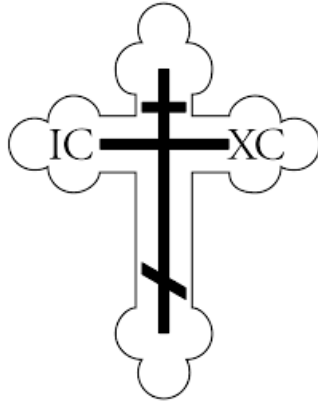


2024 General Parish Meeting
Youth and Outreach and General Ministries Report
Antiochian Orthodox Basilica of St. Mary





2024 General Parish Assembly Report
Youth and Pastoral Outreach and General Ministries
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Altar Servers

The Altar boy ministry works weekly with boys ages 9 and up. We are always looking for more boys to join and help. We will hold several training sessions this year to build fellowship among the Altar boys.

Contact: Haitham Fakhouri • Email: Haitham@pickbold.com



Church Communications

Website

Our website performed exceptionally well last year with 20,000 users visiting the site, with over 90% being new users. A majority visited from the United States but we also had users visit from the Netherlands, Canada, United Kingdom, and Germany. From the 20,000 users, there were 67,000 pageviews.

Social Media

Our Facebook page currently has 5,300 people liking the page with 6,800 followers. Instagram has 1,400 followers. The YouTube channel has also seen increased usage for those watching the regular gospel and epistle readings and sermons.

Arabic School *(report prepared by director of St. Mary Arabic School, Lina Nunu Matta)*

Contact: Lina Nunu Matta • Email: linanunu@hotmail.com

I've been directing and teaching at St. Mary Arabic School with the hard work of volunteer teachers and assistants since 2007. We reached 100 students this year, ages 4 and up. Our curriculum consists of 20 sessions from October through March and takes place every Sunday after Church School, from 12:30-1:30. We were able to provide our students with updated books this year that helped us teach them how to read and write the Arabic language while enhancing their understanding of the Arabic grammar. We also try teaching our students good morals and attitudes used in daily life. In addition we teach English as a second language (ESL class) for adults. Thank you so much to those who continuously supported us, especially Father George, Father Jim, Father Samer, Deacon Suhail, Deacon Osama, Stacey, Olive and Sonya. Additionally, we are grateful to those who donated to our program in hopes of supporting our children and maintaining our native language in our cultures. God bless our church!



Basilica Band *(report prepared by Band Spiritual Adviser, Fr. Samer Hanna)*

The Basilica of St. Mary Marching Band is a new ministry that was established by its members to serve Christ, His Church, and this blessed community of the Basilica via music. Established and lead by Maher Makhoul and Chadi Issa in 2022, the band underwent multiple transitions as it grew to what it is today. Lead by Issa Chaghouri, trumpet faculty, and assisted by Angella Abojamra, drums faculty, the band is made up of 25 members ages ten and up. With the blessings of Fr. George and Fr. Jim, we had the privilege of serving and performing on multiple occasions, including: Holy Friday, Palm Sunday, Dormition Feast and festival, SOYO Community Thanksgiving Dinner, the ordination of Fr. Samer and welcoming of His Grace, Bishop ANTHONY, and the Christmas service. Due to generous donations from the church and its members, and the assistance in the office of Sonya Kassis, we were able to purchase all required instruments and uniforms for all members. Donations were a sign of support, care and love from the Church and its members— for that, the band thanks you so much. The band is expected to grow in quantity and quality in the near future and by serving during holiday services and other important occasions. The band can become the face of the Basilica to its members and to the surrounding communities with the possibility of marching in public parades and participating in celebratory occasions with the help of SOYO, altar boys, and other church organizations. For any inquiry, question or request please do not hesitate to contact Fr. Samer Hanna, the band spiritual director, by calling (248) 709-2289 or emailing him: professorsamerhanna@gamil.com.



