



Pastor's Corner

by Rev. Fr. Alex Mackoul

Beloved in Christ, oftentimes we hear people ask questions like, "Is your Church Bible based?" or "Does your Church follow the Bible?" In the moment we usually say, "Yes, of course," but really we want to say a lot more so that they can see the bigger picture. I know it is hard in the moment to articulate what we want to get across, so I hope the following helps you respond to this question when it arises.

Let's start with the fact that most Christians have an underlying belief that the New Testament was written in order to start the Christian Church, but that is not what we know to be true. The Church was alive and well before any NT book was written. You could say the NT was written to help support the Church. You could say it was written to individual churches to help them better "be" the Church. But the Church was already formed, gathering, praying, and taking Communion before any NT Book was written (ironically this is what the NT says). Christianity did not start with a book.

This seems like a small thing but it changes a whole set of assumptions. How often have you heard, "If it's not in the Bible, it's not Christianity." That statement seems very off the mark once we know that the Bible wasn't written to be the basis of Christianity. Christianity didn't

have its beginnings in a book, but in a person (the man Jesus). He taught, preached, gathered disciples, and shared the kingdom of God without writing anything down.

His followers preached, lived, and worshipped without any NT for a good while. It was even longer before any of the books became "canon" (over 300 years later). That might not seem like a long time, but 300 years would be longer than this country has been in existence. Imagine a world where every Christian who lived from George Washington to now didn't have a standard, uniform Bible and still lived a full Christian life. That's the early Church!

The early Christians had a concrete understanding that their religion was not a collection of ideas in a book. It was a lifestyle lived out in community. This faith, without any NT, spread like wildfire amidst persecution from both Jews and Romans and it captured millions of peoples' hearts. What captured them was not any text or written down word, it was a lifestyle. Not just any lifestyle, a divine lifestyle, a lifestyle with energy and zeal and joy!

This doesn't mean that the Bible has a lesser place in Orthodoxy. It's not like we dismiss the Bible or belittle it, trying to find some place to fit it in so we can say we include it. We adorn it with gold and place it on

the Altar. We venerate it in Matins and bless with it in Liturgy. We raise it on high in the entrances. We cense it in the censing pattern. We read it in our services and it informs how our Churches are built. Just because it isn't the source of our faith, doesn't mean it isn't important to our faith.

The Bible has always been authoritative for Christians but it can't be the ultimate authority because the Bible is a book and can't interact with our opinions, ideas, and interpretations. It can't force anyone to believe a certain way. It can't be an ultimate authority.

If the Bible becomes the ultimate authority, that can lead to a lot of issues. The fundamental problem with this kind of Christianity is that the Bible isn't a set of moral guidelines or instructions on how to start a religion. It has many different types of books with different genres, interpreted in different ways, written to different peoples struggling with different things. There is poetry, historical records, songs, letters, prophetic visions, and guidelines for building holy sites. The meaning is often not straightforward. Over the years we have seen that the interpretations are endless.

If you tried to follow these holy writings straight up you would be

Cont. on page 3



Antiochian Women

Ladies Guild News

by Athena Howard, President

The summer brings a bit of a break for the ladies. But we just finished a successful grape leaf roll sale. Thank you to all of you who supported the sale and we hope you enjoy your grape leaves.

Attending the conference at the Antiochian Village was quite an experience. The Antiochian Women of the East have regular service projects and retreats planned throughout the year. And one of our own, Athena Howard, was elected as the Vice President of the AWE and will be attending the Archdiocese convention in Chicago representing the AWE and St. George Charleston.

We have a lot starting up in August.

Our first big thing is decorating the old Bier in the evening of August 13 for the Dormition of the Theotokos. All are welcome to help. The Bier is used at Great Vespers for the Dormition.

After that we begin food preparation for the Annual Dinner. The dinner is October 12 and there will be multiple opportunities for everyone to help.

See the church bulletin for food prep dates

For the rest of the year we are planning a service project, attending a dinner in support of Crossroads and many more exciting things.

Our next meeting is after church Sunday, August 10. Mark your calendars. ✕

The Order of St. Ignatius



by Ganim Howard

The main goal of the Order of St Ignatius is to provide for the needs of the Archdiocese promoting Orthodoxy and its programs, retired priests, missions and education.

