

July - 2026

# *The Cathedral Messenger*



SAINT GEORGE ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL

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# **Simple Grief: The Most Beautiful of Inheritances**

**By Fr. Joshua**



Worrying if we will be able to leave our children an inheritance is a common worry. It is one of those quiet ruminations that can weigh on the heart of a parent. We want our children to be okay after we are gone, and we fear we might not do enough to help them. After all, this world is not becoming any easier to navigate and they will need all the help they can get. Typically, when we think in terms of an inheritance we think in terms of a financial inheritance. However, there is another inheritance to leave, one that is more important than any financial inheritance, and that is the inheritance of simple grief.

Simple grief is a grief process that is straightforward and not complicated. The inheritance of simple grief is one of the greatest gifts we can leave our children. All children will one day have to navigate grieving their parents. For children whose parents loved them properly their grief will be a straight-forward process. However, when children have been subjected to complicated and unhealthy parenting dynamics, their grief process is complicated, can go unresolved, and leaves a painful footprint in their hearts for the remainder of their lives.

It is somewhat of a paradox. We would think that with bad or flawed parenting there would be an easier grief process. Afterall, what is there to miss and grieve? However, when a parent engages in broken parenting, it leaves their children burdened with complicated grief. It is complicated because it has many layers that are felt but hard to see. When children are left to grieve parents who were deficient in key areas, there are additional losses to grieve other than the physical absence of the parent. There are the losses of what should have been, but what wasn't and what could have been but will not be. There is the need to grieve that certain aspects of the parent-child relationship were never fulfilled. Key aspects such as being secure in knowing that they were loved, that their parents were proud of them, and that they were good enough. We often can't articulate it when we are in the throes of complicated grief, but we are wounded by the painful realization that those needs won't be met by them in this life, and that we will have to work with what shreds or fragments of normal parenting there might have been. Not all parental memories are beautiful portraits. Some are partial, unfinished portraits or like a jig-saw puzzle that is missing too many pieces.

Inevitably a child will internalize and blame themselves for the deficiency of a parent. This continues into adulthood. It is so difficult for them to come to know and deeply feel that it was their parent who was wounded, limited, and flawed and that as the child they were innocent, and by default, lovable and good enough. Afterall, if they were good enough and worth it enough, why then was their parent so distracted, not available, not responsive, subjected them to harmful behaviors, and didn't protect? In the heart of every such child a painful conclusion is drawn, that they must not have been good enough and not worth it. This painful conclusion soon sinks into the unconscious mind and the child grows into an adult who carries a silent pain and spends their years looking for affirmation that these painful conclusions are not true. Is this the inheritance we wish to leave our children? God forbid.

The good news is we don't have to be perfect parents to leave our children the inheritance of simple grief. We just need to make sure to master certain

areas. Those areas are love, safety, and predictability. As the well-known writer Bessel Van Der Kolk said, “It is the birthright of every child to be doted upon”. All children need to grow up knowing they are lovable, good enough, and worth it. We show this to our children by being consistent in all things related to love. We protect and never abandon them. We comfort them when they are distressed. We avoid shaming them at all costs. We make sure to never be the source of frightening experiences and memories for them. We also do this with the playful things, such as making sustained eye contact with them with a fierce love in our eyes even if it makes them embarrassed. They might not admit, but it sends a powerful message to that young developing mind that they are the most important beings in our lives, and it conveys a powerful reassurance that we are there for them and will protect them. It is precisely those moments that give our children the affirmation that they are lovable, worth it, and good enough. It is also protective in nature, as it protects them from wandering through later life trying to get those affirmations in all the wrong areas.

This inheritance of simple grief is the most beautiful of inheritances. When a parent leaves this inheritance there is only one thing for their child to grieve and that is their physical absence from this world. All else is complete. There are no loose ends. The parent-child relationship is left on the table of our life in this world as a complete jigsaw puzzle that is missing no pieces. It is also an inheritance that gets passed down through the generations. For with the inheritance of simple grief is the gift of love and how to love. We leave our children with memories and experiences that we will be a template for them to follow and repeat to their children, and the legacy continues. So, the inheritance of simple grief is a guaranteed inheritance that we all can leave our children.



# MINISTRY HIGHLIGHT

## CHILDREN'S CHURCH SCHOOL



## OUR CHILDREN READ THE ENTIRE BOOK OF EXODUS

Our goal was to allow the kids to learn, at their age-level, these wonderful Bible stories in a way that will remind them over their lifetime that God remains faithful to us, walks with us, guides us, and cares for us ALWAYS. Church School takes place at 9:30 before The Divine Liturgy starting September 13th!

