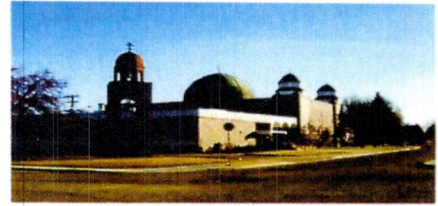


ST. ANDREW'S UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX SOBOR PARISH

9831 - 75 STREET
EDMONTON, ALBERTA
CANADA T6A 2Y8



Христос народився! Славимо Його! Christ is born! Let us glorify Him!

Слава Ісусу Христу! Слава навіки! Glory to Jesus Christ! His glory forever!

Слава Україні! Героям Слава! Glory to Ukraine! Glory to the heroes!

February 2, 2025

Dear Honorary Members, Members, Associate Members, and Friends of the Parish,

On behalf of the Board of Management, I greet you with this third letter since the Parish's 2024 Annual General Meeting. It remains a privilege to share with you this update of our Parish. I hope and pray that you remain in reasonable if not good health and fortune since my last communication with you.

His Eminence +Ilarion, Archbishop of Winnipeg and the Central Eparchy, Metropolitan of Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada and our parish priest Fr. Yuriy Suchevan continue to pray for the safety, health, and well-being of you and your families. It is asked that you pray not only for the safety, health, and well-being of them and their families, but also may God grant them strength and wisdom to guide our UOCC and our Parish.

In this letter we provide information regarding:

1. **His Eminence Metropolitan Ilarion Leads us in Prayer on December 1, 2024**
2. **Christmas Celebrations at our Parish**
3. **Pastoral Care from Fr. Yuriy**
4. **2025 Annual General Meeting**
5. **Deferral of Construction Projects to 2025**
6. **Continued Donation Appeal for the Failed Atrium HVAC Unit**
7. **Alberta Ukrainian Self-Reliance League Requesting Assistance to Work a Casino**
8. **Update to UCC-APC Groups using our Facility**
9. **APC Pictorial Directory – Update**
10. **St. Andrew's Ladies' Auxiliary Easter Bake Sale – April 5, 2025**
11. **Sobor XXV**
12. **About St. Andrew's Mens Club – Article Contributed by President Dr. Ernest Skakun**
13. **St. Andrew's Men's Club bingo schedule – please consider volunteering**
14. **Our Parish Website – Suggestions**
15. **Conclusion**

His Eminence Metropolitan Ilarion Leads us in Prayer on December 1, 2024

On the occasion of our Patron Saint Day, His Eminence Metropolitan Ilarion led us in prayer celebrating the Divine Liturgy with us. This celebration occurred on December 1, 2024, the first time that our Patron Saint Day was celebrated according to the Revised Julian Calendar. Joining His Eminence were Right Reverend Protopresbyter Fr. Victor Lakusta, our Parish Priest Reverend Fr. Yuriy Suchevan, and Reverend Fr. Protodeacon Yaroslav Boychuk. Special guests attending included Dobr. Marusia Lakusta and Marshall (president of St. John's Cathedral) and June Kachmar.

A wonderful and delicious luncheon was provided by the Ladies Auxiliary members, prepared by Kathy Buchanan and Mickey Samycia.

Refer to a few pictures of the celebration on our webpage - <https://uocc-standrew.ca/>

Christmas Season Celebrations at our Parish

2024 marked the first year that our Parish celebrated the entire Christmas season around December 24 and 25. How was it for you?

Personally, I enjoyed and welcomed it because we celebrated the birth of Christ at the same time as most other Christians! Yes, we had to figure out new routines around Christmas Eve supper location and gift giving and all that other family stuff. The fact that we celebrated this joyous occasion together with other Christians easily surpasses all of the family habits that had to be re-organized! Also personally, I prefer midnight Christmas services to morning Christmas services, and for the second year in a row attended Divine Liturgy at our sister Parish of St. Anthony. Always nice to experience something new.

I welcome you to share your personal experiences – please write me an email that I can share anonymously with our members.

