



**St. Matthew Orthodox Church
Orthodox Church in America
Diocese of the Midwest**

Father John Thetford

**607 Ravenswood Drive
Green Bay, WI 54302**

From the desk of Father John.....

Christ is in our midst! He is and ever shall be!

Everything that exists is from God. As the Divine Liturgy puts it, God “called all things from non-existence into being.” One implication of this is that our possessions are not our own. In other words, our “stuff” is not “our stuff,” it is “God’s stuff”. And He has given it to us to be stewards of His stuff. And even whatever intelligence, abilities, etc., we have that enable us to earn money and possessions, well those are also gifts from God and belong to Him, too.

This month of February, with our annual meeting happening, I want to address tithing. For Orthodox Christians, there is often confusion about giving or tithing. Tithing may be seen as an “Old Testament” practice that is no longer kept. But let us not forget Christ’s words that our righteousness is to exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees (Matthew 5:20). Yes, we no longer sacrifice animals, or anything like that, since Christ has offered himself as the permanent sacrifice once and for all, but we still uphold the moral and spiritual aspects of the Law. And just as we keep God’s eternally good 10 Commandments, we also are to keep the good practice of tithing.

Now, you may know that tithing is giving 10% to God’s Church. But why is this good, and why do we do it? Simply, because we are all one Body, the Body of Christ. This is the reality of the Church: we partake of the same Body of Christ, the Eucharist, and we become all united together in Christ as His One Body. And as this One Body, we have a common fund from which to do good works for the benefit of all. Spiritually, such giving is also part of our effort of overcoming selfishness and pride, and of coming to see each other as we truly are: valuable and worthy Children of God.

Tithing is usually done as 10% to one’s local parish. And our parish of course needs funds to continue upgrades and repairs to our building, to support a full-time pastor, and to pay the various bills. At the same time, one can also interpret tithing as giving 10% to the Church in general, which could mean giving some of what we give to IOCC, OCMC, OCL, and other worthy Orthodox organizations. But, please know, that our parish itself already gives to these and other Orthodox charitable organizations, as well as to local Christian ministries here in Green Bay, and so if you don’t know what charities to give to, just give to the parish, and beyond our needs, we will send on the rest to charity. Our parish currently does have a dedicated amount of a few thousand we give each year to charity; however, I recently learned that a parish of similar size to ours in Illinois gives about \$100,000 to charity each year. So greater giving is certainly possible!

As a final word, if you are young, have a lot of debt, or, for whatever reason, can’t give 10%, that’s ok. But give something. Give 8%, give 6%, etc. You are a Child of God, and to properly give thanks for all that God has given you, you have to give. There is no other way to cultivate a thankful attitude toward God. Don’t be afraid. Challenge yourself, give, and God, who brought you and all things that exist into existence, will take care of you.

Upper Room by Will Morgan

The Upper Room Young Adult group is currently engaged with a rotating group of discussion subjects in its Sunday afternoon sessions: “The Three Essential Questions” which concern Christ, the Church, and Salvation; “Iconography,” a series led by Pedro Sarsama; and “Science and Faith,” led by Dr. Paul Holzman. Every three or four weeks, there is also an “Open Forum,” in which the youth choose the subjects for discussion (traditionally a group favorite). All high school through college age participants are welcome to attend.



SMOC February Event Schedule

- **Book Study/Bible Study** is meeting every **Tuesday at 10:30 am**.
- **Adult Education class** is meeting every **Wednesday** after Daily Vespers at **6:00 pm**.
- The next Parish Council meeting will be held via Zoom on **Tuesday, February 8 at 6:00 pm**. If you would like to attend as a guest, please let President, Paul Novak, know at paulnovak11@gmail.com
- **Adult Choir Practice** is meeting on **Sunday, February 13**.
- This year's **Annual Church meeting** is scheduled for **Sunday, February 20 at 12:00 noon**. This year's meeting will be held in Herrick Hall. We will also have a Zoom meeting option for those who cannot attend in person.
- **The Men's Group** will be meeting on **Saturday, February 26 from 2 pm to 4:30 pm**. We will again have a potluck meal, followed by a group discussion. All men of the parish are welcome to attend.
- **Sunday School Singing** (Children's Choir) will be on **Sunday, February 27**.

