



Champions of Faith Celebrating 100 Years of Ukrainian Orthodoxy in America

Published by the
Office of Youth Ministry and the Ukrainian History & Education Center
(2017-2018)



Leader Notes:

These praxis sessions are intended to be used in conjunction with the Champions of the Faith Curriculum which may be downloaded at <http://www.uocyouth.org/championsofthefait.html>

This curriculum is designed to be carried out in one session per class meeting, but please feel free to adjust in response to the children. If you find that they want more time to discuss a particular idea or session, others may be shortened or abbreviated, as long as the main understandings above are addressed. Youth can take turns reading the text to the class, or you may choose for them to read it to themselves if they need to adjust the pace.

These special praxis sessions are for varying age groups. We recommend previewing each session so that you plan accordingly.

Objective:

In conjunction with the Centennial Celebration of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA, which is taking place in parishes throughout the United States from September 2017 until September 2018, the Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministry is partnering with the Ukrainian History and Education Center (Somerset, New Jersey) to provide materials and session plans to be utilized in the parishes to educate the youth of the parish of the history of the Church in America, as well as celebrate this historic event.

This teacher's guide provides five (5) session plans, each with suggested activities to use in the parish and regular youth ministry program. Each session plan can be tailored to fit any age group.

In addition to the monthly session plans, we ask all parish youth to create a poster board (tri-fold board) documenting the history of the parish which will be placed on display at the Metropolia Center during the celebration in July 2018 (see "Parish History Project" for further instructions). In addition, these boards can be displayed either before or after July in the home parishes, showcasing the work of the youth. It is our goal, that through the session plans, the youth of the parish will learn more about their home parishes, as well as the history of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the USA.

This teacher's guide is supplemental to the exhibits at the Metropolia Center which document the history of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA.

Shepherding Ukrainian Orthodoxy in the New Land: The Metropolitans of the Church
On view November 2017 until April 2018

Ukrainian Orthodoxy in the New Land: 100 Years in the United States of America
On view July to September 2018

The exhibits are on view at the UHEC Library Gallery and the Cultural Center (135 Davidson Avenue / Somerset, NJ 08873). Contact the Center for exhibit hours, guided tours, and/or to schedule “The Immigration Experience” Workshop for school groups (info@ukrhec.org or call 732-356-0090)

Sessions provided for the Champions of the Faith - Centennial Celebration

Session One: History of the UOC of USA

Suggested Month: January 2018

Session Two: Oral History Project

Suggested Month: February 2018

Session Three: UOL Essay Contest

Suggested Month: March 2018

Session Four: The Importance of Primary Documents & Archives

Suggested Month: April 2018

Session Five: Musical Harmony

Suggested Month: May 2018

Parish History Project

Ongoing project to be completed for display at the Metropolia Center in July 2018

Session One:

History of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of USA (UOC of the USA)

Needed Items:

- Timeline (either on a white board, chart paper or poster board)
- PowerPoint that may be used in tandem with the UOC of USA History
- Copies of 2,500 people comparison, Metropolia Center Map, map of United States
- For Middle and High School Sessions - copies of UOC of USA History
- Print and distribute the latest publication of the Ukrainian Orthodox Word

Activity for Grade School Students

1. Read an abbreviated version of the history of the UOC of USA and the Metropolia Center, which is located in Somerset, New Jersey. Show the places discussed on the map.
2. Hold a discussion why it is important to have a unified Ukrainian Orthodox Church: why it is important to attend church together as a family, as a community, and with friends.
3. Encourage them to participate in the life of the parish as a family: sit together, sing together, attend coffee hour together, and discuss the importance of being one body in the body of Christ.
4. Have the students invite a friend (or friends) to attend church one Sunday with them.

Activity of Middle School Students

1. Have the students take turns reading out loud the history of the UOC of USA and the Metropolia Center, which is located in Somerset, New Jersey. Have the youth locate the places discussed on the map.
2. Discuss as a group the importance of creating a center of all Ukrainian Orthodoxy in America. Discuss with them why it is important that the church remembers its roots in Ukraine, as well as its connection in to the history of the USA.
3. Have the students reenact the founding of the Church and the building of the Metropolia Center.
4. Have the students research the lives and stories of the Metropolitans, Archbishops and Bishops of the UOC of USA and present their life stories and accomplishments to the school and church community. Those parishes close to the Metropolia Center can visit the Museum and Library, especially the new exhibit on the Metropolitans of the Church to learn more about the hierarchs. The

lives of our hierarchs are being provided monthly on the Office of Youth Ministry website under the Champions of the Faith section. This may be used for research.

