WEEKLYBULLETIN

The Voice

June 22nd, 2025, Vol. 42, No. 25

Second Sunday After Pentecost

All Saints of America

St. ELIA
ORTHODOX ✠ CHURCH

A Parish of the Orthodox Church in America

64 W. Wilbeth Rd., Akron, Ohio 44301

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www.saintlia.com

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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

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, June 15 - Bud Gaham
Sunday, June 22 - Sandy Graham
Sunday, June 29 - Reader Michael Luc

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES

THE APOSTLES' (SS. PETER AND PAUL) FAST
June 16 -28

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – Tone 1
ALL SAINTS OF AMERICA

Saturday, June 21
5:00 pm Great Vespers and Confessions
Sunday, June 22
9:10 am 3rs and 6th Hours: Sandy Graham
9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom
Epistle Reader: Sandy Graham
Epistle: Romans 2:10-16
Gospel: Matthew 4:18-23

NATIVITY OF THE HOLY GLORIOUS PROPHET FORERUNNER AND BAPTIST JOHN

Monday. June 23
6:00 pm Vesperal Divine Liturgy of
Saint John Chrysostom

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST –Tone 2
THE HOLY, GLORIOUS AND ALL-PRAISED LEADERS OF THE APOSTLES, PETER AND PAUL
Saturday, June 28
5:00 pm Great Vespers and Confessions
Sunday, June 2
9:10 am 3rd and 6th Hours: Reader Michael Luc
9:30 am Baptismal Divine Liturgy of St, John Chrysostom
Baptism of Ronan Williamson
Epistle Reader: Reader Michael Luc
Epistles: Romans 5:1-10; 6:3-11
Gospel: Matthew 6:22-33; 28-16-

SUNDAY SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: Romans 2:10-16

10 but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. **11** For there is no partiality with God.
12 For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law **13** (for not the hearers of the law *are* just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified; **14** for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, **15** who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves *their* thoughts accusing or else excusing *them*) **16** in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.

Gospel: Matthew 4:18-23

Four Fishermen Called as Disciples
18 And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. 19 Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." 20 They immediately left *their* nets and followed Him.
21 Going on from there, He saw two other brothers, James *the son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets. He called them, 22 and immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him.
23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.

Righteous Mother Olga of Kwethluk–Tanqilria Arrsamquq Wonderworker, Matushka of All Alaska

Commemorated on October 27

A Real Person in the Eyes of God and Man

In the wide stillness of the Alaskan tundra—where the sky stretches open like a prayer and the rivers flow between worlds—God planted a soul full of hidden beauty. On February 3, 1916 (January 21, Julian Calendar), in the village of Kwethluk, at the meeting of the Kwethluk and Kuskokwim rivers, a daughter was born to the Native Yup'ik people. Her name in the Yup'ik language was Arrsamquq, a name meaning lowly, hidden, or unadorned—like

the seed sown quietly in the earth. It was a name that would prophetically mark her life, for she lived not in boastfulness or acclaim, but in humility, reverence, and love.

From childhood, she was formed both by the land and by the Church. Her hands learned the ancient skills of Yup'ik women—sewing, cooking, preparing food for winter, raising children, and keeping the home. But her soul was formed by the divine grace that had come to Alaska with the Orthodox missionaries from Russia. The faith of Saints Herman and Innocent had taken root in her village, and in her heart. Her home life, the seasons, and the services of the Church were woven together, creating in her a seamless garment of earthly service and heavenly longing.

As she matured, she married Nicolai Michael, the village storekeeper and postmaster, who would later be ordained to the holy priesthood. In time, she would become known not only as Olga, but as Matushka Olga—a mother to thirteen children of her own, and a spiritual mother to an entire village. Quiet, gentle, and strong, she became a pillar of warmth and grace in Kwethluk.

In Yup'ik culture, to be called a real person—ella tanqilria—is the highest praise. It means one who lives in harmony with the land and with others, who does not set themselves above others, but who listens deeply, works quietly, and carries the burdens of others as their own. Matushka Olga was just such a person. She did not preach. She did not boast. She simply lived with such goodness that the

land, the people, and the Church would not forget her.

A Matushka in the Manner of the Saints

After her marriage to Nicolai Michael, Olga embraced not only the responsibilities of a wife and mother, but also the sacred calling of being a Matushka—a priest's wife, a helpmate not only to her husband but to the Church. When Nicolai was ordained and began serving as the priest of the Church of Saint Nicholas in Kwethluk, she became the quiet heart of that parish community.

