WEEKLY BULLETIN

The Voice

April 20, 2025, Vol. 42, No. 16

Holy Pascha, the Feast of Feasts

St. 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.saintlia.com

www.facebook.com/sainteliaakron

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:

President: Sandy Graham
V. President: Kathy Gray
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, April 13 - Reader Nicholas Morelli
Pascha, April 20 - Reader Joshua Wherley
Sunday, April 27 - Deaconisa Heidi Gresh

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES

THE HOLY PASCHA

Holy Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ

Saturday. April 19

11:30 pm Nocturnes

Sunday, April 20

<u>12:00 Midnight</u> Resurrectin Matins
Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom
Epistle Reader: Reader Joshua Wherley
Epistle: Acts 1:1-8 Gospel: John 1:1-17

Blessing of Paschal Baskets in the hall

<u>11:00 am</u>
Agape Vespers of Holy Pascha
Gospel: John 20:19-25

BRIGHT WEEK

BRIGHT MONDAY, April 21

9:00 am Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom
Paschal Procession (weather permitting)

CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED, HE IS RISEN
Christos Voskrese! Christos Anesi! Al Masseh Qam!
Hristos a Inviat! Krishti U Ngjail! Hristos Vaskrese!
Christos e'resorto! Kristos Feltamad! Christos Reurrexit!
Christus ist Aufrsandent! Le Christ est Ressucite!
Christo Ressuscitou! Cristo se ha resucitado!
Kriste aghsdga! Taw Creest Ereen!
Kristus Zmartvikstau! Kristus vital zmr'tvych!
Tha Criosad aur eiridh

PASCHAL SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: Acts 1:1-8

Prologue

1 The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that
Jesus began both to do and teach, 2 until the day in
which [a]He was taken up, after He through the Holy
Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He
had chosen, 3 to whom He also presented Himself alive
after His suffering by many [b]infallible proofs, being seen
by them during forty days and speaking of the things
pertaining to the kingdom of God.

The Holy Spirit Promised

4 And being assembled together with *them,* He commanded
them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the
Promise of the Father, "which," *He said,* "you have heard
from Me; 5 for John truly baptized with water, but you shall
be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from
now." 6 Therefore, when they had come together, they
asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the
kingdom to Israel?" 7 And He said to them, "It is not for
you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in
His own authority. 8 But you shall receive power when the
Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall
be [c]witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea
and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Gospel: John 1:1-17

The Eternal Word

1 In the beginning [a]was the Word, and the Word was [c]with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. 4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shined in the darkness, and the darkness did not [1]comprehend it.

The Forerunner of Christ

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name *was* John. 7 This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. 8 He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light. 9 That [2]was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world
.
10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. 11 He came to His [3]own, and His [4]own did not receive Him.

The Acceptance of Christ
12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the [5]right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: 13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

The Incarnation of Christ
14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,
and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten
of the Father, full of grace and truth.

15 John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, “This
was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me [6]is
preferred before me, for He was before me.’ ”

16 [7]And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for
grace. 17 For the law was given through Moses, *but* grace
and truth came through Jesus Christ.

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MATINS OF HOLY FRIDAY

The commemoration of our Lord’s Passion begins on Thursday evening, April 17, at 6:00 pm with the Matins of Holy Friday and the reading of the Twelve Gospels.

At the Fifth Gospel, when the Passion narrative concerning Christ’s journey to Calvary is reached the Cross is carried to the Center of the Temple and is mounted on the platform that represents Golgotha. Now there is **SILENCE** – and this silence pervades Great and Holy Friday capturing and stilling our hearts and minds.

GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY – April 18 This day is unlike any other day. There is no Divine Liturgy and Holy Communion is not received on this day.

At 9:00 am the ROYAL HOURS will be prayed before the Cross of our Crucified Lord on Golgotha as we keep the silence and fast of this day.

The BRIDEGROOM of the Church is affixed to the Cross with nails. The Son of the Virgin is pierced with a spear.

The VESPERS of Friday at 6:00 pm are a continuation of the Royal Hours. During this service, the removal of the Body of Christ from the Cross is commemorated with a sense of mourning and is wrapped in a white sheet as did Joseph of Arimathea.

Everything seems over! The **SHROUD** emerges from the Altar through Iconostasis and is carried to the tomb for burial. Our Temple is the **TOMB OF CHRIST**, and we watch, and we pray.

The Matins of Great and Holy Saturday follows as the **Lamentations** are chanted as the Shroud is incensed and sprinkled with rose water.

