



## ***St. John Chrysostom Church***

A Mission of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America  
[www.stjohngoldenco.org](http://www.stjohngoldenco.org)

Meeting at: Hosanna Lutheran Church  
10304 W. Belleview Ave, Littleton, CO 80127

Fr. Seraphim Gisetti, Pastor

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## **March 2014 SJCC News**

My Joy in the Lord,

We are moving on to the next phase of our parish life!

On March 1 we move in to our own chapel at Hosanna Lutheran Church. Please see the map at the end of the newsletter as well as directions.

The chapel is just another room right now, but we can make it our own. We can hang icons, leave our things there and use it just as we did the space on Golden Rd. We are invited to share in the Coffee Hour hosted by the Lutheran church and it would be nice to host a coffee hour for them as well, but we also have the opportunity to have our own fellowship every Sunday.

Please read with care the articles that I have written in this issue – they are a reflection of some changes that we need to make. We have gotten away from some very basic Christian principles that we need to return to. It will not be easy because, as is usual with life, bad habits are hard to break. But I am sure that if we support one another, we can recover and grow.

With love, in Christ,  
Fr. Seraphim

**A warm welcome from our hosts:**



**Lenten Presanctified Discussions:** I have asked Paul Saieg to lead the discussions this year. Paul received his Masters of Theology from St. Vladimir's Seminary last year and plans on pursuing a doctorate in theology soon – hopefully this year. He will have the discussion notes and material available in time for the first discussion.

### **Some thoughts on the Parish Council**

Being a member of the Parish council is not easy. You give up time for your fellow Christians, time, not only spent in meetings, but in other work during the month. You also give up a certain amount of freedom. Your responsibility is to the Parish. Because you are responsible for the good order of this parish, you need to attend as many services as you can. Your responsibility is to be at the Parish you serve. You, as a servant of the Parish, are expected to set an example. And the example you set – attending, not attending, everything you do – will be a reflection on your service to the community. To be on the Parish Council and be estranged from the community is a contradiction in terms (and life). But without dedication, no parish can survive. Think what it says about a church community if there are 500 members and 10 come to Vespers on a Saturday night, not one of them a Parish Council member. What would you think of them? Would you really think of them as a community?

## **Christians, Corporations, and Voting**

### ***Definition of a Parish***

The function of a parish is to put into local practice the functions of the Church: to provide an environment in which people can work on their salvation – through education, worship and prayer, and the simple fact of community.

Up until the 20<sup>th</sup> century, parish life was simple – it was an organization recognized by governments as something special, outside the purview of government regulations. Governments did interfere in the life of the church but these interferences did not impact the day to day operation of the parish. There was the priest (assigned by the bishop) who was assisted by the elders of the parish. The elders were either elected by the village or town or appointed by the bishop or the priest.

### ***Duties of elders***

Elders saw their responsibility as very direct: to make sure that the local community had a physical location where worship could be conducted, education could occur, and that the community was supported by appropriate clergy.

Voting, when it did occur, was more like a roll call to list those voting in favor. Up until roughly 100 years ago the idea of a split vote or even counting votes for and against was seen as an aberration. The consistent testimony of the fathers is the following: “It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us....”. This does not mean that there were not disagreements between the fathers. All was not sweetness and light; both the lives of St. Athanasius and St. Nicholas mention them striking an opponent during a dispute. But in the end, there was unanimity in the Holy Spirit. Anyone who could not be united left. The rest, whether enthusiastic or not, all agreed to abide by the decisions made. Votes were not to discern differences but to underscore unity.

## ***The rise of corporations***

It was the Russian revolution that changed things in America. For many unfortunate reasons and some good ones, parishes began to incorporate themselves. They became corporations only because they needed legal protection from interference, and the only way to get that protection was by being a non-profit religious corporation. Even 40 years ago, many churches used an older formula and were, legally, associations, rather than corporations. But laws changed and almost every parish in the U.S. is now a corporation. By itself, this not necessarily bad. The legal protections enjoyed by churches as corporations make this move welcome. But the fallout of mentally treating churches like other corporations is spiritually devastating.