Annual Church Meeting

This year's **Annual Church meeting** is scheduled for Sunday February 20 at 12:00 noon. This year's meeting will be held in Herrick Hall. We will also have a Zoom meeting option for those who cannot attend in person. Please contact Paul Novak at: paulnovak11@gmail.com, with any questions.

Men's Group

After a successful men's group in December, we will have a second opportunity for lunch and discussion on Saturday, February 26, from 2:00 pm until 4:30 pm. Our potluck lunch will begin at 2:00 pm, and then we will have a facilitated discussion starting around 2:30 or so. This men's group is for all the men of the parish – longtime members, new people, and even those who are just still learning about Orthodoxy. I hope to see you all there!



Parish Council President's Perspective.....Paul Novak

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

On February 20th, we will hold our annual meeting. This meeting is to review the happenings of 2021 and to plan, as best we can, for the activities, financial responsibilities, beautification and upkeep of our Church building in 2022. In anticipation of this meeting, I wanted to share some of my thoughts and directions that I will discuss in more detail at the annual meeting.

First of all, I would like to thank the rest of the Parish Council for all their hard work. These members are: Matt Tomac, Vice President; Tom Julian, Treasurer; Linda Bisbee, Communications Secretary; Elaine Gavaras, Recording Secretary; and Father John. I am pleased that all of them wish to continue in their roles for another two years if approved by the parish at the annual meeting.

You may remember that at the start of 2021, we still had limited attendance at services as we were broken into two groups allowing us to attend Divine Liturgy every other Sunday. From those days until now, I am so happy with the progress we have made. I believe that, as a Church family, we have great *Momentum* going into 2022. While maybe an odd term to use, *Momentum* at SMOC helps the parish push itself to new heights and build on its successes. When you think about it, our momentum is based upon all the events and success we had in 2021. Think about the following that we all had a part in: restart of Sunday School, Bible Study, Adult education, Upper Room young adult group meeting in person again; Sunday School singing was introduced and the Choir resumed practices. We said goodbye to Father Eugene and welcomed Father John. The Church picnic, baseball game, Fall Festival and St. Matthew's day luncheon were held. Vespers was held again at Holy Transfiguration Chapel in Sister Bay, and the first Men's group meeting was held. We have been blessed with many new inquiries, Catechumens and those that have moved to the Green Bay area and now call SMOC home. Welcome! The legacy fund was established and the church's mortgage was refinanced at a lower interest rate. We are now all welcome to attend a full schedule of services. Finally, phase II of the Iconography Project was completed and is 100% paid for! Brothers and Sisters, that is positive momentum we can build upon! Thank you all very much.

My hope is that in 2022, we continue with this momentum. There are always things that will need to be done to our church building. Electrical upgrades in Herrick Hall and new external siding are at the top of the list for 2022. The wood siding on our church is at least 30 years old and needs to be replaced. I will speak about this in more detail at the annual meeting. This work will prepare the church for the final phase of the Iconography project. Beautification of the Narthex, Nave and Iconostasis will continue as well. For example, we are working on how we can add icons of the 4 Evangelists to the Royal Doors.

My drive for us to keep moving forward and keep improving SMOC in all areas, is fostered by the following quote: *"We knew not whether we were in Heaven or on Earth. For on Earth there is no such splendor or such beauty, and we are at a loss how to describe it. We know only that God dwells there among men."* — AMBASSADORS OF PRINCE VLADIMIR OF KIEV ON THEIR FIRST VISIT TO AN ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AD 987

Thank you again for your continued support of SMOC.

