



THE MESSENGER



MAY 2026

Christ is Risen! Χριστός Ανέστη!

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Our Mission Statement

TO PROCLAIM, CELEBRATE, AND SHARE
THE GOOD NEWS OF SALVATION IN
JESUS CHRIST IN ACCORDANCE
WITH THE ORTHODOX TRADITION.

The Five Tasks of Our Parish Vision

- Hear
- Pray
- Grow
- Serve
- Share



“...And you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.”

-Acts 1:8

Holy Ascension is Thursday, May 21. See page 2 for our worship schedule. ➔

Our Life Together

Chrismation

Sophie Hollander
April 4, 2026

Deaths

Constantine (Dino) Dascalos
April 9, 2026

Hrisoula (Cris) Regas
April 12, 2026

Efstratia Bakritges
April 16, 2026

Study Groups

Men's Fellowship

Fridays, May 1 and 15
7:00 a.m., Fireside Room

Saturday Bible Study

Saturday, May 2
9:00 a.m., Fireside Room
Saturday Bible Study will take a break for the summer and resume in September after the Festival. Please contact Mary Pappas at mpappas0322@gmail.com if you have questions.

Womens' Bible Study

Saturdays, May 2, 16, and 30
8:30 a.m.
Patty Christopoulos' home

Womens' Book Club

Thursday, May 7
7:00 p.m.
Classroom

Share YourShelf

May's recipient is
JOYCE UPTOWN FOOD SHELF

IMMEDIATE NEEDS:

diapers and wipes, toothbrushes and toothpaste, Ramen Noodles

Sunday, May 3

Ramen Noodles

Sunday, May 10

Cereal (both hot and cold)

Sunday, May 17

Canned Meal – large cans
(e.g., chili / pork and beans)

Sunday, May 24

Peanut Butter

Sunday, May 31

Coffee and Tea

www.joyceuptownfoodshelf.org



Donate Online
Visit the site, then select, "Donate"

If you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday.

~ Isaiah 58:10

Weekly Worship Schedule

Saturdays

5:00 p.m. – Great Vespers

Sundays (live-streamed)

Orthros – 8:30 a.m.

Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

Wednesday, May 6:

Mid-Pentecost

Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

Wednesday, May 20:

Leave-Taking of Holy Pascha

Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

Great Vespers for the Eve of Ascension – 6:00 p.m.



Thursday, May 21:

Holy Ascension; Saints Constantine and Helen

Orthros – 8:30 a.m.

Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

Sunday, May 24:

Memorial Day Weekend

Cemetery Service –
12:00 noon (approx.)

Saint Mary's section at Lakewood Cemetery

Saturday, May 30:

Saturday of Souls

Divine Liturgy – 10:00 a.m.



Previous issues of
THE MESSENGER
are available to view
on our website



VIEW NOW. SCAN THE CODE.

www.stmarysgoc.org/resources/the-messenger/

NOT SURE WHERE TO GO TO LEARN
ABOUT THE ORTHODOX FAITH?

SEEKERS' SESSION

May 9, 2026 • 5:00 p.m. Vespers,
Meal and Discussion Following Vespers

For those seeking to become an Orthodox Christian, we are here to help guide the way. Join us on Saturday, May 9, following Vespers, in the Terrace Room for a meal discussion, and Q&A. In June we will resume meeting on the second Sunday of the month at 11:45 a.m.

