

February 2024

THE VINE

الكَرْمَة

“I AM THE VINE AND YOU ARE THE BRANCHES” (JOHN 15:5)



1922-2024

انا هو الكرمة و انتم الاتحان

The Monthly Newsletter of

St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church, Canton, Ohio

A parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

Blessed Feast of the Holy Theophany of Christ!



Outdoor Blessing of the Water



2024 Parish Council Officers:

- Chairman - Greg Shaheen
- Vice Chairman - Bruce Esber
- Secretary - Marilyn Kanam
- Treasurer - Mike Shaheen

Parish Council Members:

- Leila Andrews, Walid Bardawil, Robin Cazantzes, Karen Davis, Monica Griffin, Aaron Joseph, Roger Kyriacou, Carol Shaheen, George Shaheen.



Annual Parish Meeting Reports - January 2024**Ladies Society**

The Ladies Society members had a very active year in 2023 with a mix of traditional and new events. In February, we provided refreshments for the Priest's meeting with Metropolitan ANTONIOS before Vespers. We participated in March Ladies Month by reading the Epistle in English and Arabic. Also in March, we served a Lenten lunch after Divine Liturgy to raise funds for the 2023 Antiochian Women's Project – Disaster Relief (people affected by the earthquake in Turkey & Syria). We also prepared the Presanctified meal after services at our church.

The Ladies Lenten Corner was published each week in the bulletin during Lent with a Devotional and Lenten snack and recipe ideas. We plan to continue with this column once Lent starts this March. If anyone has a Lenten recipe that they would like to share with their fellow parishioners, please email or text me the recipe and I will include it in this column.

In May, we attended and hosted the lunch for the retreat with Mother Gabriella. Also, that weekend, we provided appetizers and dessert for St. George Day.

We held our annual Ladies Bake Sale during the church picnic in August. We made donations to the Earthquake Relief Fund, the Zoe Fund and the Thanksgiving Basket fund.

In October, we served brunch after Divine Liturgy with proceeds benefiting the SAM Center, a local organization which provides services to veterans.

In November, we held our annual Thanksgiving Gathering luncheon at the Desert Inn.

Throughout the year, we made coffee each Sunday and hosted coffee hour when needed. If you would like to host coffee hour, please sign your name to the schedule or call Sherry in the church office. As a reminder, please don't feel that you have to provide a meal when hosting coffee hour. Cookies, fruit, chips, veggies or cake are all good options and enjoyed by everyone.

Finally, with the start of a new year, we ask that current members and anyone that would like to join the Ladies to please pay your annual \$5.00 membership fee to Andria Michael. Membership fees are used by the Ladies towards future outreach projects.

Thanks you & God Bless,

Marilyn Shaheen

President, Ladies of St. George

Teen SOYO

Officers: President: Noah Shaheen, Vice President: Elia Corbin, Secretary: Cheyenne Kyriacou, Treasurer: Michael Wires **Advisers:** Faiz Shaheen & Michelle Wires

Activities:

- We started the year by collaborating together to set up the luminary candles before the Holy Week processions as we do every year.
- Succeeding that we served the Palm Sunday fish dinner.
- We then helped set up the Easter egg hunt for the little kids.
- Also, we had nuns come from the monastery to speak to some of the teens and their parents.
- This year at the picnic, we not only helped sell the beverages but we also purchased them ourselves.
- Near the end of September, we began basketball practice for the upcoming tournament.
- We also held the annual bonfire for the elevation of the cross.
- October was youth month so we had the teens read the epistle during this time.
- The basketball tournament turned out very well this year and the Hafli afterwards didn't disappoint, the teens also grew better relationships with the teens from the other churches.
- Father then hosted his annual teen discussion which the teens participated in.
- We then not only hosted but also wrote our Christmas play which was followed by the pasta luncheon.
- We then ended the year with some Christmas caroling.
- That wraps up this year of Teen SOYO.



As the Society of Orthodox Youth Organization, we seek a closer connection to God through prayer and service. Our heartfelt thanks go to every individual in this parish for their unwavering support.

SOYO account balance: \$14,887.68. 2023 Camp Fund Contribution: \$1,700

Annual Parish Meeting Reports - January 2024***-Sunday School Recap***

Hello everyone. My name is Sarah Joseph. In August 2023, Father Michael called a meeting for Sunday school teachers and volunteers; it was at this meeting I was nominated and accepted the position of Sunday School coordinator. This proposed a new challenge to me since organization is not my strong suit, but with God all things are possible, right? I want to thank all of the teachers and volunteers for your kindness and patience with me. Thank you to Michelle Wires not only for your years of service in this position, but for continuing to teach in our classes and for the assistance and direction you've provided me. Thank you to Father Michael for your support and encouragement as I learn what this position entails; and thank you, to Sherry for always helping with printing, copying and all my questions.