She raised thirteen children of her own in modest means and with deep love. Her home was open; her heart was larger still. She offered hospitality not as a performance, but as a way of life. Whether sewing warm clothes for those in need, baking bread for the altar, or comforting a grieving neighbor, she did all things without self-importance. She was known never to raise her voice, and to teach—like many Yup'ik elders—not with scolding but by example. Those who came into her presence often found themselves stilled, as if by a quiet flame.

Her life bore resemblance to the holy women of the Scriptures. Like Tabitha (Dorcas) in the Acts of the Apostles, she was "full of good works and alms deeds which she did," and like the Most Pure Virgin Mother of God, she treasured the mysteries of life and of God in her heart. She clothed the naked, fed the hungry, and helped bring new life into the world. As a midwife, she accompanied women through the dangers and blessings of childbirth; as a counselor, she listened to those suffering in silence,

especially women who had suffered abuse. Her presence was maternal, unjudging, and deeply healing.

Though she lived in a land of long winters and hardship, she herself was a source of warmth. Her daily life—marked by prayer, labor, and service—became a hidden offering to Christ. Her prosphora was kneaded with prayers, her garments sewn with intention, her silence filled with watchfulness and love.

Those who knew her remember her not for speeches or public deeds, but for the realness of her presence. She was always there—praying quietly in church, listening without interruption, carrying burdens without needing thanks.

In the eyes of the world, she was not great. But in the Kingdom of God, where humility is greatness and the last are first, she walked with the saints.

Her Suffering and Repose in the Lord

In 1978, Matushka Olga was diagnosed with cancer. By that time, she had already lived a full life of service and love. Yet, as with so many saints, her final chapter became her most luminous. She did not complain. She did not seek pity. She bore her affliction with the same humility and quiet strength that had defined her life.

When doctors could do no more, she did not despair. She continued to labor gently for those around her, even as her body grew weak. Her children and neighbors recall that she remained peaceful and kind, never bitter or afraid. Her illness

became a cross, and she bore it without fanfare, entering more deeply into the sufferings of Christ. On November 8, 1979, she reposed in the Lord, surrounded by her family in her home in Kwethluk. Her death, like her life, was not loud or dramatic—but it was accompanied by wondrous signs that revealed the hidden sanctity she had carried.

Though it was a deep winter, and the land was locked in ice, the frozen river thawed, and the ice softened, allowing boats from nearby villages to arrive—a miracle of timing and temperature that no one could explain. Birds appeared in the sky, though they should have long since flown south. They circled above the village, as if bearing witness. Mourners gathered not only from Kwethluk, but from afar. The people knew—without being told—that a holy one had passed into eternal rest.

As the funeral began, there was stillness in the air, the kind of sacred hush that often follows the repose of a saint. Those presents wept, not with despair, but with awe. A mother, a Matushka, a healer, a friend had been taken from them—but heaven received a quiet soul, adorned with the grace of her hidden love.

From the moment of her passing, the people of Kwethluk began to remember her not with mere affection, but with reverence. They spoke of her kindness with gratitude, and of her silence with wonder. Her name was whispered in prayer. And in time, those prayers began to be answered.

The Uncovering of Her Relics and the Spread of Her Veneration

In the decades after her repose, Matushka Olga's memory did not fade. On the contrary, her presence deepened. Stories began to circulate—quietly at first, then more widely—of dreams, visions, and healings. Women in distress felt her nearness. Survivors of abuse spoke of being comforted in their sleep. Families troubled by sorrow found themselves praying to "Matushka Olga" as they would to a beloved elder or a wise grandmother. And she answered.

Many began to believe that she was not only a pious woman but a saint—that the Church had quietly received into heaven a protector of the suffering, a consoler of the afflicted, a mother to the motherless. Her picture began appearing in icon corners, and the faithful began to ask her intercessions in their time of need.

Then, in the year 2024, nearly forty-five years after her death, the Church undertook the uncovering of her relics. It was a sacred labor, carried out with prayer and reverence by clergy and faithful gathered in the village of Kwethluk. The day before, a blizzard had made travel nearly impossible. But on the morning of the uncovering, the skies cleared, the wind was stilled, and the sun broke thorough though creation itself made way.

As her coffin was raised from the frozen ground and reverently opened in the presence of Gospel readings, what was revealed became a quiet

confirmation of sanctity. Her bones bore the golden, honey-colored hue often associated with the relics of the saints. Her headscarf, kasp'aq, and wedding veil—garments worn in prayer, in service, and in love—remained miraculously preserved. These sacred vestments stood as silent witnesses to a life clothed in humility and grace.

