



## St. Raphael of Brooklyn Antiochian Orthodox Christian Mission

Metropolitan SABA, Primate; Bishop ANTHONY, Auxiliary Bishop of Toledo and the Midwest  
Father Symeon Kees, Pastor

722 E. College St., Iowa City, IA 52240; Tel. (319) 337-6784  
<http://www.raphaelchurch.org> [onesymeon@gmail.com](mailto:onesymeon@gmail.com)

March 18, 2024

Dear members and friends of St. Raphael Orthodox Church,

We wanted to give you an update on our progress toward completing the kitchen in our historic building. As you know, last fall we contracted with Alan Weiskamp of Studio Intrigue Architects and Keith Duster of S.I. Construction Management to design and build our kitchen. We spent the winter months working out details with Alan and Keith, and at the beginning of March, they had a final bid ready for us to review.

The bid came in at \$97,000. We all about fell over.

Since this was \$43,000 over our fundraised amount of \$54,000 – an amount we'd been told last fall was a reasonable budget for this project – we went back to Keith to see what could be done to bring the project more in alignment with our available funding. Keith worked quickly to identify aspects of the project that could be scaled back (e.g. simpler countertops, different flooring), put off until later (e.g. the rolldown serve-out window cover), or done by us instead of them (e.g. cleaning). They also worked to find a different subcontractor for one aspect of the work that they thought had been overbid, and (God bless them!) reduced their construction management fee.

Within a week, Keith came back with a bid that was much closer to what we were expecting: the bid now stands at \$64,340.

With Fr. Symeon's blessing, the Parish Council has decided to proceed with the build at this time, but that means **we need your help to raise the last \$10,000 that will bring this project to a close**. During this Lenten season of increased almsgiving, can you help us meet our goal?

We ask that gifts for this appeal be given with the understanding that funds not used to complete the kitchen project will be designated for other building maintenance and improvements at the parish council's discretion. We are asking for this freedom since the final project expenses won't be determined until completion (i.e. the bid includes a contingency to cover unexpected expenses that may or may not be needed).

We also remind those who pledged towards this project during the original campaign to fulfill their pledges. Our project relies on fulfillment of these commitments to God in order to complete the kitchen.

We are so excited to see our completed kitchen in just a few weeks! Thank you for your generosity. If you ever have questions, please feel free to contact any one of us.

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*Loving God above all, and being sent to serve Him among the least brethren, like an apostle thou didst offer prayers day and night for their salvation. As a self-proclaimed Syro-Arab by birth, Greek by education, American by residence, Russian at heart and Slav in soul, thou didst minister to all, teaching the Orthodox in the New World to proclaim with one voice: Alleluia.*

**St. Raphael of Brooklyn, 1860-1915**

May God bless you!

In Christ,

the St. Raphael Kitchen Committee

Fr. Symeon Kees

Austin Collins

Karen Kuntz

Becky Morey

Alli Rockwell