WEEKLY BULLETIN

March 24, 2024, Vol. 41, No. 12

Sunday of Orthodoxy

Forefeast of the Annunciation

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

Troparion *(Sunday of Orthodoxy)*
We venerate Thy most pure image, O Good One; and ask forgiveness of our transgressions, O Christ our God. Of Thine own will Thou wast pleased to ascend the Cross in the flesh and deliver Thy creatures from bondage to the Enemy.Therefore with thankfulness we cry aloud to Thee:"Thou hast filled all with joy, O our Savior,by coming to save the world."

Troparion *(Forefeast of the Annunciation)*
Today is the prelude of joy for the universe!
Let us anticipate the feast and celebrate with exultation: Gabriel is on his way to announce the glad tidings to the Virgin; he is ready to cry out in fear and wonder: "Rejoice, O Full of Grace, the Lord is with thee!"

Kontakion *(Sunday of Orthodoxy)*
No one could describe the Word of the Father.
but when He took flesh from thee, O Theotokos, He accepted to be described, and restored the fallen image to its former state by uniting it to divine beauty. We confess and proclaim our salvation in words and images.

Kontakion *(Forefeast of the Annunciation))*
Thou art the beginning of salvation for all of us on earth, Virgin Mother of God. For the great Archangel Gabriel, God's minister, was sent from heaven to stand before thee to bring thee joy: Therefore, we all cry to thee: "Rejoice, O unwedded Bride!"

SAINT ELIA THE PROPHET PARISH

2024 Parish Council

President: Veronica Bilas
V. President: Sandy Graham
Secretary: Subdeacon Aaron Gray
Treasurer: Reader Joshua Wherley
Members: Subdeacon Terrence Bilas, Bud Graham, Jefferson Hodge, Nicholas Morelli

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 - 2024

Sunday, March 24 - Daniel Slife
Sunday, March 31 - Bud Graham
Sunday, April 7 - Sandy Graham
Sunday, April 14 - Reader Michael Luc
Sunday, April 21 - Reader Nicholas Morelli
Sunday, April 28 - Reader Joshua Wherley

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES

GREAT LENT

The Lenten Spring has come! The light of repentance! Let us cleanse ourselves from evil, crying to the Giver of Light: Glory to Thee, O Lover of Mankind!

SECOND WEEK OF GREAT LENT

FIRST SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT – TONE 1
SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY. FOREFEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE THEOTOKOS

Saturday, March 23

5:00 pm Great Vespers and Confessions

Sunday, March 24

9:10 am 3rd and 6th Hours: Daniel Slife
9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great
Epistle Reader: Daniel Slife
Epistle: Hebrews 11:24-26 Gospel: John 1:43-51
PANAKHIDA for the repose of the soul of +William Paluch as requested by his family

5:00 pm SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY AND FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION GREAT VESPERS at Anunciation Greek Orthodox Church

ANNUNCIATION OF OUR MOST-HOLY LADY THEOTOKOS AND EVER-VIRGIN MARY

Monday, March 25

6:00 pm Vesperal Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom

Friday, March 29

6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
Lenten Covered Dish

THIRD WEEKF GREAT LENT

SECOND SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT – Tone 2
Saint Gregory Palamas. Repose of St. Innocent, Enlightener of the Aleuts, Apostle to the Americas

Saturday, March 30
5:00 pm Great Vespers and Confessions

Sunday, March 31
9:10 am 3rd and 6th Hours: Bud Graham
9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great
Epistle Reader: Bud Graham
Epistle: Hebrews 1:10-2:3 Gospel: Mark 2:1-12
5:00 pm Lenten Vespers at Presentation of our Lord Orthodox Church

Wednesday, April 3
6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

Friday, April 5
6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
Lenten Covered Dish

***FOURTH WEEK OF GREAT* LENT**

THIRD SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT – Tone 3
VENERATION OF THE PRECIOUS CROSS.
Repose of St. Tikhon, Enlightener of North America **Saturday, April 6**
5:00 pm Great Vespers and Confessions

Sunday, April 7
9:10 am 3rd and 6th Hours: Bud Graham
9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great
Epistle Reader: Bud Graham
Epistle: Hebrews 4:14-5:6 Gospel: Mark 8:34-9:1

5:00 pm LENTEN VESPERS AT ST. ELIA THE PROPHET ORTHDOX CHURCH

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS
Sunday of Orthodoxy

Epistle: Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-2:2

11:24 By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's
daughter, **25** choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the [7]passing pleasures of sin. **26** esteeming the [8]reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures [9]in Egypt; for he looked to the [k]reward.

32 And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson
and Jephthah, also *of* David and Samuel and the prophets: **33** who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, **34** quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to fight the armies of the aliens. **35** Women received their dead raised to life again.

Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. **36** Still others had trial of mocking and scourging, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. **37** They were stoned, they were sawn in two, [2]were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented 38 of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, [f]*in* dens and caves of the earth.

39 And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, **40** God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

The Race of Faith

12 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and [b]let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, **2** looking unto Jesus, the [1]author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Gospel: John 1:43-51

Jesus Calls Philip and Nathanael

1:43 The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, "Follow Me."