Submit a question in advance. Send it to: welcome@stmarysgoc.org

Parish News & Events

St. Mary's Church Staff

Proistamenos

Fr. Timothy Sas

Associate Priest

Fr. Jason Houck

Deacons

Fr. Paul Kalina

Fr. Luke Twito

Fr. Stephen Wehr

Office Manager

David Mertesdorf

Office Assistant

Giulia Chatfield

Communications & Marketing

Nikolas Kouzes

Finance

Michael Rakes

Ministry Support

Doria Saros

Youth Director

Scott Rudquist

Church School Director

Dena Tortorelis

Chanter

Joseph Karos

Choir Director

Emily Skoutelas

Church Facilities and Construction Manager

Dean Psychogios

St. Mary's Parish Council

President

Nicholas Santrizos

Vice President

Andrew LeRoy

Secretary

Justin Theodotou

Treasurer

Cristina Nicklow

Assistant Treasurer

Athena Mihos

Members

Benjamin Amundgaard

Jennifer Coin

Vasilios (Billy) Daravingas

Louis Ellis

Andrew Gatchell

Chrissie Hoffman

Heather Koutroupas



Senior Citizens' Meeting

Tuesday, May 12

Saint Mary's Seniors will meet on Tuesday, May 12, at noon in the Terrace Room. We will celebrate May birthdays and anniversaries with a group photo and a delicious cake made by Terri Leckas, followed by a POTLUCK lunch. Our program will be a "Celebration of Our Mothers" in honor of Mother's Day. Please bring a photo of your mother to the meeting (or give a photo to Tessie in advance) and also share a story about your mother at the meeting. Following our program, we will have a short meeting with announcements. All St. Mary's seniors (55+) are welcome to join our lively group. Dues are \$20 annually. For further information, please contact President Tessie Bourdamis or any of our officers.



Agape Vespers – MEOCCA Event

Sunday, May 10

MEOCCA clergy will celebrate Agape Vespers at Skinner Memorial Chapel on the Carleton College campus on Sunday, May 10, at 5:00 p.m. This service is organized to support Orthodox Christian students at Carleton and St. Olaf colleges, as part of an ongoing effort to foster on-campus student fellowship in the Orthodox Christian faith. All are welcome.



Wedding Crown Sets and Candles

Stefana (wedding crowns) sets and candles are now available in the bookstore. The stefana sets include crowns, candles, common cup and tray. The candles come in different sizes and are appropriate for weddings, chrismations, and baptisms. They are made by parishioner Billie Savvas Slater.



2026 FAITH Scholarships for Academic Excellence

Application deadline June 26, 2026

Each year since its inception in 2004, FAITH celebrates the academic achievements of young leaders within the Greek and Hellenic American community by awarding merit-based scholarships to some of the community's most promising graduating high school seniors from across the country. Recipients of the FAITH Scholarship for Academic Excellence join a network of nearly 1,000 existing FAITH Scholars who display the exceptional scholarly intellect lauded by our Hellenic ancestors and also, a magnificent spirit of charity, community service and good citizenship which is at the very core of our Orthodox Christian values.

Applicants must be graduating a public, private, or parochial high school in the United States and embarking to study in an undergraduate degree program in the fall of 2026 at a 4-year accredited U.S. college or university. Applicants must be of Hellenic descent and/or Greek Orthodox faith and member of a parish. For questions, please call (212) 803-9363 or email info@thefaithendowment.org. Follow us on Facebook to stay updated.

A Summary of *Bring Hope to Our Neighbors* Activities



Bring Hope to Our Neighbors discussions started in January 2026, when different groups of parishioners had conversations around wanting, as individuals and as a church community, to do more for neighbors struggling to maintain their homes and food security due to the federal immigration operation. During his February 1 visit to St. Mary's, His Eminence Metropolitan Nathanael called on us to make a small act of love, to take action, and to care for the most vulnerable. He offered both St. Mary's and St. George Greek Orthodox Churches emergency funding from the Metropolis Fund Project Hope (Humanitarian Outreach and Philanthropic Engagement). The result was Project Hope Sunday at St. Mary's.

Project HOPE Sunday: February 15, 2026

BRING – DONATE – PACK

Flanked by the Hospitality of Abraham icon and aglow in February's winter sun, tables loaded with groceries lined St. Mary's Terrace Room. From 9:00 a.m., bags, boxes and jugs of requested essentials streamed into the room from parishioners heeding the Gospel message they had yet to hear that morning. By 10:30 a.m., Sunday School children lined up to fill bags to help feed their neighbors in need, putting their usual lessons into practice. Following the Divine Liturgy, our faithful took their turn filling bags with hope. From families serving together with even their littlest ones able to help, to young adults and seniors working side by side, the tabletops swiftly dwindled as the now heavy bags

crowded the adjacent meeting room. Parishioners took turns writing notes of encouragement to accompany the food, offering nourishment for body and spirit. Others scanned QR codes to provide much needed financial assistance to help our neighbors stay in their homes. Together, we put hope into action caring for our community in crisis. The final tally:



BRING

You brought **75+ containers** of laundry soap for VEAP (Volunteers Enlisted to Assist People) and **nearly 100 packages** of menstrual pads for Joyce Uptown Food Shelf.