*The life of our parish is supported by the many gifts of our community. Through your prayers, volunteer service, and financial stewardship, we are able to offer outreach ministries that touch the lives of so many.*

***Thank you for helping us support our Parish Ministries!***



**MY/OUR PERSONAL STEWARDSHIP  
2026 COMMITMENT  
TOWARDS OUR PARISH**

**“SHINING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST FOR ANOTHER CENTURY!”**



**WORSHIP, SERVICE, EDUCATION, & COMMUNITY**



**SAINT GEORGE  
ANTIOCHIAN  
ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL**

**PITTSBURGH, PA**

# OUR 2026 STEWARDSHIP PLEDGE GOAL

**GOAL: Fully fund our operations and ministries without outside funding at a total cost of \$422,000**

## *St. George Orthodox Cathedral* Stewardship 2026

The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?

~Psalm 27

The Church has always encouraged its members to set aside a percentage of their income as a pledge for the support of the Church. The Old Testament guideline for giving was the tithe (one-tenth). This is hard for many. Under the New Covenant, we should strive to achieve at least some form of percentage giving. The chart below will help you estimate a pledge based on a percentage of your income- if you earn \$25,000 a year, they can be halved; if you make more, adjust them accordingly. We can use the examples to **challenge ourselves**.

If your **Annual income is \$50,000** then your weekly pledge, if made on a weekly basis, would be:

| 3%        | 5%        | 8%        | 10%       |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| \$29/Week | \$48/Week | \$77/Week | \$96/Week |

If you make your pledge on a monthly basis, the amounts are:

|             |             |             |             |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| \$125/month | \$208/month | \$333/month | \$417/month |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|

*(The above figures are rounded to the nearest dollar)*

**Many communities place emphasis on percentage giving. This is becoming the norm throughout the Church. Please consider using percentage giving as a guide and way to stewardship growth in our own spiritual lives.**

**Your Co-workers in Christ,**

**Fr. Joshua Makoul and the St. George Cathedral Stewardship Ministry**

When we support the Church, we have a right and need to know the WHAT and the WHY. To what am I giving and why? Yes, we give to support our spiritual home, of which we are all residents and family members. However, we want you to know more, understand more, and experience more. It is good to see and experience the what and the why through direct ministry involvement. It really helps to EXPERIENCE the what and why.

*We know that you are bombarded with many requests to support various causes and endeavors. We ask, however, to please keep your St. George community in mind. As we continue to grow, we will continue to increase funding to our ministries and also faithfully tend to maintaining the buildings we have, so that we might have dignified buildings for our ministries.*



*Stewardship is born from gratitude and is a way for us to offer back to God a portion of what He has given us. Please reflect on any blessings we have received and how we want to offer a portion back to God in the form of a tithe to His Church.*

**Feel free to scan the QR code below to offer a donation.**



**For Members:** You will be prompted to sign in to your Realm account to make sure your donation is credited to your Contribution Statement.

**For Non-Members:** Already Orthodox and want to become a member and join our community? Please send your email address to [office@sgcoakland.org](mailto:office@sgcoakland.org) to receive an invite to set up your St. George Realm account.

# Children's Ministry Empty Tomb Procession 2026



# MINISTRY HIGHLIGHT

## HOMELESS MINISTRY

For years, the Homeless Ministry has provided blankets, pillows, new underwear, hygiene and dental products, food and refreshing beverages to those experiencing homelessness. Beyond donations, this team has actively engaged relationships, offered companionship and has built a sense of connection to those they serve.



*“One thing that really stands out to me is that we do this right after church. Literally, after we finish worshipping the Lord and partaking of the Eucharist, we take the blessing that was just given to us and immediately go out to bless others. I think that’s such a blessing in itself. You know, a lot of times it’s not just what you do, but how and when you do it. And what better way is there to do a ministry than to go directly from the church?”*

*–Homeless ministry participant–*

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***Thank you for helping us support our Parish Ministries!***



## MINISTRY HIGHLIGHT

# MEN'S MINISTRY

## Gettysburg Retreat

In May 2026, eight gentlemen from the parish embarked on a retreat unlike any other, a journey back in time to the historic Gettysburg Battlefield. Led by Fr. Joshua, the group was guided by his extensive knowledge of the battle and his hand-drawn maps.

Despite record-breaking heat the group pressed on, retracing the movements of the armies during the 3 day battle. They forded Willoughby Run and visited Seminary Ridge, the Railroad Cut, Cemetery Ridge, and Little Round Top. Along the way, they learned about the courage and sacrifice of units such as the Iron Brigade and the 20th Maine under Lt. Joshua Chamberlain, while also gaining a deeper understanding of Confederate leaders including Brigadier General James Archer and Gen. William Barksdale of Mississippi. The experience sought not to glorify war, but to understand the men who fought it and the difficult history they helped shape.

Once back home, the echoes of the past began to settle in. The retreat inspired reflection on the extraordinary leadership, sacrifice, and conviction displayed by so many on those fields and ridges, as well as on the enduring ideal of freedom for which so many suffered and some gave their lives. It also offered an opportunity to wrestle with our nation's complex history and to consider how that heritage—both inspiring and painful—continues to shape who we are today.



