



News Brief to the Parishioners of

Saint Luke Orthodox Church

Erie, CO

November 2023

stlukeorthodox.org

November, the penultimate month of the civil year, has a roster of great saints (St. Raphael, the Holy Archangels, St. Nektarios, St. Katherine) and the Feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos. It also brings the Advent fast in preparation for Christmas. To start Advent this year, we'll be offering the sacrament of Holy Unction. We always serve Unction during Holy Week to prepare for the reception of Holy Communion on Holy Thursday (but it may be served whenever there is need). It is this connection with Holy Communion that makes Unction unquestionably a sacrament. It is not merely a prayer for healing (which the Church does continuously for the whole world), but a restoration of soul and body in anticipation of the Eucharist and for the forgiveness of sins. To be clear, Holy Unction is not a replacement for the sacrament of Confession, but an extension of the restoration and redemption we receive through Confession to the whole person.

The sacraments do not stand in isolation from each other, but are together a "seamless garment" that enables us to share in the life of the Kingdom of Heaven.

The blessing of the Oil and the anointing of the sick is an apostolic commandment, given to us as a sign of the great compassion we receive from God through His Church. God did not make human beings to suffer and be sick, but to live and share in His life. Humanity's present condition comes as a result of our separation from the fullness of God's life. Like the Good

Samaritan, our Lord has brought us "wine and oil" to treat our injuries (which are both spiritual and physical).

This anointing is also not a replacement for regular medicine, but a fulfillment of it. As Metropolitan Hierotheos said, "Our mortal and impassioned nature creates all diseases in the human body. God, of course, enlightens doctors to find ways of healing, but where human science cannot intervene, God intervenes. And many times we see many such miraculous operations." As a priest, I find that the counsel I give people is often just encouragement to take care of their health, see a doctor, take their meds, and get more sleep. Health workers who ethically and conscientiously treat their patients are doing holy work, illuminated by the Holy Spirit, and laboring towards the same end as the healing ministry of the Church.



Why olive oil? It was God's intent that the physical things of this world would be blessings to Man in Eden, that we would receive them and share them generously with each other and offer them to God with thanksgiving. In the Scripture, the "fruit of the olive" (i.e. olive oil) was treated as a sign of the richness of the Garden of Eden and the living water which had refreshed its inhabitants. Olive oil is not some random thing we picked to anoint with, but is understood even by science as having healing properties. Those properties point to the life we shared and will enjoy again with

God in the Resurrection.

Chronology of Events

Please note, there are date and time changes for weekday services in November.

- Divine Liturgy: Wednesday November 1 at 5:30 PM, Fasting Potluck to follow
- Adult Education Class: Thursday November 2 at 10:30 AM
- Myrrhbearers Meeting: Saturday November 4 at 9:00 AM
- **St. Raphael of Brooklyn Feast Day: Divine Liturgy, Saturday November 4 at 9:30 AM**
- Sunday Fellowship: November 5: Please visit OC Life table
- St. Luke Co-op: Monday November 6 at 11AM to 3:30 PM
- HOPE Group Meeting: Monday November 6 at 6:30 PM
- **Holy Archangels Feast Day: Divine Liturgy, Tuesday, November 7 at 5:30 PM, Fasting Potluck**
- Divine Liturgy: Thursday, November 9 at 9:30 AM
- Adult Education Class: Thursday November 9 time TBD
- Men's Breakfast and Study Group: Saturday November 11 at 9:00 AM
- Choir Practice: Saturday November 11 at 2:30 PM
- Catechism Class: Saturday November 11 at 2:30 PM
- Parish Council Meeting: Tuesday November 14 at 6:00 PM; Everyone is welcome.
- **Holy Unction: Wednesday November 15 at 5:30 PM & Fasting Potluck to follow; Choir Practice**
- Nativity Fast Begins: Wednesday November 15
- Adult Education Class: Thursday November 16 at 10:30 AM
- Choir Practice: Saturday November 18 at 2:30 PM
- Trisagion Memorial Service is November 19th, after Liturgy, remembering Jerome "Jerry" Benson.
- Sunday Potluck Fellowship: November 19; No assigned dishes, bring something delicious to share
- St. Luke Co-op: Monday November 20 at 11AM to 3:30 PM
- HOPE Group Meeting: Monday November 20 at 6:30 PM
- **Feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos: Divine Liturgy, Tuesday November 21 at 9:30 AM**
- Happy Thanksgiving: Thursday November 23
- Youth Group Friendsgiving: Saturday November 25 at 5:00 PM
- NO Sunday School on Sunday November 26
- Divine Liturgy: Wednesday, November 29 at 5:30 PM, Fasting Potluck to follow
- Adult Education Class: Thursday November 30 at 10:30 AM