Pastoral Care from Fr. Yuriy

Unfortunately, Fr. Yuriy does not always get notification of the need to provide pastoral care to some of our members and friends being hospitalized or their loved ones falling asleep in the Lord. I encourage each and everyone of you to call Fr. Yuriy and request this Pastoral Care if it is needed by you, by a friend, or by a Parish member. Simply ask your friends and acquaintances if they would like to receive a call from Fr. Yuriy to come and visit and say a prayer. You will never know if Pastoral Care is desired or needed by others unless you ask them.

Fr. Yuriy's mobile is (780) 885-8143 and his email address is ysuchevan@gmail.com. He will welcome your contact.

2025 Annual General Meeting

In early March 2025 we will be holding our Annual General Meeting (AGM). The exact date will be announced with an official notification as we get closer to the meeting date. The AGM will be the election of the people to form the Board of Management to manage the issues of the Parish for the next year, set minimum donation levels, set the Financial Review Committee membership, etc.

In 2024 the Board limped along without a Vice President and a Secretary – not great. My most previous letter to you describes these positions' roles and responsibilities. Please refer to that letter to see how your skills fit with the listed roles and responsibilities. If you no longer have that letter or want information of other positions, please contact me. I encourage you to "step up" and volunteer to fill one of the vacant or a different position within the Board of Management. It is really everyone's responsibility to work for their church.

The petition from the Divine Liturgy states, "... we pray for those who ... do good works in this holy temple...", and as the cliché states, "many hands make light work!"

Any volunteers can contact me by email (mjz@telus.net), or by my mobile (780-660-0789).

Deferred Construction Projects to 2025

Described at the Special General Meeting held on December 15, 2024, the Board decided to defer all major construction projects budgeted in 2024 into 2025. Those delayed projects include: painting the exterior fascia

and lower white walls of the Cultural Hall, painting the interior of the facility (not including the church), rekeying interior doors, replacing the Atrium HVAC unit, and hiring a consultant to suggest kitchen improvements.

In order to assist us financially with the cost of the projects, we applied for the Community Facility Enhancement Program (CFEP) grant of the Alberta Government. If awarded, the CFEP will grant us up to 50% of the project's cost. However, a condition stipulates that no money could be spent on the projects before the grant application was reviewed and awarded.

We expect to receive award of the grant in March 2025.

Continued Donation Appeal for the Failed Atrium HVAC unit

We thank members and organizations who have already donated toward the replacement of the failed Atrium heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC) unit. To the end of December 31, 2024, we collected \$8600! However, more donations are needed because the unit is expected to cost \$41,850. Amount collected so far is only 21% of the total cost expected.

We appeal to you to make a special donation (over and above what you would usually give to the Parish) toward the replacement of this unit. Simply write on your donation envelop and your cheque a note indicating "ATRIUM HVAC REPLACEMENT" and all monies received will go specifically toward the replacement of the rooftop unit.

We thank you in advance for your donations toward this necessary project.

Alberta Ukrainian Self-Reliance League Requesting Assistance to Work a Casino

We warmly thank the Alberta Ukrainian Self-Reliance League (AUSRL) for their donation in the amount of \$5000 toward the Atrium HVAC Replacement! And, we plan on requesting for an additional donation in the upcoming year.

They requested that some of our Parish membership and friends volunteer their time to work a Casino. As of January 30, they were still looking for volunteers to work at the following times:

Thurs March 6: Evening - 2 cashier, 1 chip runner

Fri March 7: Evening - 1 chip runner and 2 countroom

To show our appreciation to the AUSRL for their donation already made (and hopefully another one to come in the near future) to our Parish, please contact Vivianne Kruhlak directly if you can volunteer – her email address is vkruhlak@gmail.com.

For those unfamiliar, the AUSRL is the parent organization for ladies, men and youth associated with the UOCC in Alberta. Our Ladies' Auxiliary and Edmonton TYC (Товариство Українців Самостійників в Канаді - of which I am a member) are under AUSRL. And, it is the organization under which CYMK (Союз Української Молоді в Канаді - Canadian Ukrainian Youth Organization of which I was a member when I was a youth) falls, too.

A quote from their website (<https://ausrl.ca/>):

Alberta Ukrainian Self-Reliance League (also referred to as "AUSRL") is a "Not for Profit Society" in the Province of Alberta and is a Service Organization of the Ukrainian Self-Reliance League of Canada.