Activity for High School Students

1. Have the students read and discuss the history of the UOC of USA and the Metropolia Center, which is located in Somerset, New Jersey.
2. Discuss as a group the importance of creating a center of all Ukrainian Orthodoxy in America. Discuss with them why it is important that the church remembers its roots in Ukraine, as well as its connection in to the history of the USA. Discuss also with them what it means to celebrate 100 years and what they expect for the next 100 years (and what role THEY can play in the building of our Church).
3. Have the students research the history of their parishes and make a presentation (suggestions of presentation methods can be posters, PowerPoint presentation, or a photography exhibit).

History of the UOC of USA and the Metropolia Center in New Jersey (Abbreviated)

(Adapted from the website of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA)

The Turn of the 20th Century

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA had its beginning in 1915. There were many spiritual and political concerns which inspired this decision and almost immediately many parishes and faithful joined the movement. The group received spiritual protection under the omophorion (*Greek word for protection*) of Bishop Germanos of the Syrian Orthodox Church in the USA. Bishop Germanos provided the necessary guidance for the new jurisdiction until a petition was sent to the newly independent Autocephalous Orthodox Church in Ukraine, which had formed in October 1921. Leader of the AOC in Ukraine was Metropolitan Vasyl Lypkivskyj. Metropolitan Vasyl assigned Archbishop John (Theodorovich) to care for the spiritual needs of the Ukrainian Orthodox faithful of the United States of America.

ARCHBISHOP JOHN COMES TO AMERICA & THE AMERICAN-UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE USA

Archbishop John arrived in the United States in 1924 and immediately called for a Sobor (*a special meeting of the church*). This Sobor confirmed the Archdiocese as the American-Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA. Bishop Germanos officially gave up his authority over the Church to Archbishop John. Following the Sobor, under the guidance of Archbishop John, the life of the American-Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA truly began to grow. The Archbishop remained in contact with the Church in Ukraine. However, during this time Ukraine was under a government that was communist. Many communists do not believe in organized religion or God. By 1927, it was clear that the Communist government would not stop its persecution/abuse of this Church. By that year all its Hierarchs and most of its clergy had been arrested and most of the Church properties destroyed.

- Take a moment to discuss this part of history. This could be distressing to some younger children. You may need to modify the content for younger children. For older children, ask them if they know of any other instances where the Christian church has or is being persecuted? Did they know the Ukrainian Orthodox Church was persecuted only 80-90 years ago?

By 1937, many terrible things had been done to the church in Ukraine. The church was never able to obtain proper status in the Orthodox world and eventually fell apart and was replaced by the Ukrainian Orthodox Church under the Moscow Patriarchate. With very little choice, Metropolitan John cut all ties to Ukraine.

The American-Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the USA was deeply affected by these facts and made our new journey in America very complicated. A church in the Orthodox faith must be tied to or have the blessing to exist by the rest of the church. Because of how events happened, Archbishop John was not able to obtain the needed blessings and permissions. He made several attempts to plead his case before the Ecumenical Patriarchate but no progress was made on the issue. The Ecumenical Patriarchate holds a special place amongst the churches of Orthodoxy, which is why Archbishop John went to them. The clergy and faithful of the American-Ukrainian Orthodox Church of USA, however, were unafraid to move forward and to build their own independent church. At the time the Archdiocesan center (main offices) was located in Philadelphia. A seminary was established, and the

clergy needed to serve the spiritual needs of the faithful were educated and assigned - all of them working miracles in the establishment and building of new parishes all over the country.

