

Midwest Diocese
FAMILY FALL
Gathering

October 18-20, 2024
Clergy: October 17-19
HOSTED BY
ST. NICHOLAS - GRAND RAPIDS, MI

Registration Now Open!
stnicholasgr.com/fall-gathering
\$50 - Adults / \$30 - Kids 12 & under
Great Room Rates!
1 King Bed Suite: \$109 / 2 Queen Beds Suite: \$119

Keynote Speaker
Deacon Gabriel Otte
"Stillness in the Storm: Orthodoxy on Conquering Anxiety".



First, he created Freenome, a biotech company that develops blood tests for early detection of cancer. When he retired as CEO, he was ordained a deacon and serves at St. Stephen Orthodox Church in Campbell, CA. With a Masters of Theology from The Antiochian House of Studies in conjunction with the University of Balamand in Lebanon, Dn. Gabriel combines his calling as a clergyman, business adviser, and philanthropist.

YOUTH IN ACTION

FIRST DAY OF CHURCH SCHOOL 2024-2025

Today, September 8 @ 8:50 AM

All youth from Pre-school through Grade 12 are invited to participate in our St. Nicholas Church School Program. Students and teachers will gather in the Atrium for our first morning assembly at 8:50AM sharp! If you have not yet registered your youth for Church School, you may do so at stnicholasgr.com/youth.

TEEN SOYO NIGHT: WELCOMING NEW TEENS!

Today, September 8 @ 5-7PM

Join us for our first Teen Night of the new Ecclesiastical Year next Sunday. As always, we'll share in food, fellowship, and lots of fun. (Especially if Dn. Justin & Tanner can get the 9-Square game assembled in time!). All teens from 7th-12th grade are welcome.

New 7th Graders: the teens will be reaching out to you individually to invite you to come. Be sure to join us!

ST. NICHOLAS AV NIGHT

Sunday, September 22 @ 6-8PM

All camp-aged kids (8-17 next summer) and their parents are invited to AV Night! Come enjoy dinner, camp games, and learn about the Antiochian Village Summer Camp. We will watch the AV Camp video and hear from our own campers about their experience!

Please register at: stnicholasgr.com/youth/.



OUR MISSION—WHAT WE DO

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church is a worshipping community living and sharing the Faith Christ gave to the Apostles.

WHY WE EXIST

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church exists to seek and share Christ's love so that all will find Eternal Life in Him.

PARISH COUNCIL

Please use the following email address when communicating with the Parish Council:

parishcouncil@stnicholasgr.com

STRATEGIC PLANNING

For updated information go to:
stnicholasgr.com/parishioners

SUBMISSION REMINDERS

Announcements and Holy Oblations are due by noon each Wednesday.

Submit Announcements:

announcements@stnicholasgr.com

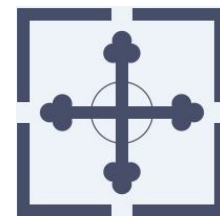
Submit Holy Oblations:

stnicholasgr.com/holyoblation/

or by completing an envelope located on the Parishioner's Table in the Narthex.

SCHEDULING TIME WITH FR. MICHAEL

To make an appointment, please call the Church Office and arrange. For those who would like to arrange their own appointments, please go to stnicholasgr.com/appointments and do so directly online.



LIFE AT ST. NICHOLAS

THE SUNDAY BULLETIN OF ST. NICHOLAS ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

SEPTEMBER 8, 2024

(616) 954-2700 ▪ info@stnicholasgr.com ▪ stnicholasgr.com

Feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross

The faithful are encouraged to celebrate the *Feast of the Elevation of the Cross* this Friday, September 13.

5PM—Orthros & 6PM—Divine Liturgy

Save, O Lord, Your people and bless Your inheritance;

grant victory to the faithful over their adversaries.

And protect Your commonwealth, by the power of Your Cross.

