

The Messenger

July 2021



St. Thomas Orthodox Church

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<https://stthomassiouxcity.org>



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Our Mission

St. Thomas Orthodox Church is a community of Christians who proclaim the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ as handed down by the Apostles. We are committed to bringing the Light of Christ to all of Siouxland in thought, word, and deed. At St. Thomas Orthodox Church, you will find Holy Orthodoxy—ancient and alive.

Weekly Schedule

Orthros and Divine Liturgy

Sundays at 9:00 a.m.

Vespers

Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m.

Great Vespers

Saturdays at 6:00 p.m.

July Birthdays

4 Becky Jacobs

10 Judy Stevens

18 Dave Suhr

19 Barbara Lammers

30 Elisa Stickney

Visiting Church on Vacation

With the global restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic lessening all around us, many are looking to take to the open road for long-overdue vacations. While it is tempting to believe that we leave behind all our obligations as soon as we lock the door behind us, that is not true of our need to attend Divine Liturgy on Sunday.

Jon Stolpe lists five good reasons we should be in church on Sunday even when we're on vacation¹:

- 1. Observing church differences helps us to understand where other people are coming from.** Churches are different. While we worship the same God, there are different styles.
- 2. Churches have different creative ideas that could be the catalyst for change in your own church.** It can be very refreshing and encouraging to experience worship by other bodies of believers. It provides new ideas that will stretch you.
- 3. Sometimes you need to take a break from your normal church.** I wouldn't recommend this for an extended period of time. But visiting other churches can give you a break and a recharge especially if you are heavily involved with volunteering, serving, or leading in your own church.
- 4. It's healthy to bond with other believers.** There is so much that divides the church today. There are so many different doctrines, theologies, and ideas that simply tear the greater church body apart. Visiting other churches helps to bridge the divide that can be so divisive. (Obviously, I think that theology is important, but we need to be cautious in how we let it divide the church. To the outside world, we must look like a bunch of messed up hypocrites who don't have any unity.)
- 5. Visiting other churches helps you appreciate your own church.** Let's face it; we all get our level of comfort. There's no place like home (or our home church). Upon our return home, our daughter couldn't wait to get home so she could make it to youth group at our church.

A directory of Orthodox churches in the United States can be found at <https://www.assemblyofbishops.org/directories/parishes/>. It's always best to call or e-mail the rector/pastor/proistamenos ahead of time to let him know you're coming; showing up at the chalice for Communion unannounced can create an awkward situation for both you and him. When you do visit another church while traveling, Orthodox or not, be sure to bring a bulletin back to St. Thomas so that others can share in the experience.

¹ Stolpe, Jon, "Visiting Church on Vacation — 5 Reasons To Visit A Different Church This Summer." Stretched. 2019. <http://www.jonstolpe.com/visiting-church-on-vacation-5-reasons-to-visit-a-different-church-this-summer/>.

St. Thomas on the Internet

Until now, the main presence of the parish on the Internet has been our Web site at <https://stthomassiouxcity.org> but, over the next few weeks, you'll see some major changes happening there as we overhaul the site. While it's being renovated, you can still stay updated by visiting our various social media pages:

Facebook page:	https://www.facebook.com/St.ThomasOrthodoxChurchSC/
Siouxland Orthodox Group:	https://www.facebook.com/groups/689850188457371/
Instagram:	https://www.instagram.com/sathorch/
SoundCloud:	https://soundcloud.com/sathorch
Twitter:	https://twitter.com/sathorch
YouTube:	https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCIkvjWIH3zMELHkelZ36kRA

Your personalized parish Web site can be found at <https://stthomassiouxcity.churchtrac.com/>

GRACE is when God *gives* us what we *don't* deserve.

MERCY is when God *doesn't give* us what we *do* deserve.

In Memoriam

Remembering those who reposed in the month of July

Moses Abdouch, Charles Abdouch, Darrah Abdouch, Abe Saunto, Salin (Sam) Samore, Lula M. Abdouch, Millie Jaksich, Fr. Michael Yanney, George E. Headid, Carl Love, Boutrous P. Boutrous, George Williams, Rosa Lee Groepper, Geraldine Melham, Betty L. Weeks, Hazel Ferris, Donna R. Ferris, Bernice Murad, Philip Stevens, Michael J. Davenport, Vitali Zhylka, Ayyette J. Kivlighn, Viktar Pauliushchyk.