-Classrooms

The 2023 school year closed with 3 students graduating. This year our Sunday school has approximately 70 students on the roster; however, consistent in classroom weekly attendance is about 25-30 students. This year, our goal is to reach out and get more of our young people into the classrooms and attending with regularity. We will continue to work together to try and achieve this goal and appreciate any help that can be provided us.

Now I'd like to take a moment to recognize all of our active teachers:

Preschool : Heather Panopolous

Kindergarten – 1st : Nejla Shaheen

Grades 2-3 : Kh. Mira Corbin

Grades 4-6 : Monica Griffin

Junior High 7-9 : Sarah Joseph

High School 10-12 : Faiz Simone, Michelle Wires, Beth Starkey

Subs/assistants : Walid Bardawil, Nour Kelly, Nina Shaheen, Natalie Kanam



Most of our younger classes currently only have 1 teacher in the classroom. Ideally, we'd like to be able to offer more assistance for safety and efficiency reasons. My goal is to offer a rotation for assistants maybe on a monthly or every other week basis. Another idea we'd like to try is to incorporate a "break week." This would be possibly every 4-6 weeks for our normal Sunday school to have a small service project or all grades craft to allow teachers and students a little break to just enjoy coffee hour together. Please reach out to me if you may be able to lend a hand in either area.

-Activities

Sunday school began this year on September 10, 2023 followed by a mini-picnic. Our curriculum comes from the Antiochian archdiocese of America for Kindergarten through High School and is on the book of Romans. Our preschool classroom has its own curriculum; also, provided by the archdiocese "Living the Faith" where they are learning the traditions and basic instruction on our Orthodox Faith. The following week we gathered on September 13th for the Elevation of the Holy cross and had a bon-fire after service. Thank you to Faiz for the set up and trash can corn. On October 8th our families enjoyed the annual Fall Outing at Ramseyer Farms. This event was coordinated by Maiy Carneal and sponsored by the Phoenicians Club. Thank you! December 3rd, we celebrated St. Nicholas Day with Noah Shaheen dressing as the beloved saint, sharing the story and some goodies with our students. December 17th the kids performed this year's Christmas Pageant. The show was directed and put together by Faiz Simone and some of the teen soyo group – with lots of help from the whole Simone Shaheen family, thank you!

Our classes had a 2 week break for Christmas eve and New Years eve and then resumed classes January 7, 2024. We are kicking off 2024 working on Creative Arts projects with the theme, "All things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His Purposes" Romans 8:28. Thank you to Liz Macris and Jazla Hilaneh for overseeing this process for us with getting the info out, packet print-outs, registration deadlines, etc. Those will be due March 17. We will continue to dedicate class time for creative arts and complete our lessons on the book of Romans to finish out the 2024 Sunday School year.

-Closing

Thank you for the opportunity to serve in this position. I humbly ask for your prayers for our Sunday school program and welcome any further help or suggestions to enrich our youth moving forward. Thank you!

Respectfully,
Sarah Joseph



Come spend President's Day weekend with their Better Halves!

The Ladies of St. George are touring "Beyond Camelot – The Life and Legacy of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis"

Saturday, February 17, 2024

First Ladies Education and Research Center

10:00 A.M.

Followed by lunch at the 330 Bar and Grill (inside the Doubletree Hotel)

The admission to this Self-Guided Exhibit is Free.

There is a charge of \$7.00/adult; \$6.00/seniors; \$5.00/children under 18, if you also choose to tour the Saxton-McKinley House.

Please contact Marilyn Shaheen for questions about this event.

The Ladies of St. George are hosting a special coffee hour on Sunday, February 25th after Divine Liturgy. This lunch is in memory of past members of the Ladies Club.

You are invited to enjoy a delicious meal prepared by Chef Max and view our memorabilia table of Ladies members pictures and past events that they hosted.

If you have any pictures of your ancestors who were members of the Ladies, newspaper articles of Ladies Club events or anything related to the Ladies Club, we would love to include these items on our memorabilia table. Please contact Marilyn Shaheen, Leila Andrews or Carol Shaheen if you have items to contribute.

If you are available to help with this lunch, please contact Marilyn Shaheen

Home Blessings

Contact Fr. Michael or the office to schedule your home blessing. (Schedule a time when all family members can be present. Place an icon, candle and small bowl of water on dining room table).