News Updates

Update on our parish financial situation

from Rob Bell, Parish Council Treasurer

Storm repair & financial outlook

As you probably noticed, the roof repair is well underway. And, 6 of the 10 damaged HVAC units were repaired. Stucco repair will be done after the roof work is completed. Through October 30th, our offerings were about \$1,000 less than budgeted while expenses were about \$6,000 higher than budgeted; ie our funds are \$7,000 lower than expected. Please consider a contribution toward the storm repairs in addition to your regular offerings. As always, any amount is helpful and appreciated.

October charity appeals

We received \$493 for Special Olympics. And, to date, have received \$550 for Erie Food Bank. If anyone wants to contribute, please do so by next Sunday, Nov 4th. As always, thank you to all who contributed in any amount to these worthy causes.

Benevolence fund

During the upcoming holiday and festal season, we look outward and request support for food banks and similar organizations to help our local communities. At the same time, we know that some of our own parish family may be facing a financial hardships. As a reminder, we have a benevolence fund that is from parish family specifically for our parish family in times of need. We've been blessed to help several families this year; shut-ins and others facing uncovered medical costs. So, if you are facing financial burdens – now or anytime throughout the year - please consider discussing your situation with Fr. Raphael. Or, if you would like to help others in our parish, you may donate at any time by designating it to "benevolence fund".

Additional Information from our Treasurer

Safeway cards: For those already using a Safeway rewards card - thank you! New cards have arrived, please see Frances or Rob. Safeway will donate a percentage of your purchases made using a rewards card to St Luke. Each year we receive hundreds of dollars of "free" donations. There's no cost for the card or program. Cards and more details are available at the office. King Soopers cards may also be set up to support our church with every purchase.

Ministry Updates

We need Ministry Leaders to fill vacancies in the following Ministries: Building Maintenance, Grounds Maintenance, Web/IT Team, Audiovisual team, Feasts/Festivals, Medical Response Team, and Safety Team. If you are a part of these ministries (or want to join) and would like to lead, please talk to Fr. Raphael.

Children, Youth and Family Events

- **Sunday School** for all Ages continues. We are studying the Book of Romans: "One Body in Christ". In the coming weeks, the children and youth will begin to prepare for the Nativity Pageant. The Pageant will be Sunday, December 17. Please see Frances if you would like to help. *No Sunday School on November 26.*
- **St. Luke Home-school Co-op** meets every other Monday. We have a few late morning activities: ballet class and handcrafts. Next is lunch and fellowship and then we gather for contemplation and recitation of a Psalm, artist and composer study, folk singing and folk dancing. Depending upon the needs and ages of your children mothers and their child/children can come for both morning and afternoon or just for morning activities or for just the afternoon.. Please contact Shelli Sittler if you are interested skstittler@gmail.com
- Join our **Youth Group** for "Friendsgiving" on Saturday, November 25 at 5:00pm. Bring along leftovers or your favorite Thanksgiving dish to share. Help plan Christmas fun and learn more about Winter Camp (January 13-15) during dinner. Winter Camp is held in January.

Antiochian Women Update

The Antiochian Women ministry has several events planned for the coming months. Please see the bulletin board or the AW e-newsletter for current information. Sign up for the newsletter here: <https://tinyurl.com/AWStLukenews>. Please plan to join us for an Advent Retreat hosted by Antiochian Women of St Luke on the weekend of Dec 8-9, 2023. The speaker is Mother Melania, Abbess of Holy Assumption women's monastery in Calistoga, CA. She will be speaking on the following topics: *On Friday evening, for the women's group*: "The Theotokos as Virgin Mother, Queen, and Champion Leader". *On Saturday, open to all*: "Living the Beatitudes", "The Three Powers of the Soul (Nous, Appetitive / Desiring, and Angering / Spirited)", "One Christian Life, Two Ways to Live It -Marriage and Monasticism". Sign-up for both Friday evening and Saturday here: <http://bit.ly/StLuke2023Advent>

Lift Up Uganda Update

Congratulations to our St Vladimir's Seminarian Richard Okello and wife Wini on the birth of their daughter Sophia on October 6. Everything went well for Mom and Baby. Sister Anastacia, 6, and brother Alexander, 3, welcome her at home. Richard will get to meet Sophia when he returns home to Uganda for Christmas break. Thank you for your prayers for a smooth delivery and a healthy baby girl!

