Our Beloved Icons

The Holy Prophet Isaiah is one of the greatest prophets that lived 700 years before the birth of Christ, (740 B.C.) and was of royal lineage. We celebrate his feast day on May 9th. Isaiah's father Amos raised his son in the fear of God and in the law of the Lord. Having attained the age of maturity, the Prophet Isaiah entered into marriage with a pious prophetess (Is 8:3) and had a son Jashub (Is 8:18).

Saint Isaiah was called to prophetic service during the reign of Ozieh [Uzziah], king of Judea, and he prophesied for 60 years during the reign of kings Joatham, Achaz [Ahaz], Hezekiah and Manasseh. The start of his service was marked by the following vision:

he beheld the Lord God, sitting in a majestic heavenly temple upon a high throne. Six-winged Seraphim encircled Him. With two wings they covered their faces, and with two wings they covered their feet, and with two wings they flew about crying out one to another, “Holy, Holy, Holy Lord Sabaoth, heaven and earth are filled with His glory!” The pillars of the heavenly temple shook from their shouts, and in the temple arose the smoke of incense. The prophet cried out in terror, “Oh, an accursed man am I, granted to behold the Lord Sabaoth, and having impure lips and living amidst an impure people!” Then was sent him one of the Seraphim, having in hand a red-hot coal, which he took with tongs from the altar of the Lord. He touched it to the mouth of the Prophet Isaiah and said, “Lo, this has touched thy lips, and will take away with thine iniquities, and will cleanse thy sins.” After this Isaiah heard the voice of the Lord, directed towards him, “Whom shall I send, and who will go to this people?” Isaiah answered, “Here am I, send me.” But what is most important of all for us, the Prophet Isaiah with particular clarity and detail prophesies about the coming of the Messiah, Christ the Savior. The prophet names the Messiah as God and Man, teacher of all the nations, founder of the Kingdom of peace and love. The prophet foretells the birth of the Messiah from a Virgin, and with particular clarity he describes the Suffering of the Messiah for the sins of the world. He foresees His Resurrection and the universal spreading of His church. By his clear foretelling of Christ the Savior, the Prophet Isaiah deserves to be called an Old Testament Evangelist. To him belong the words, “He beareth our sins and is smitten for us...He was wounded for our sins and tortured for...” (continued on page 3)
6 Reasons Why Tithing is Good for an Orthodox Parish
by the Very Rev. Fr. Andrew Stephen Damick

In October, we started a series of articles by Fr. Andrew Stephen Damick, entitled “6 Reasons Why Tithing Is Good for an Orthodox Parish.” Key points so far include:
1. Tithing enables us to be saved.
2. Tithing shows that we’re serious.
3. Tithing is absolutely Orthodox.
4. Tithing becomes ministry.

For February, we offer part five:
5. Tithing ends money problems for the parish, once and for all.

If a mission parish has 25 tithing families who each make roughly the national average ($50k/yr.), the collective income for the parish would be $125k, which is usually plenty for a mission to function on.

If a parish has 50 tithing families who make that average, pledge income would be $250k. We are now well above the income of most medium to small parishes.

If there are 100 families who tithe like that, the income would be $500k. And they’re probably about to burn any mortgage, buy new land, build something new or start a new mission. Or maybe they’re hiring a couple more clergy, a secretary, etc. How many 100-family parishes have half a million dollars to use every year?

Even if half the families in a parish start tithing or even if that same half started giving just 5%, the parish would probably never have any more money problems ever.

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St. George BASKET OF LOVE

The Ladies Society is organizing a monthly “Basket of Love”, to be given to a local community organization that assists people and families in need. Each month our parish family will have an opportunity to donate “items in need” from a wish list. The items can be placed in the basket, located in the parish hall, throughout the month. Our “Basket of Love” will include a card from St. George and be presented to the organization at the end of each month. Tracey Shada has volunteered to organize this activity.

We will kick-off this act of charity in February 2018. The S.A.F.E. Center of Kearney will be our first recipient of our “Basket of Love”. Please join us for this fun way to give. Let this be an all-family effort; look for creative ways to involve your kids in extending love to those in need. We may even draw a name of a lucky winner each month, from our youth, to present the basket to the charity we select!