She was not found incorrupt in the full sense, but the presence of grace upon her relics was undeniable. Her sanctity was not in outward marvels but in the quiet transfiguration of a life lived entirely for God. She had not been exalted in the world, but now the Church beheld her as one glorified by heaven.

Pilgrims began to arrive. Prayers multiplied. Icons were painted. And the faithful across the land—from the tundra of Alaska to the deserts of Arizona, from the Orthodox heartlands of Ukraine to small mission chapels across North America and Canada—began to call upon her as Saint Olga Michael, the righteous mother and wonderworker of the North.

Signs and Testimonies of Her Intercession

As the Church has always taught, God glorifies His saints not only in life but also after death, working through them to comfort the sorrowful, heal the wounded, and guide the lost. So it is with Saint Olga of Kwethluk, whose prayers have brought light into the darkest places, especially to women who have suffered abuse, to mothers in labor, to the grieving, and to all those in need of

maternal tenderness. Her intercession is quiet, but her presence is unmistakable.

Comfort to the Grieving

One woman, originally from Kwethluk but living in Arizona, had a dream in which Matushka Olga appeared, telling her that her mother was being brought to a bright and joyful place. The woman awoke to news that her mother had been suddenly hospitalized and flown from the village to Anchorage. She traveled to be with her and was able to comfort her mother with the vision—and so the woman died in peace, free from fear, embraced by both her daughter and the hope that Saint Olga had brought.

Healing from Abuse

Another woman, a survivor of childhood abuse, saw Matushka Olga in a dream—not as a distant figure, but as a mother and midwife who labored with her soul. In the dream, Saint Olga embraced her, anointed her, and gently removed the pain that had festered for decades. The woman awoke healed of her spiritual torment, no longer afraid of love, no longer ashamed.

A survivor of clerical abuse shared a similar vision: Saint Olga appeared silently, offering no condemnation but only pure maternal compassion, restoring the woman's faith and helping her begin again.

Miracles of Healing and Protection

- A priest, present during his daughter's difficult labor, witnessed Matushka Olga standing beside them. The pain ceased, and the child was born in peace.
- A woman undergoing heart surgery reported a vision of Matushka Olga entering the room. She was filled with warmth and peace, and her recovery was swift.
- A young boy, unjustly detained by legal authorities, was released after his family prayed to Saint Olga. Their trust in her intercession did not go unanswered.
- A couple devastated by repeated miscarriages conceived and carried a healthy child to term after entrusting their sorrows to the prayers of the holy Matushka.
- In Ukraine, a man who had long suffered from a painful affliction was instantly healed after calling on her name in desperation.

Dreams, Consolations, and Signs

- A woman grieving on Christmas saw Saint Olga seated beside Christ at a riverside, full of silent love. She awoke comforted.
- Another woman, plagued by traumatic nightmares, saw serpents tormenting her—until, in her dream, a woman appeared, and they fled. When showing a picture of Saint Olga afterward, she recognized the face immediately, though she had never seen it before.

Reconciliation and Return

- An Alaskan man, burdened for decades by shame after disobeying Matushka Olga as a child, found himself unable to hunt successfully ever since. After praying to her and asking forgiveness, he was reconciled—and his hunting, and spirit, were restored.

These are but a few of the countless stories whispered in homes and churches, written in journals, and shared among the faithful. They are not the loud wonders of empire or spectacle. They are the miracles of a true mother—small, profound, personal, and filled with grace.

Through her, the abused are comforted, the sick are healed, the lost are found, and the grieving are not left alone. She is a quiet flame in the northern land, a steady hand to the trembling, a living icon of maternal love transfigured by Christ.

A Saint for Alaska and for All the World

In every generation, God raises up His saints—those who live not for themselves, but for others, and whose lives are transfigured by love. Some are prophets. Some are martyrs. Some are ascetics or bishops or missionaries. And some, like Saint Olga of Kwethluk, are mothers whose holiness is woven through the fabric of everyday life: in quiet prayers, in bread baked with love, in garments sewn for the cold, in the simple, unseen acts of mercy that echo in eternity.

She lived in obscurity, yet now her name is spoken in cathedrals and chapels, in villages and homes, in whispered prayers and joyous hymns. She did not study theology, yet she embodied the theology of the Incarnation: that God has taken flesh and dwells among us, and that holiness is not reserved for the few, but shines in every person who lives in Christ.

