

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

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From the Desk of Fr John:

Christ is in our midst! One of the peculiarities of the Church's Calendar is that we call September 1 the beginning of the Church New Year instead of January 1. This month, I would like to share a bit about some of the "New Year's Days" that historically existed in Christian societies: September 23, September 1, January 1, & March 25.

September 23rd: In the Roman Empire, September 23rd was celebrated as the birthday of Caesar Augustus, the first official Emperor, and thus that day was seen as the "beginning" of the Empire and of the calendar year. Christians then realized that, by Divine Providence, the Conception of John the Baptist, which is the very first chronological event recorded in the Gospels (Luke 1:5-25), also took place on September 23rd. If Christ was conceived on March 25, and John was said to have been six months older, then accounting for February being two days short, the date would have been September 23. Thus, this day which marked the beginning of the Gospels became the beginning of the Church's calendar year.

September 1: September 1 became the Church New Year relatively early on, though. This was, at first, related to the Roman Imperial practice of the "Indiction", which was the special tax that was done on September 1. To mark the New Year, though, in a way that related to salvation and not just merely taxes, the feast of the Nativity of Mary the Theotokos was placed on September 8, to mark "the beginning of our salvation" (as the Troparion hymn of the feast says!).

January 1: This was related to Roman practice in the time of Julius Caesar. January was named for Janus, a two-faced pagan "god" who could see the past and the future (the New Year). Eventually, Christians realized that that Pagan date worked very well with Christianity, once again, by Divine Providence! January 1 was the 8th day of Jesus' birth, and thus, was the day on which Jesus was circumcised and given his name, according to Jewish practice. Thus, the naming of Jesus gave a special symbolic meaning to January 1. Eventually, in the 1400's-1700's, most Christian nations adopted January 1 as New Year's Day, and that became international later on.

March 25: In pre-modern Britain, until 1752, the New Year was celebrated as an 8 day feast, starting on the Feast of the Annunciation on March 25, and lasting for 8 days until April 1. The idea, of course, was that Christ's coming into the world, marked at the Annunciation, should be the beginning of the year. (This is where the idea of "April Fools' Day" comes from - the "fools" were those rural British people who, after 1752, still kept the old form of celebrating New Years' Day for 8 days until April 1!)

So these were some of the different "New Year's Days" historically. There were others, too. I personally like the idea of March 25! But our current practice of tying together the Church's New Year with the Feast of the Nativity of Mary the Theotokos, is a very proper way to start off the Church's calendar year. So... Happy New Year!

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



I hope that you and your families had a wonderful summer. With Sunday School starting, vacations coming to an end, trees starting to turn colors and the Packers starting another run to the Super Bowl you know that the fall season is upon us. As we have been blessed with many new members, I thought I would give some details on three traditional events we hold in the Fall.

Holy Transfiguration Chapel, Sister Bay, Door County Wisconsin - **Saturday, September 24th**

The Chapel is a functioning part of the St. Matthew Orthodox Church (SMOC). It is maintained by Eric Johnson along with Reader George ("Pat") Mangan, A.I.A, a long-time resident of Sister Bay and member of SMOC, who designed and built the Chapel as an outpost of Orthodoxy in Door County. The Chapel sits in the backyard of Pat's home in a wonderful wooded lot. Always open, the Chapel is available day and night. Many visitors and others have found the Chapel to be a special place "apart," dropping in to pray, light a candle, attend a Service, or just to be quiet before God. Additionally, visitors find an extensive lending library and informative tracts. Every year we make a pilgrimage to the chapel and help clean up the area in and around the chapel. It is a wonderful way to keep our chapel "up north" in good condition for visitors from around the world that visit Door County. Following our work we will have a potluck meal followed by Vespers.

Fall Festival and Bake Sale - **Saturday, October 22nd**

Held on the grounds of SMOC this event is made up of two activities. The bake sale is held in Herrick Hall where items that are made by the friends and members of SMOC are sold. Please plan to bake your favorite items including cookies, cakes, breads or other baked goods that you would like to make for the sale. We also have fresh honey that is sold. This sells out early so plan to get yours early on the 22nd. Outside of Herrick hall we will be selling freshly made Gyros. We may have some other items like cabbage rolls which sold out last year. Lets promote this event to our friends and family so that we can have a great turn out. People can also tour our church and visit the bookstore. The funds raised at this year's event will be donated to help support the Priests of the Alaskan OCA Diocese. We will need your help and support for this event so please plan to bake, buy and be a worker at this event that grows bigger every year.

