WEEKLY BULLETIN

September 14, 2025, Vol. 42, No. 29
14th Sunday After Pentecost
The Exaltation of the Life-giving Cross

THE VOICE

SAINT ELIA ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish of the Orthodox Church in America

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His Eminence Alexander, Archbishop of Toledo, Bulgarian Diocese,
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, Deaconisa Heidi Gresh.

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, September14 – Reader Michael Luc
Sunday, September 21 –Reader Nicholas Morelli
Sunday, September 28 –Reader Joshua Wherley
Sunday, October 5 – Mary Beth Gray

Sunday, October 12 – Deaconisa Heidi Gresh

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES

14th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - Tone 5
THE UNIVERSAL EXALTATION OF THE PRECIOUS AND LIFE-CREATING CROSS ***Strict Fast***
Saturday, September 13
5:00 pm Great Vespers and Confessions
Matins Gospel: John 12:28-36
Sunday, September 14
9:10 am 3rd and 6th Hours: Reader Michael Luc
9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom
Epistle Reader: Reader Michael Luc
Epistle: 1 Corinthians 1:18-24
Gospel: John 19:6-11, 13-20, 25-28, 30-35

Panakhida for +George Pultea as requested by Eve Tavenier

15th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - Tone 6
SUNDAY AFTER THE EXALTATION OF THE PRECIOUS AND LIFE-GIVING CROSS
Saturday, September 20
5:00 pm Great Vespers and Confessions
Matins Gospel: Luke 24:1-12
Sunday, September 21
9:10 am 3rd and 6th Hours: Reader Nicholas Morelli
9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom
Epistle Reader: Reader Nicholas Morelli
Epistle: Galatians 2:16-20
Gospels: Mark 8:34-9:1; Matthew 22:35-46

"What I see around me would drive me insane, if I did not know that no matter what happened, God will have the last word"

Saint Paisios

SUNDAY SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 1:18-24

Christ the Power and Wisdom of God

18 For the [a]message of the cross is foolishness to those
who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is
the power of God. 19 For it is written:

"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise And bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent."

20 Where *is* the wise? Where *is* the scribe?
Where *is* the dispute of this age? Has not God made
foolish the wisdom of this world?

21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through
wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the
foolishness of the message preached to save those who
believe. 22 For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek
after wisdom; 23 but we preach Christ crucified, to the
Jews a [c]stumbling block and to
the Greeks foolishness,
24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks,
Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Gospel: John 19: 6-11, 13-20, 25-28, 30-35

5 Then Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns
and the purple robe. And Pilate said to them, "Behold
the Man!" 6 Therefore, when the chief priests and

officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "You take Him and crucify Him, for I find no fault in Him." [7] The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God." [8] Therefore, when Pilate heard that saying, he was the more afraid, [9] and went again into the Praetorium, and said to Jesus, "Where are You from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. [10] Then Pilate said to Him, "Are You not speaking to me? Do You not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?" [11] Jesus answered, "You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore, the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin."

[13] When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha. [14] Now it was the Preparation Day of the Passover, and about the sixth hour. And he saito the Jews, "Behold your King!" [15] But they cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar!" [16] Then he delivered Him to them to be crucified. So, they took Jesus and led Him away.

The Crucifixion

[17] And He, bearing His cross, went out to a place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha, [18] where they crucified Him, and two others with Him, one on either side, and Jesus in the center.

19 Now Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And
the writing was: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING
OF THE JEWS. 20 Then many of the Jews read this
title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near
the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Greek, and
Latin.
25 Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother,
and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and
Mary Magdalene. 26 When Jesus therefore saw His
mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by,
He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your
son!" 27 Then He said to the disciple, "Behold your
mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her to
his own home. 28 After this, Jesus, knowing that all
things were now accomplished, that the Scripture
might be fulfilled, said, "I thirst!"
. 30 So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said,
"It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His
spirit.

Jesus' Side Pierced

31 Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that
the bodies should not remain on the cross on the
Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews
asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that
they might be taken away. 32 Then the soldiers came
and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was
crucified with Him. 33 But when they came to Jesus
and saw that He was already dead, they did not break
His legs. 34 But one of the soldiers pierced His side
with a spear, and immediately blood and water came
out. 35 And he who has seen has testified, and his

testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe.

The Universal Exaltation of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross

Commemorated on September 14

The pagan Roman Emperors tried to obliterate the holy places where our Lord Jesus Christ suffered and rose from the dead, so that they would be forgotten. Emperor Hadrian (117-138) ordered that Golgotha and the Lord's Sepulchre be buried, and that a temple in honor of the pagan "goddess" Venus and a statue of Jupiter be placed there. Pagans gathered at this place and offered sacrifice to idols.