The Chronicle will provide a “Wish List” in each newsletter, and copies will be available with the Basket, located in the parish hall. For “smart phone” users - take a snapshot on your phone and next time you’re in the store, check out the list! Even if you can only provide one item, as a “family” we will share our gifts to those in need. For more information about this month’s charity, S.A.F.E. Center of Kearney, see page 8. Thank you!
The holy Prophet Isaiah had also a gift of wonderworking. And so, when during the time of a siege of Jerusalem by enemies the besieged had become exhausted with thirst, he by his prayer drew out from beneath Mount Sion a spring of water, which was called Siloam, i.e. “sent from God.” It was to this spring afterwards that the Savior sent the man blind from birth to wash, and He restored his sight. By the prayer of the Prophet Isaiah, the Lord prolonged the life of Hezekiah for 15 years.

The Prophet Isaiah died a martyr’s death. By order of the Jewish king Manasseh he was sawn through by a wood-saw. The prophet was buried not far from the Pool of Siloam. The relics of the holy Prophet Isaiah were afterwards transferred by the emperor Theodosius the Younger to Constantinople and installed in the church of Saint Laurence at Blachernae. At the present time part of the head of the Prophet Isaiah is preserved at Athos in the Hilandar monastery.

KONTAKION

Endowed with the gift of prophecy, prophet-martyr Isaiah, herald of God, you made clear to all the incarnation of Christ by proclaiming with a great voice: “Behold, the Virgin shall conceive in her womb.”

source: www.oca.org/saints

PREPARING FOR GREAT LENT - 2018

The weeks of preparation, and especially the Sunday gospel readings, serve to exercise the mind, whereas the fasting of Great Lent focuses on the body, and Holy Week’s services exercise the spirit. Each has its own distinct theme which is expressed in the Gospel readings appointed for the Divine Liturgies on these days:

1. Jan. 28 - Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee (Luke 18:9-14), This Sunday emphasizes humility as a key attitude for repentance. The Greek word for repentance is metanoia, which means a change of mind.

2. Feb. 4 - Sunday of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32), This Sunday teaches us about our need to return from exile.

3. Feb. 11 - Sunday of the Last Judgment (also called Meatfare Sunday; Matt 25:31-46) This Sunday emphasizes the Last Judgement.

4. Feb. 18 - Sunday of Forgiveness (also called Cheesefare Sunday; the expulsion of Adam from Eden is the theme of this day); Matt 6:14-21. This Sunday emphasizes forgiveness.

The Church eases us into the Lenten fasting discipline during this period. The week following the Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee is fast-free. The week following the Prodigal Son is a normal week -- we fast as usual on Wednesday and Friday. In the week following Meatfare Sunday, no meat is eaten; eggs, fish, and dairy are permitted on any day.

Forgiveness Sunday brings the period of preparation to an end. The next day, Feb. 19 - Clean Monday, begins Great Lent. The Vespers service served on the evening of Forgiveness Sunday includes the Rite of Mutual Forgiveness and is the first service of Great Lent.

Great Lent is the period that the Church has in her wisdom set aside for us to intensify our own spiritual growth through fasting, prayer and worship. If you follow the Church guidelines on fasting, make time to attend the services and intensify your own prayer life, you will be rewarded with a greater closeness to God.

Each Sunday of Great Lent has its own special theme and Feast:

- 1st Sunday, Feb. 25 - is the Feast of the Triumph of Orthodoxy (Bring your icons, join us as we make a procession around the church)
- 2nd Sunday, March 4 - is the commemoration of St. Gregory Palamas
- 3rd Sunday, March 11 - is the Veneration of the Holy Cross
- 4th Sunday, March 18 - is dedicated to St. John the Ladder
- 5th Sunday, March 25 - recalls the memory of St. Mary of Egypt
- 6th Sunday, March 31 - is the Saturday of Lazarus

HOLY WEEK

Great Lent is followed by Holy Week, the week beginning with Palm Sunday and preceding Pascha. More information for Holy Week will be offered in the March issue of the Chronicle.
Dear St. George parishioners,

Thank you so much for your donations for our mitten tree project. This year, we donated 142 items to the Kearney Head Start program. When I delivered the hats, gloves, mittens, coats, sweatpants, and underwear, the teachers were ecstatic to see the items! They were extremely grateful and said that their kids definitely need what we collected. I wanted to share their excitement with all of you!

Thanks,
Sarah Fothergill

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Dear Ladies Society,

Thank you so much for the mercy meal for John Liakos. It was delicious and very much appreciated. **May his memory be eternal!**
From, The John Liakos family

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Dear Ladies Society,

Christ is Born! May God reward your generous heart. We are honored by your gift and we carry Fr. Christopher in our heart closer than we carry our own soul. Be assured of our prayers.