Daughters of St. Mary/ St. Paisios Arabic Bible Study Group

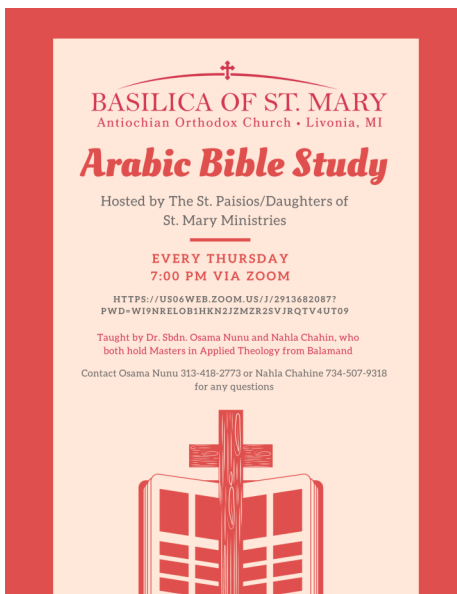
Bible studies in Arabic are held every week on Thursday at 7 pm. This Arabic Bible study program has been active in our Church for several years. This group has already covered many books in the New Testament, lives of saints and various topics related to the Orthodox faith. Post pandemic, it is mainly being conducted on Zoom by Dr. (Subdeacon) Osama Nunu and Nahla Shaheen. Both hold masters in applied Theology from Balamand.

The group is also active in organizing many outings and events.

Contacts: Osama Nunu, osamanunu@yahoo.com or Nahla Imseeh, nala.msee@gmail.com

Journey Through the Bible (English Bible Study)

This ministry celebrates its two year anniversary in 2024. We were blessed to have lectures and instruction from Subdeacon Michael Pagani, and Dr. (Subdeacon) Osama on the Gospel of John. Christopher Holwey continuously provided thought provoking discussion on the life of the Church, bringing understanding of our liturgical services. Sessions are held twice a month, on Tuesdays. All sessions are livestreamed, and all session videos are available on the church YouTube page. Last year we added a new ministry called "A Spiritual Lesson in Minutes" where we present short videos of five minutes or less, of various spiritual lessons in both Arabic and English, prepared and presented by Subdeacon Osama Nunu and edited by Ramzi Bargout. The videos are posted on our church Facebook page every Wednesday.



BASILICA OF ST. MARY
Antiochian Orthodox Church • Livonia, MI

Arabic Bible Study

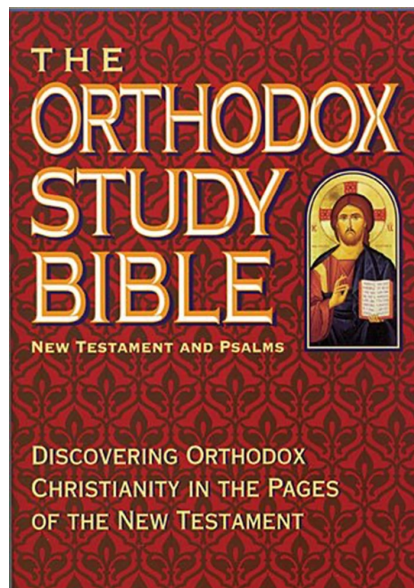
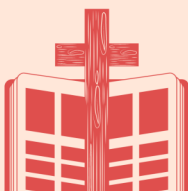
Hosted by The St. Paisios/Daughters of St. Mary Ministries

EVERY THURSDAY
7:00 PM VIA ZOOM


[HTTPS://US06WEB.ZOOM.US/J/29136820877](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/29136820877)
PWD-W19NRELOB1HK2JZMZR2SVJRQTV4UT09

Taught by Dr. Sbdn. Osama Nunu and Nahla Chahin, who both hold Masters in Applied Theology from Balamand

Contact Osama Nunu 313-418-2773 or Nahla Chahine 734-507-9318 for any questions




THE ORTHODOX STUDY BIBLE




NEW TESTAMENT AND PSALMS

DISCOVERING ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY IN THE PAGES OF THE NEW TESTAMENT



BASILICA OF ST. MARY
Antiochian Orthodox Church • Livonia, MI

Journey Through the Bible



January
1/10/2023
1/24/2023

February
2/7/2023
2/21/2023

March
3/7/2023
3/21/2023

April
4/4/2023
4/18/2023

May
5/2/2023
5/16/2023

Our regular series continues, every other Tuesday. Joins us as trained theologians begin a study on the Gospel of John, including Q&A sessions, supplemental materials, and more!