DONATE

Over \$3,500 was donated for rent support to Bancroft Families (aligned with Philoptochos partner Bancroft Elementary School) and the Powderhorn Park Neighborhood Association (the previous neighborhood of St. Mary's GOC)

PACK

You made cards of encouragements and packed **215 Express Packs** for VEAP with food purchased from local grocers. Express Packs provide 2-3 days of shelf stable food, and VEAP hands out nearly 50 packs daily.

Bring Hope to Our Neighbors: During Lent

BRING – CONNECT – SUPPORT

On a weekly basis throughout Lent, the **BRING – CONNECT – SUPPORT** Campaign shared ideas for St. Mary's congregants to continue to bring hope to our neighbors.

BRING

School supplies, healthy snacks and paper products were collected for Bancroft Elementary School. This school has been supported by Philoptochos for several years, so it was a natural choice to restock supplies that help students and staff finish the school year successfully.

CONNECT IDEAS:

1. Reconnect with parishioners you haven't seen in a while.
2. Visit a shut-in (*a.k.a. VIP or Very Important Parishioner*).
3. Introduce yourself to someone at St. Mary's and meet a new parishioner or catechumen.

4. Write to Minneapolis Police Chief Brian O'Hara and specifically the 5th precinct to thank them for their service, for keeping St. Mary's safe, and for their continuing commitments to the safety and sanctity of life of the residents of Minneapolis. (Email: police@minneapolismn.gov; Address: Police Chief Brian O'Hara, Minneapolis City Hall, 350 South 5th Street, Room 130, Minneapolis, MN 55415)
5. Reach out to Pan Orthodox friends who may be impacted by trouble in the Middle East.

SUPPORT IDEAS:

1. Shop or donate to an ethnic store, like *Bill's Imported Foods*.
2. Eat at or buy a gift card to an immigrant-owned food truck or restaurant.
3. Learn how you can continue to support local businesses and neighborhoods at *Mpls for Mpls*.
4. Learn about *OneMpls Fund*, which annually targets 1-3 pressing needs in greater Minneapolis.



Thank you!

Bring Hope to Our Neighbors activities have been successful because of the participation of many.

- Thank you to all who helped set-up for the February 15 packing event, donated requested items and money, wrote notes of encouragement, and bagged and delivered Express Packs, soap and pads.
- Thank you to the Sunday School program, which graciously donated a portion of their Pancake Breakfast donations to the community rent support portion of Project HOPE Sunday.
- Thank you to all who engaged in the Lenten ideas to connect with and support people and organizations around us, and who donated to the Bancroft School Supply Drive.
- Thanks to a generous donation from the St. Mary's Foundation, the steering committee (Jamie Amacci, Vicky DiGiovanni, Paulette Hastings, Jayne Klatt, Terri Leckas, Melpo Murdakes) is planning for a summer campaign to support neighbors in need. Please share your suggestions with one of us.

2026 RESTORATION PROJECT
CAMPAIGN UPDATE

FOR THE DOME



\$246,000
still needed

\$754,000
in commitments

TARGETED GOAL: \$1M

Thank you to everyone who has pledged a contribution to the building improvements project. We have received **\$754,000** in commitments towards our goal of raising **\$1M**. In order for us to begin the dome restoration project this spring, we need to secure a remainder of **\$246,000**. We invite every member of our community to join this sacred effort through *prayer, participation, and giving*. Please prayerfully consider *if* and *what* you can donate to help restore this blessed and treasured landmark.

Questions? Reach out to Nick Santrizos at:
nsantrizos@gmail.com



Electronic payment donations can be made by scanning the code.

All contributions for this project will be put into the Saint Mary's Capital Improvements Reserve.

www.stmarysgoc.org/For-The-Dome



Philoptochos

PHILOPTOCHOS MEETINGS

The Board meeting will meet on
Tuesday, May 12, at 6:30 p.m.
Location to TBD

Our **Spring Finale** dinner and meeting is on **Tuesday, May 19, at 6:00 p.m.** in the Terrace Room. This is our last gathering until the fall and we'd love to see you there! Details to follow.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Twin Cities Pan-Orthodox Tea
Saturday, May 2, 2:30-4:30 p.m.

The 21st Twin Cities Pan-Orthodox Tea will be hosted by St. George Coptic Orthodox Church, 10605 36th Avenue North, Plymouth. Come together for fellowship and share ideas toward our common goals to learn from each other, share ideas from our parishes and to serve to be Christ-like. Presentation by Father Jacob. Please bring an appetizer or dessert to share. For any questions, contact Amira Youssef at 763.221.4309. Vespers is at 5:00 p.m.