(Apolytikion of the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross)

Read more about this Feast by visiting: stnicholasgr.com/cross

THIS WEEK

Sunday, September 8

Feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos

8:50AM—Orthros &

First Day of

Orthodox Education

10AM—Divine Liturgy

Teacher & Student

Prayer of Blessing

Women's Ministry & SOYO

Leadership Swearing-in &

Prayer of Blessing

*** Middle Eastern Dinner

Kickoff

5PM—Teen SOYO Night

Tuesday, September 10

Cheese Bread Baking

9AM—Dough Balls

10AM—Baking

Wednesday, September 11

Parish Night

6PM—Vespers

6:30PM—Spaghetti Dinner

7PM—Classes & Activities

Thursday, September 12

10AM—Bible Study

11AM—St. Xenia's Circle

Friday, September 13

Elevation of the Holy Cross with Procession

5PM—Orthros

6PM—Divine Liturgy



Parish NIGHT

ALL PARISHIONERS ARE WELCOMED AND ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS
September 11 - November 6

ADULTS
(re)Discovering the Ancient Path
(A foundational look at the Orthodox Faith in Christ)
A Year in the Life: Exploring the 12 Great Feasts

YOUTH
SOYO-GRADE 7-12
JOY - GRADE 4-6
HOPE - GRADE 3 AND UNDER

VESPERS 6 PM
DINNER 6:30 PM
GROUPS FOR ALL 7 PM

BRING A FRIEND

LET'S PLAY BALL!

Next Sunday, September 15

The softball game vs. St. George is just around the corner! The festivities will begin with lunch following Liturgy (approximately noon) at Manhattan Park (331 Cascade Rd SE, East Grand Rapids). Hot dogs/burgers/chips/drinks will be provided. The game will begin immediately following lunch (typically around 1PM, or sooner). Please come to play or to cheer on St. Nicholas! (No experience or glove required). Please contact Scott Storey if you have questions or are interested in playing. You can also sign up at <http://stnicholasgr.com/softball/>.

During the month of September, we encourage each member to reevaluate his/her involvement in the ministries we offer at St. Nicholas. Use the *Time and Talent* link or QR code to indicate the ministries you desire to participate in. <https://stnicholasgr.com/timeandtalent>.



SAYING "GOOD MORNING "

As we start the new Ecclesiastical Year, we want to invite you to be a Sunday morning greeter. This opportunity involves standing in the stained-glass hallway and greeting everyone as they pass by. One of the biggest rewards of greeting is becoming familiar with those who attend the Divine Liturgy each week. Another added benefit is being a friendly face while displaying the love of Christ! If you are interested, click the button below to sign-up! No experience necessary. All you need to be able to do is say "Good morning!" <https://stnicholasgr.com/goodmorning/>.

ST. XENIA'S CIRCLE: A TIME TO SHARE & SUPPORT EACH OTHER

*It's the circle of life
And it moves us all
Through despair and hope
Through faith and love....
--From The Lion King*

We will soon begin a new session of "St. Xenia's Circle". This group is designed to help each other with the grief and sadness that we experience when we are separated from our loved ones or the other losses we endure. Father Michael will guide us through this very important circle of life that touches us all. We will reflect on short readings, sharing our thoughts and supporting one another.

Saint Xenia endured much loss, and we will learn how she used her faith in God to find comfort and peace. If you're interested in joining, please register at the following link: <https://stnicholasgr.com/st-xenia/>.

Saturday, September 14
8AM—Meatball Baking
6PM—Great Vespers followed by Confession

Sunday, September 15
8:50AM—Orthros & Orthodox Education
10AM—Divine Liturgy
St. Nicholas vs St. George Softball Game @ Manhattan Park

LOOKING AHEAD
Sunday, September 22
Ministry Engagement Celebration Sunday

Friday, September 20 - Monday, September 23
Adult AV Camp

Tuesday, October 15
Middle Eastern Dinner

Friday-Sunday, October 18-20
Fall Gathering

VERSE OF THE WEEK

And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve me for His heavenly kingdom. To Him be glory forever and ever. Amen!