Eventually after 300 years, by Divine Providence, the Christian holy places, the Sepulchre of the Lord, and the Life-giving Cross, were discovered and opened for veneration. This took place under Emperor Constantine the Great (306-337) after his victory over Maxentius (in 312), who ruled the Western part of the Roman Empire, and over Licinius, the ruler of its Eastern part. In the year 323 Constantine became the sole ruler of the vast Roman Empire.

In 313 Saint Constantine issued the Edict of Milan, by which Christianity was legalized and persecutions against Christians in the Western half of the Empire were stopped. Although Licinius had signed the Edict of Milan in order to oblige Constantine, he continued

his cruel persecutions against Christians. Only after his conclusive defeat did the Edict of Milan extend also to the Eastern part of the Empire.

The Holy Equal of the Apostles Emperor Constantine, triumphing over his enemies in three wars, with God's assistance, had seen the Sign of the Cross in the heavens. Written beneath were the words: "By this you shall conquer."

Ardently desiring to find the Cross upon which our Lord Jesus Christ was crucified, Saint Constantine sent his mother, the pious Empress Helen (May 21), to Jerusalem, providing her with a letter to Saint Makarios, the Patriarch of Jerusalem. Saint Helen journeyed to the holy places connected with the earthly life of the Savior, building more than 80 churches, at Bethlehem the birthplace of Christ, and on the Mount of Olives where the Lord ascended to Heaven, and at Gethsemane where the Savior prayed before His sufferings, and where the Mother of God was buried after her Dormition.

Although the holy Empress Helen was no longer young, she set about completing the task with enthusiasm. In her search for the Life-giving Cross, she questioned both Christians and Jews, but for a long time her search remained unsuccessful. Finally, she was directed to a certain elderly Jew named Jude who stated that the Cross was buried beneath the temple of Venus. They demolished the pagan temple and, after praying, they began to excavate the ground. Soon the Lord's Tomb was uncovered. Not far from it were three crosses, and a board with the inscription ordered

by Pilate, and four nails which had pierced the Lord's Body (March 6).

To discover on which of the three crosses the Savior had been crucified, Patriarch Makarios alternately touched the crosses to a corpse. When the Cross of the Lord touched the dead man, he was restored to life. After witnessing the raising of the dead man, everyone was convinced that the Life-giving Cross had been found.

Christians came in huge crowds to venerate the Holy Cross, beseeching Saint Makarios to lift the Cross, so that those far off could see it. Then the Patriarch and other spiritual leaders lifted the Holy Cross, and the people prostrated themselves before the Honorable Wood, saying "Lord have mercy." This solemn event occurred in the year 326.

During the discovery of the Life-giving Cross another miracle took place: a woman who was close to death was healed by the shadow of the Holy Cross. The elderly Jude (October 28) and other Jews believed in Christ and were baptized. Jude was given the name Kyriakos, and later he was consecrated as the Bishop of Jerusalem. He suffered a martyr's death for Christ during the reign of Emperor Julian the Apostate (361-363).

Saint Helen took part in the Life-giving Wood and nails with her to Constantinople. Saint Constantine ordered a majestic and spacious church to be built at Jerusalem in honor of the Resurrection of Christ, also including under its roof the Life-giving Tomb of the Lord and Golgotha. The church was built ten years. Saint Helen did not survive until the dedication of the

church; she reposed in the year 327. The church was consecrated on September 13, 335. On the following day, September 14, the festal celebration of the Exaltation of the Honorable and Life-giving Cross was established.

Another event connected to the Cross of the Lord is remembered also on this day: its return to Jerusalem from Persia after a fourteen-year captivity. During the reign of the Byzantine Emperor Phokas (602-610) the Persian king Khozróēs II attacked Constantinople defeated the Greek army, plundered Jerusalem, capturing both the Life-giving Cross of the Lord and the Holy Patriarch Zachariah (609-633).

The Cross remained in Persia for fourteen years, and only under Emperor Herakleios (610-641), who defeated Khozróēs and concluded peace with his successor and son Syroes, was the Lord's Cross returned to the Christians.

With great solemnity the Life-giving Cross was transferred to Jerusalem. Emperor Herakleios, wearing a crown and his royal purple garments carried the Cross of Christ. The Emperor was accompanied by Patriarch Zachariah. At the gates by which they ascended Golgotha, the Emperor stopped suddenly and was unable to proceed. The holy Patriarch explained to the Emperor that an Angel of the Lord was blocking his way. Herakleios was told to remove his royal trappings and to walk barefoot, since He Who bore the Cross for the salvation of the world had made His way to Golgotha in all humility. Then Herakleios donned plain clothes, and without further hindrance, carried the Cross of Christ into the church.

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THE CROSS STANDS…
WHILE THE WORLD TURNS.”

