



**St. Matthew Orthodox Church
Orthodox Church in America
Diocese of the Midwest**

Father John Thetford

**607 Ravenswood Drive
Green Bay, WI 54302**

From the desk of Father John.....

40 days after the Resurrection, we celebrate the Feast of the Ascension. Oftentimes, we may find ourselves unsure of how to understand this event. We hear that Jesus went up in clouds, and disappeared from the sight of the Apostles. How should we understand the meaning of His Ascension?

First, we have to come to terms with the fact that our way of thinking in the modern world is much more in line with ancient pagan philosophical thought than it is by ancient Jewish Biblical thought. For many ancient philosophers, such as Plato, the world was divided into material and immaterial, and never the two would meet. In addition, for these Greek philosophers, the material world was inherently “evil.” This idea of an inherent evil in materiality is also seen in ancient Babylonian religion, where human bodies were believed to be created from the blood of the evil gods. In comparison to both, though, the revelation of the Jewish Bible was that this world we live in is inherently good, created by the one God, and is only fallen from goodness due to human error, as seen in Genesis. When it comes to Christ’s saving work, then, we know that He came to redeem the world. Thus, his Ascension must not be seen as an “escape” from an “evil world,” as a pagan might think of it; rather, it is part of Christ’s work of the redemption of the fallen world.

In addition, we must remember that the division between God and Man in the Bible is not only between spiritual and material, but also between what is seen and unseen. God is mainly described as the one who is unseen – for example: “man shall not see me and live” (Exodus 33:20); “no man has ever seen God” (1 John 4:12). Christ, though, the Son of God, came to be seen, and to reveal Himself, and His Father, to the World. Thus, Christ bridged the gap between seen and unseen, and also, through his death and resurrection, the gap between spiritual and material. His coming to dwell among us bridged the gap between the unseen God and seen Men, and His Incarnation, culminating in His Resurrection from the dead, began the new era for humanity, one no longer subject to the divide of spiritual and physical. In His New Humanity, He eats fish with the disciples, but He also walks through closed doors and disappears. These are not “supernatural” powers; rather, they belong to the New Nature that he has inaugurated by his Resurrection. Having this new human nature, Christ is no longer subject to the divide between physical and spiritual.

However, for now, as we saw at His Ascension, He is again “unseen.” He disappears, and He leaves, but at the same time, He promises to be present with us, through the Holy Spirit. So, He is in Heaven, but also “in our midst.” His power remains in the world, while He is no longer seen with our physical eyes. But importantly, while He is not seen now with our eyes, He hasn’t “stopped” being physical, or having His own particular human body. He continues as perfect God and perfect man, in the new body of the new human nature that is subject to the new laws of nature that He put into place in 33 AD.

As we continue in our journey in this life, and in pondering this mystery, may we remember Christ’s own prayer: “...Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on Earth as it is in Heaven.” Christ’s mission is not to come into the material world, and then leave it, but rather, it is, with our cooperation, to bring the Kingdom of Heaven into the World, and to unite the Spiritual and Material into one new nature. So let us not think that our religion is about leaving the world, but to do the good work that Christ has left for us of helping bring to completion His redemption and transformation of the world.

In Christ,
Fr John

SMOC News and Event Schedule

- **Book Study/Bible Study** is meeting every **Tuesday at 10:30 am**.
- **Adult Education class** is meeting every **Wednesday** after Daily Vespers at **6:00 pm**.
- **Adult Choir Practice** will be on **Sunday's, June 5 and June 19**.
- **Sunday School:** The final day for Sunday school is on **Sunday, June 5**. It has been a difficult year for kids due to the increase in illnesses that hit them hard after their resistances were lowered after almost two years of social distancing. However, we look forward to the fall being more regular. In the parish, we will transition to having Sunday School students and teachers being dismissed after Communion and to have their Sunday School lesson take place between Communion and the beginning of Coffee Fellowship. This system, which is used in many Orthodox parishes, should work better for everyone.
- The next **Parish Council** meeting will be held via Zoom on **Tuesday, June 14 at 6:00 pm**. If you would like to attend as a guest, please let President, Paul Novak, know at paulnovak11@gmail.com
- **Sunday School Singing** will be on **Sunday, June 26**.
- **Vacation Church School 2022:** Vacation Church School will return this summer! **See information sheets on the candle stand and at the end of this newsletter!** Please contact **Father John to register and for questions**. Here are the dates for the two 2-day sessions:
 - **Thursday, June 16 & Friday, June 17**
 - **Monday, July 25 & Tuesday, July 26**
- **Ukraine Donations:** If you would like to give, please visit WisconsinUkrainians.org. If you have questions, please speak to Svitlana Mykhaylyuk.
- **The McClanahan OCMC Missionary Family Update:** Please continue to keep in your prayers the missionaries that our parish is supporting monthly, the [McClanahan family](#), as they prepare to go to Indonesia to preach the Orthodox Christian faith. I was in touch with Deacon Philip this week, and he said that he will be going to Indonesia for 10 days in June to secure their housing and some other details, and then God willing will make the move to Indonesia with his wife Kristiana and their kids at the end of July or early August. At this point, they ask for prayers that their Visa process continues to go smoothly. Please pray that their Visas are approved with no issues, and that they are able to arrive in Indonesia promptly to serve the Lord.
- **\$15,465 dollars** has been raised for the replacement of the exterior wood siding on our building. **This leaves \$14,535 still needed** to meet our goal of **\$30,000**. We hope to start work on the siding this August! Please note on your check **Siding Project** when you make your donation. More information is on the Herrick Hall bulletin board.