If you are thinking of becoming a St. Ignatius member, Bishop Thomas will be in Charleston for the Feast of the Transfiguration (Aug. 6) and the Nativity of the Theotokos (Sept. 21) and could perform the inductions at that time. ✕

Quiet Room/ Nursery news

Sometimes children become restless and need a break from sitting in church. The Quiet Room Nursery is the perfect place to continue to hear and see the liturgy and allow your child to calm down before returning to church. ✕



If you would like to volunteer to help before or during the annual dinner in October, please contact Loretta Haddy, Athena Howard or the Church Office 304-346-0106.

St. George Foundation

by Ronald A. Murad

The St. George Foundation is celebrating its 25th year since its inception in the year of 2000. The Foundation investments consist of the Main Trust and an additional 21 Family Memorial Funds. The Family Memorial Funds are contributions from families of the St. George Cathedral, who would like to honor their loved ones eternally, by having a Memorial / Named Fund specifically for those families. A fund may be established by any donor with a pledge of \$10,000 funded over five years.

Since the Foundation inception in 2000, the St. George Cathedral has received income of \$602,331 through 2024. This income is derived by paying out 80% of all interest and dividends earned in the previous calendar year.

The St. George Foundation's goal is to provide a perpetual funding source to enable St. George Cathedral to fulfill its outreach purpose related to:

Orthodox Christianity
Charity
Youth Programs
Elderly
Education ✕

**Sunday,
September
7th, 2025 is
Grandparents
Day!**



THE ST. GEORGE Grapevine

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The St George Grapevine is published about every three months and is mailed during the first week of the month.



St. George Senior Fellowship

by Maryann Skaff

Our get-together May 6 was a huge success, combining "Cinco de Mayo" and "Derby Days." We had delicious taco salads and cake after which a "run for the roses" was held. Six people at a time lined up in numbered "lanes," and advanced to the finish line as dice were rolled. There was even a special race for those using walkers and wheelchairs! A pinata was hung in the hallway, and several people took turns smashing it. The released candies were shared by all. We sang happy birthday celebrating April, May and June senior birthdays.

Keep cool this summer, and we will see you in the fall. Watch the bulletin for details. ✝

Run for the roses and Cinco de Mayo



Pastor's Corner

cont. from page 1

extremely confused because the text doesn't interpret itself. Guess how many denominations of Christianity there are? There are 30-40 thousand denominations and they all claim the Bible as their authority. These aren't small differences in opinion. They are big enough for people to split from their own communities and start other denominations.

All this to say, when someone asks, "Is your Church Bible based?" We can answer, "Not really, the Bible is based on our Church."

With love in Christ,

Fr Alex

**Summarized from Journey to Reality by Zachary Porcu ✝*



Happy birthday Seniors!





St. George Church School

by Crissy Asseff
Church School Director.

Saint George Orthodox Cathedral ended our Church School year on May 14th.

We had a graduation/celebration to honor our Church School students, High School graduates and College graduates.

We are working on our Vacation Church School which takes place on Thursday and Friday July 17th and 18th. The kids and teachers are very excited for this upcoming VCS. This year is a Genesis Road Trip!

The Church School will return with a kickoff luncheon and sign-up on Sunday September 14th.

God bless and be with our Church School Students and Staff.

If you want to help or volunteer for our children please reach out anytime.

Thank you
Crissy Asseff
Church School director
304-539-8858
crissy@goinstitches.com



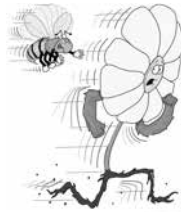
Church School



Annual Picnic

WORD SEARCH

A Lovely Summer



BALL	HAMMOCK	
BASK	HEATWAVE	PATIO
BEACH	HIKE	PLAY
BIKE	ICE	POOL
BOATS	JEANS	SAIL
CANOE	LAKE	SHADE
COOKOUT	LAWN	SHORE
CRUISE	LOAF	STORM
DRIVE	LOUNGE	SUMMER
FISH	OCEAN	SURFING
GALA	OUT	SWIM
GOLF	OUTDOORS	TENNIS
GRILL	PATH	WALK

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St George Liturgical Choir

by Loretta Haddy

The choir is hoping to prepare a Christmas program with sacred and secular music to be performed in December. To accomplish this we will need more voices including several of our previous choir members plus others to join us. We will rehearse once or twice a month, so no Thursday rehearsal requirement. This should be a fun project!!