In Christ,
Paul M. Novak



Liturgical Schedule - February 2022

Tuesday, February 1, 6:00 PM Vespers Liturgy (Presentation of the Lord)
 Wednesday, February 2, 6:00 PM Daily Vespers
 Saturday, February 5, 5:00 PM Great Vespers
 Sunday, February 6, 9:10 Hours, 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
 Wednesday, February 9, 6:00 PM Daily Vespers
 Saturday, February 12, 5:00 PM Great Vespers
 Sunday, February 13, 8:30 AM Matins, 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
 Wednesday, February 16, 6:00 PM Daily Vespers
 Saturday, February 19, 5:00 PM Great Vespers
 Sunday, February 20, 9:10 AM Hours, 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
 Wednesday, February 23, 6:00 PM Daily Vespers
 Friday, February 25, 5:00 PM Vespers & Memorial Service (Soul Saturday)
 Saturday, February 26, 5:00 PM Great Vespers {*Men's Group 2:00 PM – 4:30 PM*}
 Sunday, February 27, 8:30 AM Matins, 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy (St. Raphael of Brooklyn)
 Wednesday, March 2, 6:00 PM Daily Vespers
 Saturday, March 5, 5:00 PM Great Vespers
 Sunday, March 6, 9:10 AM Hours, 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy followed by Forgiveness Vespers
 Monday, March 7, 11:30 AM 3rd and 6th Hour; 6:00 PM Great Compline with Canon
 Tuesday, March 8, 11:30 AM 3rd and 6th Hour; 6:00 PM Great Compline with Canon
 Wednesday, March 9, 11:30 AM 3rd and 6th Hour; 6:00 PM Presanctified Liturgy
 Thursday, March 10, 11:30 AM 3rd and 6th Hour; 6:00 PM Great Compline with Canon
 Friday, March 11, 11:30 AM 3rd and 6th Hour
 Saturday, March 12, 9:10 Hours & 9:30 Divine Liturgy with Blessing of Koliva; 5:00 PM Great Vespers
 Sunday, March 13, 8:30 Matins, 9:30 Divine Liturgy with Procession of Icons (Sunday of Orthodoxy)



From Our Treasurer, Tom Julian

As we reflect on 2021, I am so grateful that our parish met our 2021 budget and, specifically, we exceeded our giving to our outreach and compassion ministries. We increased the budget significantly last year, and I anticipate that we can do that again in 2022. I ask that you will pray earnestly for our missionaries and the ministries that we support through faithful giving. I also ask that you attend the annual parish meeting in person on February 20 and remain informed about the financial and operational strategies of our church and its mission to serve and shepherd. It is crucial that we are in unity about our mission and purpose.

Keeping You in the Loop:

Greetings from Your Ministry Team!

This month our focus is on OCMC missionaries in Guatemala, Fr. Juvenal; Fr. John Chakos and his wife, Sandy; and Jesse and his wife, Juanita. We'd like to send a gift of encouragement and support...imagine if everyone gave \$10.00!

A gift of cash or a check made out to St. Matthew may be given. Be sure to designate it for Guatemalan Missions.

Thank you!

Church Cleaners for February and March



- Bisbee** (week of) 1/30/22 for 2/6
- Schweiner** (week of) 2/6/22 for 2/13
- Enck** (week of) 2/13/22 for 2/20
- Pitkevich** (week of) 2/20/22 for 2/27
- Zdrale** (week of) 2/27/22 for 3/6
- Novak** (week of) 3/6/22 for 3/13
- Schahczaenski** (week of) 3/13/22 for 3/20
- Julian** (week of) 3/20/22 for 3/27
- Tomac** (week of) 3/27/22 for 4/3

Thank You!



Happy February Birthday

- 6 - Katherine Wieland
- 8 - Misha Mykhaylyuk
- 12 - Gregory Gudumac
- 13 - Dorothy Olson
- 17 - Casimir Massopust
- 21 - Dale Petersen
- 22 - Cynan Pfitzinger
- 25 - Doug Bisbee
- 27 - Aaron Valverde
- 28 - Owen Jeffers
- 29 - Sarah Tomac

Many Years!



Happy Anniversary!

Mark and Alicia White on February 16

Many Years!



The word catechumen means "hearer" or even more precisely, "echo-er." This indicates that the main task of being a catechumen is to listen to what the Church has to teach, and then to profess that same teaching oneself! Thus, on January 30, we had the first of our general Catechumen's classes following coffee hour, from about 1 pm to 4 pm. We will have three such classes leading up to when several Catechumens will be received into the Church during Holy Week. Anyone else who is not a Catechumen, but perhaps who is newer to Orthodoxy or just who would like to stay and learn, is also welcome! The theme of the first class on January 30 was: "Who is God? Who is Jesus Christ? Who is the Holy Spirit? Who are we?"