Church Bookstore

Come check out the SMOC bookstore!!! Everything from books, cards, crosses, incense, calendars....and much, much more. If we're out of something or if you would like to order something, contact Cheryl Julian!

Parish Council President's Perspective.....Paul Novak

With this being our last newsletter until the Fall, I came upon a very interesting question; Where Does God Go for Summer Vacation? The story goes like this...

"On the day that her family piled into the station wagon to visit their Grandmother, a young girl asked her mother, "Mom, where does God go for summer vacation?" Her mother chuckled at the question, and told her God doesn't go on vacation. The girl wondered, "Why don't we go to Church then?" "Why isn't there any Sunday School?" Why don't I get to see my Church friends?" Her parents weren't really prepared to deal with questions like this! What could they say? After all, God wasn't on vacation... they were! Imagine her parents' surprise when they realized their little daughter had "stumped them." They just didn't know how to answer her question. But what was really great was that they were worried enough about it to look for an answer! Until now, her parents thought: Church was only a 2-hour responsibility on Sunday mornings. For the young girl though, it was a different story. She lived what she learned. Church wasn't just an obligation for her. No way! In fact, it was a way of living... a way of being!

-Excerpt taken from Where Does God Go for Summer Vacation?

So, where does God rank in our family's summer plans? Will He go with us on vacation or will a break from school and work mean a break from God? This summer, let us all challenge ourselves. Instead of taking a rest from our spiritual life, use the summer to grow closer to God. Be creative! Be committed! Be with Christ!

Also remember, that the Church's expenses don't take a vacation during the summer. The lights and air conditioning will still need to come on and the grass cut. The mortgage and Father John will still need to be paid. If you are out of town and wish to make your weekly or monthly contribution, you can mail your check to the church or make an online donation via the Church's website at <https://www.smocgb.com/support>

Have a wonderful summer.

In Christ,
Paul M. Novak

"Upper Room"

The "Upper Room" young adult group celebrated Pascha by breaking in the church's new ping-pong table. A very casual mini-tournament was held, with some very competitive games (especially among the siblings). As we enter summer, the group will tentatively be moving on to the discussion subject of the Mysteries (aka Sacraments). As well, the youth are looking forward to some Saturday evening bonfires and marshmallow roasting at the fire pit in back of the church, beginning sometime after Pentecost. Plans are in the works for an outing to visit a couple Orthodox monasteries in August, possibly together with some of the young adults from St. Cyril and Methodius parish in Milwaukee. The Upper Room meets every Sunday after Liturgy from 12-12:40 and is open to any high school and college age young adults who are interested.

Greetings from your Ministry Team!

This spring Melissa and Nana walked in the 40 Days for Life campaign. Melissa organized a "Baby Shower" for The Orthodox Christians for Life National organization. Thank you to these women and to all of you who have donated to the monthly focuses we have had this past spring.

In June, we look forward to supporting our OCMC missionary, Dn. Phil and his family who are missionaries in Indonesia. July has us focusing on collecting food for a local food pantry, and August brings us to supporting House of Hope and Alexandrina. We will also be helping out our neighbor, Martin School, with some much needed supplies in late August.

Once again, thank you for your generosity and all you do to help us to minister in our community and over seas.