Online Form: <https://forms.gle/Sp7hLWrcccjDj2eV9>



FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

OPERATING FUND JAN—DEC 2023

TOTAL INCOME IS \$ 245,188

TOTAL EXPENSE IS \$ 238,211

NET GAIN \$ 6,977



| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat | |
|--|---|--|---|---|-------------------------------|-----|-------------------------------|
| <p>On February 18 we will celebrate Godparent's Sunday.</p> <p>We will celebrate our commitment to Christ, our commitment to His Church and our commitment to one another! Be sure to attend church with your Godchildren and partake of Holy Communion together.</p> <p>You can also have lunch together at the Assessment Luncheon after church. (children are admitted for free)</p> | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | |
| <p>Sunday School Valentines for Shut-ins</p> <p>Matins 9 am Liturgy 10 am</p> | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| | <p>Catechism Class, 6 pm-7:30 pm in the Library</p> | <p>Parish Council Meeting 6 pm</p> | <p>Bible Study in the Library 11 am</p> | | <p>Paraklesis 6:30 pm</p> | | <p>Great Vespers 5 pm</p> |
| <p>Teen Soyo Bake Sale</p> <p>Matins 9 am Liturgy 10 am</p> | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| | | |  <p>Bible Study in the Library 11 am</p> | | <p>Paraklesis 6:30 pm</p> | | <p>Great Vespers 5 pm</p> |
| <p>Talent Show and Assessment Luncheon</p> <p>Matins 9 am Liturgy 10 am</p> | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| | <p>Catechism Class, 6 pm-7:30 pm in the Library</p> | | <p>Bible Study in the Library 11 am</p> | | <p>Paraklesis 6:30 pm</p> | | <p>Great Vespers 5 pm</p> |
| <p>Ladies Luncheon</p> <p>Matins 9 am Liturgy 10 am</p> | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | | |
| | | | <p>Bible Study in the Library 11 am</p> |  <p>Caring Meal Ministry Food Ministry 9 am</p> | | | |

Annual Parish Meeting Reports - January 2024
ST. GEORGE CHARITABLE OUTREACH MINISTRY



Most of this year was devoted to the new MEAL MINISTRY and reaching out to our own parishioners, however in the Fall we focused on projects that reached out into the community:

SOCKTOBER

Men's, Women's and Children's new and like-new socks were collected the month of October and donated to the Refuge of Hope. We collected 460 pairs of socks!

VETERAN'S DAY PROJECT

Ladies of St George took on a project to donate monetarily to the SAM Center in Massillon which addresses the needs of Veterans on all levels, year-round. Pam Huggett chaired a Brunch after church on October 29th — although the attendance was disappointing, the Ladies added to the \$260 profit to make it \$500 which Parish Council matched. We were able to donate \$1000 to this cause.

COAT DRIVE

Coats of all sizes and types were collected in the Social Hall and donated to Refuge. This is an ongoing need and coats/clothing may be left in the Hall and will be delivered weekly.

THANKSGIVING COLLECTION

Monies from the Thanksgiving Collection from parishioners, along with \$500 from the Ladies was again matched by Parish Council. We were able to purchase \$2000 in Marc's gift cards, along with \$400 in Aldi's gift cards which were donated in memory of David Tomey. These cards were distributed on Dec 4th to Crenshaw, Gibbs and Schreiber Schools to be used at their discretion for families who have a need.

GIVING TREE

Three families were adopted from the Community Christmas Giving Tree Project and provided gifts for the holiday. One never knows the impact of generosity and whose heart, either in those who give or in those who receive, will be touched. May we continue to reach out to each other and to those we will never know with gratitude for God's Blessings and His Love.

Submitted by Carol Shaheen

Parish Youth Inreach Ministry

In the spring of 2023, we formed a humble committee that came together, drafted love letters and sent them to our High School graduates ages 18-25.

Although these love letters are quite simplistic, by design, the outreach showcases the love we have for our Orthodox youth here at St George. These love letters, drafted by authors here in our community are intended to try to emulate Christ. To show love like Christ Jesus does for us, every day. Christ's love is not compulsory, nor does it boast and it is not proud, as it is written in 1 Corinthians 13.

The Love letters sent in 2023 were authored by Karen Davis, Mary Hilaneh, Lamice Jasser, Simone Shaheen, and myself - Nina and covered the following topics; (Apr) Pascha - Great Feast and fasting, (May) Christ is Risen, (Jun) Schools out - Camp Counsellors highlights, (Jul) Saints and their love for God and their neighbor, (Aug) The Transfiguration and Dormition of the Theotokos, (Sep) Proverbs, The Acts of the Apostles and Discernment, (Oct) Psalm 50- Make me hear joy and Gladness, (Nov) Psalm 107 - Let us give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, (Dec) Christ is Born, Glorify him & and the annual college student dinner hosted by Father and Kh. Corbin...I would be remiss if I didn't mention the beauty of the love demonstrated at this event.

In 2024, I'd like to see the youth participate in the authorship of the Love Letters, and Elia Albaba will own the January Love Letter with the topic, The Epiphany and Orthodox Feasts. Thank you, Elia,!

I also invite everyone in this room to reach out to me if you are interested in authoring a Love Letter.

