE'S THE ONE YOU'RE FOLLOWING!**



ST. GEORGE SCRAPBOOK

Our Baptism Congratulations

To **Travis & Katie Maloley** and **Mike & Ronda Maloley** on the baptism of their daughter and grand-daughter, **Kollins Jean "Mary" Maloley** on January 30, 2016



"As many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ"
Alleluia

•MANY YEARS•

Our Congratulations to Stanley Hoff, husband of Jeannie (Shada) - our newest member to the holy Orthodox Church. Stanley received the **sacrament of Chrismation** on Sunday, January 31, 2016. In the sacrament of Chrismation we receive "the seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit", which is our personal participation in Pentecost--the coming of the Holy Spirit upon us.



Thank you Stanley and Jeannie for allowing us to share in your special day.
A very warm Welcome to St. George!



"TELL YOUR STORY"

- Archbishop Michael



a few of our happy WinBin Volunteers!



HOUSE Blessing

The Hadley's invited the St. George parish family to help celebrate their House Blessing on Sunday, January 17th. Prayers, Food, & Fun was had by all. Thank you Levi, Amy, Micah & Alexis for opening your home to us all!



Archbishop Michael's Visit - Jan. 2016



GOD BLESS OUR ST. GEORGE PARISH FAMILY

Resolve to Exercise Virtue

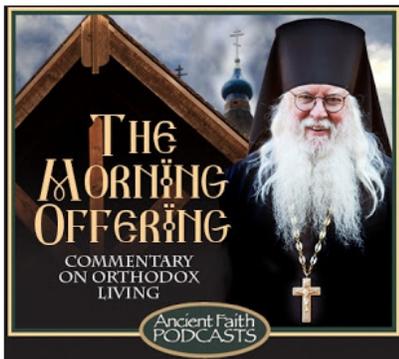
by Abbot Tryphon of Vashon Island

“When we make New Year’s resolutions, we pledge ourselves to positive change in the coming months. We decide we’re going to lose weight, and we set a loss of a certain amount as our goal for the coming year. We promise ourselves we’ll be more frugal in our spending and set aside more of our income for savings. Our children will be more central in our weekly allotment of time, with family time coming before personal recreation. The yard work will not be put off in the coming months, and that major kitchen remodel will actually be put on the front burner.”

How’s that working for you?

“Perhaps a better plan would be to pledge ourselves to **exercise virtue** during the coming year. Doing this means disposing ourselves to do good habitually and firmly. We pledge ourselves not only to perform good acts, but also to give the best of ourselves to others. Virtuous people tend toward the good with all their sensory and spiritual powers and also pursue the good, choosing to do it through concrete actions.”

From his book, *“The Morning Offering. Daily Thoughts for Orthodox Christians”*



Thank You!

WIN BIN VOLUNTEERS



More volunteers are always needed. Please see the WinBin sign-up sheet in parish hall downstairs. Your offering of your time to help those in need is pleasing to God!



Never confuse the person, formed in the image of God, with the evil that is in him: because evil is but a chance misfortune, an illness, a devilish attack. **But the very essence of the person is the image of God,** and this remains in him despite every disfigurement.



[+ St. John of Kronstadt](#)

The Lenten Prayer of St. Ephrem the Syrian

O Lord and Master of my Life!
 Take from me the spirit of sloth, meddling, lust of power and idle talk.
 But give rather the spirit of chastity, humility, patience, and love to Thy servant.
 Yea, O Lord and King!
 Grant me to see my own sins and not to judge my brother;
 For blessed art Thou unto ages of ages. Amen

(continued from page 3)

was an honor to be able to learn more about the importance of our very **beloved and unchanging Triune God**. He opened the floor up to questions. At first, the questions were slow from us all. By the end, there were questions popping up more in number. My favorite part of questions was learning more, about how to share our faith with others. His Eminence taught us about **“sharing our story”** with people. He shared with us part of his personal story, about how he was in the hospital in a coma and someone very special visited him every day. *He shared his faith with us as he taught us how to share ours with people.* **He said to share the experiences we have in the church with people** who may ask me, “What’s new?” We can reply by sharing bits of our ourselves, in our faith with them. “What’s new? Well, I just got done helping scrape the walls at our church to get them ready for our new icons. Have you seen our new iconography project? It’s beautiful.” I personally haven’t helped scrape the walls (thank you to everyone who is serving in this way). I might say, “I just got done helping with VBS at our church. The girls and I had so much fun.”