44 Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. **45** Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

46 And Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth? "Philip said to him, "Come and see."

47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!"

48 Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?"

Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.

"**49** Nathanael answered and said to Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!"

50 Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than these."

51 And He said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter[a] you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

SUNDAY, MARCH 24, 2024,

Today, March 24, 2024, is the **Sunday of Orthodoxy** celebrating the Incarnation of the Son of God becoming man. This belief is expressed especially in the proper use of Icons in the Church.

At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, we will hold out Icons and profess in the **Synodikon** the Church's belief in the one true faith of Holy Orthodoxy.

Everyone is asked to bring their Icon from home and hold them.

AKRON LENTEN SERVICES

Great Lent begins this year on Monday, March 18, 2024

The first Sunday of Great Lent is called the **Sunday of Orthodoxy,** celebrating the ***"Triumph of Orthodoxy"*** over Iconoclasm and the restoration of the veneration of Icons. On the **Sunday of Orthodoxy, March 24**, **the Eve of the Feast of the Annunciation of the Theotokos,** the Akron Orthodox Churches this year will gather to celebrate **Vespers at Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church at 5:00 pm**.

The **Combined Lenten Vespers** will be served each. Sunday during Great Lent at **5:00 pm**:
March 24 – Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church
March 31 – Presentation of our Lord Orthodox Church
April 7 - St. Elia the Prophet Orthodox Church
April 14 - St. Thomas Eastern Orthodox Church
April 21 - **Holy Unction** at St. Nicholas Orthodox Church at **5:00 pm.**

ANNUNCIATION OF OUR MOST-HOLY LADY THEOTOKOS AND EVER-VIRGIN MARY

The Feast of the Annunciation will be celebrated at Saint Elia on Monday evening, March 25, with the Vesperal Divine of St. John Chrysostom at 6:00 pm.

The Annunciation of our Most Holy Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary

Commemorated on March 25

The Feast of the Annunciation is one of the earliest Christian feasts and was already being celebrated in the fourth century. There is a painting of the Annunciation in the catacomb of Priscilla in Rome dating from the second century. The Council of Toledo in 656 mentions the Feast, and the Council in Trullo in 692 says that the Annunciation was celebrated during Great Lent.

The Greek and Slavonic names for the Feast may be translated as “good tidings.” This, of course, refers to the Incarnation of the Son of God and the salvation He brings. The background of the Annunciation is found in the Gospel of Saint Luke (1:26-38). The troparion describes this as the “beginning of our salvation, and the revelation of the eternal mystery,” for on this day the Son of God became the Son of Man.

There are two main components to the Annunciation: the message itself, and the response of the Virgin. The message fulfills God’s promise to send a Redeemer

(Genesis 3:15): “I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed; he shall crush your head, and you shall lie in wait for his heel.” The Fathers of the Church understand “her seed” to refer to Christ. The prophets hinted at His coming, which they saw dimly, but the Archangel Gabriel now proclaims that the promise is about to be fulfilled.

We see this echoed in the Liturgy of Saint Basil, as well: “When man disobeyed Thee, the only true God who had created him, and was deceived by the guile of the serpent, becoming subject to death by his own transgressions, Thou, O God, in Thy righteous judgment, didst send him forth from Paradise into this world, returning him to the earth from which he was taken, yet providing for him the salvation of regeneration in Thy Christ Himself.”

The Archangel Gabriel was sent by God to Nazareth in Galilee. There he spoke to the undefiled Virgin who was betrothed to Saint Joseph: ***“Hail, thou who art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”***

In contrast to Eve, who was readily deceived by the serpent, the Virgin did not immediately accept the Angel's message. In her humility, she did not think she was deserving of such words but was actually troubled by them. The fact that she asked for an explanation reveals her sobriety and prudence. She did not disbelieve the words of the angel, but could not understand how they would be fulfilled, for they spoke of something which was beyond nature.

Then said Mary unto the angel, ***"How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?"*** (Luke 1:34).

"And the angel answered and said unto her, ***'The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: therefore also that which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with*** **God nothing shall be impossible.'** And Mary said, ***'Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.' And the angel departed from her."*** (Luke 1: 35-38)

The icon of the Feast shows the Archangel with a staff in his left hand, indicating his role as a messenger. Sometimes one wing is upraised, as if to show his swift descent from heaven. His right hand is stretched toward the holy Virgin as he delivers his message.

The Virgin is depicted either standing or sitting, usually holding yarn in her left hand. Sometimes she is shown holding a scroll. Her right hand may be raised to indicate her surprise at the message she is hearing. Her head is bowed, showing her consent and obedience. The descent of the Holy Spirit upon her is depicted by a ray of light issuing from a small sphere at the top of the icon, which symbolizes heaven.

"Behold, our restoration has now been revealed to us: in a manner beyond understanding, God is united to mankind; at the voice of the Archangel, delusion is destroyed, for the Virgin receives joy; things of the earth have become heaven; and the world is freed from the ancient curse. Let creation rejoice exceedingly and sing with voices of praise: "O Lord, our Maker and Deliverer, glory to You!"

