

❖ PAIDEIA 2026 ❖
CALL FOR PAPERS

We are pleased to announce the fourth annual meeting of the PAIDEIA Society, a community of Orthodox Christian scholars, clergy, monastics, and laity. Its name, “*PAIDEIA*,” derives from the Ancient Greek word meaning “education,” “learning,” and most importantly “*culture*” as powerfully formative, 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 the Ancient Greek *Paideia*, in the Christian Civilization of Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, and indeed within traditional cultures everywhere. Modernized forms of Christianity, however, have instead substituted secular foundations that are often inadequate for sustaining the rich and vibrant culture needed to articulate our faith. 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.

Our theme this year is “*Orthodoxy Speaks to the Human Heart.*” As usual, the theme is intended to be suggestive rather than prohibitory, aiming to focus us upon a common subject matter. A sketch of this theme follows:

One of the challenges facing Orthodox Christians in a modern secular culture is that of explaining the appeal of Orthodoxy. Many factors can be, and often are, cited: the deep historical roots of Orthodoxy, the truth of its dogma, the beauty of its worship, the profundity of its spiritual teachings, the compelling example of its saints and monastic elders, the robust power of its spiritual practices. The questions we wish to pose are: why do these have such power over the human heart? In what way do they speak to all persons, regardless of race, sex, or cultural background, in light of our common human experience? How do they provide the key for redeeming and sanctifying an otherwise barren secular world? We also welcome reflections on the meaning of the heart itself, a word that figures prominently in Scripture (over 800 citations) and in the Orthodox ascetic tradition (“purifying the heart” and “prayer of the heart”), and that still retains an evocative resonance in innumerable everyday idioms such as “heartfelt” and “heartless.” What does it mean to say that Orthodoxy “speaks to the heart” and how is this different from the appeals to the emotions or to purely rational argumentation upon which other Christian bodies often rely?

Our 2026 meeting will take place on **Tuesday, June 2 through Friday morning, June 5, 2026** on the beautiful grounds of Antiochian Village in the Laurel Mountains of Pennsylvania. As in the past, we are for the most part structuring the conference schedule at a less hectic pace than is often the case, with papers of roughly 25-30 minutes, followed by 15-20 minutes discussion and then generous break-time for refreshment and informal discussion. But for the first time, we are also scheduling an experimental component, with one or more two-hour sessions, in which short (15-20 minute) presentations on a common theme would be followed by an hour of discussion on all three papers. This new format lends itself especially well to panels coordinated prior to submission on a common theme, but participants are also free to simply specify that they prefer to give a shorter paper and we will try to find an appropriate time for it. Please be sure to state which paper length you prefer (15-20 or 25-30 minutes) in your

submission. As in the past, we plan to host multiple concurrent sessions, so the options for learning and discussion will be rich and diverse. Room and board at Antiochian Village are relatively modest: \$497.26 for a single and \$396.16 for a double room for three days, which includes eight meals from dinner on Tuesday to brunch on Friday. Fees will be pro-rated for shorter stays. The cities of Ligonier and Latrobe are nearby, for those wishing to procure their own accommodations and dining. The conference fee will be \$100.00 for the gainfully employed, and \$50.00 for seminarians, students, monastics, and others with limited funding. Each evening will conclude with a reception featuring complimentary food and drink. A **link to register** for the conference will be posted at <https://www.antiochianvillage.org> by the end of January.

The conference will feature a mix of invited speakers along with speakers chosen on the basis of submitted abstracts. Speakers for our last two conferences have included Metropolitan **Jonah (Paffhausen)**, Hieromonk **Macarius (Ruegemer)**, Fr. **Bogdan Bucur**, Fr. **Anthony (Gaelan) Gilbert**, Fr. **Ignatius Green**, Fr. **Chad Hatfield**, Fr. **Hans Jacobse**, Fr. **Joseph Lucas**, Fr. **John Schroedel**, Fr. **Paul (Alfred) Siewers**, Fr. **Thomas Soroka**, Pdn. **Brian Patrick Mitchell**, Dcn. **Sampson Nash**, Dr. **David Bradshaw**, Dr. **Daniel Buxhoeveden**, Dr. **Seraphim (Bruce) Foltz**, Dr. **David Ford**, Dr. **Mary Ford**, **Andrew Gould**, Dr. **Daniel Hinshaw**, Dr. **Edith Humphrey**, Dr. **Cyril (Gary) Jenkins**, Dr. **Stoyan Tanev**, and Dr. **Joseph (Rico) Vitz**. Additionally, there will be two plenary keynote speakers, who will be announced soon. And of course, those wishing to participate in the conference discussions without presenting a paper are heartily welcomed. Proposals of 100-200 words for papers on this year's topic should be **submitted by February 15, 2026** to *both* Foltz and Bradshaw at foltzbv@eckerd.edu and david.bradshaw@uky.edu. We expect a decision on accepted papers no later than March 15.

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

In the spirit of Orthodox fellowship,
Sincerely yours,

Seraphim Foltz
David Bradshaw

for *PAIDEIA Conveners*:

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