The Ministry Team



June Liturgical Schedule

Wednesday, June 1, 6:00 PM Vigil (Ascension)

Thursday, June 2, 9:10 Hours, 9:30 AM Liturgy (Ascension)

Saturday, June 4, 5:00 PM Great Vespers

Sunday, June 5, 9:10 Hours, 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

Wednesday, June 8, 6:00 PM Daily Vespers

Saturday, June 11, 9:10 Hours, 9:30 Divine Liturgy & Memorial Service (Saturday of Souls)

Saturday, June 11, 5:00 PM Vigil (Pentecost)

Sunday, June 12, 9:10 Hours, 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy & Kneeling Prayers (Pentecost)

Wednesday, June 15, 6:00 PM Daily Vespers

Saturday, June 18, 5:00 PM Great Vespers

Sunday, June 19, 9:10 Hours, 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy (All Saints)

Wednesday, June 22, 6:00 PM Daily Vespers

Saturday, June 25, 5:00 PM Great Vespers

Sunday, June 26, 8:30 AM Matins, 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy (All Saints of North America)

Tuesday, June 28, 6:00 PM Great Vespers (Saints Peter and Paul)

Wednesday, June 29, 8:45 AM Divine Liturgy (Saints Peter and Paul)

Wednesday, June 29 (NO Daily Vespers)

Congratulations and Many Years!

Introducing....**Mr. and Mrs. Clint and Jennifer Squires**
who were married at St. Matthew's on Sunday, May 15.



Prayer for Peace in Ukraine

“Heavenly Father, your son taught us ‘Blessed are the Peacemakers for they shall be called Children of God.’ At this hour we fervently pray that your Holy Spirit may inspire Ukrainians and Russians to discover and trust that Jesus is the only true source of peace, safety, comfort, truth, and freedom. We ask God to deliver Ukraine from evil. May He have mercy and heal this land. May He give Ukraine peace and the chance to develop as a nation that values truth, justice, and freedom - all rooted in the goodness of God. We pray that Ukrainians will practice forgiveness toward those who have harmed them and seek reconciliation. May the most Holy Mother of God extend her Blessed Mantel of Protection over Ukraine. Amen.”

SMOC Summer Cleaning Schedule

ZDRALE (week of) 5/29/22 for 6/5
 NOVAK (week of) 6/5/22 for 6/12
 SCHAHCZAENSKI (week of) 6/12/22 for 6/19
 JULIAN (week of) 6/19/22 for 6/26
 TOMAC (week of) 6/26/22 for 7/3
 WEILAND (week of) 7/3/22 for 7/10
 SARSAMA (week of) 7/10/22 for 7/17
 MYKHAYLYUK (week of) 7/17/22 for 7/24
 ODMAN (week of) 7/24/22 for 7/31
 BISBEE (week of) 7/31/22 for 8/7
 SCHWEINER (week of) 8/7/22 for 8/14
 ENCK (week of) 8/14/22 for 8/21
 ZDRALE (week of) 8/21/22 for 8/28
 NOVAK (week of) 8/28/22 for 9/4



Thank you so much!!

From Tom Julian.....Treasurer.....

On behalf of the Parish Council, I want to again thank all who financially support SMOC and the ministries we support. Your faithful giving reaches many others locally and throughout the world. We received a wonderful blessing as a church family when the Ukrainians of Wisconsin organization was able to use our building as “ground zero” for their relief efforts in the early stages of their operations. We have often thought of how we could someday best utilize our upper level space and God provided at least a temporary answer. I believe this is an example of how important it is for us to continue to improve and upgrade our facilities. Please consider a generous donation to our church siding replacement if you haven’t already specifically given for this important project. We need your help to have this complete this summer. If anyone would like to make a memorial gift in memory of Bishop Paul or others, those gifts will be deposited into our Legacy Fund for clergy development, building improvements, or maintenance of the Holy Transfiguration Chapel in Sister Bay. Please consider a memorial gift of any size this Memorial Day.

June Birthdays

- 1 - Marc Kotz
- 2 - Nathan Gantenbein
- 3 - Myla Sarsama
- 7 - Nana Odman
- 10 - Kathy Nassios
- 14 - Matthew Catalano
- 14 - Paul Novak
- 16 - Chuck Bayerl
- 21 - Will Morgan
- 23 - Marianna Heid
- 23 - Jessica Valverde
- 26 - Maria Taillon
- 27 - Lydia Grinsteiner
- 28 - Annaliese Roegner
- 30 - Cathy Mangan
- 30 Juan Valverde



Happy Birthday....

Many Years!!

