

WEEKLY BULLETIN

December 17, 2023, Vol. 40, No. 49

28th Sunday After Pentecost

Sunday of the Forefathers

THE VOICE



SAINT ELIA ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish of the Orthodox Church in America

64 W. Wilbeth Rd., Akron, Ohio 44301

Church Hall: 330-724-7129

Office: 330-724-7009

www.saintelia.com

www.facebook.com/sainteliakron

*His Eminence Alexander, Archbishop of Toledo, Bulgarian Diocese,
Very Rev. Mitred Archpriest Father Don Anthony Freude, Parish Rector
Rev. Protodeacon James M. Gresh, Attached*

SAINT ELIA THE PROPHET PARISH

2023 Parish Council

President: Veronica Bilas

V. President: Sandy Graham

Secretary: Subdeacon Aaron Gray

Treasurer: Reader Joshua Wherley

Members: Subdeacon Terrence Bilas, Bud Graham,
Sarah Niglio

Choir Director: Subdeacon Terrence A. Bilas

Assistant Directors: Anastasia Bohush

Deaconisa Heidi Gresh, Reader Michael Luc

Church School: Anastasia Bohush

Sisterhood of St. Juliana:

President: Anastasia Bohush,

V. President: Sandy Graham

Secretary: Katherine Hodge

Treasurer: Mary Magensky

Workers of St. Elizabeth the New Martyr:

Coordinators: Subdeacon Aaron Gray, Veronica Bilas

Scheduled Readers - 2023

Sunday, December 17 – Reader Joshua Wherley

Sunday, December 24 - Deaconisa Heidi Gresh

Sunday, December 31 – Hours: Subdeacon Terrence Bilas
Epistle: Anastasia Bohush

Sunday, January 7 - Sue Ellen Turscak

Sunday, January 14 - Bud Graham

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES

THE NATIVITY FAST

“The sayings of the prophets are now fulfilled.”

28th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – Tone 3
SUNDAY OF THE FOREFATHERS. Holy Prophet Daniel
and the Three Holy Youths: Ananias, Azarias and Misael
Saturday, December 16

5:00 pm *Profession of Faith and Holy Chrismation of*
Daniel Joseph Slife and Otto George Slife
Great Vespers and Confessions

Sunday, December 17

9:10 am 3rd and 6th Hours: Reader Joshua Wherley
9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom
Epistle Reader: Reader Joshua Wherley
Epistle: Colossians 3:4-11 Gospel: Luke 14:16-24
Lighting of the 5th Candle on the Advent Wreath



CHRISTMAS HOLY WEEK

The Feast of the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ is
preceded by a Holy Week: the Forefeast of the Nativity of
Christ.

Tuesday, December 19 – 6:00 pm

Vespers of the Forefeast of the Nativity of Christ

Wednesday, December 20 – 6:00 pm

Vespers of the Forefeast of the Nativity of Christ

Thursday, December 21 – 6:00 pm

Vespers of the Forefeast of the Nativity of Christ

Friday, December 22 – 6:00 pm

Royal Hours of the Nativity of Christ

29th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – Tone 4
SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FATHERS. Sunday Before the
Nativity of Christ. CHRISTMAS EVE

Saturday, December 23

5:00 pm Great Vespers and Confessions

Sunday, December 24

9:10 am 3rd and 6th Hours: Deaconisa Heidi Gresh

9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom

Epistle Reader: Deaconisa Heidi Gresh

Epistle: Hebrews 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40

Gospel: Luke 14:16-24

Lighting of the 6th Candle on the Advent Wreath

5:00 pm Vigil of Christmas – Compline and Matins

Matins Gospel: Matthew 1:18-25



Feast of CHRISTMAS

***The Nativity According to the Flesh of
our Lord God and Savior, Jesus Christ.***

Monday, December 25 – CHRISTMAS DAY

9:10 am 3rd and 6th Hours: Reader Michael Luc

9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great

Epistle: Galatians 4:4-7 Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12

**SECOND DAY OF THE FEAST OF THE
NATIVITY. Synaxis of the Most Holy Theotokos**

Tuesday, December 26

9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom

THIRD DAY OF THE FEAST OF THE NATIVITY

Holy Protomartyr and Archdeacon Stephen

Wednesday, December 27

9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom

30th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - Tone 5

SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST.