In becoming corporations, the idea became prevalent that, like City Councils and civic clubs, parishes voted and the majority “won”. Parishes became clubs rather than really being the Church. Priests became chaplains rather than pastors – in fact even if not in name. This continues in many churches to this day, particularly in the OCA and in the Greek Archdiocese. In part, this is because the laws of the United States and many other countries don't really distinguish between a Christian corporation and a non-Christian one. The same procedures apply to all. As a result, votes are required to be recorded. But what does a vote mean for a Christian?

## ***Voting***

In the secular world, votes are means of recording opinions, but for Christians, votes are, essentially, meaningless. We are expected to know each others opinions before we get to a vote. A Christian meeting in the modern age follows a very simple pattern – we discuss what needs to be done, and when the discussion is over, then someone says, “OK, who is going to make the motion?”. Unlike the secular world, we don't start with a statement of what we want to do, we start by discussing how to meet our needs, and then go to formulating that discussion (establishing a motion). By the time we get to a motion, we already know everyone's opinions on the matter; there is no real need of a vote, since everyone participated and everyone's vision has been articulated. The motion exists only to formulate the consensus that has been already achieved. To then insist on voting against your brothers and sisters in Christ is to insist on your own vision. It is pride which says, “I want my disagreement to be known for posterity because I know I am right and they are wrong”, rather than the humility which says, “I disagree, but I will give you the same rights that God has given me – the right to be wrong”.

This is the crux of why voting yea or nay in the Church is unchristian. If people know our views and don't agree with us, then we have to have the humility to allow them their opinions; and if the parish is in general agreement with an opposing view, then we have an obligation to let them go, even in what we feel is an absolutely wrong direction. After all, we are not talking about something which directly endangers their, or our, salvation; and if we do feel that how the parish operates or spends money endangers our salvation, then we need to dive into the Gospels and learn what is truly important in life.

## ***Going Forward***

With this in mind, I expect that at every meeting from now on, whether Parish Council or Parish, we, every one of us, speak our minds without fear of being belittled or attacked. When it comes to a vote, if we feel we cannot vote in favor, then we should remain silent and abstain rather than vote in opposition to our brothers and sisters. And, after the vote, we either support our brothers and sisters in their decision, or, if we feel that we cannot accept a decision and support them, we need to leave this community and find one which better suits us, like many a Christian before us. The divisiveness and dissension we have had must stop and we must become united with one mind and one voice and in love for each other.

**As we move on, we still need prosphora.** I will be happy to come to your house and bake them with you.....

### **PROSPHORA Baking Schedule**

**REMINDER:** PLEASE make sure that you bring ONE (and only one) prosphora with names for commemoration -this includes both living and departed, if some of the living or departed are not Orthodox, I want them anyway - to church at least the night before the date on which it is due. You can bring it up to three weeks before and we'll freeze it until the date, but don't try to bring it that morning. I usually start the Proskomedie early and need the prosphora to be there. If it's not there by the night before, I will defrost a spare to use. Thank you for your consideration.

#### **March**

03/02 Open  
03/09 Paula Leshinski  
03/16 Jonathan Spencer  
03/23 Christa Bergren  
03/30 Alexandra Gisetti

#### **April**

04/06 Masha Gisetti  
04/13 Parish (Palm Sunday)  
04/20 Parish (Pascha)  
04/27 Open

### **Parishioner Celebrations**

**NOTE: If you don't see your day listed OR see your day listed on the wrong day  
PLEASE let Fr. Seraphim know – as soon as possible**

#### **March**

03/08	Birthday	Claire Emmons
03/10	Birthday	Paula Leshinski
03/13	Namesday	Christine Negreanu
03/15	Birthday	Nickolas Higgins
03/18	Namesday	Eric Jerome
03/19	Birthday	Joseph Mikita
03/19	Birthday	John Rahe
03/20	Namesday	Claire Emmons
03/21	Birthday	Jonathan Spencer
03/26	Namesday	Larissa Spencer
03/28	Birthday	Cody Bergren
03/31	Birthday	Christine Negreanu