In Christ,
Fr. Silouan
Monastery of Holy Archangel Michael, Canones, NM

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Dear Father and parishioners of St. George,

On behalf of Holy Archangel Michael Skete, we want to thank you for your gift. You are remembered here at the Divine Liturgy and daily prayers. May our Lord Jesus Christ bless you, and His holy Angels protect you, now and always.

Holy Archangel Michael Community
Weatherby, MO

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**Thank you to Kh. Anastasia from all who attended the January 20/40 gathering. We all enjoyed learning about the Holy Land. It was so nice to sit and see the picture presentation and listen to the personal stories you shared.***

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Thank you to everyone who came to enjoy this time of prayer, food, fellowship and learning. We enjoyed sharing this time with friends who were invited.

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Thank you to Alexis Hadley who provided childcare. We were blessed in so many ways with this special evening together.

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**Bessie Shada, on the loss of her husband Tony, a life-time member of our St. George parish family, on Wednesday, January 3, 2018.**

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**Our Heartfelt Sympathy**

**To The Family Of:**

**Bessie Shada**, on the loss of her husband **Tony**, a life-time member of our St. George parish family, on Wednesday, January 3, 2018.

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**May his memory be eternal**

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“Be careful when you are in church . . . You must know my child, that there are countless angels above the people in church and invisibly sing along with them. But when one of the faithful begins to joke, to talk about worldly things, or to comment about others, the angels who see him, drop the hymn and weep bitterly for his plight.”

--St. Nephon of Constantia
The **Women’s Book Study** group will meet Monday, Feb. 5th, and the 19th, from 4:00 - 5:00 at Amanda Denny’s home. Come join us for fun and fellowship as we continue our journey with *Saint Paisios*, as we read his book, *Passions & Virtues*. This has been a great read!

**MINISTRY UPDATES**

**Sunday morning**, February 18th—We will be hosting a **PANCAKE LUNCHEON** after Liturgy, for our parish family. This will be a “free-will” offering. Please plan to join in on the fun and help us by bringing your favorite toppings. Proceeds will help us fund an upcoming meal for the Jubilee Center during Great Lent. This is a fun way to fellowship with our parish family!

**Sunday evening**, February 18th
(Chesefare Sunday) following the **Forgiveness Vespers** service, we will plan to meet at the **St. Raphael house** for our meeting. *(If you haven’t been to a Forgiveness Vespers, please come and see...you don’t want to miss it. It just may become one of your new favorites.)* We will have cheese pizza and a charity challenge presentation. Father Christopher may offer a small talk relating to Great Lent.

Hope to see you all!

**ST. GEORGE YOUTH GROUP**

In January, the youth group met to calculate the results from the parish canned food challenge. Thank you to Mark Klein for letting us borrow his scale and for helping us deliver the canned food to the Jubilee Center. This month we also enjoyed a youth group dinner at **Qdoba**.

**MEN’S STUDY GROUP**

The **St. George Men’s Study Group** meets each Saturday morning, at 8:30 am, at the St. Raphael House.

**ST. HELENA Ladies Society**

Thank you ladies for your attendance at our January meeting. We may be a small group but with gratitude to God for His blessings, we have several opportunities to serve our parish and community, in the coming year. Thank you for your energy and many creative ideas shared at our January meeting.

The **Annual Church Spring Breakfast will be February 17th**. We voted to change this event to a “free will offering”. Please be sure to pick up Tickets and/or Flyers to help promote this fund-raiser. **Encourage your friends to stay for a Church Tour** as a way to introduce them to our faith and to see the beautiful iconography at St. George. Our February meeting will be an **evening of fellowship** at Sarah Fothergill’s home. This **“Winter Ladies Social”** is planned for Sunday, Feb. 11th at 6:30 p.m. Cards and emails have been sent out - please see Sarah or Joanie if you have any questions. Refreshments will be provided—bring your smile and bring a friend!

In February, we will begin our charity project, **“Basket of Love”**. See pg. 9 for more details.

We will have a cleaning day for the church to help us get ready for Pascha, on **March 18th**, after coffee hour. Bring a change of clothes and we will get busy making St. George shine!

A reminder that annual dues for 2018 ($25.00) can be paid to Kim or Tracey. Our next meeting is scheduled for **Sunday, after Pot-Luck, March 4th**. We look forward to seeing each of you!
Ladies Winter Social

Date: February 11th, 2018
Time: 6:30 p.m.
Location: Sarah Fothergill's home (1211 W. 13th St.)

Join us for fellowship and to hear from the ladies that attended this year's Midwest Women's Orthodox Retreat!
Refreshments are provided...all you need to bring is yourself (and feel free to bring a friend!)

➕ RSVP by Feb. 8th is appreciated.