St. Matthew Dinner - **Sunday November 20th**

Every year we celebrate Saint Matthew of which we are named after. The Church celebrates this day on Wednesday Nov. 16th. With the visit of Bishop Daniel we will hold our Dinner with him on Sunday Nov. 20th following Divine Liturgy. This very special occasion allows us to give thanks and to have a bit of a formal dinner during our normal coffee time. Some short remarks are given and will be highlighted by having our Bishop with us. Please plan to attend this free event and help us celebrate St. Matthew and the guidance he has given us over all of these years.

Times and additional details to follow as we get closer to each one of these fall activities. Please let me know if you have any questions or if you wish to volunteer to help out at any or all of these events.

In Christ,
Paul M. Novak

St Matthew Orthodox Church Annual Parish Picnic



The annual picnic was held on Sunday, August 28 after Divine Liturgy. But before it could even start the whispers and weather app checking was going on. "Maybe we should have it at church. It's going to rain."

Tom Julian made announcement that the rain would start at 12:15 and take place while we are lunch. Everyone quickly drove the three minutes to the park and sure enough the rain started and ended when we were finished with lunch.

The group photo was taken, the kids had some gunny sack races and then it was time for the annual kickball game.

Overall a good time was had by all.

Thanks to everyone for the delicious food and to Matt Tomac for organizing the picnic.

by Debra Novak



Church Cleaning Schedule:

JULIAN (week of) 9/11/22 for 9/18
 TOMAC (week of) 9/18/22 for 9/25
 WEILAND (week of) 9/25/22 for 10/2
 SARSAMA (week of) 10/2/22 for 10/9
 MYKHAYLYUK (week of) 10/9/22 for 10/16



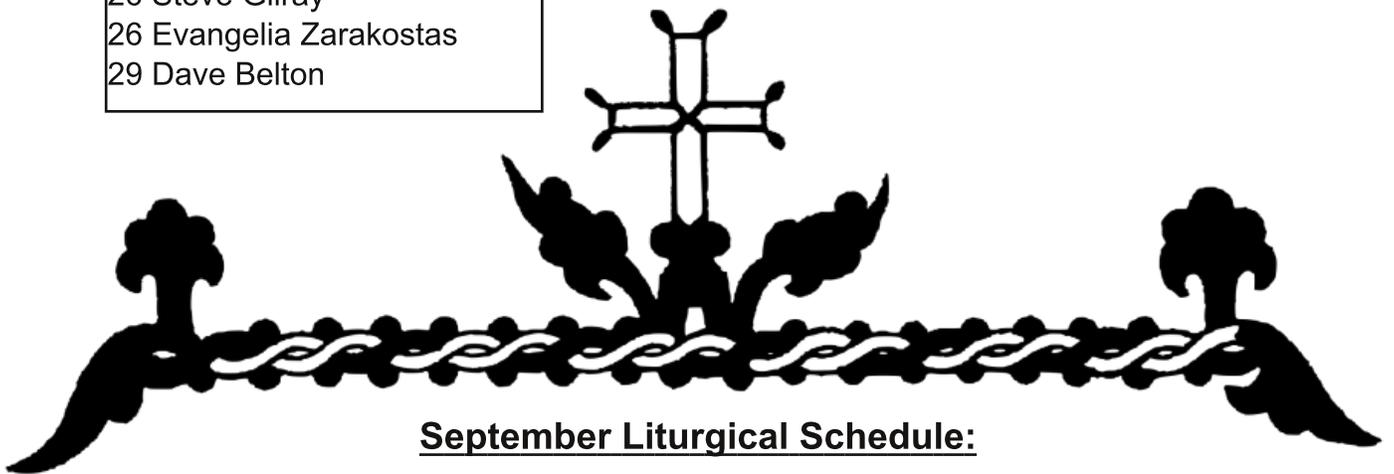
God Grant You Many Years!

