

St. George Orthodox Church

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V. Rev. Father Joseph M. Abud, Pastor

Rev. Father Michael Bassett, Assistant

Web Site: saintgeorgeflint.org

November 28, 2021

Christ is in our Midst! *He is and ever shall be!*

Live Streaming of Divine Services

St. George is open for all parishioners and visitors. If you cannot attend, please pray with us through our livestream which can be seen on our YouTube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/SaintGeorgeOrthodoxChurchFlintMI>

If you have a smart TV, you actually have a web browser and YouTube app built in. All you have to do is start the browser app for YouTube and put the link in the address bar.

Welcome to St. George! Thank you for attending today's Divine Services. If you are a first-time visitor, please register your visit by completing the guest book located in the narthex. We would appreciate getting to meet you after liturgy, so feel free to join us during Coffee Fellowship in our Banquet Center! Every Sunday we remember the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The word "*Liturgy*" means *work of the people* that means everyone participates through singing, praying, hearing the teaching, and opening our hearts to allow God's grace to enter. We believe Holy Communion to be a sign that in Christ we have all things in common, share an identical faith, and are united fully to the Orthodox Church. Anyone interested in learning more about our faith are encouraged to speak with one of our clergy. Holy Communion can be given to Orthodox Christians who have prepared themselves through prayer, fasting (no food or drink from midnight the night before), the Sacrament of Confession (7 years and older) within the last 2 months, and being at peace with others. Everyone else, including visitors, are invited to receive the final blessing of the priest and Holy Bread at the end of Liturgy. Again, welcome!

Holy Bread Offerings (*Oblations*)

- George and Jeanette Nassif for the health of their family and in loving memory of **Sylvia** and **Jack** Abdella, **Ace** Nassif, and **George** and **Minera** Aswad.

Baptism/Chrismation Days

The Church School offers the Holy Bread for their teachers and/or students who are celebrating their *New Birth* {Baptism and/or Chrismation} into the Church this week:

- **Luka** Mitri ~ November 26th

May they be children of the Light and heirs of eternal good things. {Baptismal Service}

- We also pray for the servants of God who have fallen asleep in the Lord: **Georgette** Hayder (+October 21st, sister of Wadia Albaba), **Matthew** Handley (+October 28th, friend of Nataly Odeh), Dr. **Amal** Khoury (+November 16th, niece of Aida Nassar), **Roza** Alied (+November 17th, grandmother of Dania Hanna), and **Vera** Farah (+November 21st).
- Prayers are offered for our parishioners who are ill, recovering, or in need, especially His servants: **Metropolitan Paul** and **Archbishop John** who are in captivity, **Sahar** Abdallah, **Asma** Abuaita (sister of Janett), **Shafiq** Abuaitah, **Suheil** and **Abeer** Abuaita, **Anwar** Abueita, **Chelsy** Abufarha, **William** Alsahouri, **Sharon** Ballreich (sister of Nancy Silpoch and Debbie Salim), **Emil** Bathish, **Levi** Cooper, **Jennifer** Craft and **Brionna** Gorbitt (friends of Mariann Hayek), **Vera** Daoud, **Jimmy** David, **Ranna** Esho (friend of Batoul Burbar), **Averie** Fisher (niece of Doug and Sandy Thomas), **Elias** Gantos, **Mariam** Ghanim (mother of Manal Abuaita), **Phyllis** Good, **Amy** Handley (friend of Nataly Odeh), **Daisy** Isaac, **Nicola** Khoury, **Lan** Kiley (niece of Raji and Sue Salomon), **George** and **Jeanette** Nassif, **Aida** Raffoul, **Juliette** Qumseya, **Roger** Saadeh, **Deborah** Salim, **Elaine** and **Ellis** Salim, **Nicholas** Saseen, **Elaine** Shaheen, and **Michael** Silpoch; **Jarrett**, **Elise** [daughter of Habeeb & Denise Ghattas and Jill Smith], and newborn **James Michael** Lane (October 25th); **Ayman**, **Diana**, and newborn **Alayna** Khair (November 11th).
- We also pray for our expectant parents: **Jasanta** and **Ghassan** Al-Khoury, **Natania** and **Rene** Hanna, **Kari** and **Panagiotis** Mikroudis [daughter of John and Theresa Farah], and **Yara** and **Mudaffer** Rishmawi.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP is not hosted today ☹️. Please offer a donation to help cover our costs, thank you!

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP HOSTS Available dates: December 26th ~ sign-up poster and hosting information is in the Lounge and includes bringing whatever you wish to serve and cleaning up afterwards. St. George provides coffee, cups, cream, and sugar at a charge to the host of \$25. *During the Christmas Fast (November 15th - December 24th), no meat, poultry, eggs, dairy, or their by-products are served.*

WANT TO BE AN ANGEL? Our parish is again participating in the **North End Soup Kitchen Angel Tree**. Thirty-two (32) children are looking for “angels” to brighten their Christmas. Gift range is between \$30 and \$50. Gift cards are OK for children 15-17 years old. Several items may be requested, but you only need to pick one or more of these items. Attach the provided gift tag that has the child’s name, the code number to the gift, and place in gift bags. All gifts must be returned by December 5th! The *Angel Tree* with tags can be picked up after Divine Liturgy in the Banquet Center or by contacting May Gantos (810-869-4012). If you would like to make an online donation or send it directly to the church with the memo *Angel Tree* so our coordinators can purchase gifts, thank you! If you have any questions, please speak with our coordinators May, Gabby, or Lauren Gantos. Again, thank you, and God bless your generosity!

