



ST. PETER AND PAUL
UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Very Reverend Vasile Colopelnic, Pastor

136 Washington Street
Auburn, NY 13021
315-252-5573
peterpaulucc@gmail.com
www.peterandpaulukr.com

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“Sanctify those who love the beauty of Your house...” Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

Dear parishioners and friends of our church,

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Thirteen years ago, this month, I arrived in Auburn, NY as the newly assigned pastor to this historic parish of Saints Peter and Paul. Over these past thirteen years, we have come together to accomplish remarkable things—transforming our church and its property into a visible sign that our community knows how to care for itself. This transformation wasn’t without difficulties – yet our parish’s resilience helped us push forward. We may not be a large parish, but we are vibrant and faithful!

Spiritually, we have continued to grow—just as past generations did when faced with their own challenges. We live in a time when many are hesitant to be actively involved in church life, yet we continue to gather each week for the Divine Liturgy, offering our prayers and gratitude to God for the blessings He so generously bestows upon us.

Materially, we have made our church and surrounding premises a warm and welcoming place for everyone. From purchasing the land behind the church and expanding the parking lot, to installing an accessibility lift and replacing the front steps—each of these projects, and many others in between, were made possible through your generous donations and prayers. We revived our annual summer festival, now regionally known and admired as a beautiful celebration of our Ukrainian-American heritage. Our parish has also played a key role in welcoming and helping resettle many Ukrainian refugee families—thanks to the support of the greater Auburn community.

We now find ourselves approaching a historic milestone. **In 2026, we celebrate the 125th anniversary of our parish’s founding.**

We can only imagine the struggles and sorrows of our forefathers who left behind their country to come to this new world. And we can only reflect on the sacrifices they made to build a life and community here. But we can experience anew the joy they surely felt when Bishop Soter Ortynsky, of blessed memory, came to Auburn to consecrate the very church we have today. We can feel the pride they felt to have a church of their own rite and language. And we surely can relive the comfort they felt in having a spiritual refuge for themselves and their children. What a priceless gift our founders left us!

Now it is our time! To honor their legacy! To cement our place in this history! And to preserve this parish for our children and the generations to come! Over the next year we will prepare to joyously celebrate this 125th Jubilee. Our efforts will be focused in two areas: a **spiritual renewal** and **capital renovation**.

Spiritual Renewal

We have an opportune moment to reflect, give thanks for God's blessings and look to the future with hope. Our world is uncertain, but one thing remains constant: with Jesus Christ and through his Church, we can live dignified lives and be assured of our hope in His eternal kingdom. So, I propose a challenge to us all: let us be "*fishers of men*" and invite **25 new families** or individuals to join our loving community. We are called to be disciples of our Lord, sharing His truth and joy with others. Will you take up this call? And for those who may not have been to church in a while: our doors, arms and hearts are wide open to welcome you back!

Capital Renovation

Central to this 125th Jubilee is the physical renovation of our beloved church building. With this letter, I humbly begin my appeal for your generous financial support. I encourage each of you to support according to your means - whether through a one-time donation, ongoing weekly contributions, or sponsorship of specific projects. Our work to restore our church's integrity and preserve its beauty will happen in the following three phases;

Phase 1, Exterior: *replace roof, repair masonry/pointing, restore mosaics, install lightning rods, etc.*

Phase 2, Interior: *repaint interior, restore historic iconostasis & icons, replace flooring, etc.*

Phase 3, Beautification: *new icons on choir loft, new candle stands, new electronic carillon, etc.*

The **total estimated cost** of these renovations **\$425,000**.

As many of you have already seen, we've completed the first two major projects of Phase 1: the professional *replacement of the church roof* over three weeks in July and August. Please visit our website to see amazing before-and-after photos! The cost of this work was **\$106,575**. In addition, we completed the installation of a *Lightning Protection System* at a cost of **\$19,384**.

I am deeply grateful for your generosity thus far. I know that, with continued support, we will recover these costs and reach our overall goal. *Brick pointing repairs* are planned for next spring. During the winter, we will begin focusing on the *interior repainting*, and I am currently working out the project details.

Mark Your Calendar

With God's help and your support, we will continue working through these three renovation phases over the coming year. On **October 11, 2026**, we will celebrate this momentous occasion with a **Hierarchal Divine Liturgy**, celebrated by **His Excellency, Bishop Paul Chomnycky, Bishop of Stamford**, followed by a joyful reception at **The Lodge in Skaneateles, NY** (more details to come). **Please save this date and plan to join us!**

Let us come together, united in faith and love, to accomplish these noble goals! You will receive additional letters with updates throughout the renovation phases.

May the good Lord bless each of you for your efforts, your generosity, and your continued love for our parish.

Yours in Christ,

Father Vasile Colopelnic

P.S. If you plan to mail in a check, please include 125th Jubilee Renovation in the memo. You can also bring your donation directly to the church. We welcome online donations as well but encourage donating larger amounts (over \$250) by check or cash to avoid transaction fees. Thank you and God bless!