Thanksgiving for Fr. Simon Menya who returned to the US from Uganda with Sue September 29. He attended the OCAMP and St Moses the Black conferences in October and served with his fellow graduate priests of St Vladimir's in their parishes in Chicago and Houston.

Presenting updates on his Northern Uganda Self Sufficiency Project at St Vladimir's and many New York schools and parishes, he will travel all over the United States. He plans to be in Colorado Dec 1-9 and will be speaking at Coffee Hour on December 3, first to all of the children and then to the adults, while the children practice for their Nativity play. Fr Simon is looking forward to his time with everyone from St Luke Church!



Uganda School Sponsor

Sponsorships for kindergarten and primary students at St Nektarios Nursery and Primary School, which starts January 12, 2024, are underway. Please contact Sue Nelson if you are interested in continuing to sponsor your same student for another year of 3 terms of tuition and a school uniform. This year's cost is \$150. If you missed sponsoring a needy child for 2023 you are welcome to participate in 2024. When Sue is in Uganda she is bombarded by parents asking to have their child sponsored in 2024. Parents of this year's sponsored children are very grateful for your support. Please contact Sue for questions and provide cash/check by December 20. Gifting one year of education for a poor student and their family will provide a happy Nativity!

Myrrhbearers Annual Christmas Wreath Sale

Please see any Myrrhbearer or place your order and payment (cash or check) in an envelope in the Parish Hall for your fresh Christmas Wreath with pine cones and a bow. Every sale of a \$20 wreath allows Lift Up Uganda to buy an insecticide treated mosquito net for newborns delivered at the St.Nektarios Health Center. Malaria is a devastating disease and can result in death in the very young. Please place your order by November 12. The wreaths will be delivered on November 24 to the Parish Hall. The wreaths are made by adults with Downs Syndrome in Ft Collins at Columbine Products. If you do not need a wreath please consider giving a donation or spread some holiday cheer and give a wreath to a friend/ family. Last year we were able to buy 75 mosquito nets but more are needed. Currently we deliver at least one baby every day at the St Nektarios Health Center. Help us "Fight the Bite" to prevent Malaria! For questions contact Sue Nelson 970-391-2690

Community Outreach

Orthodox Christians for Life: Sunday November 4 Coffee Hour Table

The Orthodox Christians for Life (OCLife) is a national organization that encourages parishes across the U.S. to labor and pray in their local communities for the sake of the unborn. OCLife is choosing this fall season and Respect for Life month to raise awareness of their work. Among other ministries, OCLife educates, serves and prays, and mobilizes parish involvement. OCLife labors to promote the sacredness of life, especially at its most vulnerable stage, in the womb, by growing more parishes across Orthodox jurisdictions to be a witness of prayer and service in their local communities. Our St Luke Community is a member of this ministry. Look for the St Luke OCLife table in the parish hall on Sunday, November 4 to learn more about the ministry and how you can financially contribute directly to their efforts. Also, please stop by to discuss ways you might participate with the St Luke branch of OCLife in the future. As a local group, we have hosted a pro-life discussion with our youth, a Dormtion prayer vigil, Sunday school education, and annually collected baby clothes and items for infant layette baskets for the Boulder Pregnancy Resource Center. We will again have the opportunity to walk at the state capitol as a witness for life, at the Colorado March for Life. This year's march is scheduled for Friday, April 12. We hope you can join us.



Erie Food Bank Thanksgiving Outreach

October-November 5th This monetary collection will enable the food bank to distribute gift cards to needy families so they can purchase a turkey. Please make your check out to St. Luke and in the memo indicate Erie Food Bank. Funds collected will be given to Joanna Toy, Director.



Lakota Christmas Outreach

Once again St.Luke is blessed to share the Nativity Season with our neighbors to the north. We will send needed items to Nancy LaPointe, Wraparound Care Coordinator at Sinte Gleska University Family Program on the Rosebud Indian Reservation in South Dakota. We order gifts, food, personal hygiene items, and cleaning supplies through Amazon. Amazon delivers directly to the University. Please give your check donation directly to Bee Sturgis or make it out to St.Luke with memo: "Lakota Outreach". The outreach will be held November 1st through December 10th. Gifts ordered as donations are received.