July Birthdays

- 1 - Andreas Schweiner
- 5 - Dr. Paul Holzman
- 7 - Abigail Roegner
- 9 - Jennifer Squires
- 10 - Peter Nassios
- 11 - Svitlana Mykhaylyuk
- 20 - Andrew Mykhaylyuk
- 22 - Kyria Taillon
- 22 - Magnus Zaubmueller
- 25 - Alexandra Parry
- 25 - Dennis Petrick
- 26 - Lana Catalano
- 26 - Richard Major
- 26 - Deacon Spyridon
- 28 - Lydia Greenlaw
- 31 - Kevin Brown
- 31 - Olivia Jeffers

August Birthdays

- 3 - Lars Odman
- 11 - Matushka Photini
- 14 - Maria Catalano
- 15 - James Roegner
- 21 - Joy Jeffers
- 22 - Vivian Schwalenberg
- 23 - Ion Nistor
- 25 - Mark Massopust
- 31 - Bill Bane



June Anniversaries

- 8 - Paul and Debra Novak
- 14 - Pat and Cathy Mangan
- 14 - Mark and Whitney Massopust
- 21 - Peter and Elizabeth Parry
- 29 - Aaron and Jessica Valverde

Happy Anniversary....



July Anniversaries

- 10 - Brandon and Tara Enck
- 10 - Lars and Nana Odman
- 16 - Greg and Ann Kaseno
- 16 - Bob and Tania Phillips
- 26 - Dr. Jeff and Bonnie Zdrale

August Anniversaries

Many Years!!

- 1 - Deacon Spyridon and Matushka Photini Roegner
- 5 - Jim and Judi Stuck
- 14 - Tom and Cheryl Julian
- 18 - Father John and Matushka Katherine Thetford
- 30 - Doug and Linda Bisbee

Many Years!!



Welcome and Many Years

Wilmer Matei Munteanu was baptized at St. Matthew's on Saturday, April 30. His parents are Ionut and Shawna Munteanu who live in Baileys Harbor. Tom Julian is his sponsor and Erin Anschutz is his godmother.

Congratulations to Aaron and Jessica (and Juan) Valverde on the birth of their daughter (and baby sister), **Kina Grace**. May God grant Kina many years!





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Here is a really great article by Fr. Paul Jannakos on Archbishop Paul:
<https://domoca.org/remembering-archbishop-paul-endearing-and-enduring/>

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VACATION CHURCH SCHOOL 2022 @ ST. MATTHEW'S!

Vacation Church School for children ages 5 – 15 is returning this summer in two 2-day sessions in June and July.

Dates:

- * Session 1: Thursday, June 16 & Friday, June 17
- * Session 2: Monday, July 25 & Tuesday, July 26

Schedule:

- * The daily schedule will be from 9:10 AM to 3:00 PM each day.
- * For those dropping off and picking up their children, the earliest that children may be dropped off will be 8:40 AM, and the latest they may be picked up will be 3:30 PM
- * The daily activities will consist of learning about the lives of saints, doing Christian crafts, talks with the priest, some singing, and outdoor games and activities.
- * On Tuesday, July 26, there will be Divine Liturgy with a children's sermon
- * There will be lunch at 11 and an afternoon snack at 1:30 provided by the program.
- * Children may attend 1, 2, 3, or all 4 days.



Children:

- * The activities will be geared toward children ages 5-15. At times, the children will split into two age groups for differentiated activities. Children will be supervised by at least two adults with child clearances at all times according to Orthodox Church in America policy.
- * Teens over 15 are welcome to attend as well as helpers with the younger children.
- * Children 4 and under are welcome to attend as long as their parents are able to remain present throughout the day.

REGISTRATION: Registration is now open! Please send the following information to Fr. John **by June 6 for Session 1** and by **July 15 for Session 2** at frjohnthetford@gmail.com if you have children who will be attending:

1. Names and ages of children attending.
2. Which days they will attend.
3. Any food allergies or sensitivities your children may have.
4. Any other concerns or questions you may have.

VOLUNTEERS: Please let Fr. John know **by June 1 for Session 1** and by **July 10 for Session 2** if you want to volunteer. We will need volunteers to help with supervision, and also people to help with food preparation and clean up. Please be aware that those supervising children will need to do a background check according to OCA policy.

SUPPORT: There is no registration fee for children to attend Vacation Church School, so if any parishioners would like to make free-will donations to help cover the program's costs, consisting of the cost of the crafts and meals, that would be appreciated. **Please see Tom J.** if you want to give.

Thank you! We look forward to another successful VCS program this year!