**Holy Righteous Ones: Joseph the Betrothed, David
the King, and James, the Brother of the Lord**

Saturday, December 30

5:00 pm Great Vespers and Confession

Sunday, December 31

9:10 am 3rd and 6th Hours: Subdeacon Terrence Bilas

9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom

Epistle Reader: Anastasia Bohush

Epistle: Galatians 1:11-19 Gospel: Matthew 2:13-23

5:00 pm Great Vespers

Prayers for the New Year 2024

JANUARY 2024

**THE CIRCUMCISION OF OUR LORD AND
SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST. Saint Basil the Great,
Archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia**

Monday, January 1, 2023

9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great

THE SECOND BETHLEHEM

There are two births of Christ: one unto the world in Bethlehem; the other in the soul, when it is spiritually reborn. We tend to think of the former much more than the latter and celebrate it every year; but the spiritual Bethlehem is equally momentous.

The birth of Christ in Bethlehem and the birth in the soul, result from a kind of Divine invasion. In one instance, it was into the world: in the other, into a particular person. Both create great epochs. The Bethlehem birth was a crisis of history and split time into two – the era before and after His Coming. The spiritual birth also has its importance, for it creates a crisis in the individual by begetting a new set of values, new goals and purposes, and impulses in life.

It was the second birth that the apostle Paul insisted on when he wrote from prison to his beloved people, the Ephesians, asking that Christ may dwell in their hearts by faith and that they be rooted and grounded in love. This is the second Bethlehem, or the personal relationship of the individual heart to our Lord Jesus Christ – the heart's Supreme Lover.

Advent Paraklesis, Ode 1

O Bethlehem, receive Christ: for, made flesh, He comes to dwell in you, opening Eden to me. Make ready, O Cave, to behold most strangely contained in you, Him, Who cannot be contained, Who is now made poor in the wealth of His tender mercies.

THE ADVENT WREATH

The Feast of the Nativity of our Lord together with Feast of His Baptism in the Jordan are Feasts of Light celebrating the coming and manifestation of Christ the Light of the world. Nature itself helps us to experience these Feasts of Light.

With the coming of winter, the days get shorter and the nights longer, but once we reach Christmas itself the reverse begins to happen. Nature prepares for the Coming of Christ, the Light in the darkness and so do we during the Holy Season of Advent.

To help in our preparation, we have an Advent Wreath in Church. The Wreath, made of evergreens, will have six candles on it: one for each Sunday in Advent. After the homily, the children will come up to light the candles on the wreath each Sunday.

Today, Sunday, December 17, we will light the fifth candle on the wreath along with our Advent Prayers:

Prepare O Bethlehem, for Eden has been opened to all! Adorn yourself O Ephrathah, for the tree of life blossoms forth from the Virgin in the cave! Her womb is a spiritual paradise planted with the Divine Fruit: For if we eat of it, we shall live forever and not die like Adam. Christ comes to restore the image which He made in the beginning.

DONATION ENVELOPES

Everyone's donations for the support of Saint Elia Church is very important and greatly appreciated by all of our members. In the past we have ordered donation envelopes from the Church Budget Envelope Co. The Parish Council has decided not to order them this year. Donations can be made by Tithely, PayPal, Bill Pay or by general Offering Envelopes that are packaged and available on the front pew.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS DONATIONS

With the celebration of Christmas just weeks away, please consider donating for poinsettias and decorations. **Christmas Flower Offering Envelopes** are available on the candle desk. Thank you for your generosity. The envelope has a space, if you wish, to make your offering "In Memory."

