WEEKLY BULLETIN

March ~~1, 2~~026, Vol. 43, No. 9
First Sunday of Great Lent
Sunday of Orthodoxy

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

2026 Parish Council

President: Veronica Bilas
V. President: Daniel Ralich
Secretary: Subdeacon Aaron Gray
Treasurer: Reader Daniel Slife
Members: Anastasia Bohush, Anthony Dodovich, Bud Graham, Jefferson Hodge,

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 - 2026

Sunday, Mar. 1 -Mary Beth Gray
Sunday, Mar. 8 - Hours: Subd. Terence Bilas
Epistle: Anastasia Bohush
Sunday, Mar. 15 – Sue Ellen Turscak

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES

SECOND WEEK OF GREAT LENT

FIRST SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT - Tone 5
SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY

Saturday, February 28
5:00 pm Great Vespers and Confession

Sunday, March 1
9:10 am 3rd and 6th Hours: Mary Beth Gray
9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great
Epistle Reader: Mary Beth Gray
Epistle: Heb 11:24-26, 32-12:2 Gospel: John 1:43-51

5:00 pm SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY VESPERS
Saint Thomas Church
Speaker: Father Remus Grama

Wednesday, March 4 – (at St. Elia)
6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

Friday, March 6 – (at St. Elia)
6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
Lenten Covered Dish

THIRD WEEK OF GREAT LENT

SECOND SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT – Tone 6
Saint Gregory Palamas

Saturday, March 7
5:00 pm Great Vespers and Confessions
Matins Gospel: Luke 24:36-53

Sunday, March 8
9:10 am 3rd and 6th Hours:Subd. Terrence Bilas
9:30 am Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great
Epistle Reader: Anastasia Bohush
Epistle: Hebrews 1:10-2:3 Gospel: Mark 2:1-12

5:00 pm AKRON LENTEN VESPERS
Presentation of Our Lord Church

SUNDAY SCRIPTURE READINGS
SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY

Epistle: Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-12:2

By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward.

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: who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again.
Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, [a]were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented— of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, *in* dens and caves of the earth.

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

The Race of Faith

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 let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the [b]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 1:43-5:1

Philip and Nathanael

The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, “Follow Me.” Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

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.”

And Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?”

Philip said to him, “Come and see.”

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

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.”

Nathanael answered and said to Him, “Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”

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.”

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.”

1st Sunday of Great Lent:
Sunday of Orthodoxy

Commemorated on March 1

The first Sunday of Great Lent is called the Sunday of Orthodoxy because it commemorates the restoration of the Holy Icons and the triumph of the Orthodox Faith against the terrible heresy of the Iconoclasts, i.e. those heretics who refused to honor the Holy Icons. For more than a hundred years the Church was disturbed by the evil doctrine of iconoclasm.

The first Emperor to persecute the Church was Leo the Isaurian, and the last was Theophilos, the spouse of Saint Theodora (February 11), who reigned after her husband's death and re-established Orthodoxy in the time of Patriarch Methodios (June 14).

Empress Theodora proclaimed publicly that we do not kiss the Icons as a sign of worship, nor do we honor them as "gods," but as images of their prototypes.

In the year 843, on the first Sunday of the Fast, Saint Theodora and her son, Emperor Michael, venerated the Holy Icons together with the clergy and the people. Since that time this event has been commemorated every year, because it was definitively determined that we do not worship the Icons, but we honor and glorify all the Saints who are depicted on them. We worship only the Triune God: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and no one else, neither a Saint, nor an Angel.

Journey to Pascha with the Psalms!

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. 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 **February 23**, so that we will pray through the entire book of Psalms twice during 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.

To participate, all you need is a Bible and a little bit of time to set aside each day. You can join in by going to http://saintelia.com/news/lenten-prayer-group/ and filling in the online form. Shortly before Great Lent begins on February 23, 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.

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!

Winter/Spring Bible Study:
The Epistle to the Hebrews

Join us as we study and discuss this rich and meaningful book of the New Testament that is read in the Orthodox Church throughout the year. All sessions will be from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., with locations split between the St. Elia parish hall and Artisan Coffee at 662 Canton Road in Ellet, which has a private room available for us to reserve (and excellent food and coffee!). Please note that no outside food or beverages are permitted for the sessions at Artisan

.**Please see Deacon Aaron with any questions. We look forward to learning together!**

Session 4: High Priest of A New and Better Covenant —
Hebrews 7:1 to 10:39 **Monday, March 9, at St. Elia**

**Session 5: A Good Testimony Through Faith **
Hebrews 11:1 to 12:13 Thursday, April 23, at Artisan Coffee

Session 6: Let Brotherly Love Continue —
Hebrews 12:14 to 13:25 • Thursday, May 14, location TB

OUR STEWARDSHIP - February 15 2026

Candles:	**$ 98.12**
Bookstore:	**19.00**
Tithely Offering:	**1,811.04**
Sunday Tray Offering:	**1,364.00**
TOTAL:	**$3,292.16**

AKRON LENTEN SERVICES

Great Lent begins this year, 2026, begins on Monday, February 23.

Our Greater Akron Orthodox Community will come together for VESPERS each Sunday evening:

March 1 - Sunday of Orthodoxy
5:00 pm -St. Thomas Church

March 8 - St. Gregory Palamas
5:00 pm – Presentation of Our Lord Church
March 15 – Veneration of the Cross
5:00 pm - St. Elia Church
March 22 – St. John Climacus
5:00 pm – St. George Church
March 29 – St. Mary of Egypt
5:00 pm - Sacrament of Holy Unction
St. Nicholas Church

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OCW LENTEN RETREAT

Saturday, March 7, 2026

10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church

Speaker: Fr. Paul Abernathy

Neighborhood Resilience Project

St. Moses the Black Orthodox Church

Pittsburgh, Pa.

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Food items needed for local refugees

From now until the Sunday of the Cross (March 15), our parish will be collecting food items for the **International Institute of Akron (IIA).** Following a change in federal policy, on November 1 over 1,300 refugees and asylees in Summit County lost supplemental food assistance permanently. The IIA is a nonprofit organization that has supported local immigrants and refugees since 1916, with help including resettlement, legal aid, employment and education. They are requesting the following items to help those most affected:

Non-perishable food items

- **White rice**
- **Cooking oil**
- **Salt**
- **Dried beans and lentils**
- **Rice noodles**
- **Egg noodles**
- **White flour**
- **Wheat Flour**
- **Maize flour (fine)**
- **Yeast**

Grocery store gift cards

- **Aldi**
- **Wal Mart**
- **Acme**

Please look for the bin in church to deposit items, and see Deacon Aaron Gray with any questions. Thank you for your care and help for those in need!

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

REMEMBER OUR SICK AND SHUT-INS

Metropolitan Onuphry of the Ukraine
Metropolitan Theodosy of the Ukraine
Metropolitan Arseny of the Ukraine
Archbishop Benjamin
Archbishop Nathaniel
Archpriest Emil Huntyan
Matushka Laryssa Hnntyan
Mitred Archpriest Daniel Kovalak
Matushka Myra Kovalak
Priest Gabriel Bilas
Matushka Christine Zebren
Matushka Valerie Zahersky
Florence Lambo
Michele Lambo
Mary Magensky
Sarah Nigilo
Melissa Trace
Frances Hakim
Louis Hakim
Joey Gresh
Halina Woroncow
Joseph Taylor
Ellen Rees
David Elioff
Sofia Wsevolodov
Gary Thompson
Phyllis Dodovic