In the Church Activity Center

7:00 PM

If you can't join in person, follow along during an online livestream! Subscribe to the Basilica's YouTube channel and click the notification bell to receive updates.

<https://www.youtube.com/@StMaryLivoniaMI>



For any questions, email Subdeacon Michael Pagani: michaelpagani50@gmail.com

Camp St. Mary

Camp St. Mary celebrated its 22nd year as one of the main summer programs of the Basilica. This summer's sessions was slightly shortened to six weeks and took place on Sundays instead of the usual Tuesdays. It was a fun-filled summer packed with trips to the lake, the Dormition Monastery and the Detroit Zoo, as well as service projects and church services. Thanks to this year's co-directors, Miray Shalhoub and Lillian Youssef for their hard work and dedication to the program.

2023 CAMP ST. MARY
God is Love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. 1 John 4:16

CSM IS NOW TAKING PLACE ON SUNDAYS! REGISTRATION BEGINS AT 9:30 AM DOWNSTAIRS AND ENDS AT 10:00 AM. ATTENDANCE AT DIVINE LITURGY AT 10:00 AM IS MANDATORY TO CAMP PARTICIPATION! CAMPER WHO DO NOT ATTEND CHURCH WILL NOT BE ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY AFTERNOON CAMP ACTIVITIES

SUMMER SCHEDULE

JULY 2	COLOR WARS	9:30 AM-6:30 PM
CAMPER STAYING AT CHURCH. BRUNCH AND SNACKS INCLUDED.		
JULY 9	CASS LAKE	9:30AM--TBD
JULY 16	TBD	9:30 AM--TBD
JULY 23	SERVICE WEEK & HAFLE	9:30 AM--TBD
JULY 30	MONASTERY	9:30--TBD
AUG 6	CARNIVAL&ALUMNI DAY	9:30--TBD

CAMPER REGISTRATIONS & COUNSELOR APPLICATIONS ARE AVAILABLE AT: WWW.STMARYLIVONIA.COM

INTERESTED IN MAKING A DONATION?

PAYMENTS CAN NOW BE MADE ONLINE! WWW.STMARYLIVONIA.COM OR USE YOUR PHONE'S CAMERA TO SCAN THE CODE BELOW:



Tuition: \$210 for all six weeks, if paid at once OR \$45 per week for single sessions.

CAMPERS SHOULD BRING A CHANGE OF CLOTHES EACH WEEK. PROVIDED MEALS AND SNACKS WILL VARY DEPENDING ON THE ACTIVITY. PLEASE CHECK FACEBOOK IN ADVANCE.

EVENTS AND PICKUP TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE! PLEASE CHECK FACEBOOK PAGE FOR WEEKLY UPDATES.

QUESTIONS? CONTACT CO-DIRECTORS:
 MIRAY SHALHOUB 248-986-5612 OR MICHAEL NAKAD 734-680-3655



Choir (report prepared by Choir Director, Chris Holwey)

Melanie and I are so very proud of our choir, who continue to keep alive the beauty and joy of all the Orthodox hymns that are sung at our church services, whether it be the Divine Liturgy every week, or the special services throughout the year, including the Hierarchical Liturgy this past year when various bishops came to visit. The membership in our choir continues to change, as we send some off to college and others coming to join us, even our children who come to learn and sing with us to the glory of God. Our plan is to keep learning new music, invite and welcome any new members from the parish who sing and read music to join us, and lift up the hearts and minds of the faithful as we celebrate the joy of our salvation in Christ Jesus our Lord. Please keep us all in your prayers. --Christopher Holwey

Contact: Chris Holwey • Email: caholwey@gmail.com



Church School

The church school is the foundation of all our youth programs at the Basilica. This year, we were blessed to be able to refresh our classrooms and add some new furniture and supplies, thanks to the quick work of the parish council in securing funds for the refresh. Our weekly attendance is strong, with over 120 students in grades preschool – twelve, in five classrooms. The school year began the first week of October to accommodate the classroom updates. There are 32 weeks in the Church School year, with five Sundays off during holiday breaks. Our students were excited and fortunate to be able to witness the ordination of Father Samer Hanna in December, among many other events of the year.

