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## St. Michael's begins marking its centennial

### National choir to perform at local church

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JERMYN — As part of a yearlong celebration planned for the 100th anniversary of St. Michael's Orthodox Church, a well-known choir will be performing Sunday. The Jermyn church will play host to the Spirit of Orthodoxy Choir at 6 p.m. Sunday. It will be the first time

the group, with members throughout the Northeast United States, has performed in Jermyn. "Music in the Orthodox Church is central to our worship," the Very Rev. John Kowalczyk said. "Having this pan-orthodox choir, which is a renowned choir, come and give this beautiful concert for me personally as the pastor, it expresses a renewal of Orthodox worship in our community."

The event is one of many planned leading up to a culminating event in November 2009 to mark the November 1909 cornerstone laying of St. Michael's.

"If these walls could talk — immigrants built them 100 years ago and people have told me stories of how difficult it was," the Rev. Kowalczyk said. "(The celebration) is an opportunity to give back to these walls and say thank you, Lord, for the joys in life."

Diana Brotschul of Blakeslee, a St. Michael's congregation member who has been helping to organize the event, said the public is welcome, and there will be a reception after the performance.

The church is also planning a children's Christmas play, caroling and next year possibly a trip to Russia. The church's roots are in Russian Orthodoxy, though it has since broadened to include other Orthodox churches.

The Rev. Kowalczyk said he is encouraging the community to come out and hear the group. He said other area residents might go to a different church — but they attend the same schools and supermarkets — and he wants the entire community to have the chance to celebrate.

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