ARE YOU VACCINATED? DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS AND NEED ANSWERS? We are blessed to have many medical professionals in our parish and they all want you to get a Covid-19 vaccine. There is lots of wrong information on TV and social media. Don’t be fooled; it could cost you, your family,

or friends in a tragic way! If you have any questions or need truthful information, please contact Dr. Lindsey (Farah) Brunner: text ONLY please at 810-908-9213. If you or someone you know needs help to make an appointment or be driven to one, please call the office 810-732-0720.

CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS!

Christmas Program Update! Because of the lack of interest and commitment from our students, we have asked them to sing a Christmas song or play an instrument ~ please RSVP to me with their choice today. We need to make sure it is appropriate to be sung or played in the church. Also, the children attending the program on Saturday, December 11th will sing a group song; the music will be given to them this Sunday. A wonderful *Family Night* in the Banquet Center immediately follows Great Vespers and short program; who knows, we may even have a special visitor! Please contact me cooeita@aol.com or 810-691-0956 with any questions. *Janet Abueita, Director*

COMING EVENTS

This Week	On Monday, November 15 th , we begin the traditional forty-day Nativity Fast (also called the Christmas or Advent Fast) in preparation for the feast of the Nativity of Christ on December 25 th . The Fast is divided into two periods. The <u>first period</u> is until December 19 th when the traditional fasting discipline (<i>no meat, poultry, eggs, dairy, fish, wine, oil and their by-products</i>) is observed on all days except Tuesdays and Thursdays when <i>wine and oil</i> are allowed and Saturdays and Sundays when <i>fish, wine, and oil</i> are allowed.
Monday	Bible Study: Gospel of St. Matthew the Apostle and Evangelist 3-5pm SOYO Monday 6-8pm
Wednesday	Arabic-English Bible Study Gospel of St. Matthew 12-2pm Christmas Fast Service 6pm
Thursday	Pan-Orthodox Book Club at St. George (see Rene or Natania Hanna for more information) 6pm
Saturday	Great Vespers and Confessions 5pm

ONE RACE ~ We Must Become United As One Race

by Abbot Tryphon, head of All-Merciful Savior Monastery on Vashon Island, Washington

It is important to understand that genetically, all humans are of but one race. Indians, Arabs, Jews, Caucasians, Africans, and Asians, are not different races, but rather, different ethnicities of the human race. God created all humans with the same physical characteristics, with only minor variations. Furthermore, He created all humans in His image and likeness (Genesis 1:26-27), and has invited all of us to enter into communion with Him. A black man is just as much my brother as a fellow Norwegian with blue eyes like mine.

In the Book of Acts, we read that with the coming of the Holy Spirit, diverse expressions of languages were being spoken. And in the Book of Revelation we see a glimpse of eternity with men and women from every tongue, tribe, and nation

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making up the choir of eternal praise (Revelation 7:9). That the writers of Scripture took notice of ethnicity, and saw diversity as good, makes it impossible for the Christian to hold to thoughts of racial superiority or separation of the races.

How can we hold to racist ideologies when even the Apostle John hinted at prejudice concerning Jesus, "*Can anything good come out of Nazareth?*" (John 1:46) How can we dare hold to racist opinions when the Lord Jesus Christ presented parables which even offended the religious leaders of His time? The Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10) and the story of the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4) make it impossible for us to hold to ideas of ethnic superiority over different races. Even our Orthodox iconography intentionally reflects the full range of skin hues when painting a saint's face in order to stress the interconnectedness and blessedness of all races of humanity.

All forms of racism, prejudice, and discrimination are affronts to the work of Christ on the cross. Jesus Christ died that all men might be saved, be they Jews, Africans, Spanish, Norwegians, Asians, or whatever. In Christ we are united as One Body, and as humans we are all of one race. Ethnicity should mean nothing for the Christian, and our parishes should demonstrate the truth of the ethnic diversity of the Kingdom of God. If we hold to racist beliefs, we only demonstrate how far we have distanced ourselves from the teachings of Our Lord. Can a Christian be a racist? The answer is an emphatic NO!

What matters is not the color of a man's skin, but how he does his job, and how he lives his life. That is it; nothing more to say. Of course, there are cultural and social issues that are problematic, but one part of the solution is to allow space for cultural differences without anyone forcing his own culture on anyone else and not being required to allow his own cultural traditions to be infringed upon.

The final solution, of course, is that we all naturally are and need to become of one race, the race of the Orthodox Christians, in which the principles of the Gospel bring us all together in one Orthodox culture, one in essential principle and varied in distinctive traditions that are converted and transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit.