We encourage all our families to take advantage of the many online resources available to them, as well as sending children to church school every week. It is only through the support of dedicated people that we are able to teach your children some of the most valuable things they will ever learn. A foundation built on our Holy Orthodox Faith, grounded in Jesus Christ will never crumble. Thanks to all our dedicated, faithful teachers and to Father George and Father Jim for their constant guidance and love. Glory to God for all things!

2023-2024 Church School Teachers:

Preschool and Kindergarten: Mrs. Sabrina Hanna – Saras and Mrs. Nicole Saad

1st and 2nd Grade: Mrs. Abeer Mallouhi and Mrs. Diana Albarchini

3rd –5th Grade: Mrs. Maria Ashkar and Mrs. Rozanna Ansara

6th –8th Grade: Sbn. Michael Pagani and Sbn. Osama Nunu

High School (9th-12th grades): Mr. John Shaheen

Frequent Sub: Lisa Maroun



Greece Pilgrimage

Father Jim was blessed to lead a group of twenty parishioners on a pilgrimage to Greece to “Follow in the Footsteps of St. Paul. They spent two weeks in July visiting sites where St. Paul began his work, including Athens, Kalambaka, Thessaloniki, Kavla, Phillippi, Mount Athos, Kusadasi, Pella, Patmos, Santorini and Crete. While in Thessaloniki, they were met by our iconographer and world-renown artist, Vlassios Tsotsonis. Glory to God for this amazing opportunity!



Ladies Society, Contact: Lynn Katrib, 2024 President Email: lynnt333@hotmail.com

The Basilica of St. Mary Ladies Society held several successful events in 2023, starting with a bake sale in January, which raised \$525.00; a wine tasting event which raised \$15,625.96 in February with 177 people in attendance. In March they held their annual Lenten Lunch, which raised \$2,100. They also participated in Antiochian Women's Month where they volunteered as ushers and epistle readers throughout the month of March. In October they held a fun BINGO night, which sold 179 tickets and raised \$5,357.00. They held their annual Thanksgiving Luncheon in November, and a charity potluck in December, where they generated in \$1,275 grocery gift cards. They also participated in several church events and programs, including the annual festival in August, Christmas decorating for the church, and hosting two events during the visit of Bishop Anthony in December. Thanks to the outgoing board! The new board takes over in February.

Dues and donations made in 2023

\$500 toward a project for Midwest Antiochian Women.

\$200 dues to Midwest Antiochian Women.

A donation of \$5,878.31 was made to the church, leaving an end-of-year balance of \$2,300.



Men's Fellowship, Contact: Sal Afnan • salafan817@gmail.com

2023 was a big year for the Men's Fellowship. It was the first full year of our new leadership team, President Sal Afnan, Vice-President Danny Neda, Treasurer Yarob Fakhouri. With the help and guidance of Haitham Fakhouri the theme of this year was growth, service and organization. In 2023 the Men's Fellowship was proud to become an official ministry within the church and now has a seat on the Parish Council. The year kicked off with the group's first official fundraiser which was a successful and fun Valentines Day party, which helped raise money for the Church. Throughout the year we looked for ways to serve the church and the community. In April our fellowship sponsored and served lunch to the parish after one of the Holy Week Services. In August we volunteered at our annual Dormition Festival. In October we organized a "fall cleaning" day in which we cleaned up a lot of the landscaping to give the church a little more curb appeal. And in December we were able to coordinate and help donate over 100 Christmas presents to children in need throughout Metro-Detroit. Throughout the year we engaged in several fun team-building activities to help strengthen the relationship amongst the men in our group. Some of the events included billiards, axe-throwing and volleyball, but our social events are always highlighted by our annual Detroit Tigers Baseball game outing. This event is specifically designed to bring together our sons, nephews or anyone that we mentor or care for. We feel this bonding experience with our kids will lay the foundation or future generations of men in our fellowship. At its core our group is about strengthening our faith and learning more about what it means to be a Christian. We had several deep spiritual conversations about different important topics. In April, we discussed the importance of Lent and the importance of fasting. In July our resident seminary student, Nicholas Nunu led a discussion about the importance of the role of men in shaping young children's view of the Church as well as living a life worthy of a saint. In November we met for our annual Friendsgiving where Father Jim gave a beautiful candle lit prayer for those suffering in the Middle East and around the world. In December we capped the year off with our Christmas mixer in which we raised Money for ANERA, a charity that specifically helps those suffering in the Middle East. God willing our focus for 2024 will be to continue the growth of our members and the growth of our charitable contributions.