We continue to impress the need to attend 9:45 Sunday warmup if you can't be at Thursday's rehearsal. We make frequent adjustments for Sunday's service so it is challenging for the choir to smoothly sing the weekly service if you aren't familiar with the changes. Please respect this request so we can sing to the glory of God.

If other organizations plan to have events during coffee hour, please contact us!! ✝



The choir singing at St. George Day.



St. George Day.

St. George Book Store



by Loretta Haddy

The St George Fellowship's Bookstore continues to stay very busy having books, icons, crosses, candles, and other religious items for sale. It's hoped that these items will assist with setting up home altars. We can order items upon request from multiple vendors which usually arrive two weeks later. We have discount accounts set up to get lower prices. The bookstore has a historical library of many books.

We hope to eventually set up a Saint George history section for visitors and others to peruse. Anyone wanting to share items, please let us know. ✝

Kids Corner Q & A

Q. Is There Church in Heaven?

A. In heaven, we won't have churches like the ones we have on earth because everyone in heaven will be a believer in Christ, and all of us will be together in God's presence. So we will be able to talk, laugh, pray, and have fun together all the time. We won't need church buildings either. We will see Jesus in person, so we will be able to worship him all the time, not just an hour a week. There will also be angels in heaven worshipping with us. We don't know exactly what worship will be like, but it won't include announcements, the offering, Bible reading, and a sermon. It will be pure joy. Think about it-we will be able to talk directly to Moses, David, Paul, and all the other faithful and famous servants of God!



KEY VERSE: "But we are looking forward to God's promise of new heavens and a new earth. Only goodness will be there. (2 Peter 3:13)

RELATED VERSES: 1 John 3:2; Revelation 21:1-27

RELATED QUESTIONS: : How big is the church in heaven, if there is one? Who gets to go to heaven? When we all go to heaven, will Jesus make something else on the earth?

NOTE TO PARENTS: Be careful of telling kids that in heaven we get to worship God all the time. They may think that they'll be singing hymn after hymn and listening to sermon after sermon for all eternity. Be sure to explain that heaven will be fun and exciting-better than Disney World, Nintendo, or any party they can imagine.

From 801 Questions Kids Ask About God with answers from the Bible. ✝



Teen SOYO

by Diane Nester, Teen Advisor

Teen SOYO has been busy!

On Lazarus Saturday, teens packed and delivered 300 meal bags for the Ronald McDonald



House. Thank you to Ray Browne for picking up the huge grocery order!

On Holy Friday, Father Alex hosted an Ask Abouna session for teens and their parents.

The much anticipated teens versus adults basketball game took place May 4. We had 17 teenagers either play or run the concession stand. Five students under the age of 12 participated in the halftime contest. Additionally, many adults volunteered to play, run the scoreboard and cheer on the teams. A big thank you to our referee Father Alex, Coach Louie Cassis, and Sierra St Clair for baking and donating pepperoni rolls.

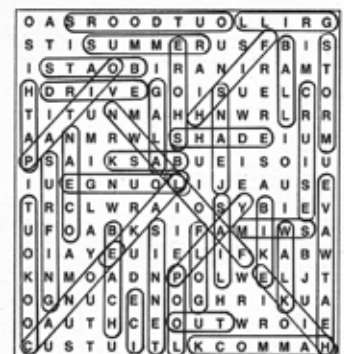
Finally, congratulations to our newly inducted Teen SOYO Officers: President Abigail Nester, Vice President Ariana Choueiri and Secretary/Treasurer Will Mullins. Officers will serve during the 2025-2026 school year.



Teens
vs
adults
basketball



Word Search Answers





Saint George Calendar of Events

Weekly Schedule

Check the weekly bulletin
for updates, changes or
cancellations.

