

The Messenger

February 2022



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

Sundays	Orthros & Divine Liturgy	09:00
Wednesdays	Daily Vespers	18:00
Saturdays	Great Vespers	18:00

February Birthdays

9 Jaxson Ameen	16 Carson Kirwan
10 Mike Jacobs	23 Scott Haberer
12 Kane Yanney	26 George Stickney, Sr.

If your birthday is in February but is not listed here, please let Fr. Peter so know we can update our records.

What Is the Triodion?

During the three week pre-Lenten season, the Church prepares us for repentance. She urges us to prepare ourselves through gradual diet modification and instructing us with themes of humility, judgment, repentance, and forgiveness. The period is bounded by four Sundays.

1. **February 13: Publican and the Pharisee** (*Luke 18:10-14*)

This Sunday emphasizes humility as a key attitude for repentance. The Greek word for repentance is *metanoia*, which means a change of mind. To repent, we must not boast of our spiritual feats but humble ourselves like the Publican who longs for a change of mind. We are called to learn this secret of the inward poverty of the Publican rather than the self-righteousness of the Pharisee who is convinced of his perfectness and not open to change because of his pride. There is no prescribed fasting for this week.

2. **February 20: Prodigal Son** (*Luke 15:11-32*)

This Sunday teaches us about our need to return from exile. This parable shows us the mercy of the Father who with open arms receives his son, whose behavior he does not return, but is joyous of his return home. We are encouraged to examine ourselves in the period of Lent to purge ourselves of sin and “come home.”

The week that follows is called Meat Week (Κρεατίνη) as it is the last week we are to eat meat. In the villages of Greece this was the traditional week to slaughter the family pig; the leftovers were smoked to be eaten after Pascha. The normal rule of fasting are applied to this week: fast on Wednesday and Friday.

Saturday of this week is the first Saturday of Souls where those who have fallen asleep in the hope of resurrection and eternal life are remembered at a special “Saturday of the Souls” service. Parishioners bring small dishes of kollyva to the church and submit a list of first names of deceased ones to the priest. We commend to God all those who have departed before us who are now awaiting the Last Judgment. This is an expression of the Church’s love. We remember them because we love them.

3. **February 27: Judgment (Meat-fare) Sunday** (*Matthew 25:31-46*)

This Sunday emphasizes the Last Judgment. We are reminded of our individual responsibility for love. We are encouraged not to eat meat this week, but we can eat eggs, cheese, and other dairy products.

4. **March 6: Forgiveness (Cheese-Fare) Sunday** (*Matthew 6:14-21*)

This Sunday emphasizes forgiveness and how we must forgive others if God is to forgive us so we can break the chains of sinful tendency which we inherit from Adam and Eve. This is the last day of preparation as the traditional Lenten fast begins on the following day where no meat, dairy, or eggs are to be eaten according to the church tradition.

5. **March 7: Great Lent Begins**

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.

Adapted from [the Rev. Dn. Charles Joiner](#)

St. Thomas on the Internet

Check out our Web site at <https://stthomassiouxcity.org> as well as our other pages:

Facebook:	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

In Memoriam

Remembering those who reposed in the month of February

Mike Bashara, Charles Butrous, James C. Abdo, Sr., Christina M. Rice,
Emily S. Alberts, George S. Murad, Mary A. Jackson, Lawrence B. Reiling, Tillie Helmers,
Marian W. Murad, James Yanney, Robert (Bob) Jackson, Lawrence (Larry) Corey

Ladies Club

The Ladies had their meeting on January 4th, at 6:30 p.m. at 3800 Glen Oaks Blvd. We had election of officers. The new officers are: Judy Stevens—President, Julie Kinnaman—Vice-President, Jane Kirwan—Secretary, and Theresa Muhe—Treasurer. We approved a motion to give \$1,000 to St. Thomas for the Benevolence Fund along with \$750 to reimburse for the fridge repair and a \$200 donation for Clarice David to reimburse or for her use for repairs. Theresa wrote a check out for that. We are still working on a project that we could do that the whole parish could help with to get St. Thomas' name out there.

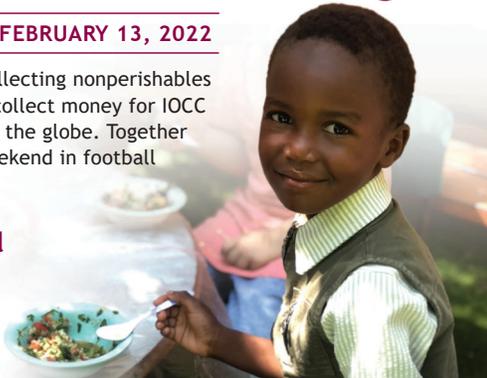
Judy Stevens

Together we can beat hunger.