Men's Fellowship, continued



Senior Heritage Fellowship

The members of the Senior Heritage Fellowship continued their monthly luncheons, prepared and donated blankets to those in need during the winter, as well as socks during the winter collection. They held a luncheon for Christmas. Many members of the heritage group are also regular weekly volunteers who prepare our bulletin for mailing. Their hard work and dedication is much appreciated by the church.

Contact: Ayda Mughannem or Aida Kakish



Basilica of St. Mary Montessori Academy (BOSMMA)



Director: Abeer Samaan (*report prepared by Abeer Samaan*)

Mission and Educational Philosophy: At the core of BOSMMA's mission is an unwavering commitment to nurturing the whole child - mind, body, and soul. Our Montessori approach centers around a child-centered philosophy, immersive hands-on learning experiences, vibrant multi-age classrooms, and the cultivation of independence, self-motivation, and essential social skills. All of this is done in a culturally diverse, nurturing, and engaging environment that is infused with an Orthodox faith-based approach.

Academic Achievements: With an enrollment of 75 students, we proudly highlight academic accomplishments. This year, we're continuing our CGS Religious Education class, as well as introducing two new extracurricular classes- Dance, and Arabic. These classes give our students the opportunity to explore different areas of interest and assist in provoking curiosity to different subjects. Our school has also made improvements to the learning environment including energy-efficient lights, revamped flooring, and painting in the activity center. Additionally, our commitment to safety and comfort is evident with the installation of two new furnace units and new fencing.



Service Projects and Community Engagement: BOSMMA remains actively engaged with the community through various service projects, including food drives, pajama drives, a cultural festival, blessing bags, and the St. Jude Trike-a-Thon. These initiatives not only benefit the community but also instill a sense of compassion and social responsibility in our students.

Summer Camp Programs: Our summer camp programs serve children aged 3-12, featuring fun themes and a week of nationally certified STEM programs for grades K-6th.

Board Members and Future Opportunities: We extend our gratitude to our current board members and welcome new members and fresh ideas. If you are interested in joining the school board, please contact the school office for more information.

Staff Appreciation and Enrollment Reminder: Our dedicated staff has played a vital role in BOSMMA's growth. With current enrollment at capacity and a waiting list, we remind parents that enrollment for the 2024-2025 school year will begin in February.

Gratitude and Community Support: We express our heartfelt thanks to everyone who has supported BOSMMA over the years. Your support has allowed our community to grow, and we feel fortunate to be part of such a supportive and loving environment.

Basilica of St. Mary Montessori Academy (BOSMMA), continued



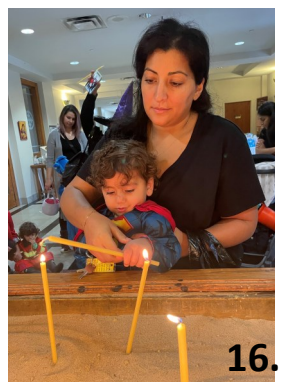
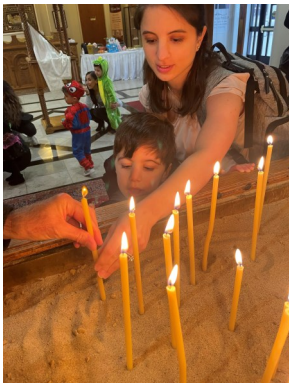
Joy, feeling one's own value, being appreciated, and loved by others, feeling useful and capable of production are all factors of enormous value for the human soul.

~ Maria Montessori.

