WEEKLY BULLETIN

The Voice

February 23, 2025, Vol. 42, No. 8

Meatfare Sunday

St. ELIA
ORTHODOX ✝ CHURCH

A Parish of the Orthodox Church in America

64 W. Wilbeth Rd., Akron, Ohio 44301

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His Eminence Alexander, Archbishop of Toledo, Bulgarian Diocese, OCA

Very Rev. Mitred Archpriest Father Don Anthony Freude, Parish Rector

Rev. Protodeacon James M. Gresh, Rev. Deacon Aaron Gray

SAINT ELIA THE PROPHET PARISH

2025 Parish Council

President: Veronica Bilas
V. President: Sandy Graham
Secretary: Deacon Aaron Gray
Treasurer: Daniel Slife
Members: Anthony Dodovich Bud Graham, Jefferson Hodge, Daniel Ralich

Choir Director: Subdeacon Terrence A. Bilas
Assistant Directors: Anastasia Bohush
Deaconisa Heidi Gresh, Reader Michael Luc

Church School Coordinator: Popadia Donna Freude
Staff: Natalie Slife, Eve Tavenier, Reader Nicholas Morelli. Frances Hakim, Subdeacon David Trace

Sisterhood of St. Juliana:

V. President: Sandy Graham
Secretary: Katherine Hodge
Treasurer: Mary Magensky
Assistant Treasurer: Anastasia Bohush

Workers of St. Elizabeth the New Martyr:

Coordinators: Subdeacon Aaron Gray, Veronica Bilas

Scheduled Readers 2025

Sunday, February 23 - Marybeth Gray
Sunday, March 2 - Hours: Subdeacon Terrence Bilas
Epistle: Anastasia Bohush
Sunday, March 9 - Sue Ellen Turscak
Sunday, March 16 - Daniel Slife

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES
The Lenten Triodion

3rd Pre-Lenten Sunday
SUNDAY OF MEATFARE – SUNDAY OF THE LAST JUDGMENT- Tone 2
Saturday, February 22
5:00 pm Great Vespers and Confessions
Matins Gospel: Mark 16:1-18
Sunday, February 23
9:10 am - 3rd and 6th Hours: Marybeth Gray
9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom
Epistle Reader: Mary Beth Gray
Epistle: 1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2
Gospel: Luke 25:31-46
This week we begin to fast from meat. Cheese, eggs and milk are permitted every day this week.

4th Pre-Lenten Sunday
SUNDAY OF CHEESEFARE SUNDAY - Tone 3
THE EXPULSION OF ADAM FROM PARADISE
FORGIVENESS SUNDAY
Saturday, March 1
5:00 pm Great Vespers and Confessions
Matins Gospel: Mark 16:9-20
Sunday, March 2
9:10 am 3rd and 6th Hours: Subdeacon Terrence Bilas
9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom
Epistle Reader: Anastasia Bohush
Epistle: Romans 13:11-14:4
Gospel: Matthew 6:14-21

5:00 pm VESPERS AND MUTUAL FORGIVENES SERVICE – *Great Lent begins – Strict Fast*

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!

FIRST WEEK OF GREAT LENT

Monday, March 3– 6:00 pm
Great Canon of Repentance of St. Andrew of Crete - st Section
Tuesday, March 4 – 6:00 pm
Great Canon of Repentance of St. Andrew of Crete -2nd Section
Wednesday, March 5 – 6:00 pm
Great Canon of Repentance of St. Andrew of Crete- 3rd Section
Thursday, March 6 – 6:00 pm
Great Canon of Repentance of St. Andrew of Crete- 4th Section
Friday, **March 7 – 6:00 pm**
Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts –
Blessing of Boiled Wheat in Commemoration of the Greatmartyr Theodore. Covered Dish

SECOND WEEK OF GREAT LENT

FIRST SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT - Tone 4
SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY.
THE HOLY FORTY MARTRYS OF SEBASTE
Saturday, March 8
5:00 pm Great Vespers and Confessions
Matins Gospel: Luke 24:1-12
Sunday, March 9
9:10 am 3rd and 6th Hours: Sue Ellen Turscak
9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great
Epistle Reader: Sue Ellen Turscak
Epistle: Hebrews 11:24-26, 32 -12:2
Gospel: John 1:43-51

5:00 pm SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY VESPERS at Presentation of Our Lord Orthodox Church

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS
Sunday of the Last Judgment

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2

But food does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse. But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a [a]stumbling block to those who are weak. For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols? And because of your knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? But when you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? If I am not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you. For you are the [b]seal of my apostleship in the Lord.

Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46

The Judgment of the Nations

"When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He

will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.
Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'
Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?'
And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.
Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.' Then they also will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?' Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Sunday of Meatfare
Sunday of the Last Judgment

Commemorated on February 22

Today's Gospel reading is Matthew 25:31-46, the parable of the Last Judgment. It reminds us that while trusting in Christ's love and mercy, we must not forget His righteous judgment when He comes again in glory. If our hearts remain hardened and unrepentant, we should not expect the Lord to overlook our transgressions simply because He is a good and loving God. Although He does not desire the death of a sinner, He also expects us to turn from our wickedness and live (Ezek. 33:11).

This same idea is expressed in the prayer read by the priest after the penitent has confessed his or her sins:

"O Lord, God of Thy servant's salvation, merciful, gracious and patient, who relent in punishing our wicked deeds and desire not the death of a sinner but rather he/she turn to Thee and live. Come now and deal mercifully with Thy servant (N) and grant him/her a disposition of repentance, forgiveness of sins and pardon, absolving him/her of every fault deliberate or indeliberate. Reconcile and unite him/her to Thy holy Church through Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom power and majesty belong to Thee: now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen"

The time for repentance and forgiveness is now, in the present life. At the Second Coming, Christ will appear as the righteous Judge***, "Who will render to every man according to his deeds"*** (Rom. 2:6). Then the time for entreating God's mercy and forgiveness will have passed.

As Father Alexander Schmemann reminds us in his book GREAT LENT (Ch. 1:4***), sin is the absence of love, it is separation and isolation.***

When Christ comes to judge the world, His criterion for judgment will be love. Christian love entails seeing Christ in other people, our family, our friends, and everyone else we may encounter in our lives. We shall be judged on whether we have loved or not loved our neighbor. We show Christian love when we feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, visit those who are sick or in prison, have a heart of compassion and a willing ear to listen to others If we did such things for the least of Christ's brethren, then we also did them for Christ (Mt.25:40). If we did not do such things for the least of the brethren, neither did we do them for Christ (Mt.25:45).

Today is the last day for eating meat and meat products until Pascha, though eggs and dairy products are permitted every day during the coming week. This limited fast prepares us gradually for the strict fast of Great Lent.

AKRON LENTEN SERVICES

Great Lent begins this year, 2025, on Monday, March 3.

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 9,** the Akron Orthodox Churches this year will gather to celebrate Vespers at **Presentation of Our Lord Orthodox Church at 5:00 pm.**

A Sunday of Orthodoxy Program Booklet is being prepared and your donations will support the work of the Orthodox Clergy Association, Christian Orthodox Council of Akron, and Orthodox Christian Women. Please give your donations **to Mary Marcin by Friday, February 28:**
Benefactor $100; Supporter $50; Patron $25; Sponsor $10.

The **Combined Lenten Vespers** will be served each **Sunday** evening during Great Lent at **5:00 pm**:
March 9 – Presentation of our Lord Church
March 16 – St. Thomas Church
March 23 – St. Elia Church
March 30 – St. George Church
April 6 – Holy Unction at St. Nicholas Church

Mon. March 24 - Vespers at **5:30 pm** at Annunciation Church for the Feast of the Annunciation

PREMEMBERING THOSE SERVING IN THE ARMED FORCES

Subdeacon Anthony Freude, son of Fr Don and Popadia Donna
Egor Cravcenco, son of Serghei and Ludmila
Khristopher Barnhart, son of Diego and Chanelle]

REMEMBERING OUR SICK AND SHUTINS

Archbishop Onuphry of the Ukraine
Archbishop Benjamin
Archbishop Nathaniel
Archpriest Anderew Moulton
Archpriest Emil Huntyan
Priest Gabriel Bilas
Mitered Archpriest Daniel Kovalak
Matushka Myra Kovalak
Matushka Christine Zebren
Matushka Laryssa Hutnyan
Matushka Valerie Zahersky
Subdeacon Martin Paluch
Reader John Paluch
Florence Lambo
Mary Magensky
Sarah Niglio
Melissa Trace
Martin Vronick
Louis Hakim
Joey Gresh
Halina Woroncow
Joseph Taylor
Brian Gable
Hilda Ralich
Ellen Rees

ETERNAL MEMORY

Pani Dolores Zuder
Matushka Suzanne Senyo
Archbishop Anastsios

Journey to Pascha with the Psalms!

The Goal

This year, we will continue an annual tradition at St. Elia since 2008 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 3, so that we will pray through the entire book of Psalms twice during the course of the fast.

Added Bonus

As we all join together 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 to http://saintelia.com/news/lenten-prayergroup/ and filling in the online form. 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 47:1

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SISTERHOOD OF ST. JULIANA MEETING
Today, Sunday, February 23, following the Liturgy

OUR STEWARDSHIP
Sunday, February 16, 2025

Candles:	**$ 40.00**
Sun. Tray Offerings:	**875.00**
Tithely Offerings:	**700.09**
TOTAL:	**$1,615.09**