Hello, my name is Branden Seefeld. I considered myself either agnostic or atheist for about 18 years prior to the past three years. Over the course of the past few years, I was fortunate enough to find it necessary to take the ideas of religion, and ultimately of the Christian God quite seriously. I started reading books and listening to lectures, podcasts, and audiobooks about Christianity. While I finally accepted that Jesus Christ is "the way and the truth and the life," I could never imagine my stepping into a church. Slowly, my acceptance of Christ began to hone in on Orthodox Christianity because of its emphasis on prayer, fasting (which I was regularly doing for my health and to test my mettle), and almsgiving. As I continued to learn more about Orthodox Christianity and the importance of the Sacraments (like Penance and the Holy Eucharist most specifically), it became increasingly clear to me that it was time to step into an Orthodox church. I have been attending Divine Liturgy on Sundays since May 9, 2021, and, God willing, I will be Chrismated into the one true church of Christ.

Hello,

My name is Nathan Gantenbein, and I've been coming to St. Matthew since July when I moved to Green Bay. I grew up Protestant, but I've been looking into Orthodoxy for a long time, and finally made the jump when I moved out on my own. I currently work a phlebotomist, but I am attending school in Sturgeon Bay to be a nurse. I enjoy lifting weights and exercising. I also enjoy reading and writing.

Hello, my name is Stenson Faldet. I am 26 years old, and was born and raised in the city of Waupaca. In my free time, I prefer to be outside, engaging in anything from fishing, to hiking, to biking. Reading, mostly non-fiction, is another interest of mine. I was introduced to Holy Orthodoxy through studying Church history and classical Christian theology. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time at St. Matthew so far, and look forward to getting to know more of you in the future!

Hello from Clint Squires and Jennifer Kirkland,

We've been attending St. Matthew for a few months and recently became catechumens, praise God! After connecting on the internet on an Orthodox Christian discussion forum, it wasn't long before we met in Jennifer's home state of Texas. We came back to Neenah and are engaged to be married in the spring! When we're not taking care of our four cats, two dozen fish, and bird, we love cooking, gardening, nature, music, creative projects, tennis, and outdoor adventures. We both feel we've finally found the right spiritual home and are very thankful for our wonderful church family.



Greek Pasta Salad for a Crowd

from Linda Bisbee

Salad Ingredients:

- 2 - 16 ounce pkgs or boxes of pasta (Cavatappi, Cellentani, or Elbow Macaroni)
- 2 pints grape tomatoes, washed and halved
- 1 - 7 ounce jar of Kalamata Olive pieces in brine (drained)
- 10 ounces feta cheese, crumbled
- 3 medium cucumbers, seeded and diced
- 1 large bunch of radishes; washed, ends removed, and thinly sliced
- 1 cup chopped flat leaf parsley

Dressing Ingredients:

- 1 1/4 cups red wine vinegar
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled
- 4 ounces feta cheese, crumbled
- 1 Tablespoon dried oregano
- 1 Tablespoon sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon all-purpose seasoning
- 1 1/4 cups olive oil



Directions:

1. To make salad: Cook the pasta according to package directions. Drain and rinse with cold water. Spread the pasta out on a baking sheet to dry for 30 to 45 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, prepare all the remaining salad ingredients and place them in a large serving bowl. Add pasta and toss together.
3. To make dressing: In a blender or food processor, place the red wine vinegar, garlic, feta cheese, oregano, sugar, salt, pepper, all-purpose seasoning and blend. Pulse to chop up the garlic and cheese. With the machine running, slowly and in a steady stream, add the olive oil and process until emulsified. Taste and adjust seasonings as needed. The dressing should be salty enough from the feta cheese; try not to over-salt.
4. Pour the dressing over the salad. Toss to thoroughly combine and serve. Or you can make both the salad and dressing a day in advance and combine just before serving.