FOCUS Meal
Sunday, May 10

We're coordinating the May 10 Mother's Day dinner at FOCUS Minnesota and we want your help! Dinners are now being served at Christ on Capitol Hill Lutheran Church, 105 University Avenue, just behind the State Capitol building, with sit-down meals served at 5:00 p.m. and takeout plates available at 6:00 p.m. We are asking individuals to make rigatoni or to bring salad fixings, buns, or cookies. Additionally, in-person help is needed at Christ on Capitol Hill from 3:00-7:00 p.m., and includes meal preparation, serving, and hospitality to welcome and dine with guests, acknowledge the mothers, and encourage card-making for those wanting to make something special for the mom(s) in their life. To sign up, please stop by the Philoptochos Table after Liturgy or use the SignUpGenius link below. Thank you for helping to make Mother's Day special for those who would have difficulty doing so on their own.



<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080C49A8A722AAF85-63518978-2026#/>

Sacred Baking Hands-On Workshop

A hands-on workshop to learn how to make artoclasia is being offered on Friday, May 15, beginning at 6:00 p.m., in the church kitchen. Learn the traditional techniques and significance behind crafting this blessed bread. Registration closes on Sunday, May 10. Our dear Presbyteria Alexandra will teach the class. All ingredients will be provided. Register at our table on Sundays or email Toni Bazakos: antigone.bazakos@gmail.com Questions may be sent to Toni at the above email address or call her at 612.554.7861.

2026 Taste of Greece Bake Sale ~ Let the Baking Begin!
In May, we're starting the effort to stock the freezer with cookies and pastries for the 2026 Taste of Greece Bake Sale! Co-chairs Paulette Hastings, Tina Menter, and Photine Saar have been making plans along with the cookie captains, and we have three cookie baking opportunities this month!

Kourambiethes:

Wednesday, May 13, 12 noon-7:00 p.m.

Koulouria:

Thursday, May 21, 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

(There are two shifts: 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. or 1:30-4:30 p.m. Come to one or both!)

Baklava:

• **Thursday, May 28, 10:00 a.m.-7:30 p.m.**

(assembly - bring a saucepan and pastry brush)

• **Monday, June 1, 10:00 a.m.-7:30 p.m.**

(assembly - bring a saucepan and pastry brush)

• **Wednesday, June 3, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.**

(cut, clove, and syrup - bring a sharp knife)

• **Thursday, June 4, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.** (if needed)

No experience is necessary - we provide on the job training! Please come for an hour or two or more and bring a friend as many hands lighten the load.

Women's Book Club Discussion

The May book club meeting is Thursday, May 7, 7:00 p.m. in the 6th grade classroom. May's book is a wonderful and practical guide titled "Toolkit for Spiritual Growth: A Practical Guide to Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving" by Fr. Evan Armatas. The book is available in the bookstore. Please join us even if you have not read the book. You will find the conversation inspirational. Please also note that we are planning to offer a Zoom link for those who can't make it in person. Please try and attend if you are able in person. Contact Katherine Boosalis at katherine@boosalis.net if you would like to be added to the mailing list.

A heartfelt thank you to:

...All the Philoptochos ladies for their hard work in preparing St. Mary's for Pascha, from decorating to baking to dyeing and bagging eggs—your efforts are truly appreciated. God bless you all!

...Thank you to the fundraising committee and all the volunteers that helped with Family Movie Night for the Dome!

Please watch for updates on events or needs from us in the weekly bulletin, webpage and our table on Sundays

Follow Saint Mary's Philoptochos on Social Media

Facebook

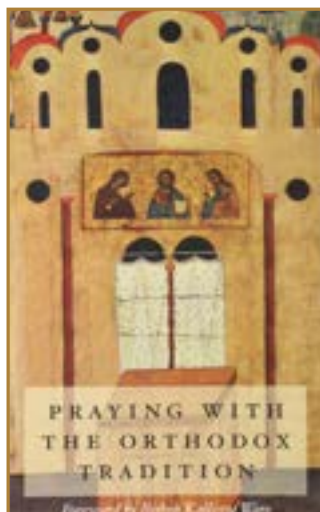


Instagram



In the Bookstore

By Rebecca Myerly
bookstore@stmarysgoc.org



Praying with the Orthodox Tradition is a collection of prayers for the liturgical hours of each day. While the liturgical seasons in the Orthodox Church year are widely known, the liturgical hours of each day are less well known outside a monastic setting. A few years ago Sister Vassa Larin wrote a book titled **Praying in Time**, in which she encourages and explains how to pray the liturgical hours each day outside a monastery in the modern world. One could describe **Praying in the Orthodox Tradition** as a sourcebook of prayers for the liturgical hours

as explained by Sister Vassa. Stefano Parenti compiled the prayers included in this book from a late eighth century Greek liturgical manuscript known as the Barberini Codex 336. Paula Clifford translated these prayers into English, presenting them in thought lines that facilitate meditation.

