



## For Immediate Release

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### **St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church "Spirit of Midtown" Award Winner - Recognized for dedication to, investment in Midtown**

**OMAHA, Neb., June 11, 2008** – Destination Midtown will present St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church with the "Spirit of Midtown" award on Sunday, June 15, a fitting tribute as the church celebrates its centennial and breaks ground on a future-focused renovation.

"The project represents a commitment by St. John's to the neighborhood and a desire to enhance the facilities used by our parishioners and guests," said Rev. Peter Pappas, the church's presbyter.

The project also represents a \$1.2 million investment in Midtown and the Park Avenue neighborhood, the church's home for 55 of its 100 years. St. John's is adding 6,000 sq. ft. to its building and modernizing and improving the kitchen facilities, restrooms, children's area and administrative offices.

Jamie Grayson-Berglund, Destination Midtown's executive director, said the church's investment in and steady dedication to Midtown made it a natural choice for the quarterly "Spirit of Midtown" award.

"For decades, the church has been a solid community and cultural anchor for Midtown in the Park Avenue area," said Grayson-Berglund. "It's involvement with community-building events like the Big Fat Greek Festival, fish fries and church tours really help to make Midtown a great place to live, work and play."

Grayson-Berglund added the church membership was extremely helpful during the Park Avenue Redevelopment Study, participating in and hosting several community meetings at the church from June 2007 - March 2008.

St. John's will break ground on its renovation on Sunday, June 15, capping a weekend of events to celebrate the church's 100-year anniversary.

#### **Events for Saturday, June 14 include:**

##### Ecclesiastical Services

10 a.m. - Divine Liturgy and memorial service  
St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church, 602 Park Ave.

##### Centennial Ball

6 p.m. - Reception and silent auction  
7:30 p.m. - Dinner  
Doubletree Hotel ballroom, 1616 Dodge St.

#### **Events for Sunday, June 15 include:**

##### Hierarchical Divine Liturgy

10 a.m. - The Divine Liturgy  
St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church, 602 Park Ave.

Groundbreaking and Sprit of Midtown Award Presentation

Approximately 1:30 p.m. - Ceremony to include a special service performed by Archbishop Demetrios of America, His Eminence Metropolitan Isaiah and Rev. Pappas, words from Mayor Michael Fahey and award presentation from Jamie Grayson-Berglund, executive director of Destination Midtown.  
St. John's parking area, south side of building

To nominate a Midtown business, nonprofit or individual for a "Spirit of Midtown" award, contact Destination Midtown at [info@destinationmidtown.org](mailto:info@destinationmidtown.org).

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*Destination Midtown is a partnership between Midtown businesses and residents, the City of Omaha and the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce. The mission is to create a premier urban environment where people want to live, work, shop and play. The vision is to establish a distinct urban environment that promotes economic development activities and advances neighborhood goals and forges unique partnerships. Destination Midtown is bordered on the north by Cuming Street, the south by Center Street, the east by 24th Street and the west by Saddle Creek Road.*

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