THE PARISH IS INVITED to a PANCAKE LUNCHEON FEB. 18th

This coffee hour event is being hosted by the 20/40 Group after Liturgy. This luncheon will be a “free-will” offering--proceeds will help fund an upcoming meal for the Jubilee Center during Great Lent. We look forward to serving & offering a time of fellowship with YOU, our parish family!

Our Baptism Congratulations

To baby AMELIA MARYAM KENNEDY on Saturday, January 20, 2018 at Saints Constantine & Helen Greek Orthodox Church in Cheyenne, Wyoming.
Proud grandmother is Virginia Suleiman, and parents, Samaria & Clint Kennedy.

MANY YEARS

Our Baby Congratulations

To proud grandmother Virginia Suleiman, and proud parents Sidonya & Jeff Fulton, on the birth of their son, Raphael Fulton on January 2, 2018. He was 6 lbs. and 19". Many Years!

Raphael
Ambrose
Fulton
MANY YEARS

Pilgrimage for the 100th Anniversary of Father Nicola Yanney’s Repose

October 26-28, 2018

St. George Orthodox Church - Kearney, NE
more info: www.saintgeorgekearney.com
Last year our parish offered approximately 50 morning and evening Lenten services, starting with Forgiveness Vespers in February and ending with Holy Saturday Liturgy in April—and that's not including our normal weekend services! If you would like to spend more time in prayer this Lent, please consider attending one of each service below, and hopefully more! Here are some descriptions taken from our parish website to help you understand the different services offered.

"Great Compline" - A beautiful service of evening prayer with a number of Psalms, both read and chanted. This service lasts about an hour (except during the first week of Lent, when it is combined with parts of the Great Canon...then, the service lasts about 1 hour and 45 minutes).

"The Great Canon" - A long penitential hymn of verses and refrains, based on different figures from the Bible. During each refrain "Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me," it is typical for the faithful to make a prostration or a bow, if possible...except for the chanters who are busy chanting the service. During the first week of Lent, the Great Canon is divided into 4 parts, with one part added to Great Compline on Monday through Thursday. During the 5th week of Lent, the Great Canon is heard in its entirety with Small Compline (that service lasts 2+ hours).

“Pre-sanctified Liturgy" - A special penitential Liturgy we serve only during Lent. Many of the hymns of Vespers are included in this service. Extra Holy Communion is consecrated on the previous Sunday ("pre-sanctified"), kept in a special tabernacle on the altar, then served at this Liturgy later in the week. It is especially to give grace and encouragement for those who are engaging in the fast. Pre-sanctified is about an hour and a half; it is usually preceded by 9th Hour (lots of Psalms) and Typica (selected hymns from our regular Liturgy), which together last about 30 minutes. Usually, these services are on Wednesday evening, followed by a lenten potluck meal and time of fellowship. Those receiving Holy Communion at Pre-sanctified Liturgy are to fast all day before receiving, or at least from after an early, light lenten lunch.

"The Akathist Hymn" - The Akathist Hymn during Lent is a special one to the Virgin Mary (called the "Madayeh" service in Arabic), praising and honoring her place in God’s plan of salvation. This is one of the most popular Lenten services, especially in Lebanon, Syria, and the Holy Land. It lasts a little under an hour.

"Daily Lenten Orthros" - A service of morning prayer, similar to the service we have each Sunday morning before Liturgy. Orthros includes Psalms, beautiful chanting, and litanies. It lasts about an hour.
**Stewardship 2018**
Offering our prayerful thanks, let’s continue to fulfill our commitment to Christ’s Church in thanksgiving for His many blessings to us!

This is the time of year we ask that you please complete and turn in your Stewardship Commitment Card for 2018. And while giving prayerful consideration to the commitment you are making, please know that your support is most meaningful when accompanied also by your presence!

Your Stewardship Commitment is a testimony of your dedication to your own spiritual growth, as well as to the spreading of our beloved Orthodox Faith by supporting our parish.

Pledge Cards can be found on page 10 of this month’s Chronicle.

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**OUR FEBRUARY “Basket of Love”**
The S.A.F.E. Center of Kearney will be the recipient of February’s St. George “Basket of Love.” The Center’s mission is to provide free and confidential services for individuals and families affected by domestic and sexual violence while bringing awareness and prevention efforts to communities across South Central Nebraska.

Here’s their wish list and let’s have fun filling up the basket during the month of February. Thank you!