Choir

Did you know that the average age of St. Luke Choir Members is about 60 years old? It is a true joy for all of us to sing in St. Luke Liturgical Choir! Singing magnifies our worship, allows the words of each hymn to sink into our hearts and edifies our minds. But will the choir be able to continue for the next generation? We would love to gain the membership of some of our younger congregants to carry on our choir tradition, but we can only do this with a commitment from you. Currently, the age of our youngest choir member is 41! "Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground'". (Matthew 25:24). Please, do not hide your talent out of fear or shame! Because of our lack of bass singers due to illness or injury, we will not be able to hold our annual Christmas Concert Outreach this year. We are hoping to gain members for all sections so that we may be able to hold this beautiful concert in 2024, but we will not be able to do without your help. We know that many of you feel that you cannot commit to choir practices, but if you are interested, please let us know and we will do our best to work with your schedule. Other than resurrecting our former choir members from the dead, the fulfillment of our need for new, younger members will not be met without your help. Please consider making our choir one of your priorities in your service to Our Lord by contacting any choir member or Denise McIntyre at 303-525-8618 or mcintyrelaw@comcast.net.

Bookstore News

True Vine Bookstore has recently added a number of new books and icons, including writings of church fathers and saints, children's books and icons of various saints. The bookstore staff is always happy to order items for you, often at a significant wholesale discount. Looking for a special gift for a loved one? Check out the hand carved icon in the bookstore by local iconographer, Anna Vander Wall. She resides in northern Colorado and was trained by Jonathan Pageau and Christopher Gosey. She is available for commission requests.

OCF: College Students

Greetings CU Boulder OCF! This fall, OCF will meet October 3, 17, 31; November 14, and November 28. All meetings are in Ketchum room 1B64. All students, staff and faculty are invited for Bible Study and pizza. Contact Graham Simpson: grahamsimpsonco@gmail.com or Robbie Macdonald roma9153@colorado.edu



Word Magazine

The Word Magazine is a free publication for members of our church provided by the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese. Paper or digital copies published. Sign up here: http://ww1.antiochian.org/address_updates

The Great Doxology

Our Parish continues to learn the Great Doxology in all eight tones, as appointed in our Liturgical Guide. All new music settings take time to become familiar, please be patient and follow the chanters as you pick up the melody during parts of it. Pick up your copy of each Sunday's tone in the Narthex.

Care of our Temple

We have two weekly cleaning teams that work very hard to keep our temple beautiful. Please be mindful of our shared sacred space. Wipe muddy and snowy feet on mats in the Narthex. It is good to keep an eye on the children when they are eating blessed bread so that unnecessary crumbs are not going onto the floor. Please remove your trash, kleenex, etc. and place in the trash bins in the Narthex.

Care for our Homebound Members

Volunteers needed to visit, encourage and help homebound members of our parish. Please let Frances know if you can help.

Live Streaming Services

Our Sunday 8a Orthros and 9a Sunday Divine Liturgy "live streaming" continues on our YouTube channel "stlukestream". The link below may be copied and pasted into your web browser. As a "subscriber" to our YouTube channel, you can get an alert - if you wish to know when a live stream is on.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCHBtBg43HgfOd4N02UZOR4w>

Looking ahead to 2024

If any of your or your friends have interest in a Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, please speak to Fr. David. He may be planning one in late September with Fr. Constantine Nasr (retired priest in our Archdiocese and born in Palestine). Fr. David hopes to be involved in one pilgrimage each year in his retirement.

Saturday Catechism Classes — 2023/2024

Beginning in September, Fr. Raphael will offer a series of introductory classes for Inquirers and Catechumens at St. Luke. These classes are geared for all those interested in learning more about the Orthodox Church, for those interested in becoming Orthodox, and for our own members who may never have gone through a series of catechism classes. **These classes will be held on Saturday afternoon before Vespers at 2:30PM.**

	Date	Topic
I.	09/16	Introduction & Revelation
II.	09/30	Nicene Creed - Part I "I believe in One God..."
III.	10/14	Nicene Creed - Part II Who is Jesus Christ?
IV.	10/28	Nicene Creed - Part III The Holy Trinity
V.	11/11	The Holy Scripture & Canons
VI.	12/02	Hagiology & Mariology
VII.	12/16	Sacraments and Worship
VIII.	01/13	Divine Liturgy
IX.	01/27	Iconography
X.	02/10	Spirituality
XI.	02/24	Developing a Rule of Prayer
XII.	03/09	Confession & Entry into the Church

*Dates, times and topics are subject to revision. See future News Briefs for updates.