Metropolitan Kallistos Ware wrote an informative and edifying foreword to this book. He begins with a quote by Saint Gregory of Nazianzus: “Remember God more often than you breathe” and then explains:

Prayer is more essential to us, more an integral part of ourselves, than the rhythm of our breathing or the beating of our heart. Without prayer there is no life. Prayer is our nature. As human persons we are created for prayer just as we are created to speak and to think. The human animal is best defined, not as a logical or tool-making animal or an animal that laughs, but rather as an animal that prays, a eucharistic animal, capable of offering the world back to God in thanksgiving and intercession. (vii)

Praying with the Orthodox Tradition consists of prayers for Vespers (sunset), Compline (night-time before going to bed), the Midnight Office, Matins or Orthros (at dawn), Prime (the first hour around 7:00 a.m.), Terce (the third hour—9:00 a.m.), Sext (the sixth hour—noon), and None (the ninth hour—3:00). [Note to reader: the book starts with Vespers because “the Orthodox Church, following the ancient Jewish understanding of time, regards the new day as commencing not at midnight or at dawn but at sunset.” (vix)]

Light is a repeated theme in these liturgical hours, “both as a physical reality and as a symbol” because “the alternation of daylight and darkness is the primary way in which we experience the passing of time.” (ix)

The prayers also connect the different moments of the day with events in the history of salvation....Time is in this way taken up into God’s saving action and experienced, not as loss or meaningless repetition, but as sacred and redeeming time, *kairos*, the moment of truth and opportunity. (ix-x)

So we are shown how Christ, the maker and Lord of time, can be brought into all the different moments of our day. The book reveals to us time transfigured—time assumed into God, renewed, sanctified. (vii-viii)

Even the titles given for each liturgical time of day in this book are prayer—

“Welcome Christ the True Light”—Vespers/sunset

“Give glory to God who does marvellous things”—Compline/night-time

“That we may be delivered from the Powers of Darkness”—Midnight

“That we may be transfigured by the rising sun”—Matins or Orthros/dawn

“That we may receive the Holy Spirit in His fullness”—Terce/9:00 a.m.

“That we may acknowledge God’s presence daily”—Sext/noon

“That we may be strong at the time of trial”—None/3:00 p.m.

“That we may follow the Lord in all His ways”—afternoon

Praying with the Orthodox Tradition is a beautiful “Amen” to God for and in His gift of time.

**Father of mercy,
may your will
bring light to every part of our being
and cleanse us from all malice and sin;
keep us pure and blameless
whenever the devil may interfere,
and in your goodness, Lord,
grant that we may learn more of you
and come to a better understanding
of your nature,
that we might stand in awe of you
and do what is pleasing to you
until the end of our days,
until our final hour
and our dying breath. (68)**