The primary objectives of AUSRL are:

- To support the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada in its promotion of Christian Fellowship and enhancement of the Ukrainian Orthodox Faith.*

- *To support the perpetuation and growth of the Ukrainian Heritage in Alberta through the activities of its component and related organizations.*
- *To facilitate for all Albertans the education, instruction, training and research in areas of Canadian history, cultural heritage and cultural diversity.*
- *To become well informed as to the activities of registered Canadian charitable organizations, foundations and not for profit organizations and to assist morally, physically and or financially those requesting help and having objects consistent with the objects of the AUSRL.*

Update to UCC-APC Groups using our Facility

We are pleased that our facility is being used in support to newly arrived Ukrainians.

Our Parish continues to provide meeting space to the Support Group for newly arrived Ukrainians offered in conjunction with the UCC-APC. Their preferred location to meet is the "wonderful atrium." I imagine it is because of the greenery there. I'm glad we have it for them to use!

In my understanding, the importance of the Support Group cannot be overestimated! I listen to a podcast called "Ukraine - The Latest" - a UK based group of reporters who use the podcast to report on the war in Ukraine every weekday. In a particular episode was an interview with one person who lived in Mariupol' and worked in its theatre (and was displaced from that city when it was destroyed during the early part of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation) - this person described how she attended support group sessions as a way to help cope with the effects of the war on her mental state. If our Parish can provide a location where some newly arrived Ukrainians meet to help cope with their experiences, then it is well worth it!

The UCC-APC is planning a third session of English Language Classes for newly arrived Ukrainians starting near the end of February 2025. Watch for announcements in church, posters pinned on the bulletin boards, and an email with more information.

APC Pictorial Directory – Update

Kathy Buchanan is chairing the Committee to organize the Pictorial Directory photo sessions. She will need assistance and ask that you consider volunteering in this regard. For those unfamiliar, every 5 years or so (at our Parish's request), the company APC has published a pictorial directory of the Parish membership. Published years include: 1998, 2003, 2008, 2014, and 2019.

To participate, Parish members schedule an appointment to come to the Parish and have photos taken of their family in a temporary 'photo studio' set up in a classroom. APC then produces a membership booklet and a large board containing all photos (an example is present in the Atrium currently). You will receive a personal copy of the membership booklet free of charge. There is opportunity to order family photos for a fee.

The tentative dates for the photo sessions will be March 6, 7, and 8, 2025. Please plan on coming to the Parish and have your photos taken. Stay tuned for more information.

St. Andrew's Ladies' Auxiliary Easter Bake Sale – April 5, 2025

St. Andrew's Ladies' Auxiliary annual Easter Bake Sale is being held on April 5, 2025. See the attached poster. Please support our Ladies' Auxiliary.

For those willing to contribute baking, or your time and efforts, please contact Vivian Skakun directly at 780-434-0543 to see how you can be of assistance.

XXV Sobor of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada

July 9-13, 2025 is the XXV Sobor of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada (UOCC) in Winnipeg. Information about the Sobor is posted on the UOCC webpage (<https://www.uocc.ca/24th-sobor-of-the-ukrainian-orthodox-church-of-canada/>). A copy of this information is also attached. More information will be shared with you as it becomes available.

It is important that we attend the Sobor and show the spiritual leader of our UOCC, His Eminence Ilarion that we support him. Some UOCC members from across Canada do not support His Eminence and our presence will help counteract that lack of support. Please consider attending Sobor. I plan on attending.

About St. Andrew's Mens Club – Article Contributed by President Dr. Ernest Skakun

St. Andrew's Mens Club (SAMC) – who we are, what we do, and a plea.

SAMC is a Not-for-Profit Society incorporated under the Province of Alberta Societies Act, operating at arm's length of St. Andrew's Ukrainian Orthodox Sobor Parish. SAMC was set up in this manner so as to enable it to co-ordinate and provide personnel / volunteers for a broad range of fund-raising activities including "gaming" events such as bingos and casinos.

