

❧ PAIDEIA 2027 ❧
CALL FOR PAPERS

We are pleased to announce the fifth annual meeting of **PAIDEIA: A Society for Orthodox Thought and Culture**. The name PAIDEIA derives from the ancient Greek word meaning “education,” “learning,” and most importantly “culture,” as is suggested by its derivation from the Latin *cultus*, or community of worship. We believe that culture in its broadest sense—shaping our experience of space, time, meaning, and reality itself—ultimately derives from *worship* or the practice of religion, as was the case in ancient Greece, in the Christian civilization of late antiquity and the Middle Ages, and within traditional cultures generally. Modern secular culture has instead substituted foundations that are inadequate for the true needs of the human soul and a life-giving relationship with God. We believe that Orthodox Christianity stands in a unique position to lead in the retrieval and revitalization of Christian *paideia* through remaining steadfastly rooted in the ancient teachings, liturgies, and ascetic practices of the Church.

The theme of this year’s conference is ***Wisdom, Human and Divine***. Wisdom occupies a somewhat ambiguous place in Christian thought. St. Paul speaks of how “God has made foolish the wisdom of this world” and “the foolishness of God is wiser than men.” Within Orthodoxy, the Fools for Christ offer a vivid reminder of the vanity of merely human wisdom. Yet in the same passage, St. Paul goes on to point to a higher divine wisdom: “we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory.” Many saints and monastic elders have exhibited such divine wisdom, not only in their teaching but in the purity and holiness of their lives.

The conference will seek to explore the nature of human and divine wisdom, their relationship, and the role they should play in our lives. Some possible topics include:

- What can we learn from the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament? How should this literature be read in light of the identification of Christ as “the wisdom of God and the power of God” (I Cor. 1:24)?
- How has wisdom been understood within the Orthodox tradition, including the teaching of the Fathers, iconography, and the lives of the saints?
- What can we learn from the lives of the Fools for Christ?
- What is the enduring value of the Russian sophiologival tradition?
- What is the place of wisdom in the modern world, and what are the unique insights that Orthodoxy can contribute?
- How should we seek wisdom in our own lives?

As usual, the theme is intended to be suggestive rather than restrictive, aiming to focus our attention on a common subject matter. Contributions dealing with other aspects of Orthodox thought and culture are welcome.

The meeting will take place on **Tuesday, May 25 through Friday morning, May 28, 2027** at Antiochian Village in the Laurel Mountains of Pennsylvania. The normal paper length will be 25-30 minutes reading time, followed by 15-20 minutes for discussion. Proposals for longer sessions featuring multiple papers on a common theme are also welcome. There will be two plenary keynote speakers, who will be announced soon; and of course, we welcome those wishing to participate in the conference without presenting a paper. Each evening will conclude with a reception featuring complimentary food and drink.

Room and board at Antiochian Village are remarkably affordable, about \$500 for a single and \$400 per person for a double room for three days, including eight meals from dinner on Tuesday to brunch on

Friday. Fees will be pro-rated for shorter stays. The towns of Ligonier and Latrobe are nearby for those wishing to procure their own accommodations and dining. The normal conference fee is \$100.00, reduced to \$50.00 for seminarians, monastics, and others with limited funding. (A discount code for this purpose will be distributed later.) A link to register will be available soon at <https://www.antiochianvillage.org> and <https://www.paideiasociety.org>.

Paper proposals of 100-200 words should be submitted to foltzbv@eckerd.edu, david.bradshaw@uky.edu, and david.ford@stots.edu by **February 1, 2027**.

We look forward to seeing you in May. And we urge you to share this Call for Papers with friends who may be interested.

In the spirit of Orthodox fellowship,

Seraphim Foltz
David Bradshaw
David & Mary Ford

for *PAIDEIA Conveners*:

David Bradshaw, Bruce (Seraphim) Foltz, David & Mary Ford, Fr. Chad Hatfield, Fr. Hans Jacobse, Mary Lowell, Dcn. Sampson (Ryan) Nash, and Fr. Paul Siewers