September Birthdays

3 Debra Novak
 4 Kayla Belton
 8 Alexander Brown
 8 Evie Pfitzinger
 11 Mateo Heid
 11 Pedro Sarsama
 16 Madison Heid
 19 Cheryl Julian
 20 Stenson Faldet
 22 Angelica Pfitzinger
 26 Steve Gilray
 26 Evangelia Zarakostas
 29 Dave Belton

September Anniversaries

15 Timothy & Gloriya Grinsteiner
 18 Lisa Ocokoljich & Paul Greenlaw
 22 Kevin & Oksana Brown
 24 Craig & Oksana Schweiner
 25 Rafael & Peggy Roman
 26 Peter & Kathy Nassios



September Liturgical Schedule:

Wednesday, September 14, 8:30 am - Matins; 9:30 am - Divine Liturgy (Exaltation of the Cross)
 Wednesday, September 14, 6:00 pm - Daily Vespers
 Saturday, September 17, 5:00 pm - Great Vespers
 Sunday, September 18, 8:30 am - Matins; 9:30 am - Divine Liturgy
 Wednesday, September 21, 6:00 pm - Daily Vespers
 Saturday, September 24, 3:00 pm - Great Vespers at Holy Transfiguration Chapel,
 Sister Bay, Door County (NO service at St. Matthew)
 Sunday, September 25, 8:30 am - Matins; 9:30 am - Divine Liturgy
 Wednesday, September 28, 6:00 pm - Daily Vespers

Please note that as of 9/18, we will begin to serve Matins every Sunday. Matins is the early morning service of the Orthodox Church. On Sundays, the Matins service offers a great deal of reflection on the Resurrection. It is a great way to introduce the Liturgy and is done every Sunday in most Orthodox Churches around the world.

SMOC News and Event Schedule

- Book Study/Bible Study meets every Tuesday at 10:30 am.
- Adult Education class meets every Wednesday after 6 PM Daily Vespers
- Choir Practice will be on Sundays September 18th and October 9th & 30th
- Sunday School: Sunday school begins Sunday, September 18th. We will transition to having Sunday School students and teachers being dismissed after Communion in order to have their Sunday School lesson take place between Communion and the beginning of Coffee Fellowship. This system, which is used in many Orthodox parishes, should work better for everyone.
- Sister Bay Chapel Cleanup, Picnic, and Vespers: On Saturday, September 24, our parish community will be gathering at Holy Transfiguration Chapel, in Sister Bay, Door County, to clean up the chapel, have a picnic, and celebrate Vespers at 3 pm. There will be no Vespers at SMOC that Saturday.
- The next Parish Council meeting will be held via Zoom on Tuesday, October 11 at 6:00 pm. If you would like to attend as a guest, please let President, Paul Novak, know at paulnovak11@gmail.com
- Sunday School Singing will be on Sunday, September 25.

The Enthronement of His Grace Bishop Daniel at Holy Trinity Cathedral, Chicago IL

The enthronement of His Grace Bishop Daniel will take place on Saturday October 1, on the feast of the Protection of the Mother of God, at Holy Trinity Cathedral, our diocesan cathedral in Chicago IL.

The schedule is as follows:

- Friday 9/30: 6 PM Vigil
- Saturday 10/1: 9 AM Divine Liturgy, Enthronement, Banquet. 5 PM Vigil.
- Sunday 10/2: 9 AM Divine Liturgy

Save the Date: Episcopal Visitation

His Grace Bishop Daniel will be visiting our parish during the weekend of November 20th



You can learn more about our diocesan hierarchy by reading his bio here:
<https://domoca.org/diocesan-hierarchy/>

The Roegner Family...

By now most of you have seen us around or bumped into one of us at coffee fellowship over the past couple of years. We have been transitioning to spending more time in Wisconsin and now reside in Waupaca. Photini and I have 5 children: Sophia (20) is a senior at the University of Georgia studying Pre-Veterinary Medicine. Anna (18) is now a freshman at Belmont University in Nashville studying Architecture. Joseph (16), Emmelia (13), and James (11) are attending a Christian school this year and will be familiar faces at SMOC. Photini and I own a construction company with operations in Iowa and now Wisconsin.

Our Journey...

Photini and I began our journey to the Orthodox Church when we were living in Virginia in the early 2000's. We both grew up in Christian homes (with Protestant backgrounds) and at the time we were attending a Reformed Presbyterian church. We began studying early Church history and Patristics with some close friends and quickly were struck with the notion that Christianity *really is* an ancient faith. As Orthodox Christian we may tend to take this for granted but church history for many Protestants begins with the Reformation and their church fathers are those of the Reformation. As I was reading the writings of the early Church Fathers it became difficult to recognize any resemblance or connections to the church I knew as a Protestant.

The second thing I began to struggle with is the idea referred to in many Protestant circles of *Ecclesia Semper Reformanda*. This is a Latin term referring to the conviction that the church must always be reforming itself to maintain its purity of doctrine. This modus can be clearly seen in the way certain churches are continually changing – socially and doctrinally. As a family we experienced this personally when we saw several church splits over ideological issues during just a few years. I concluded that my young children would likely not know the same church or faith by the time they were adults.