Funds derived from bingos and casinos are essentially held "in trust" by SAMC to be used to support the "community". The use of proceeds from Alberta Liquor and Cannabis Board (ALGC) must be in accordance with ALGC "approved" guidelines up to certain limits (\$5,000.00) and larger amounts must be preapproved. The funds are and have been used to provide annual financial assistance to youth camps such as Bar-V-Nok and Kiev's-Ki-Hi, to social care agencies (Women Shelter, CASA Child, Adolescent, and Family Mental Health), Red Cross in support of disasters such as fires in Jasper and Fort McMurray and floods in BC, and to Ukrainian Canadian Congress-Alberta Provincial Council and Canada Ukraine Foundation in support of Ukrainians arriving and settling in Alberta as a result of the war in Ukraine. By far, the largest donations are made to St. Andrew's Ukrainian Orthodox Sobor Parish for capital projects and to the Educational and Cultural Program. Typically, about 60% of all funds dispersed by SAMC go directly to the Parish or paid on behalf of the Parish. For the period 2013 – 2019, donations totalled \$567,675.00. Major capital projects in this period included the replacement of the cultural building and church roofs – costs that were shared jointly by the Parish, SAMC, and Government of Alberta Community Grants. Over the past 4 years, SAMC has donated \$260,000.00 to the Parish.

It is only fitting that a larger proportion of the proceeds from bingos and casinos be donated to the Parish since the staffing requirements for them are largely members of St. Andrew's Parish. It is impossible for SAMC to fill the staffing requirements only from its active membership of about 15 members. There are some inactive members who for a variety of reasons are unable to work bingos and casinos or to attend meetings and events. Each of the 19 Bingo events requires 12 volunteers and each Casino event requires 36 positions over the course of two days. The SAMC Board is very grateful and thankful to the Parish members and community volunteers who have helped and continue to help. However, the Bingo and Casino chairpersons have to rely increasingly on volunteers not affiliated with SAMC or St. Andrew's Parish to fill the rosters. In order for SAMC to continue to conduct Bingos and Casinos more volunteers are needed. Simply put, more volunteers are required if the Bingos and Casinos are to be sustained.

Unlike some of the other Ukrainian Orthodox parishes, where on being accepted as a male member of a parish, one automatically becomes a member of the "Mens Club", such is not the case with SAMC. Any male person over the age of 18 years who is of or sympathetic to the Orthodox faith may become a member. All male members of St. Andrew's Parish are encouraged to become active SAMC members. To learn more about becoming a member of SAMC, contact Terry Kushniruk, membership chair at 780-466-6670 or by email at faithaviation@telus.net.

Further information about the SAMC can be obtained from the Parish website uocc-standrew.ca by clicking on Organizations or by contacting the president, Ernest Skakun at 780-434-0543 or by email at BLUEMALVA@shaw.ca.

St. Andrew's Mens Club Bingo Schedule – Please Consider Volunteering

On behalf of the St. Andrew's Men's Club, Gordon Ostapchuk requests assistance from Parish members or their friends or family by volunteering to work at bingos for this 2024-25 season. Proceeds from the bingos are earned by the volunteers and are given to the Men's Club. It's from those monies that the Men's Club donates to our Parish. The Men's Club has been a significant donor to our Parish in the past. The volunteer work is easy, will be explained to you, and quickly comprehended. You will not be given hard tasks!

A partial schedule of Bingo dates is shown on the Parish website "Home" page and is displayed at the Parish bulletin boards. Upcoming events are:

- February 13, 2025
- March 12, 2025
- March 21, 2025

All events commence at 10:30am at Parkway bingo, located at 8775 51 Ave NW.

Please consider volunteering – please contact Gordon Ostapchuk @ 780-463-0454. Your assistance is appreciated, and your efforts go toward our Parish.

Our Parish Website – Suggestions

How is our website? Do you have suggestions to make it better? Please email me volunteering to review and come up with suggestions to improve it. If there are enough volunteers, a committee may be considered.

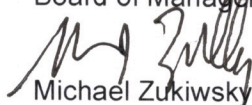
Conclusion

Do you have activities that positively affect our Parish members and friends? Do you want them advertised? If so, please send me a written article that I can "cut and paste" into this letter space. This letter is sent out to Parish members and friends and is intended to provide information about what is happening in our Parish community. Your input is valuable!

If you have any questions regarding this update or otherwise, please call me on my cell (780) 660-0789 or email me at mjz@telus.net or call and leave a message on the office line (780) 469-1729 or send an email to info@uocc-standrew.ca.

Yours truly,

Board of Management President, St. Andrew's Ukrainian Orthodox Sobor Parish



Michael Zukiwsky