SOUPERBOWL SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2022

Help feed the hungry by collecting nonperishables for a local food bank, and collect money for IOCC to support our work around the globe. Together we can turn the biggest weekend in football into a super day of giving!

Learn more at
iocc.org/souperbowl



Message from the Parish Council Chairman

As the newly elected Chairman of the Parish Council for 2022, I am both honored and grateful for this opportunity to serve our Lord and the members of St. Thomas Orthodox Church.

Having been baptized in this church more than 70 years ago, I am honored to carry on the tradition of my family in service to this parish. My great grandfather, Joseph Skaff, was a founding member of our church and my grandparents, mother, uncles, aunts, and cousins have served in a variety of roles over the last 100 years. Having spent most of my life outside of Sioux City, I am grateful to be back and able to contribute my time and energy to support this very special place of worship that has been preserved for over a century.

Regrettably, we have a number of challenges before us. St. Thomas, like nearly every church in Siouxland and throughout the country, is struggling with decreased attendance. The Parish Council is committed to address the issue this year and plan to develop and implement various actions to not only stabilize our numbers but, hopefully grow them. It will not be an easy task and requires the assistance of the entire church family.

Despite the obstacles we have faced, a number of good things have been accomplished over the last few years which we should point to the resiliency of our congregation. First, the Parish Council approved a balanced budget for 2022. We have been able to control our spending in line with our pledges and other income as to not dip into our savings accounts for the last 3 years. We forecast the same will be true of 2022. Next, we have been able to do major projects to our church building without any borrowing. Those include:

1. Stabilization of our foundation on the east side of the building.
2. Repairing the bell tower façade.
3. New boilers and chiller pump for our heating and cooling systems.
4. New floors in the Nave, fellowship hall, and kitchen.
5. New fabric and padding for the pews.
6. New insulation around all heating and cooling pipes in the fellowship hall.
7. Repair of all radiators throughout the church building.
8. Re-staining the front door.
9. Painting the kitchen and replacing all missing tiles on the walls.

Also, our Cemetery Committee, led by Pat and Cathy Corey, continues to maintain a truly beautiful place for our departed. The grass is always green and perfectly trimmed and our Chapel was re-stained last year. Our cemetery is self-sustaining and is in good financial shape. We should be very proud of this unique amenity that our church has created and maintained so well.

In closing, I invite you to share your ideas, thoughts and concerns with me at any time. My email is brienzo24@yahoo.com and my cell phone is [\(712\)899-0135](tel:(712)899-0135).

Frank Brienzo

Parish Council Minutes 2021-12-08

Father opened with a prayer and called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. on December 8th, 2021. Those present were George Stickney, Ed Bottei, Manoj Virrippil, Frank Brenzo, and Judy Stevens.

Minutes from the November meeting and the committee reports were all present. Judy made a motion to accept the reports Frank seconded and they were approved. Fr. Peter mentioned that Clarice David was still in the hospital. Date for the Annual Parish Meeting is January 9th and the first Parish Council meeting will be on January 12, 2022.

Father gave the schedule for the Christmas Services. We will have the Royal Service at 10:30 a.m. on Friday, December 24th, and Christmas Orthos and Divine Liturgy at 10:00 p.m.. Holy Trinity will have Vespers Divine Liturgy at 6:00 p.m. on December 24th and have Christmas Divine Liturgy at 8:30 a.m. on December 25th.

A budget for 2022 was presented as well as what to do with the funds in the “Dinner” account. Both of these items were tabled till January 2, 2022 when we would have definite figures to work with.

George moved and Father seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:25PM.



It's Hockey Time for St. Thomas!

Join us Saturday, March 5th, for a night of fun! We have an awesome discount rate of \$10 per ticket, and **family/friends are welcome to join!** Sign up in the parish hall (or shoot us a message) by February 20th to reserve your tickets! Don't miss the action (or the surprises)! Please give cash or check (payable to St. Thomas) to Judy or Erica.

There is Divine Liturgy scheduled for that morning, so there will be NO Great Vespers that evening, and everyone can be there for the puck drop!