Ladies Club

We met at Minerva's on June 3rd at 6:30 and were finally glad to meet. We have listed some places where we would like to donate: Tree House Project, Shesler Hall, and Unity Point. We will bring back thoughts at our next meeting. God Bless.

SOYO

No report.

Sunday School

No Report

Meditation

Thursday: Luke 4:16-22

In every heart, there lives the dream that all will be made right, that justice and righteousness will prevail for all people. It's a blessed hope but also terrifying. Why?

In our Gospel reading, we learn that a day is coming when all injustices will be corrected, all hurts will be healed, all lies exposed, and all wounds will be addressed and healed. However, this also means that every person I've mistreated, hurt, lied about, or selfishly taken advantage of will be avenged as well. On that day, I too will be standing in the light of the righteous judgment of my own faults and my own mistreatment of others. It puts a different spin on things, doesn't it?

The spiritually mature person realizes that he or she must work diligently now to repent and ask forgiveness, thus opening the way for the grace of God to transform our actions toward others into righteous and peaceful love. No wonder the Church teaches us to pray for "a Christian end to our lives, peaceful, without shame and suffering, and for a good account of ourselves before the awesome judgment seat of Christ."

TODAY: Let's ask God for the grace to search our own hearts for our own faults, not even noticing the faults of others. Let us become so gracious in our words, actions, and choices that when the Last Day comes, we will welcome the Lord's righteous judgments. Those who have already become practiced in humble forgiveness and repentance will naturally and quickly lay their burdens and expectations at the feet of Christ and cry out, "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner."

Fr. Barnabas Powell

St Thomas Orthodox Parish Council May 12, 2021

7:00 PM Via GoogleMeet

In Attendance- Fr Peter Cox, George Stickney, Jr., Frank Brienzo, Pete Steggerda, Judy Stevens, Erica Ameen

7:07 PM- Fr. Peter called the meeting to order with a prayer.

REPORTS

Pete reported that we about \$10,000 down for the year and that we should monitor the situation. With no other questions on submitted reports, George motioned to approve and accept reports, Frank seconded the motion, and all approved.

PASTOR REPORT

There is one high school graduate this year. On May 23 we will have a senior spotlight. Father ordered four Bibles to give to the two Ameen girls and two Virippil girls that have graduated in the last couple of years.

Father ordered 7 copies of a book (Autopsy of a Deceased Church), and would like everyone to read it before the next board meeting for us to discuss at a later date. discuss the book.

There was a security notice on our website stating it was out of date so he is moving it to a new provider. There may be glitches this week as everything is being transferred.

NEW BUSINESS

The floors are not finished, and no answer as to a date when they will be starting (shipment delays). New tentative party date for August 28th?

Possibilities for the dinner were discussed. Father made a motion to make a new committee consisting of Judy (Ladies Club) and George and Erica (Dinner) to figure out details and logistics of a combined mini sale. All were in favor and motion passed.

The Metropolitan has sent the message that meeting in person is now OK. Father does like having online, and others are ready to be back in person. Frank suggested having offsite meetings for specific things that need to be discussed in depth, as it's easier to have those discussions in person. For consent agenda meetings, Frank suggested continuing online, as those are usually quick and not needing to be as in depth. Father gave the example that the new committee would come back with their ideas on the dinner and present to the board, along with saying we will meet to discuss these things in depth at this date and time. We could also extend the invitation out to the parish members, and get involvement from others.

Next meeting will be JUNE 9TH - 7PM

Father made a motion to adjourn, George seconded the motion. All approved.
Meeting was closed in prayer at 7:51 PM

In Christ, Erica Ameen

Treasurer's ReportMay 2021

Income

2021 Pledges	9,018.15	
Miscellaneous	666.75	
Other Donations	0.00	
Total Income		9,684.90

Expenses

401 Maintenance	-90.95	
404 Internet	-133.09	
406 Trash Pickup	-120.00	
407 Insurance on Church Property	-1,837.75	
408 Church Utilities	-537.23	
409 General Supplies	-645.37	
410 Office Expense	-100.23	
411 Copier and Copy Expense	-91.43	
431 Priest Base Salary	-3,550.00	
432 Priest Cell Phone	-100.00	
433 Priest Health Insurance	-800.00	
434 Priest Life Insurance	-135.00	
436 Priest IRA	-200.00	
438 Priest Auto and Auto Insurance	-450.00	
451 Archdiocese Assessment	-594.41	
Total Expenses		-9,385.46

NET**299.44**

Operating Account	\$38,571.42
Building Fund	41,585.00
In and Out Account	80.00
Savings Account	32,152.04