She is a saint of the Alaskan land, yet her love has crossed every border. Her spirit walks where the Yup'ik drum once sounded and where Orthodox chant now rises. Her prayers accompany survivors, mothers, widows, children, and all who suffer in silence. To the broken, she is a healer. To the forgotten, she is a friend. To the despair, she is a light in the long night of the soul.

The Yup'ik elders say: ***"A real person does not disappear but remains in the hearts of those they have loved."*** In the Church, we say more: A real person in Christ becomes a saint, and the hearts they have loved, in communion with the Lord, become the Church, the living body of Christ in the world.

Saint Olga Michael of Kwethluk—Tanqilria Arrsamquq, the Quiet One—has not left us. She remains, as she always was praying, watching, guiding.

Righteous Mother Olga, Matushka of all Alaska,
Refuge of the afflicted, comfort of the grieving,
Intercessor for women, protector of the pure,
Pray to Christ God for us, that our souls may be saved.

Livestream Services for the Glorification of the Righteous Olga of Kwethluk

Links are now available to livestream the upcoming glorification services of the Righteous Olga of Kwethluk.

The following services will be broadcast live:

Primatial All-Night Vigil for the Glorification of Saint Olga – Kwethluk, Alaska
Date: Thursday, June 19 Time: 4:00 PM AKDT
Livestream: https://youtube.com/live/iUpL1KWTgxc?feature=share

Primatial Divine Liturgy for the Glorification of Saint Olga – Kwethluk, Alaska
Date: Friday, June 20 Time: 9:00 AM AKDT
Livestream: https://youtube.com/live/S53n8pgekLI?feature=share

Primatial All-Night Vigil in Honor of Saint Olga – Anchorage, Alaska
Date: Saturday, June 21 Time: 5:00 PM AKDT
Livestream: https://youtube.com/live/x-H-PXE7zv4?feature=share

Primatial Divine Liturgy in Honor of Saint Olga – Anchorage, Alaska
Date: Sunday, June 22 Time: 9:00 AM AKDT
Livestream: https://youtube.com/live/gH7pQyw7I5Y?feature=share

THE APOSTLES FAST

The Apostles Fast, also known as the Saints Peter and Paul Fast, continues through June 28 The Feast of the holy apostles Peter and Paul is celebrated on Sunday, June 29.

FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

The Vesperal Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom for the Feast of the Nativity of the Holy, Glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John will be celebrated **Monday evening, June 23 at 6:00 pm**

PARISH COUNCILMEETING

June 24, 2025, at 6:30 pm

BAPTISMAL DIVINE LITURGY

Next Sunday, June 29, the Baptismal Divine Liturgy will be celebrated with the Baptism of Ronan Williamson, son of Daniel Williamson.

GRASS CUTTERS NEEDED

Please check the sign-up sheet on the counter in the Church Vestibule and sign up for your availability. Please see Subdeacon Terrence Bilas for questions.

OUR STEWARDSHIP

June 15, 2025

Candles: $ 36.00
Sun. Tray Offerings: 1,055.00
Tithely Donations; 902.62

TOTAL: $1,993.62

REMEBERING 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 SHUTIN

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
Meliss Trace
Frances Hakim
Louis Hakim
Joey Gresh
Halina Woroncow
Joseph Taylor
Brian Gable
Ellen Rees
David Elioff
Sofia Wsevolodovna

Book Study: LIVING AS AN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN IN AMERICAN SOCIETY

7:00-8:15 PM, Thursdays, June 26 - July 10, St. Elia Church (a Zoom connection will also be available)

Orthodox Christians are often unaware of how profoundly American culture affects their beliefs and spiritual practices. American ideas and habits regarding individualism, democracy, progress, politics, sexuality, and wealth are frequently at odds with the teachings of Holy Tradition. This study is intended to shed light on these secular attitudes and philosophies, and compare them, in a side-by-side format, to the theology and spiritual practices of the Eastern Orthodox Church. The goal of our class is not simply to know what Orthodoxy teaches, but to achieve an Orthodox *phronema* or mindset.

The class is based on an eBook (PDF) by the same name. For those without computer access, black and white printed copies can be made in advance by request (about
$8 for an unbound copy). But most people will benefit by using the searchable electronic version which contains hundreds of online links.

If you are interested in joining this class, you can download the book: saintelia.com/news/bookstudy/

If you are attending by zoom, please contact Bill DiPuccio by email to obtain the link:
wlliamdipuccio@sbcglobal.net
Bill Di Puccio PhD