Treasurer's Report – December 2021

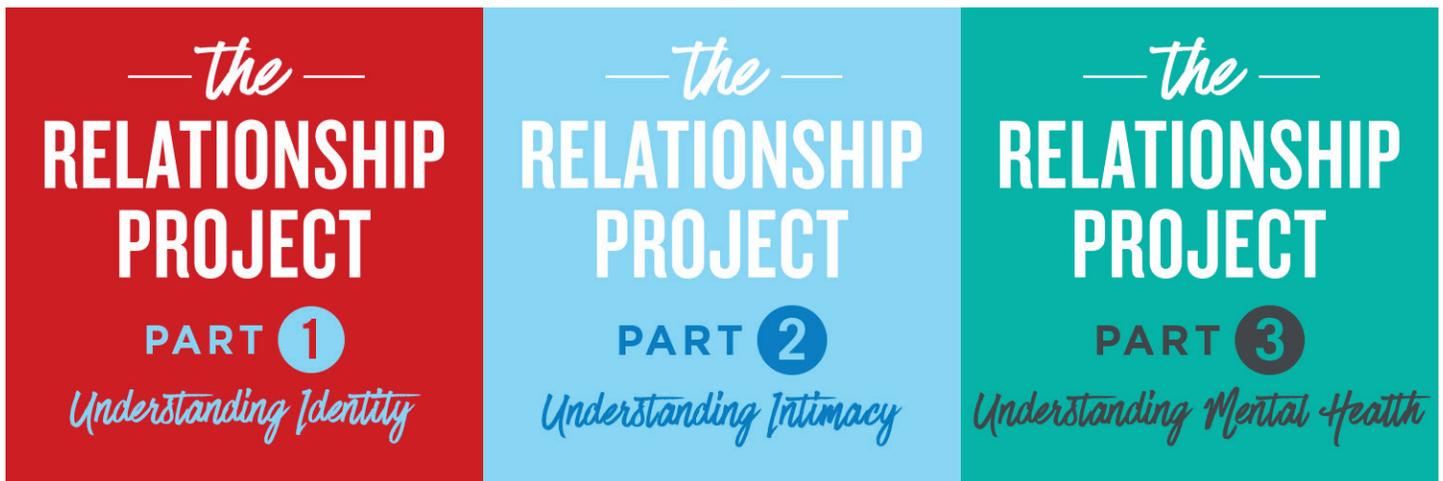
Income

2021 Pledges	6,532.90
Miscellaneous	762.67
Other Donations	5,120.00
Other Income	9,044.34
Total Income	\$21,459.91

Expenses

401 Maintenance	(1,230.50)
402 Lawn & Snow	(810.00)
403 Education	0.00
404 Internet	(182.09)
406 Trash Pick-Up	0.00
407 Insurance on Church Property	0.00
408 Church Utilities	(808.49)
409 General Expenses	(1,571.80)
410 Office Expense	(99.12)
411 Copier & Copy Expense	(91.43)
412 Benevolence	(1,560.00)
413 Transfer between Accounts	0.00
431 Priest Base Salary	(2,500.00)
432 Priest Cell Phone	(100.00)
433 Priest Health Insurance	(800.00)
434 Priest Life Insurance	(135.00)
436 Priest IRA	(200.00)
437 Priest Medical Expense	(2,000.00)
438 Priest Auto Allowance	(400.00)
439 Priest Auto Insurance	(50.00)
440 Priest SS & Medicare	0.00
441 Priest Housing & Utilities	(1,050.00)
442 DOWAMA	0.00
451 Archdiocesan Assessment	(599.50)
460 Online Fees	(16.05)
Total Expenses	-\$14,203.98

Net **\$7,255.93**



The Relationship Project

Our Lenten Adult Class

By exploring questions like *What is our true identity?*, *What does it mean to be a child of God?*, *What is the true meaning of intimacy?*, and *What does the Church say about good mental health?*, this compelling group study allows your group to discover who they are in Christ. This program provides extensive support in creating a safe space for participants to wrestle with the possible differences between what the world may suggest, versus what the Church teaches as truth.

Presented in an easy-to-use, visually stunning and highly engaging format: Students will have fun connecting with each other as they learn the timeless wisdom and freedom that is found in the Orthodox Faith.

Composed of three connected parts, with multiple sequential teaching segments, *The Relationship Project* brings you into an exciting exploration of how you were designed by God, and what that design means within your relationships.

By exploring all three parts of *The Relationship Project*, your class will discover who you are as children of God, how you were designed to be in relationship with others, with yourselves, and, ultimately, with God.

Classes will be held on Monday nights from 7:00–9:00 p.m. via Google Meet. The course will run a duration of six weeks, taking us right into Holy Week (3/7, 3/14, 3/21, 3/28, 4/4, 4/11). Participants will be emailed a link to click on when class starts that will take you directly to the group room. All you need is a phone/computer with internet access, pen/pencil, workbooks¹, and willingness to challenge the way you think against what the world teaches and what God wants for us.

CLASS SIZE IS LIMITED and this is a very sought out program! Let Fr. Peter or Erica know today when you are ready to join!

“We would recommend The Relationship Project to young and old! It makes you actually think about personal relationships and relationships with God! Erica did an amazing job as a teacher and friend in presenting the material” —Pat & Cathy Corey, TRP Class of ‘21

¹ Cost for workbooks is \$45, Each participant needs their own set as you write personal thoughts in them. These are yours to keep to look back into long after the classes have finished.