“Let your demeanor, your dress, your walking, your sitting down, the nature of your food, the quality of your being, your house and what it contains aim at simplicity. And let your speech, your singing, your manner with your neighbor, let those things also be in accord with humility rather than with vanity.

In your words let there be no empty pretense, in your singing no excess sweetness, in your conversation be not ponderous or overbearing. In everything refrain from seeking to appear important.

Be helpful to your friends, kind to the ones with whom you live, gentle to your servant, patient with those who are troublesome, loving towards the lowly, comforting those in trouble, visiting those in affliction, never despising anyone, gracious in friendship, cheerful in answering others, courteous, approachable to everyone, never speaking your own praises, nor getting others to speak of them, never taking part in unbecoming conversations, and concealing where you may whatever gifts you possess.”

-St. Basil the Great

"BEFORE THY CROSS, O CHRIST, WE BOW DOWN IN WORSHIP, AND THY HOLY RESURRECTION WE GLORIFY."

"BLESSING BAGS" for those in need

This fall, our parish family will be collecting items to include in "blessing bags" containing necessities for those who are homeless or otherwise in need. Look for the bin located near the entrance of church and drop off your items as you come in each week. **The blessing bags will be assembled following Divine Liturgy on Sunday, October 5,** so all items must be turned in by then. The bags will be given to **Peter Maurin Center** to be distributed to those living in tents in the Akron area and otherwise in need, with any extra loose items to be made available through their twice-a-month toiletry pantry. **Below is a list of ideas of items that may be contributed. Thank you for doing your part to help those in need!**

Baby Wipes
Hand Sanitizer (travel size)
Deodorant (travel size)
Toothbrushes
Toothpaste (travel size)
Shampoo (travel size)
Conditioner (travel size)
Combs
Chapstick
Tissues (travel size)

Feminine Products
Socks
Small Water Bottles
Small Packs of Trail Mix/Granola, etc.
Gum/Mints

CHURCH SCHOOL STAFF MEETING

Following the Divine Liturgy **this Sunday, September 14,** there will be a Church Staff Meeting in Office. Our Parish Church School will begin on **Sunday, October 5.**

DIOCESAN CONFERENCE

The Annual Conference of our Diocese, the Bulgarian Diocese of the Orthodox Church in America, will be held on **Friday, October 10, and Saturday, October 11,** at St. Nicholas Church in Burton (Flint), Michigan Subdeacon David Trace will be our delegate to the Diocesan Conference.

ARCHBISHOP ALEXANDER'S PASTORAL VISIT

Our Father and Archbishop Alexander will be with us on **Saturday, November 8, for Vespers and on Sunday, November 9**, for the celebration of the Pontifical Divine Liturgy. On Sunday, the Archbishop will Tonsure Daniel Slife as a Reader, who, with the blessing of the Archbishop, has entered our Diocesan Diaconate Program.

OUR STEWARDSHIP – SEPTEMBER 7, 2025

Candles:	$ 63.00
Sunday Tray Offerings:	675.00

Improvement Fund:	165.00
Candle Desk Donation:	10.00
Tithely Donations:	1,095.27
TOTAL:	**$2,008.27**

REMEMBERING THOSE SERVING IN THE ARMED FORCES

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

REMEMBERING OUR SICK AND SHUTINS

Archbishop Onuphry of the Ukraine
Archbishop Benjamin
Archbishop Nathaniel
Archpriest Andrew Moulton
Archpriest Emil Huntyan
Matushka Laryssa Huntyan
Priest Gabriel Bilas
Priest John Manuel
Mitred Archpriest Daniel Kovalak
Matushka Myra Kovalak
Matushka Christine Zebren
Matushka Valerie Zahersky
Reader John Paluch
Florence Lambo
Mary Magensky
Sarah Niglio
Melissa Trace
Frances Hakim
Louis Hakim
Joey Gresh
Halina Woroncow

Joseph Taylor
Brian Gable
Ellen Rees
David Elioff
Sofia Wsevolodovna

OCW KICKOFF 2025-26

Sunday, September 28, 2025, 2:00 4:00 pm
St. George Antiochian Church, 3204 Ridgewood Road

Eat: **Sweets, Savories, Beverages Win: Gift Baskets**
Celebrate**: Orthodox Christian Woman of the Year**
Everyone Welcome
Guest Speaker: Kassiani Callos
presents:
"BAKING YOU HAPPY"
Reflections on living a life of service, the many blessings I've received, and lessons I'm learning along the way

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CHRISTIAN ORTHODOX COUNCIL OF AKRON

presents

Hymns of the Theotokos

October 5, 2025 -- 4:00 pm
St. Nicholas Orthodox Church, Mogadore, Ohio

Choirs from Orthodox Christian Churches in the Greater Akron area presenting Orthodox Hymnography for the Birthgiver of God.

Free will offering to benefit COCA activities.