- [Ask the youth if they have any questions. Do they know what a seminary is? It is a place where people go to learn about God and the Church. What do you call people who go to seminary? Seminarians or Seminary Students.](#)

THE UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

In 1928 a second group of Ukrainian Orthodox faithful in the USA began a movement toward Orthodoxy. Because of the questions surrounding the status of Archbishop John, the group hesitated in affiliating itself with his already established jurisdiction even though it was thriving. The first Sobor of this group met in Allentown, PA in the spring of 1929 and established itself as the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in America. Rev. Dr. Joseph Zuk was elected as administrator to organize the diocese at the 1937 Sobor in New York City he was elected as its first Bishop. Two hierarchs of the Syrian Orthodox Church in the USA consecrated Bishop Zuk in 1932 at St. Volodymyr Cathedral, in New York City. Unfortunately, Bishop Joseph lived less than two years following becoming a bishop.

- [Ask the youth if they have any questions. Refer to the map and timeline.](#)

In 1936, the Ecumenical Patriarch accepted the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in America under his omophorion (protection) and in 1937 Bishop Bohdan (Spylka) was consecrated as bishop of the diocese. Under his guidance the jurisdiction also began to thrive and the number of parishes and faithful grew, almost rivaling the growth of the American-Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA under Archbishop John.

The two Ukrainian Orthodox jurisdictions co-existed in the USA for the next 17 years. They both expanded, with Archbishop John also heading the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Canada and Bishop Bohdan establishing several parishes there, as well.

In 1942, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Ukraine was re-born once. During this period of religious freedom, Stepan Skrypnyk was ordained Bishop Mstyslav. Bishop Mstyslav was assigned to serve the Ukrainian Orthodox community in Canada, but eventually moved to serve in America and joined the jurisdiction of Bishop Bohdan. He had a great desire to unite the two existing jurisdictions in the USA. Bishop Mstyslav, persuaded Archbishop John to submit to a new consecration as a bishop in order to resolve all canonical questions about his status as a bishop. In 1949 Archbishop John agreed and was consecrated by Bishop Mstyslav and Metropolitan Christopher, Exarch to the USA of the Alexandrian Patriarchate. An Exarch is a special type of bishop with different responsibilities.

- [Discuss the benefits of religious freedom and how the Soviet government prohibited religion in the country. Many people had to practice in secret, in fear that they would be arrested. Bishop Mstyslav was arrested in Ukraine, as were many other members of the clergy.](#)

UNIFICATION AND THE CREATION OF THE UOC OF USA

In 1950, both the UOC in America and the American UOC of the USA churches participated in a "Unification Sobor, which was held in New York City. The two churches unified and formed the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA. Archbishop John was named Metropolitan and Archbishop Mstyslav became the President of the Consistory.

- What is a Consistory? A consistory is a church council or court. The Consistory of the UOC of USA is located in the Metropolia Center in New Jersey. Before it was in New Jersey, the consistory of the Church was located in Philadelphia. What do you think the President of the Consistory does? Who is our current President of the Consistory.

THE METROPOLIA CENTER IN NEW JERSEY

In June of 1951, at a meeting of the Metropolitan Council, a proposal was made to purchase a 57-acre farm in Central New Jersey. The Rossman farm was purchased and dedicated in 1952 as a spiritual and cultural center for Orthodox Ukrainians. On the property was also the original estate, home and burial ground of Heindrick Fisher and his family. Fisher was New Jersey's delegate to the United States Continental Congress – Heindrick Fisher. The Continental Congress was a group of delegates that represented the colonies before and during the American Revolutionary War.

- Ask the youth if they know anything about the Revolutionary War. How do they feel knowing that our Metropolia Center is on American historical grounds?

1952: THE CONSECRATION OF THE METROPOLIA CENTER

The appeal was a success and the consecration of these holy grounds was scheduled for 1 June 1952. A three-day long summer rainstorm, however, prohibited the actual consecration from taking place. In spite of the rain, over 2,500 people arrived, surprising, but at the same time morally uplifting the organizers of the event. The whole program, including Divine Liturgy, was moved to the auditorium of the local high school, which held only 1,200 people, so all the hallways and some classrooms were filled with faithful. Some even had to remain in their cars or buses. Over 30 priests, five deacons and 30 altar boys served with Metropolitan John and Archbishops Mstyslav and Hennadij, while the choir from St. Volodymyr Cathedral in New York City, enhanced by singers from parish choirs of Carteret and Newark.

- Ask the youth what they think about the consecration day. Can they picture 2,500 people? Show the photos of 2,500 people provided at the end of this session.