2 Timothy 4:18

PARISHIONER UPDATE

Change of Address:
Rami & Hilliary Haddad
7550 Fulton St. SE #308
Ada, MI 49301

ICON DECORATING - GET INSPIRED

The Icon Decorating Ministry wants to show you how meaningful it can be to decorate icons or sponsor the flowers to adorn the icon. Just like a Holy Oblation, icons can be decorated for "The Health and Blessings of "or "In memory of" someone, in honor of your Patron Saint Day, for a birthday or anniversary, etc.. If you find yourself inspired to decorate or assist in decorating an icon or want to sponsor an icon, please contact Carolyn Rock.

I have been a member of the Icon decorating ministry team for several years. I have always loved flowers. It is an honor to adorn our very special icons with flowers from God's nature. I often use the lavender and roses from my own garden for my arrangements.



The Nativity of the Theotokos is close to my heart, and it is my blessing to decorate her icon. Today, the day of her nativity is, also, the date of our parents' wedding anniversary.

When I enter church, I see the eyes of our dear Theotokos in her icon. As I gaze into her eyes, I see those of a loving mother not only for her Son, but for all of us. The Nativity of the Theotokos – from Linda Audy

SUNDAY MORNING ORTHODOX EDUCATION

It's not too late to attend classes this fall!
Grow in the Faith each Sunday @ 8:50AM

Adult Sunday Class
Dr. Charlie Makhoul's Adult Class will discuss the topic "Let us give thanks unto the Lord": A Study of the Divine Liturgy. The class will take place in the Chapel. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Church School
Parents, please visit this link today to get your children registered. <https://stnicholasgr.com/youth/>.



SHEPHERDS OF INDEPENDENCE ANNUAL BBQ

Saturday, Sept. 21, @ 11:30AM-1:30PM
St. Nicholas will again sponsor a BBQ for the residents of Shepherds of Independence (1400 Morgan St NW, Grand Rapids). Please come join us as we play yard games, hang-out and eat some great smoked pork and brisket. It is a wonderful opportunity to "show mercy with cheerfulness" (Romans 12:8). Please register at <https://stnicholasgr.com/shepherds/>.

Shepherds of Independence is a supportive care facility in Grand Rapids which provides housing and food for some of the most vulnerable people in our community.

LABOR DAY GATHERING

Fun and fellowship to close out the summer was sponsored by our Young Adults at Legacy Icons on Labor Day!



A NEW CHURCH YEAR, A NEW LOOK AT HOLY OBLATIONS

By Fr. Michael

The start of each new Ecclesiastical Year is a good time to take a new look at things, to start new practices or learn new ways of doing old ones. With this in mind, let's take a new look at the practice of offering Holy Oblations, followed by some adaptations we will begin to use in this new Ecclesiastical Year that began this past week.

Throughout history, Orthodox Christians have practiced accompanying their prayers with an offering of some kind. We give our regular tithes and offerings in prayer, demonstrating our dependence on—and love for—God and His Church. People brought oil for lamps and candles to illuminate the church for worship, a practice we continue long after the invention of the electric light bulb. And we bring our gifts of bread and wine to be offered to God on the Holy Altar, in prayer for ourselves, our loved ones, or anyone for whom we wish to pray.

In our modern days when baking bread has fallen out of practice in most households, the practice of giving a monetary offering developed, and someone else bakes the Holy Bread to be offered to God. The word “oblation” precisely means something offered to God.

Many parishes like ours print the list of Holy Oblations, because these are not private offerings, as the Liturgy is not a private service. All are invited to join in the prayer for those for whom Holy Oblations are offered. We do not have a “prayer list” separate from the list of Holy Oblations because this list *is* our prayer list. The actual name for this list is the “diptychs,” the current list of names of both the Living and the Departed, for whom the whole parish is encourage to pray.