With this, Happy New Year- for a Blessed 2024.

Nina Shaheen

It is time to get our creative thinking caps on for the Creative Festivals 2024! Mark your calendars - submissions are due: **SUNDAY, MARCH 17, 2024**

The theme is: "All things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28

Please see Liz Macris or Jazla Hilaneh in the bookstore if you have any questions. Thank you and God bless!

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/antiochianarchdiocese/53255471074/>



Food Ministry Outreach



DONATIONS \$3625
 FOOD COSTS \$803.78
 BALANCE \$2,821.22

Last January, Father Michael called me and asked me to head a food ministry, knowing that the Middle Eastern Dinner had come to an end and I can cook and I like to organize. Since I consider a privilege to feed people, it was an honor to accept.

Another bonus is that we have a wonderful core of volunteers who are committed to St. George and helping others. This ministry would not exist if it were not for their caring hearts and dedication. I would publicly acknowledge all of them. Thank you for showing up, rearranging your schedules, cooking, cleaning up and delivery. Thank you for all your input and support!

Along with those who are so willing to donate their services, I would also like to thank those of who have donated money to the ministry, since this is all pulled off by donations. Along with more modest ones, we are grateful for every penny. The donations are strictly used for food and packing supplies, nothing else.

The decision on who receives a meal is simple. If you are a nonagenarian, (a person who is from 90 to 99 years old), if you are ill, if you are bereaved, if you are a shut in, or if you simply need a pick-me-up, we put you on the list. Some people have declined, and that is fine. It is not a requirement to be a member of St. George to be on the list. We have a few people who are not members, and they get a monthly delivery. We average about 25 meals per month that we deliver. Also, if you know of someone to add to our list, please contact Father Michael, Sherry Albaugh or me, no questions asked.

After we were up and running, we added a new facet. We make an additional ten meal package which we send to Aultman Woodlawn Palliative Care. These are for the families and friends of people who are in a hospice setting.

Just last month, we switched up things a bit. Our volunteer team generously donated items. We met in the Social Hall, compiled 25 bags consisting of items such as puzzle books, socks, toiletries, popcorn, crackers, and of course icon bookmarks. They were delivered to Bethany and Altercare of Louisville for those residents who do not have visitors. The generosity of those who donated is very touching and humbling.

We look forward to 2024 to continue this small, but mighty ministry. Thank you, Father Michael, Sherry Albaugh, the volunteers and all of you for your support!

Submitted by Pam Huggett

Bible Bowl - The Book of Romans

Thursday, June 27 at the Parish Life Conference
 Oakbrook, IL.

Interested in participating in the Bible Bowl contact
 Steven or Beth Starkey

Team Divisions:

Pre-Teen 10-12 years old Teen 13-19 years old
 Adult 20 and older

Assessment Luncheon

&



Sunday, February 18

(If you are interested in showcasing your talent for the talent show, please contact



Sarah Joseph



What is the Archdiocese Assessment?

Each parish of the Archdiocese is required to tith 10% of their income to the Archdiocese. The assessment is \$ 50.00 per adult to help offset some of this expense.

(You can use the yellow Archdiocese assessment envelope in the box of stewardship envelopes placed at the end of January. You can also pay on Tithely or cash app or through your online banking account.)

Your invited to a free lunch on February 19. In order to get your free lunch, pay the assessment. If you have not yet paid and want to join us for this fabulous lunch prepared by our cooks you can PAY AT THE DOOR. (Cash, check or credit card accepted) Children are free and guests are welcome but must pay \$10.

Please plan on attending; it's a nice way to thank you for your contribution.

(If interested in helping with the Assessment Luncheon, please contact chairperson Karen Davis

Interested in participating in the Oratorical contact Fr. Michael. (Junior Division ages 13-15) (Senior Division ages 16-19)

The St. George Antiochian Orthodox
Church of Canton, Ohio
1118 Cherry Avenue NE
Canton, OH 44704-1036

UPCOMING EVENTS

***June 26-29, 2024
Parish Life Conference - Oakbrook IL.***

Live Streaming of Services on our Facebook page.

(You don't need a Facebook account to access the page and view the videos)

St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church of Canton, Ohio

<https://www.facebook.com/st.georgeantiochiancanton/>

Online Word magazine:
www.antiochian.org/theword

Online Giving Option

St. George Church has an online

giving/stewardship option on our website.

God bless you for your support and we sincerely thank you
for your contribution.



Online Stewardship Option:

<http://www.stgeorgecanton.com/stewardship.html>

You can also set up a bill pay through your bank and
an automated check will come to the church (a free service).

St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church

A parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

1118-1122 Cherry Ave. N.E. Canton, Ohio 44704 - 1036

Office hours are 9:00 am - 1:00 pm

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Website: www.stgeorgecanton.com

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