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**Thank you for helping us support our Parish Ministries!**

# Pascha 2026



## **Building Beautification Update:**

The Building committee is diligently working on Phase 1 planning for the St. George expansion project. They have solicited proposals for and interviewed two architecture firms. The goal being to find the right partner in expanding/leveling the parking lot, adding retaining walls, and adding beautifying green-space using the land from the former houses. All while keeping an eye on the future, ensuring that any future expansion can be made easily.



# Orthodox Scouts in Action at St. George



**On Saturday March 28<sup>th</sup> scouts from all around the region gathered at the cathedral to work on their religious emblems. These awards (St. George, Chi Rho and Alpha Omega) teach participants about their Orthodox faith while demonstrating one of the tenants of Scouting USA, Duty to God.**





## **SAINT GEORGE FOOD PANTRY**

### **CHRISTMAS IN JULY**

Our St. George Food Pantry is in need of \$25.00 Giant Eagle gift cards to supplement our non-perishable boxes of food which we distribute to anyone in need on a monthly basis. These gift cards allow our neighbors to buy perishable food, prescriptions and other needed essentials.

You had generously responded at Christmas and we're grateful. At this time, we find ourselves in need of more gift cards as our neighbors' needs have increased.

Your generosity makes a difference in their lives.

If you'd prefer to make a monetary donation, we're happy to purchase the gift cards on your behalf.

Please see Amy Albert, Joanne Cloherty or Denise Potter.

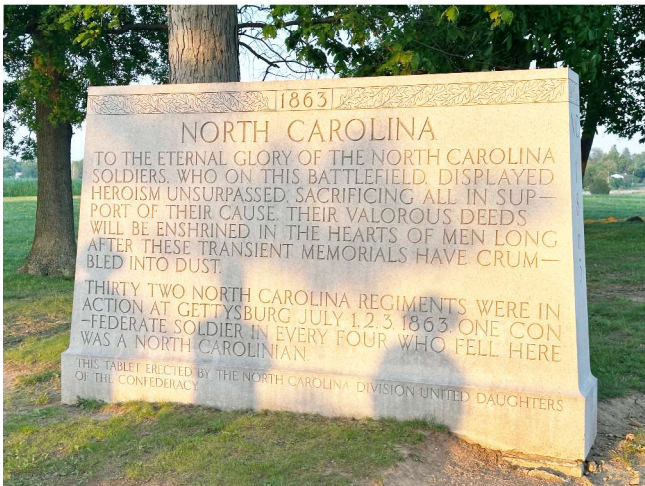
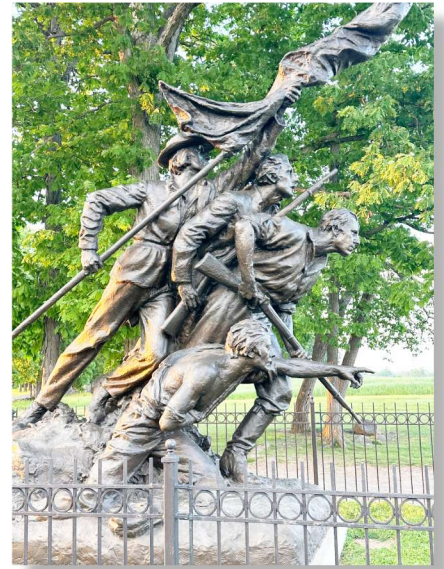
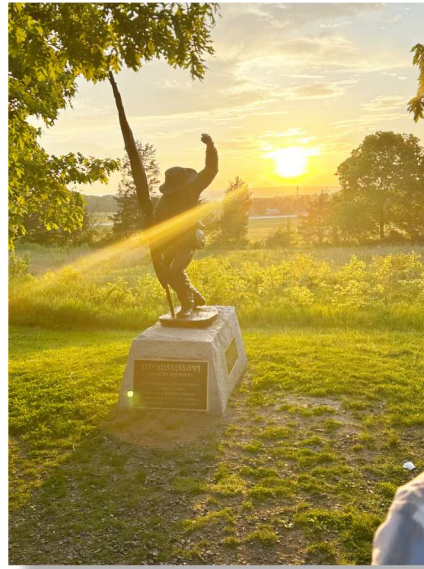
You'll find the gift card donation box in our narthex.

Thank you for your generosity and kindness to those less fortunate.

May God continue to bless you and your families.



# Men's Ministry May 2026 Gettysburg Trip



# Life at St. George



The Chrismation of Lance Huckabee



Nick French winning the  
chili contest!

St. George men versus women  
bowling event



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## **Dates To Remember**

### **Services (See the website calendar for more information):**

Every Sunday Morning: Orthros @ 9:15 AM Followed by Liturgy

Every Wednesday Morning: Akathist Service (Confession Available) @ 9:45 AM

Every Saturday Evening: Great Vespers @ 5:00 PM

### **Educational Events:**

Sunday School Starts Sunday, September 13th

Adult Christian Education - Start Date To Be Announced

### **Dormition of the Theotokos:**

Dormition of the Theotokos Fast from August 1 to the 14th

Feast of Dormition on August 15

For events being organized by our ministries, or to see how you can help them in their missions, please see the ministry fliers inside this bulletin.