The Shroud is carried in procession around the Temple commemorating Christ's descent into hades (the place of the dead).

Then walking under the Shroud, we are reminded that we have been freed and forgiven and in Baptism we have been buried with Christ to rise with Him into the newness of life.

GREAT AND HOLY SATURDAY – APRIL 19

On Great and Holy Saturday, the Church contemplates the mystery of our Lord's descent into hades, the place of the dead. Death, our ultimate enemy, is defeated from within. "He (Christ) gave Himself as a ransom to death in which we were held captive, sold under sin…Descending into Hades through the Cross…He lossen the bonds of death" (Liturgy of St. Basil).

Great Saturday is the day between Jesus' death and His resurrection. It is the day of watchful expectation, ***in which mourning is being transformed into joy.*** The day embodies in the fullest possible sense the meaning of ***bright sadness***, which has dominated the celebrations of Holy Week.

.**This Saturday, April 19**, the Vespers will be celebrated with the Divine Liturgy **at 9:00 am**. Before the Gospel, the dark vestments of Holy Week are removed, and the bright vestments of Pascha are put on.

Our sorrow is transformed into joy.

HOLY PASCHA, FEAST OF FEASTS, April 20

Before midnight (11:30 pm) on Saturday evening, the Canon of Holy Saturday Matins is repeated, and the Shroud is lifted out of the tomb as we sing:

Do not lament Me, O Mother, seeing Me in the Tomb, the Son conceived in the womb without seed. FOR I SHALL ARISE AND BE GLORIFIED WITH ETERNAL GLORY AS GOD. I shall exalt all who magnify you in faith and in love" … ushering in the stroke of midnight.

The **Matins of the Resurrection** begins in complete darkness. The priest takes the light from the vigil light, (at St. Elia this light is from the Holy Fire in Jerusalem- 1917) and gives it to the faithful who are holding candles. The priest chants:

"Come ye and receive the light from the unwaning light and glorify Christ, Who is risen from the dead."

All the people join singing the hymn again and again: ***"Thy Resurrection, O Christ our Savior, the angels in heaven sing. Enable us on earth to glorify Thee in purity of heart."***

From this moment, every Christian holds the paschal candle as a symbol of his vivid, deep faith in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ as Savior. The priest leads the

faithful outside circling the Temple three times and coming before the doors the Gospel is proclaimed: ***"He is Risen; He is not here."*** (Mark 16:1-8)

Then comes the breathless moment as the faithful wait for the priest to start the hymn of the Resurrection, which they join in singing repeatedly: ***"Christ is Risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life."***

From this moment the entire service takes on a joyous Paschal atmosphere. The hymns of the Odes and Praises of Resurrection which follow are of superb meaning and expression as we confess:

"This is the Day of Resurrection, let us be illumined by the Feast, let us embrace each other and let us call brothers even those that hate us; and forgive all by the resurrection, and so let us cry, Christ is risen from the dead!

By this hymn we admit that love of one's fellowman is the solid foundation of the faith in the Resurrection of Christ.

As part of this marvelous festival the sermon of St. John Chrysostom is read, which calls upon us to:

"Take part in this fair and radiant festival. Let no one be fearful of death, for the death of the Savior has set us free… O death, where is thy sting? O Hades, where is thy victory? Christ is risen and Thou art overthrown. To Him be glory and power from all ages to all ages."

The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom is then celebrated.

AGAPE VESPERS

Later on Sunday, at 11:00 am, the faithful gather once more for Agape Vespers. The Gospel according to Saint John (20:19-25) is read in various languages, proclaiming the Good News of Resurrection all over the universe to all peoples. The fruit of faith in the Resurrection of the Lord is love in His Named; therefore, this day is called "Sunday of Agape" (love feast), a day dedicated to Christian principles, especially to forgiveness and charity.

BLESSING OF THE ARTOS

Following the Midnight Service of Pascha, the ARTOS will be blessed. Artos is a Paschal Bread and bears on it the Icon of the Resurrection. In the Old Covenant the Jews commemorated the Passover from bondage in Egypt by sacrificing

RED EGGS

Please bring a half-dozen of Red Eggs to the midnight Service of Pascha. Bring them to the Church Office and Father Don will bless them and distribute them to everyone in church at the end of the Liturgy.

RED EGGS symbolize the New Life in the Risen Christ granted to us through His Precious Blood shed on the Cross. As Father presents each one of us with a red egg, he will greet us with *"Christ is Risen"* and we respond *"Indeed, He is Risen"*

PASCHAL BASKET BLESSING

Following the Midnight Service of Pascha, the Paschal Baskets will be blessed in the Church Hall. Children are encouraged to bring their baskets for blessing.