The consecration was rescheduled for September 21, 1952 – the Feast of the Nativity of the Mother of God. Metropolitan John and Archbishop Mstyslav concelebrated Divine Liturgy. Fifty-six priests participated in the event, which immediately followed the first ever clergy conference of the unified Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA

- What is a clergy conference? A clergy conference is a place for bishops, priest and deacons to come and discuss important matters and deepen their faith. Traditionally it has been held every October.

On September 21, 1952 – the only buildings on the Church Center property were:

- the historic Fisher Family Home, which had become the Consistory and home of the Archbishop,
- the print shop from where they published the “Ukrainian Orthodox Word” (the official newspaper of the church),
- a small home where the Consistory Treasurer lived,
- the mill, which served as a community center,
- library and archives,
- and a school of Ukrainian and religious studies.

SAINT ANDREW CHURCH AND CEMETERY

In 1954 the 15 original acres of our St. Andrew Cemetery was established. This was made possible only because the Fisher family cemetery was already located on our property and is still maintained by our Church as a historical site. Interments began almost immediately and the cemetery has grown to almost 9,000 graves covering 25 acres of land.

In 1955 construction began on St. Andrew Memorial Church as a monument to those who were victims of the Holodomor or man-made famine created by Josef Stalin. It is believed that millions of Ukrainians died during the Holodomor. The Memorial Church is also a monument to those who gave their lives for the independence of Ukraine and the United States of America. It took ten years to complete the church and was consecrated(blessed) in 1965. The Memorial Church has become the symbol of our Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA and our Church.

- [At this point, you may share a photo\(s\) of St. Andrew Memorial Church.](#)

THE SEMINARY OF THE UOC OF USA

In 1972, the Church purchased the Heatherington Estate, and the main house was converted into the St. Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary.

- [What is a Seminary? A seminary is a college that prepares students to be priests.](#)

PATRIARCH MSTYSLAV

In 1991, at the age of 93, Metropolitan Mstyslav was elected in absentia as the first Patriarch of Kyiv and all Ukraine of the UAOC. He was enthroned as Patriarch Mstyslav I, on November 6, 1991 in St. Sophia Cathedral in Kyiv. When he passed away in 1993, his remains were entombed at the Holy Resurrection Mausoleum at the Metropolia Center.

- [Metropolitan Mstyslav was elected Metropolitan in absentia, which means he was not present at the actual election. A patriarch is the highest ranked leader of a church. Discuss church hierarchy here with the youth: Patriarch, Metropolitan, Archbishop, Bishop.](#)
- [The UOC of USA is under the Ecumenical Patriarch. The Ecumenical Patriarch ranks as “first among equals” among the heads of the several autocephalous churches that make up the Eastern Orthodox Church. The current Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople is Bartholomew I.](#)

THE GROWTH OF THE METROPOLIA CENTER

In 1980, the Ukrainian Cultural Center was blessed and used for the first time!

On May 7, 2001 during St. Thomas Sunday pilgrimage, the Holy Resurrection Mausoleum was blessed. It is located under St. Andrew’s Memorial Church. is there we find the Patriarch Mstyslav's crypt. Surrounding this central area are another 276 crypts for the interment of Ukrainian Americans active in church and community life.

- [Ask the children if they know what a mausoleum or crypt are used for. They are a special place for people to be buried after they die.](#)