#### **April**

04/01	Birthday	Alexandra Gisetti
04/01	Namesday	Masha Gisetti
04/23	Namesday	Alexandra Gisetti
04/23	Namesday	Serena Jerome
04/29	Birthday	Ricky Gomez

## Schedule of Services and Events

### March

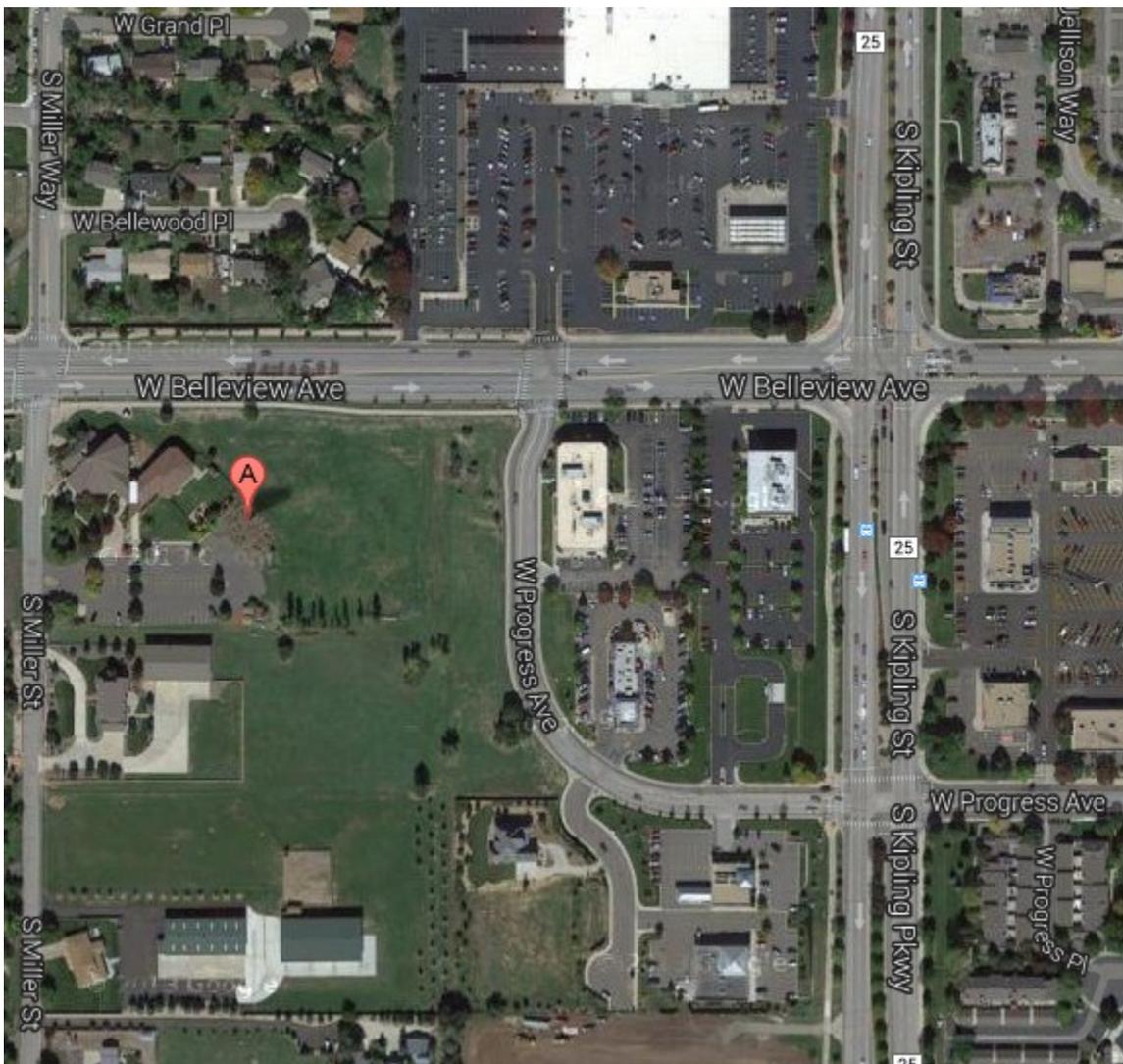
1	Sat	5:00 pm	Vespers
2	Sun	9:00 am	Liturgy    Forgiveness Sunday Vespers of Forgiveness
3	Mon		<i>Great Lent begins</i>
5	Wed	6:30 pm	Presanctified Liturgy, Lenten potluck & discussion
8	Sat	5:00 pm	Vespers
9	Sun	9:00 am	Liturgy    1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent – Triumph of Orthodoxy
12	Wed	6:30 pm	Presanctified Liturgy, Lenten potluck & discussion
15	Sat	5:00 pm	Vespers
16	Sun	9:00 am	Liturgy    2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent – St. Gregory Palamas
19	Wed	6:30 pm	Presanctified Liturgy, Lenten potluck & discussion
22	Sat	5:00 pm	Vespers
23	Sun	9:00 am	Liturgy    3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent – the Cross
25	Tue	6:30 pm	Vesperal Liturgy <b>Annunciation to the Theotokos</b>
26	Wed	6:30 pm	Presanctified Liturgy, Lenten potluck & discussion
29	Sat	5:00 pm	Vespers
30	Sun	9:00 am	Liturgy    4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent – St. John of the Ladder