HELPING THOSE IN NEED

During the month of December our parish charitable group, the *Workers of St. Elizabeth*, will be collecting **SOCKS and GLOVES** for the **Peter Maurin Center**. Located just 5 minutes north of St. Elia at 1096 Old South Main St., the Center serves unsheltered and marginalized individuals and families in the greater Akron area by offering meals, warm clothing and other necessities, and friendship.

Look for the bin located near the Parish Family Christmas Tree in the Hall and drop off your items as you come in each week.

WELCOME TO OUR PARISH FAMILY

We are reminded that the Church is not a place we go to but a family we belong to.

We wish to welcome to our Saint Elia Parish Family the Slife family, Daniel and Natalie and their children Otto and Eliza. Congratulations to Daniel and Otto who were Chrismated before Vespers on Saturday with Subdeacon Aaron Gray as Daniel's Sponsor and Andrew Gray as Otto's Sponsors.

Welcome to Daniel Ralich who has joined our Parish Family of Saint Elia.

May God grant to our newest family members peace and joy for **MANY YEARS!**

PARISH FAMILY CHRISTMAS TREE

A Parish Family Christmas Tree has been set up in the Hall and is waiting for **your Family Ornament.**

Starting a new tradition this year at St. Elia, you are invited to bring a ornament from your family and hang it on the Parish Family Christmas Tree in the Hall.

Please write your family name and this year's date (2023) on the ornament.

ST. ELIA CHRISTMAS ORNAMENT

A Christmas Ornament, designed by Subdeacon Aaron Gray, as a fundraiser for St. Elia Church, is available for purchase in our bookstore for \$10.00.

OUR STEWARDSHIP, December 10, 2023

Candles:	\$ 88.00
Christmas Flowers:	140.00
Special Donations:	50.00
Sunday Offering:	1,000.07
TOTAL:	\$1,278.07
Tithe Donations:	\$74.55

TOTAL OFFERINGS: \$1,352.62

WISH LIST

With the rising costs in almost everything, our Parish of St. Elia, along with everybody else, is also facing financial difficulties in the present and more in the future to meet the daily bills on time. Thank you to all who faithfully donate. If you are able, please consider making special donations of the Parish needs of items listed on the

WISH LIST:

Paper towels

Bathroom Tissues

Kleenex

Dishwasher Soap

Incense (\$20.00 for a half pound)

Censor Charcoal (\$35.50)

4-hour votive candles (\$38.50 a gross)

7 Day Votive Candles (\$52.00 for a case of 12)

REMEMBERING OUR CATECHUMEN

Kristopher Barnhart

REMEMBERING THOSE SERVING IN THE ARMED FORCES

Subdeacon Anthony Freude, son of Fr Don and
Popadia Donna Freude

Egor Cravcenco, son of Serghei and Ludmila
Cravcenco

REMEMBER OUR SICK AND SHUT-INS

Archbishop Alexander

Archbishop Benjamin

Archbishop Nathaniel

Phyllis (sister of +Rose Marie Vronick)

Florence Lambo

Martin Vronick

Nicoletta (Nikki) Bober

Pani Dolores Zuder

Mitered Archpriest Daniel & Matushka Myra Kovalak

Matushka Christine Zebren

Matushka Laryssa Huntyan

Subdeacon Martin Paluch

Sarah Nigilo

Melissa Trace

Louis Hakim

Mavis Sugden

Deaconisa Heidi Gresh

Gregory Yova (Project Mexico)

**Orthodox Christian Women
Present**

Winter Mini-Retreat

Saturday January 20, 2024 – 9:30am to noon

**St. Elia the Prophet Orthodox Church
64 West Wilbeth Road, Akron 44301**

**Free Event - Everyone Welcome!
Continental Breakfast Provided**

“Question the Clergy”

**Featuring a Panel of our
Beloved Local Priests**

Advance Questions Encouraged!

Please send your queries to:

info@stteoc.com by January 17th.

**All questions remain anonymous. Questions
may also be submitted at the event**

**Contact: Nancy Studebaker 330-655-9638 or
nlstudebaker@gmail.com or Sandy Graham 330-988-8107
or sgraham@bright.net For questions or additional
information**
