At the direction of Archbishop Michael, the FT Drum, NY Area Orthodox Mission, or the Watertown Mission Station, was formed to serve the FT Drum, NY Area (FT Drum Military community as well as Jefferson and Northern Lewis County, NY) residents with an Englishlanguage Orthodox community. The mission formally began on 8 October 2022, St Pelagia the Penitent, with vespers at a member's home. A Facebook page was started; however, advertising was kept to a minimum due to space constraints. Since then, we have met weekly for Saturday evening vespers with the various community members attending Ss. Peter and Paul in Syracuse or St. Olympia, Norwood, as time and weather permits. On 7 September 23, 2023 (Feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos), the Mission Station began holding services in the church building of the Anglican Church of Christ the King in Watertown, NY. This was followed by, on the 8<sup>th</sup> of September, with Hours and Typica.

The mission station is adjusting the interior worship space from Western Christian Liturgical to Orthodox. We serve a meal after our weekly Vespers service and, at that time, work out transportation to the nearest parishes for Sunday liturgy. We have begun a welcome to Orthodoxy class held before Vespers on Saturdays. The mission is beginning to gather everything required to place the Mission Station in full operation. We have one member on a special course of study at St. Tikhon's Seminary who will finish their studies this May. We plan to launch a website within 60-90 days and reach out beyond our current members, who are primarily junior enlisted soldiers from the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division. Our desired end state is that by the Fall of 2024, we have converted our current space into an Orthodox church building, attracted members, and celebrate services regularly both during the week and Sunday to our community.