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**Wish List for S.A.F.E. Center, in Kearney**

**Immediate Needs**
- Paper Towels
- Clorox Wipes
- Toilet Paper
- Trash Bags
- Laundry Soap
- Freezer Bags
- Toilet Plunger
- Plastic Forks
- Paper Plates
- Cookware
- Bath Towels
- Canned or Boxed Food
- Fresh Produce and Meat
- Women’s Underwear (5-7)

**Provide Survivors a Helping Hand**
- Stamps
- Grocery Store Gift Cards
- Gas Cards
- RYDE Tickets
- Cell Phones (working or not)

**Ongoing Needs**
- Body Wash
- Toothpaste, Toothbrushes
- Dishwasher Soap
- Baby Wipes
- Diapers sizes 4, 5, 6
- Household cleaners
- Dryer sheets
- Dish Soap
- Hair Products

**Agency Dreams**
- First Aid Kits
- Shed (8’ x 8’) for Shelter
- Donations to expand our Endowment
- (Any Financial Donations are used for the provision of services)

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On Sundays and Feast Days come to church, and falling down with reverence before God, be mindful of all the mercies you may ever have received from Him. Thank Him for them with all your heart, and as a sign of your thankfulness, promise to live as He has commanded you. This is a sacrifice most pleasing to God.

- St. Theophan the Recluse
The services of the church and the fathers stress over and over that our physical fast from food is useless if we do not also strive to “fast” from our iniquities. Fasting from food is an important aid to the help purify the soul, and to gain in virtue.

The season of the virtues now has come and the Judge is at the door. Let us not hold back with darkened face, but let us keep the Fast, offering tears, contrition and almsgiving; and let us cry: ‘Our sins are more in number than the sand of the sea; but, Deliverer of all, forgive each one of us, that we may receive an incorruptible crown.’

The arena of the virtues has been opened. Let all who wish to struggle for the prize now enter, girding themselves for the noble contest of the Fast; for those that strive lawfully are justly crowned. Taking up the armor of the Cross, let us make war against the enemy. Let us have as our invincible rampart the Faith, prayer as our breastplate, and as our helmet almsgiving; and as our sword let us use fasting that cuts away all evil from our heart. If we do this, we shall receive the true crown from Christ the King of all at the Day of Judgment.

Adam was driven out of Paradise, because in disobedience he had eaten food; but Moses was granted the vision of God, because he had cleansed the eyes of his soul by fasting. If then we long to dwell in Paradise, let us abstain from all needless food; and if we desire to see God, let us like Moses fast for forty days. With sincerity let us persevere in prayer and intercession; let us still the passions of our soul; let us subdue the rebellious instincts of the flesh. With light step let us set out upon the path to heaven, where the choirs of angels with never-silent voice sing the praises of the undivided Trinity; and there we shall behold the surpassing beauty of the Master.

O Son of God, Giver of Life, in Thee we set our hope: count us worthy of a place there with the angelic hosts, at the intercessions of the Mother who bore Thee, O Christ, of the apostles and the martyrs and of all the saints.
OUR FEBRUARY FASTING

February 1st is fast free. The traditional fasting from meat, poultry, fish, eggs, and dairy products is observed in the 2nd week. Meat Fast begins on February 19th and the Great Fast begins on Clean Monday, February 26th.

THE ANSWER IS 19

**Answer:**
Father Nicola traveled to 19 different states performing baptisms, weddings, funerals, and encouraging the faithful to keep their faith and build churches.

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**Master, Teacher of wisdom,**
**Bestower of virtue,**
You teach the thoughtless and protect the poor:
Strengthen and enlighten my heart.
Word of the Father,
Let me not restrain my mouth from crying to you:
Have mercy on me, a transgressor,
O merciful Lord!

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**We must keep in mind that whatever we do, openly or in secret, we do in the presence of our guardian angel.**

--St. Nikolai of Zicha

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**Let us hear from you. We welcome your comments, ideas, photos and any info you would like to share with your St. George family!**

stgeorgechronicle@yahoo.com

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**ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH 2018 PLEDGE CARD**

Name __________________________________________   Phone home ___________________ Cell ____________________

Address __________________________________   State ___ Zip ________ Email ________________________

Pledge
In thanksgiving to God for all His many blessings and in my desire to be a good and faithful steward of St. George Church, I pledge to the Lord $ ___________________ for the year 2018.

I will fulfill my pledge (circle one)

- Annually
- Semi-annually
- Quarterly (every 3 mos.)
- Monthly
- Weekly

Signature ___________________________________________ Date _______________________

_May God continue to bless you and your loved ones richly as He abundantly enriches His parish of St. George - Kearney, Nebraska_

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“And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.” Acts 11:26