(Vesper Verse)

The Annunciation falls during Lent, but it is always celebrated with great joy. The Liturgy of Saint Basil or Saint John Chrysostom is served, even on the weekdays of Lent.

The Divine Liturgy for the Feast is to be celebrated after Vespers on the Day of the Feast. Thus, the Vesperal Divine Liturgy will be celebrated on Monday evening, March 25th, at 6:00 pm.

Prepare for Pascha by Praying the Psalms!

The Goal

This year, we will continue our annual tradition, since 2008, at St. Elia of praying the Psalms together as a parish community during Lent. It's an opportunity for us to draw nearer to Christ and one another during the fast, as we journey toward Holy Pascha.

How It Works

The Orthodox Church has traditionally divided the book of Psalms into 20 sections. In our St. Elia prayer group, we will all pray a new section each day throughout the 40 days of Lent, beginning on March 18, so that we will pray through the entire book of Psalms twice during the fast.

Bonus

As we all join in praying the Psalms, we can use this opportunity to pray for one another, for our parish, and for any special intentions that any of us may have by

sharing prayer requests with one another via email. Additionally, you will receive Lenten reflections throughout the fast via email with quotes from the saints and other edifying material.

What You Need
To participate, all you need is a Bible and a little bit of time to set aside each day.

How Do I Join
You can join by going and filling in the online form using this account: **sainteliaakron@gmail.com**
Shortly before Great Lent begins, you will receive an email with a schedule of which Psalms to pray each day and the names of everyone else who is participating in the prayer group, so that we can remember one another in our daily prayers.

One Last Thing
May the Lord bless us as we pray the Psalms together, and may He draw us nearer to Himself and to one another during this Lent. Have a blessed 40 days!

> ***Praise the Lord!***
> ***For it is good to sing praises to our God!***
> ***For it is pleasant, and praise is beautiful!***
> ***Psalm 147:1***

St. Elia Prayer Group
A ministry of St. Elia Orthodox Church
Prayer Group Moderator: Subdeacon Aaron Gray

“Tell Them About Confession”

A traveler recently returned from a trip around the world and related how he saw in Japan a man stagger through a railway station with a huge carton on is back. On the carton were the words, **“The Universe.”** How graphically this describes what has happened to an individual bent under the weight of the universe! Through books, newspapers, cell phones, radio and television, the “universe” and its troubles are daily laid on the backs of staggering individuals – individuals who are already loaded with excess baggage of their own.

We cannot solve all the world’s problems, but rather we need to concern ourselves with our own problems. For many of us are staggering under the weight of the excess baggage of our hatreds and jealousies, of our fears and worries. Of our failures and secret sins. How can a man carry all this baggage on his

shoulders, day after day, month after month, year after year, without breaking under this burden?

God has provided way for man to rid himself of this excess baggage of sin and guilt. The way is through repentance and confession. The noted Christian psychiatrist, Dr. Paul Tournier, writes: "I have been at times accused of over-emphasizing the importance of confession, as if the whole cure of our souls were contained in it. I speak of my own experience as a doctor…nothing can be compared in importance with confession.

****

OUR STEWARDSHIP, March 17, 2024

Candles:	**$ 65.00**
Special Offering:	**200.00**
Tray Offering:	**1,035.00**
TOTAL:	**$1,300.00**
Tithely Donations:	**$ 574.09**
TOTAL OFFERINGS:	**$1,874.09**

WISH LIST

If you are able, please consider making special donations of the Parish needs of items listed:

Incense ($20.00 for a half pound)
Censor Charcoal ($35.50)
4-hour votive candles ($38.50 a gross)
Day Votive Candles ($52.00 for a case of 12

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
Archpriest Emil Huntyan
Phyllis (sister of +Rose Marie Vronick)
Florence Lambo
Martin Vronick
Nicoletta (Nikki) Bober
Pani Dolores Zuder
Mitered Archpriest Daniel Kovalak
Matushka Myra Kovalak
Matushka Christine Zebren
Matushka Laryssa Huntyan
Subdeacon Martin Paluch
Sarah Nigilo
Melissa Trace
Subdeacon David Trace
Louis Hakim
Deaconisa Heidi Gresh
Mary Elizabeth Marcin
Carl Nickoloff
Joseph Taylor (nephew of DiPuccio Family)

4th annual

NATIONAL ORTHODOX BABY SHOWER

ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS FOR LIFE

Our community outreach group, ***The Workers of Saint Elizabeth***, is joining with Orthodox parishes across the country to hold a "baby shower" to support mothers who choose life for their unborn children. Join us in collecting the listed items below to benefit ***Zoe for Life*** located in Cleveland.

Bring your items to church **from March 17th to April 7th** and place them in the Pack and Play located in the Church Hall.
Questions? Please contact Veronica Bilas or Subdeacon Aarron Gray

Diapers sizes Newborn to 6
Pullups (any size)
Baby Wipes
Baby Clothes (new up to 2T)
Blankets
Toys (new)
Cribs (new)
Target/Walmart gift cards
Pacifiers (new)
Baby Socks
Bottles (new)
Diaper Bags
Car Seats (new)