The next morning was a delight as we all were able to experience His Eminence serving the Divine Liturgy. He also spoke with us in his homily about **everyday miracles** and how St. John Maximovitch would give the shoes right off of his feet to the homeless people on the street who were walking barefoot on the ice and snow. His



Eminence spoke about charity and how it’s important to **keep helping people because everyday miracles might be happening to someone when we help**. After Liturgy, I finally got up enough courage to ask for my first blessing from any bishop. I know people have been doing it for centuries, but I have not, and I was stressed out about if I was going to do it right. Archbishop Michael was so kind and patient with my learning. He gave both me and my youngest daughter a blessing. Allison loved getting to see and kiss the icon of the Theotokos and the Christ child around His Eminence’s neck. We thanked him and visited a little with him, and our church friends after Liturgy. We then said goodbye.

The questions that were once clouding around my head were all answered. That felt great, but the greatest personal lesson was that everyone has different ways of expressing their faith within the traditions of the Church and that our Orthodox bishops care deeply about us. Thanks be to God for His Church and our bishops.

Thank you for visiting us, Your Eminence, Archbishop Michael of New York and New Jersey!

PLAN NOW TO ATTEND THESE IMPORTANT FEAST AND CHURCH DATES FOR 2016

Ecclesiastical Calendar

Pascha and The Twelve Great Feasts of the Church

Great and Holy Pascha is known as the Feast of Feasts and Festival of Festivals. It is the Day of Resurrection, the feast of complete joy, hope, and renewal. Twelve other great feasts highlight important events in the life of Christ and His Mother, the Theotokos.



Twelve Great Feasts

The Nativity of the Theotokos	September 8
The Elevation of the Holy Cross	September 14
The Presentation of the Theotokos	November 21
The Nativity of Christ	December 25
The Epiphany (Theophany) of Christ	January 6
The Meeting of Christ in the Temple	February 2
The Annunciation of the Theotokos	March 25
Palm Sunday	Sun. before Pascha
The Ascension of Christ	40 days after Pascha
Pentecost	50 days after Pascha
The Transfiguration of Christ	August 6
The Dormition of the Theotokos	August 15

Moveable Ecclesiastical Dates

Sunday of the Publican & Pharisee	February 21
Sunday of the Prodigal Son	February 28
Sunday of Last Judgment (Meatfare Sun)	March 6
Sunday of Forgiveness (Cheesefare Sun)	March 13
Lent Begins	March 14
Sunday of Orthodoxy (Bring your Icons)	March 20
Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas	March 27
Sunday of the Holy Cross	April 3
Sunday of St. John the Ladder	April 10
Sunday of St. Mary of Egypt	April 17
Saturday of Lazarus	April 23
Palm Sunday	April 24
Holy (Good) Friday	April 29
Orthodox Pascha (Our Easter)	May 1
Western Easter	March 27
Ascension	June 9
Saturday of Souls	June 18
Pentecost, The Descent of the Holy Spirit	June 19
Sunday of All Saints	June 26
Holy Apostles Fast Begins	June 27

How can you serve your church?

Volunteer your time and gifts by getting involved. St. George offers several committee opportunities or speak with Fr. Christopher for ways YOU can make a difference.



ST. GEORGE
Chronicle

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Church, Kearney, Nebraska

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February 27
Repose of St. Raphael



TROPARION

Rejoice, O Father Raphael,
Adornment of the Holy
Church!
Thou art Champion of the
True Faith,
Seeker of the lost,
Consolation of the oppressed,
Father to orphans, and Friend
of the poor,
Peacemaker and Good
Shepherd,
Joy of all the Orthodox,
Son of Antioch, Boast of
America:
Intercede with Christ God for
us
And for all who honor thee.

The Presentation of Christ into the Temple



Happy Feast Day - Feb. 2nd

Of course, there will be trying periods in our life when the path of ascension toward God will seem exceptionally difficult. Then we should think that for every step taken there are a thousand rewards being prepared. Sufferings along this path are momentary, but the rewards are eternal.



- St. Innocent of Alaska

FEBRUARY FASTING

The traditional fasting from flesh meats, eggs, and dairy products is observed on Wednesdays and Fridays. During the week following Publican & Pharisee, February 22, there is no fasting on any day. During the week following Prodigal Son, February 29, the traditional fasting discipline is observed on Wednesday and Friday as usual.



**ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH
2016 PLEDGE CARD**

Name _____ Phone home _____ Cell _____
(please print)

Address _____ State _____ Zip _____ Email _____

Pledge

In thanksgiving to God for all His many blessings and in my desire to be a good and faithful steward of St. George Church, I pledge to the Lord \$ _____ for the year 2016.

I will fulfill my pledge (circle one)

Annually Semi-annually Quarterly (every 3 mos.) Monthly Weekly

Signature _____ Date _____

*May God continue to bless you and your loved ones richly as He abundantly enriches
His parish of St. George - Kearney, Nebraska*



“And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.” Acts 11:26