REMEMBERING 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
Priest John Manuel
Mitered Archpriest Daniel Kovalak, Matushka Myra Kovalak
Matushka Christine Zebren
Matushka Laryssa Huntyan
Matushka Valerie Zahersky
Subdeacon Martin Paluch, Reader John Paluch
Florence Lambo
Mary Magensky
Sarah Niglio
Melissa Trace
Martin Vronick
Frances Hakim
Louis Hakim
Joey Gresh
Halina Woroncow
Joseph Taylor
Brian Gable
Ellen Rees
David Eliof

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Please make your PASCHAL FLOWER DONATIONS. Envelopes are available on the vestibule counter or on the candle des

Archpastoral Message of His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon Pascha 2025

To the clergy, monastics, and faithful of the Orthodox Church in America, beloved children in the Lord,

Christ is risen! Indeed he is risen!

"This is the chosen and holy day, first of sabbaths, king and lord of days, the feast of feasts, holy day of holy days. On this day we bless Christ forevermore."

So we sang at Matins, at the eighth ode of the Paschal canon. St. John of Damascus, the author of that canon, calls today "the feast of feasts," and as we celebrate this feast of feasts, this first and greatest of feasts, we might ask a seemingly simple question: what are feasts, and why do we celebrate them? This question seems particularly appropriate as the world around us grows ever more chaotic and complex. In the midst of all the change and busy-ness, how can we spare the time just to celebrate and do nothing of use?

Many of us are familiar with the Russian festal greeting, *s prazdnikom*. The key word here is *prazdnik*, the Russian word for feast or holiday, which derives in turn from the adjective *prazdny*, meaning "empty," and hence "idle." But this emptiness, or idleness, is not merely an expression of absence. The feast has positive content, but this content is not man-made: it is something made by God, something that our inaction allows us encounter and appreciate. Feasts are days on which we remain idle so that God can

act; they are days that we empty of our own works so that we can fill them with the remembrance of the things of God: his deeds, his presence, his glory.

After all, as the Lord says, the sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath (Mk. 2:27). We abused our freewill, sinned, and lost the continual enjoyment of God, instead being cursed to eat by the sweat of our brow (Gen. 3:19). But God, in his mercy, has given us the feast day, a day on which we are able to return to our Edenic state. We set aside the labor that is the result of our sin and, for a day at least, devote ourselves to true rest, to the one thing needful: worship in spirit and truth, whose hour is coming and now is (Lk. 10:42, Jn. 4:23). As we sang at the canon, the feast is the day on which we bless Christ forevermore.

The feast day, in this way, becomes an icon of the deified person, filled with the divine energies—God's activity, rather than his own. The saints empty their hearts, their lives, their being, of everything worldly and passionate so that God can dwell there as his holy temple. The feast is also thus an icon of the life to come, in which the elect will no longer know toil or care, but only the never-ending banquet of the kingdom, the ceaseless heavenly worship of the one God in Trinity.

Thus, on this first of sabbaths, I pray that we might all set aside our Lenten labors and rejoice in the day which the Lord has made, Bright Sunday, his great and holy Pascha (Ps. 117:24). Following in the footsteps of our self-emptying Master, we worked for six weeks to cleanse our hearts and lives of everything unbefitting, not so that we could be empty, but so we could be filled, according to own measure and capacity, with the grace that Christ

brings into the world through his life-creating Resurrection. Christ rested after his six days of labor, and now after our six weeks of Lenten work, he calls us to enter into his rest, to find our peace in him and the great salvation that he has wrought for us upon the Wood.

Christ is risen, the Peace of God, the divine Peace himself, and so, in the midst of a busy and whirling world, we find everlasting peace on his feast of feasts. May the grace, peace, and joy of his Resurrection abide with all of you, always, now and throughout the ages to come.

Greeting you with festal cheer and Paschal rejoicing, and assuring you of my primatial prayers and blessing, I remain,
Yours in Christ,

+ TIKHON
Archbishop of Washington
Metropolitan of All America and Canada

OUR STEWARDSHIP

Sunday, April 6,2025: TOTAL: $1,973.62 (corrected)

Sunday, April 13, 2025

Candles:	**$ 107.00**
Sun. Tray Offerings:	**1,600.00**
Paschal Flowers:	**165.00**
PayPal Offerings:	**30.00**
Tithely Offerings:	**755.12**
TOTAL:	**$2,657.12**