A few years down the road, we had exhausted a few other possibilities, walked through the door of an Orthodox Church for the first time in Iowa, and we never left. Shortly after we became catechumens and were chrismated a year later. Thank God, we had found a Church firmly rooted in the Faith of the Apostles.

And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch (Acts 11:26)...

As followers of Christ, we are His disciples. The word "Christian" comes from the Greek word "Christianos," meaning "little Christ." At the time of the Apostles the term was intended as more of an insult directed at those who stood out as followers of Christ. Well, the name clearly stuck but centuries later its now just a term of common identity. But, as His disciples we are to be "little Christs," in the way we live our lives. We are to imitate Him, and we can do this by being obedient, as Christ was obedient. He also came to serve, not to be served (Matthew 20:28).

This is how I came to become a Deacon in the Church. I was approached and asked to serve, began training in the Diaconal Vocations Program, and was ordained in 2015. As a family we made a commitment to immerse ourselves in the life of the Church when we were chrismated. We made a point of being there, attending services, and just plugging in. The term Deacon simply means "servant" or one who serves. There are many ways we can all serve: helping in the altar, singing in the choir, visiting the sick, greeting a stranger, or even just cleaning up after an event. This is our hope here in Green Bay, to plug into the life of this parish and serve.

The reason we came to the Orthodox Church is to flee the chaos that we experienced in life. It is an anchor. The Church grants us the help we need to be healed, to be united with Christ, and to become "little Christs." Glory to Jesus Christ!

In XC,
Dn. Spyridon

A Note from the Treasurer:

I wanted to take this opportunity to say thank you to everyone who gave so generously to our most recent building project. The siding project is underway and we have received over \$39,000.00 in funds toward replacement of siding, repair of any substructure and new windows for Hedrick Hall. The result of your commitment to the updating of our core structure is already visible. I am overjoyed by your response to this effort. God Bless you all.

Secondly, I would like to appeal to all of us to consider a recommitment to our Project 42 for monthly mortgage payment. Currently we have a handful of donors giving an annual P42 gift of \$504.00 (12 x \$42) and another handful giving \$42 monthly designated for our mortgage. It would be very helpful if more donors would commit to a monthly designated gift of \$42.00 or more to P42. Please designated these gifts as P42 on your giving envelope. 36 donors giving \$504.00 allows us to cover our goal of mortgage elimination in 2029-2030. As always a big thank you to all of those who have been making these pledges since the very beginning of Project 42 in 2015.

Thank you,
Tom Julian



The Siding Project Commences!



Men's Group: The Men's Group is not meeting in the early fall due to the number of projects and events taking place at our parish. All of these projects and events - particularly, the Siding project! - are a great way to get to know each other better and enjoy fellowship. We hope to have a meeting with a meal and conversation again some time later in the fall.

The Upper Room: On Saturday, August 13th the Upper Room Youth Group and several other parishioners from St. Matthew's made a day trip pilgrimage to a trio of Serbian Orthodox holy sites. Traveling through pouring rain for part of the journey, we first stopped at St. Sava's Cathedral in Milwaukee to meet up with our guide, Archimandrite Serafim Baltic. All were impressed by the mosaic icons that covered St. Sava's walls, and equally impressed to learn it took the artist 20 years to complete. After viewing the church, we were treated to St. Sava's "world famous" Serbian fish fry (baked fish with tomato sauce) in Serb Hall, as it was a fish day for the commemoration of St. Tikhon of Zadonsk.



After lunch we packed back into our vehicles and followed Fr. Serafim to another St. Sava's — this the monastery in Libertyville, IL, built on land purchased by St. Mardarije early in the 1920's. Within the onion-domed church we were blessed to be able to venerate the miraculously incorrupt relics of St. Mardarije, who reposed in 1935 at the age of 46. Fr. Serafim talked to us of the meaning of miracles and fielded our questions. From Libertyville we next travelled to our final stop on our pilgrimage, the Holy Protection of the Mother of God Monastery, aka New Gračanica, in Grayslake, IL. A wedding was just finishing up in the church so we parked by the lake and chatted more with Fr. Serafim as we waited for the all clear. The church at New Gračanica is a replica of a 14th century church in Kosovo, though a little bigger than the original. We attended the Vespers service, chanted by two seminarians in Church Slavonic, followed by the Akathist to the Theotokos "Of the Three Hands," read partly in Serbian and partly in English, before a copy of the famous icon on Mount Athos. We all thanked Fr. Serafim for his hospitality, and he invited us to come down and visit again.