Mother Toddler Ministry

The Mother Toddler Ministry is one of the longest running ministries of the Basilica. Fr. Jim meets regularly with the children and their mothers (or fathers, grandparents and more) every Wednesday morning to practice the ritual of lighting candles, as well as reading Bible stories, doing crafts, and singing. This year we were able to have our holiday potlucks and field trips visiting the cider mill, park, and water splash pads. The ministry is always welcoming new members, and includes children of all ages.

Contact: Emily Ansara and Grace Qaqish • Email: stmarymtg@gmail.com



Teen SOYO (report prepared by SOYO coordinator, Lillian Youssef)

Officers and Board Leadership: Lillian Youssef, Coordinator; Michael Chahine, President; Anthony Chalhoub, Vice President; Anthony Youssef, Treasurer; Anya Ghannam, Secretary; Juliana Hanna, Marketing; Rafi Hanna, Photography and Media; John Faris and Alex Musharbash, Food Coordinators; Alex Saad, Alternate/Sub

The Teen SOYO at the basilica of St. Mary continues to be one of our parish's most successful ministries. Our program is devoted to helping teens grow in their faith and making strong connections with others. Events are held twice a month and incorporate the following pillars: fellowship, worship, witness, and service. Once a month, we have a mini retreat called a "Teen Talk" which include lessons that are aimed towards helping teens learn more about our faith and any other topics they may aspire to learn about, like societal issues and challenges they may face. Once a month we also have social events where we foster fellowship by going to Airtime, roller skating, having a hafli night, etc. We held one service project in December where we made over 30 blankets for orphans and the homeless. We plan to have at least two more service projects this year, including during Lent. This year SOYO has been expanding tremendously with phenomenal turnouts at each event! We have had new faces each event and have gotten encouraging feedback from them as well. We thank all those who dedicate their time to this program throughout the year.



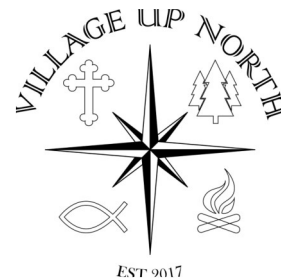
Vacation Church School

Vacation Church School welcomed 60 campers and 15 volunteers for one week in June as they shared important lessons, enjoyed fellowship, and learned about “Shining the Light of Christ,” the theme for the summer. Our Bible verse for the week, which was practiced and memorized by the children was, “I am the light of the world, whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life,” John 8:12. We are so grateful to this year’s co-directors, Nick Nunu and Lisa Maroun, and for the love and dedication of our volunteers, including teens, young adults, parents, and of course our clergy, and more who help make this such an enjoyable and worthwhile program for our children. **Contact: Sonya Kassis • Email: skassis@tbosm.com**



Village Up North

Village Up North celebrated another summer of building confidence and character. Over 80 campers and 45 staff members created an experience that will never be forgotten. Campers enjoyed Christian education, sports, kayaking, tubing, fishing, campfires, skits, music, and learned to pray the Orthodox services under the canopy of the stars and trees. Our camp was granted full accreditation by the American Camp Association in 2023. As our camp continues to grow, many camper alumni are becoming counselors, teachers and leaders. The camp has developed its very own character and signature, built from the ground up by the young people and spirit of St. Mary's. Join us August 12-17, 2024 as we continue to build character, leadership and special bonds that can only be found at Village Up North. Camper registration forms and staff applications are available at www.villageupnorth.com.



Contact: Tom Saba, Camp Director • Email: tom.saba@gmail.com



Young Adult Fellowship

Recognizing the growing need of young adults to stay connected to their faith and one another, a new ministry was established. Young Adult Fellowship (YAF) provides an outlet for Orthodox young adults to continue learning and living their faith in unity. YAF's reach extends beyond just the Basilica, with many participants joining from churches across the Metro Detroit area. The program began in the fall of 2023 with a night of fellowship and an Ask Abouna session. In November, we held an Akathist to St. Nektarios followed by the movie Man of God and a discussion on the saint's life. We kicked off the new year with a crowd favorite, Game Night, and look forward to holding monthly events which encompass various themes of service, fellowship, and prayer moving forward.