Due to all of the above, we ask that everyone observe the following:

1. All are encouraged to offer Holy Oblations often as a powerful way to bring our requests to God. These can be done in times of sickness or other need, or in thankfulness for a celebration such as a birthday, anniversary, etc. It is appropriate to offer Holy Oblations for our departed loved ones each year on the anniversary of their passing.
2. Please offer Holy Oblations through our website at stnicholasgr.com/parishioners, or by submitting an envelope on the Parishioner table in the Narthex. Holy Oblations offered by phone or email are discouraged to ensure the accuracy of the offering.
3. When composing a Holy Oblation, please remember:
 - ◆ We address God and not the person, so please, no “greeting card” messages to the person. Ex. May God grant him/her (not “you”) many years.
 - ◆ The name(s) of the person(s) being prayed for is obviously needed, and it is preferred but not required to include the names of those making the offering.
 - ◆ The list of Holy Oblations is the prayer list of the Church, so offering Holy Oblations is the only way to have names included on that list. To accommodate the many names for whom prayers are requested, Holy Oblations/“prayer list” will be offered for one week. Please only request a name be kept on the list longer (up to 40 days) for cases of serious illness of need.

OCF AT CALVIN UNIVERSITY CHURCH FAIR

Last Wednesday, our local Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF) leaders, Emily Cameron (St. Nicholas) and Gavin Daniels (Holy Cross), joined Dn. Justin at the Calvin University Church Fair. They offered information about OCF, discussed the Orthodox faith and invited students to come check out our churches and their weekly OCF gatherings. The work of the OCF in Grand Rapids is invaluable in bringing the Orthodox faith to local college students with enthusiasm and joy.



PRAYER TRAIL DEDICATION POSTPONED

The Prayer Trail Dedication, which was to take place after today's Divine Liturgy, has been postponed. The event will take place in the spring. As soon as it has been scheduled, it will be announced.

MIDDLE EASTERN DINNER NEWS

Tuesday, October 15

ONLINE AND PRINTED TICKETS AVAILABLE NOW!

We are counting on your cooperation to help make this dinner a success! Please start to sell tickets, and remember to purchase your own as well. There are several options for purchasing tickets:

- ◆ **Online tickets** can be purchased @ <https://stnicholasgr.com/dinner/> for \$22.50 using Venmo and for \$22.66 using credit card .
- ◆ **Printed tickets** can be purchased by cash or check for \$22 and by Venmo for \$22.50. They will be on sale weekly during Coffee Hour and are also available in the church office during office hours.

A few helpful tips to get you started on selling tickets.

- ◇ Send the online ticket link to your family and friends.
- ◇ Take printed tickets to sell to family and friends who would enjoy delicious dinner and collect money from them for the tickets.
- ◇ **All unsold tickets and money from purchases must be turned in by Sunday, October 6!**



SCAN ME



SCAN ME



SCAN ME



BAKING SCHEDULE

A table is set up during Coffee Hour for all parishioners to sign-up and work for each of the baking sessions.

NOTE: Please do not wear open-toe shoes when you come to bake.

Tuesday, September 10

Cheese Bread

9AM-Dough Balls

10AM-Baking Begins

Saturday, September 14

Meat Balls

8AM—1PM

Tuesday, September 17

Cheese Bread

9AM-Dough Balls

10AM-Baking Begins

Monday, September 23

Baklava

10AM



FORERUNNERS

Our first event of the new Ecclesiastical Church Year is Thursday, September 19 with our neighbors at Hope Network. We are hosting a picnic with them at their facility (4222 Burton SE). Last year, we had great participation and had a lot of fun! Those who are able, meet at church at 3PM to help gather supplies. We will be grilling hot dogs and serving picnic sides. The picnic begins at 4PM. Please RSVP to Eileen Adolphson, Barbara Thomas, or Subdn. Nicholas. For those who are not familiar with our Hope Network neighbors, they are an adult foster care facility for those with physical or cognitive disabilities.

STAY IN THE FELLOWSHIP LOOP!

Stay up to date with your fellowship group by checking the links for upcoming information:

MEN

stnicholasgr.com/men

WOMEN

stnicholasgr.com/women

OK MAMA

[O.K. Mama](https://www.facebook.com/OK.Mama) Facebook group

FORERUNNERS

stnicholasgr.com/forerunners

YOUNG ADULTS

Ethan DeJonge or Dn. Justin for the **GroupMe** app invitation.

YOUTH

stnicholasgr.com/youth