

## PARISH TIMELINE - PROPOSED DRAFT

*Presented to the parish council on 11-13-2014*

1. 1905 - Fr. Nicola Yanney performs first baptisms in Sioux City of the Syrian Diocese of the Russian Church.
2. 1916 - A Syrian Benevolent Society is founded in Sioux City. These societies were social clubs aimed at the establishment of a local Orthodox church and—in the case of St. Thomas—the establishment of a parish cemetery. Thereafter, a church building was purchased on 6<sup>th</sup> and Iowa Streets. Just a few years later (in 1918), the benevolent society relocated to 8<sup>th</sup> and Iowa.
3. 1927 - A cemetery bearing the parish name is established next to Graceland Cemetery.
4. 1928 - The St. Thomas Ladies Club is established.
5. 1930 - After years of part-time spiritual care, Fr. Michael Yanney is assigned as our first pastor. He serves the community for no less than 33 years—the longest tenure of any priest to date.
6. 1935 - Parish hosts its first Syrian-Lebanese Dinner. In time, this dinner would become famous throughout all of Siouxland.
7. 1940 - St. Thomas becomes the first Orthodox parish in the Archdiocese—possibly in all of American Orthodoxy—to establish an English-language choir.
8. 1952 - The current church building was dedicated (11<sup>th</sup> and Jones).
9. 1976 - The facilities were expanded to include Sunday School rooms, a board room, a pastor's office, and a new kitchen.
10. 1980 - Holy Resurrection Russian Orthodox Church closed its doors. The addition of several families of Slavic heritage transformed St. Thomas into a pan-Orthodox Church.
11. 1984 - The parish adopts a new constitution. This new document greatly expanded the role of women within the life of the church. Women are allowed to serve on the parish council for the first time in nearly seven decades. Furthermore, the constitution dictates that the president of the Ladies Club is an ex officio member of the parish council.
12. 1996 - The formerly white walls of the church interior became filled with beautiful, Byzantine icons. Although most of the icons would be completed within the next decade, some work is left to be done.
13. 2012 - Present - Long-neglected maintenance items were addressed in record time. Several renovations were made to make the facilities more accommodating to children and young parents including a full renovation of the nursery and the addition of the Metropolitan Philip play area in the parish hall. With the hiring of iconographer, Khouriya Erin Kimmet, St. Thomas Church can look forward to a completion of the iconographic program by its centennial in 2016.