Sunday: 9:30 am Orthros; 10:30
am Divine Liturgy; Church
School after Communion;
Catechumen & Inquirers Class
after Liturgy

Monday: 11:00 am Theology Tea

Wednesday: 3:00 pm Afterschool/
Homeschool Program, 5:30 pm
Our Orthodox Life

Thursday: 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal

Saturday: 5:00 pm Great Vespers/
Confessions



August

1: 7:00 pm Paraklesis
Service

4: 7:00 pm Paraklesis

Service

5: *Transfiguration*: 5:30 pm Orthros,

6:30 pm Hierarchical Divine
Liturgy with Bishop THOMAS

6: 7:00 pm Paraklesis Service

8: 7:00 pm Paraklesis Service

10: 1:00 pm Ladies Guild Kickoff
Meeting

11: 7:00 pm Paraklesis Service

12: 6:30 pm Parish Council Meeting

13: 6:00 pm Bier Decoration for
the Dormition, 7:00 Paraklesis
Service

14: 6:00 pm Great Vespers for the
Dormition

15: 9:30 am *Dormition*: 9:30 am
Orthros, 10:30 am Divine Liturgy

16: 10:00 am Boil Cabbage

17: 12:30 pm Cabbage Rolls
Preparation

18-19: 10:00 am Cabbage Rolls
Preparation

24: 5:00 pm Blessing of the Pets

27: 6:00 pm Great Vespers for St.
Moses the Ethiopian, movie
about St. Moses & Potluck

AUGUST 2025

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

SEPTEMBER 2025

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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OCTOBER 2025

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	



September

1: Labor Day

Ecclesiastical New Year:

9:30 am Divine Liturgy, 7:00

Ladies Guild Meeting

7: 12:30 pm Children's Choir

Rehearsal with Fr. Alex

8: *Nativity of the Theotokos*: 9:30 am

Orthros, 10:30 am Divine Liturgy

9: 10:00 am Render Butter for
Baklava, 6:30 pm Parish Council
Meeting

10: 10:00 am Render Butter for
Baklava, 5:30 pm Our Orthodox
Life Kickoff

11-13: 10:00 am Grape Leaves
Preparation

14: 12:30 pm Church School Kickoff
Luncheon

16: 7:00 pm Akathist to St.
Euphemia

21: Welcome Guest Sunday, 12:30
pm Teen SOYO Meeting

22-24: 10:00 am Kibbee Preparation

24: 5:30 pm Supplication Service to
St. Thekla & Potluck



October

4: 10:00 am Nuts

Preparation for
Baklava

6: 10:00 am Baklava Preparation,

7:00 pm Ladies Guild Meeting

7: 10:00 am Baklava Preparation,

5:00 pm Package Hummus

10: 3:00 pm Onions Preparation

11: 10:00 am Green Beans & Rice
Preparation

12: 5:00 am Annual Dinner
Preparation, Annual Dinner: 12
noon – 6:00 pm

13: 7:00 pm Service for St. Jacob of
Hamatoura

14: 6:30 pm Parish Council Meeting

18: *St. Luke the Evangelist*: 9:30 am
Orthros, 10:30 am Divine Liturgy



50th Anniversary

Leaders of the parish of Saint George were instrumental in bringing about an important event for all Orthodox Christians in the United States. In 1973, the two leaders of the Church, Metropolitan Michael Shaheen of the Toledo Archdiocese and Metropolitan Philip Saliba of the New York Archdiocese, met in Charleston in an effort to unify the two factions. In 1975, celebration of the union took place at last, creating one united Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America, with Metropolitan Philip designated Primate, and Metropolitan Michael becoming Auxiliary.



The whole church watched with nervous anticipation as the visitors sat where the Martins have sat for 42 years.



Thank you Fr. Nicholas

On Sunday July 28th, we celebrated the Liturgy one last time with Fr. Nicholas Newman and his family. The Newman family is moving to Wilkes Barre, Pa to serve St. Mary Antiochian Orthodox Church. We will always remember Fr. Nicholas as a humble servant who helped children, catechumens, and cradle Orthodox dive deeper into the faith and come to life in the beauty of Orthodoxy. As a layman, deacon, and priest, he showed us what true leadership was all about. No task was beneath him and no matter what he did, he made sure that he was present



in a spirit of joy and unity. At his farewell luncheon, we thanked him with great love, shared stories, and offered him a Paschal vestment set. We also offered Kh. Casey an icon and thanked her for all her work with our youth. May God continue to guide the Newman family and grant them many years in faithful service!



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