

The Bells of St. George

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August 2008

Dear brothers and sisters,

When we switched the newsletter publication schedule to a bi-monthly format, it has cut our printing costs in half, but also may have created some unintended confusion. For example, it is now in July that we're putting out the issue for August and September, which means we need to start publishing information about the upcoming Church School year when I'm sure all things regarding school are still far from people's minds.

Nevertheless, we are looking forward to an exciting Church School year, not just in our parish but in the pan-Orthodox community of the Shenango Valley. The clergy are currently discussing and planning a pan-Orthodox Teen Youth group, to meet on a regular basis throughout the year. Although our Clergy Brotherhood has not worked out all of the details as of yet, (as president I have called a meeting for the end of July), what I can announce is that we will be scheduling a meeting for parents to be held sometime in August, so that beginning in September we will begin holding youth sessions, rotating from one church to the other. It is a chance to, first of all, to learn about our Orthodox faith, but also for our children to get to know other Orthodox teens from neighboring churches. Brought to our attention in the past was the fact that some of our children's classmates are Orthodox, yet the students had no idea they were of the same faith. We're hoping to form a nice size group of teens that will meet regularly for classes and other group activities, at least twice a month. More details will be given parents in the weeks to come.

In addition to our regular Church School program we are also hoping to have a few religious talks for adults in the fall. Classes will tentatively be held once a month, the first Tuesday evening of the month, based on the interest shown. So if you'd like to take part in this please see me. And finally, as I have been asked in the past about Serbian lessons, I would like to organize classes this coming fall, whether that be for children or adults. Once again, if you are interested in either teaching or attending, please let me know.

Fall is just around the corner and before you know it we'll be seeing more and more school buses going up and down the street, leaves falling, temperatures dropping, leading to the cold of winter. But, to me, I see this as an energetic time, a time for a new start. As we get ready for the new school year, we're buying new clothes, supplies for our children, etc. and can see the anticipation of a new year in their bright faces. Some historians say that it wasn't always like that. Long ago, in American rural areas, children went to school from December to March and then mid-May to August. They stayed with their parents in the spring and fall to help with the planting and the harvesting. In the big cities in the 1800s, on the other hand, immigrant parents that worked in the factories kept their kids in school for 11 months out of the year. And yet another historical source states that church schools [in Russia] always began in September because that is the church new year and over time all other educational establishments followed suit.

Regardless, may this coming fall be a rejuvenating start to our Church School programs and a renewed commitment to our individual quests for deeper understanding and the strengthening our faith.

In Christ,

Fr. Milovan

News *from the* Parish

Throughout the month of June and into July some of you might have noticed the work that has been underway on the dome of our church. There has, indeed, been a considerable amount of repair done to the roof. Though not completely done, you'll notice the new, brighter shade of yellow on the dome which we are expecting to soon be applied to the other, smaller dome and accent areas. Also, the shingles will be replaced, the cross on the church is being repaired and should be returned shortly and the church interior is going to be repainted. In other words, there is still much to be done! Every month we have a second collection during the Divine Liturgy which goes towards the cost of this construction. On behalf of all the members of the church board I'd like to thank everyone for all of your donations and continued support. Some might remember that in the spring we started a pledge drive to go towards these costs. Since we have been asked regarding the progress of this drive in this issue we are publishing the complete list of names and donations.

We've received donations to help defray the repair costs from parishioners as well as church organizations. This includes our Men's Club which held their annual Golf Scramble in July. With different things going on at the same time, this year's scramble was not as big as ones in the past, yet it was still quite successful. Most of its success is through the hard work of Ed and Francine Fabian who had been running around getting sponsorships, ads, and everything else prepared for the big day. Thankfully, the forecasted rain was late in arrival and the golfers enjoyed beautiful weather. Ed Fabian, chairperson for the event, would like to thank the following people for their hard work, whether it