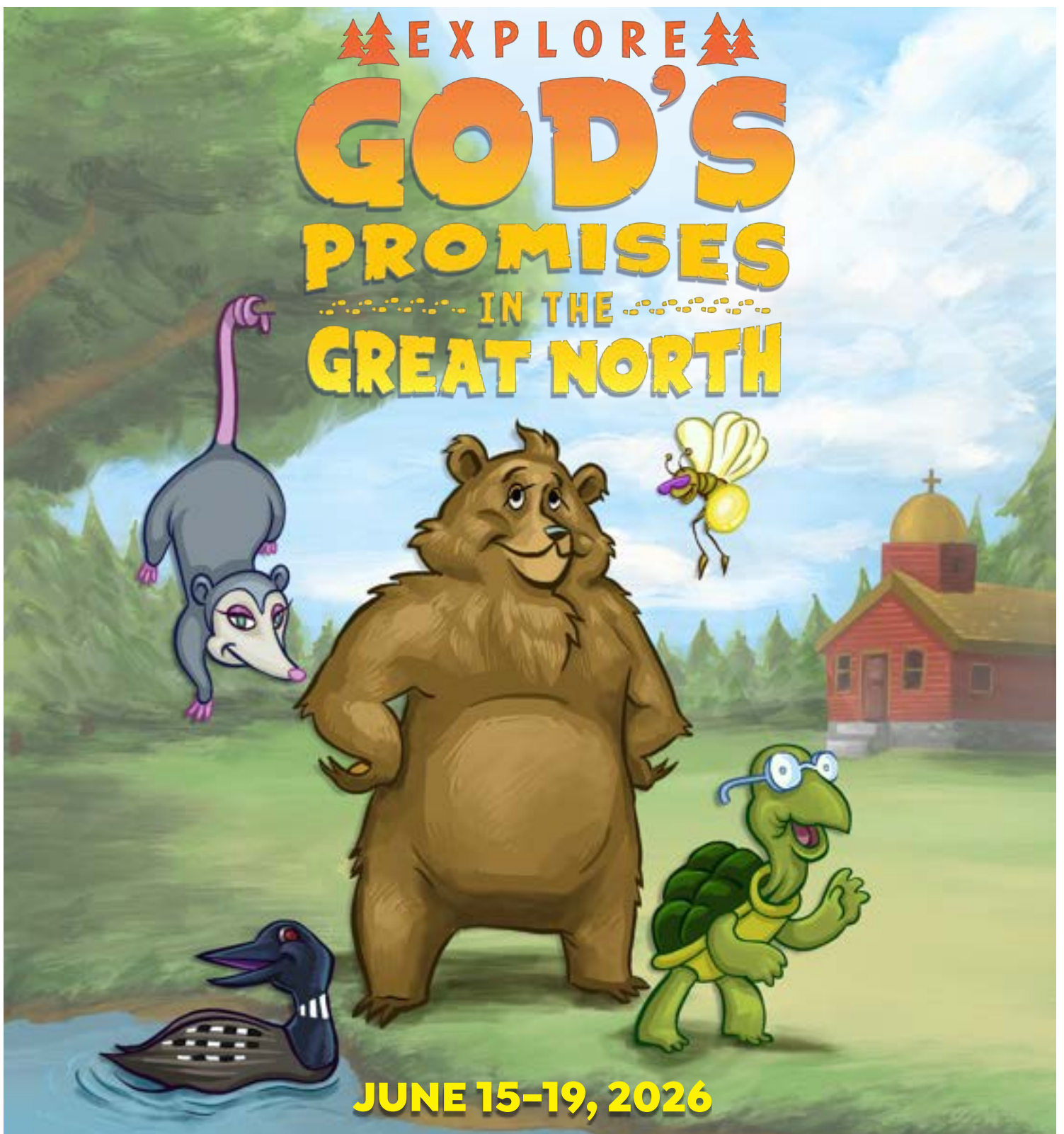


**ST. MARY'S
BOOKSTORE**

Please visit the bookstore for truly meaningful graduation and wedding gifts.

Saint Mary's Vacation Church School

EXPLORE
GOD'S
PROMISES
IN THE
GREAT NORTH



JUNE 15-19, 2026

Register today and Get ready for a great adventure!

Vacation Church School is open to children, age 5 to those entering 6th grade in the fall. Five days of music, worship, activities, snacks, and games. Middle and high school youth are needed for staff support. If your teen is available and willing to help, please also sign them up. Scan the code to register your child.



Bring Hope to Our Neighbors

Spring & Summer Season



BRING in May



- *Week 1: Ramen Noodles*
- *Week 2: Cereal (both hot and cold)*
- *Week 3: Canned Meal*
 - *- large cans (i.e. Chili /Pork and Beans)*
- *Week 4: Peanut Butter*
- *Week 5: Coffee and Tea*

PACK each Month

After Divine Liturgy to support our partners addressing food insecurity.



- *Sunday, May 31st*
- *Sunday, June 28th*
- *Sunday, July 26th*

CONNECT each Month



- *Sign up to deliver food packs to our local partners.*

Together we can continue to bring HOPE to our neighbors with ACTION.



Saint Mary's Greek Orthodox Church
3450 Irving Avenue South
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55408

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



The feast of Holy Pentecost is on Sunday, May 31.

THE MESSENGER



MAY 2026

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PUBLICATION DEADLINES

The Messenger

First Sunday of each month

Sunday Bulletin

Preceding Monday, 4:00 p.m.

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