### April

2	Wed	6:30 pm	Presanctified Liturgy, Lenten potluck & discussion Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete
4	Fri	7:00 pm	Akathist to the Theotokos
5	Sat	5:00 pm	Vespers
6	Sun	9:00 am	Liturgy    5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent – St. Mary of Egypt
9	Wed	6:30 pm	Presanctified Liturgy, Lenten potluck & discussion
12	Sat	5:00 pm	Vespers
13	Sun	9:00 am	Liturgy <b>Palm Sunday</b>
14	Mon	7:00 pm	Bridegroom Matins
16	Wed	7:00 pm	Matins of Holy Thursday and Unction Service
17	Thu	4:00 pm	Vesperal Liturgy of the Last Supper
		7:00 pm	Matins of Holy Friday (12 Gospels)
18	Fri	8:00 am	Royal hours
		3:00 pm	Vespers of Holy Friday (Burial Service)
		7:00 pm	Matins of Holy Saturday (Lamentations)
19	Sat	10:00 am	Vesperal Liturgy of Holy Saturday

		11:30 pm	Nocturne	
		midnight	Procession	
			Paschal Matins	
			Paschal Liturgy	
			Paschal Meal	
20	Sun	noon	Paschal Vespers	
21	Mon	9:00 am	Paschal Liturgy	<b>Bright Monday</b>
26	Sat	5:00 pm	Vespers	
27	Sun	9:00 am	Liturgy	<b>Thomas Sunday</b>

This is the map to Hosanna Lutheran Church 10304 W Belleview Ave, Littleton, CO 80127. There is a light at Miller, on Belleview as well as a light at Progress. See directions below



This is the entrance we will use, it has direct access from the parking lot – follow the hall to your right after you walk in the doors.



**Directions:**

From I-70 and Arvada: take C470 South/East to Quincy/Bellevue, turn left to round-about, go left again (East) on Bellevue past Simms to Miller.

From I-25 and South: take C-470 to Bowles, go right to Simms, turn left, go to Bellevue, turn right, go to Miller

From US 6 and Denver: Take the Kipling exit SOUTH. Go to Bellevue, turn right, go two blocks, turn left onto Miller.

Hosanna Lutheran Church is on the SE corner of Bellevue and Miller