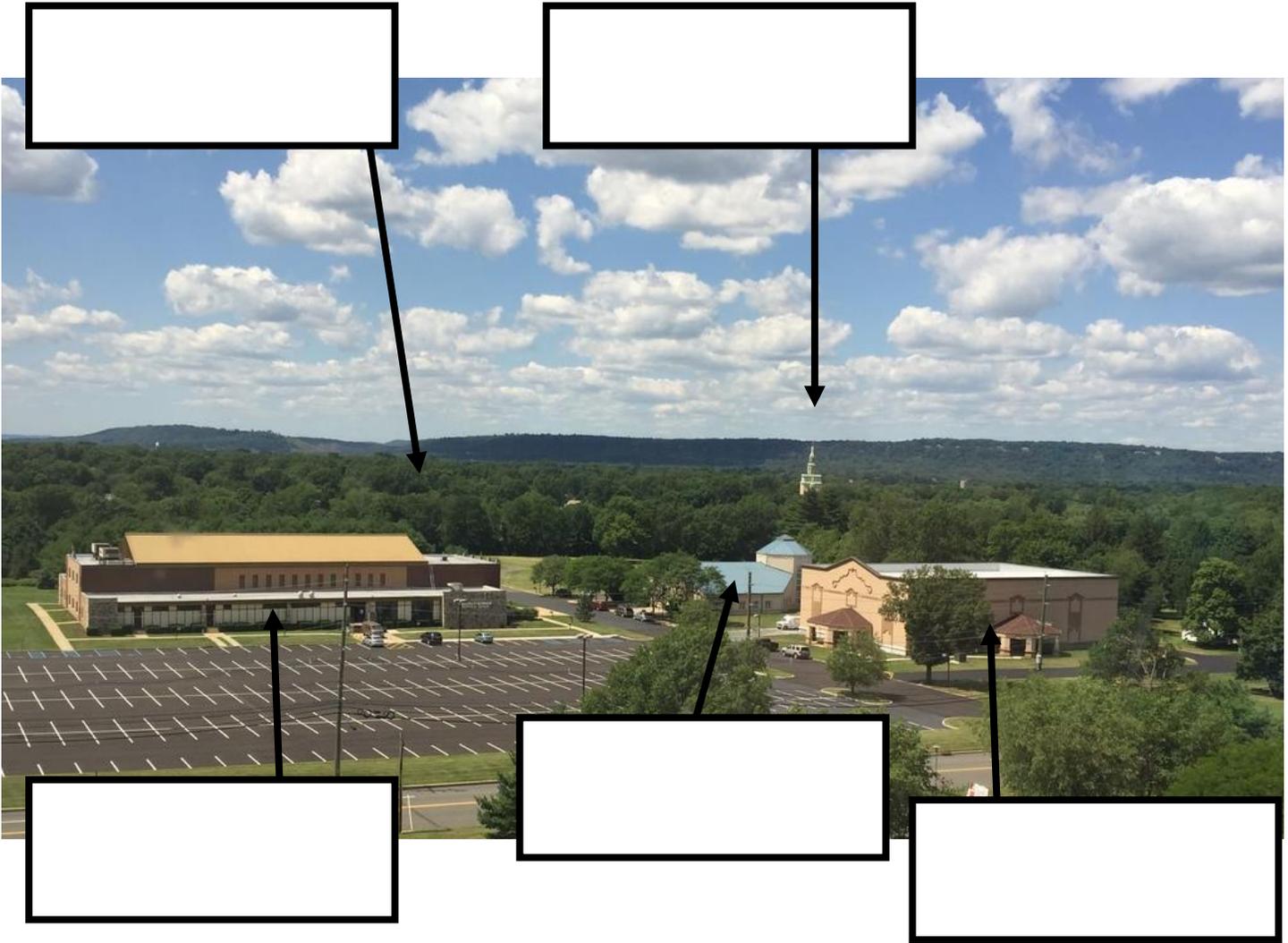
The most recent addition to our Metropolia Center in 2001 was the site of the future Historical and Educational Complex Museum in memory of Patriarch Mstyslav, which will complete the

Consistory/Library complex building. In the courtyard of this complex will be a permanent monument commemorating the 8 million victims of the genocidal famine.

Thousands upon thousands of Ukrainian Americans, Ukrainian world leaders, American Presidents, Senators and Congressmen and Ukrainian Presidents and many other Ukrainian government leaders, as well as people from all faiths have walked this property blessed those 60 years ago and have entered the buildings and institutions established here by the Grace of God and through the inspiration of Metropolitan John, Patriarch Mstyslav and all the bishops and leading clergy of our church. Many more will come and much more will be accomplished on these hallowed grounds by present and future generations of bishops, clergy and faithful, because God has implanted in us all a love for our Holy Ukrainian Orthodox Church and a desire to pass our rich spiritual and cultural heritage on, intact, to our children and grandchildren. May God give us the continued strength, dedication and will to do so.

- [What are some things you learned about the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA? Have you ever visited our Metropolia Center in New Jersey?](#)

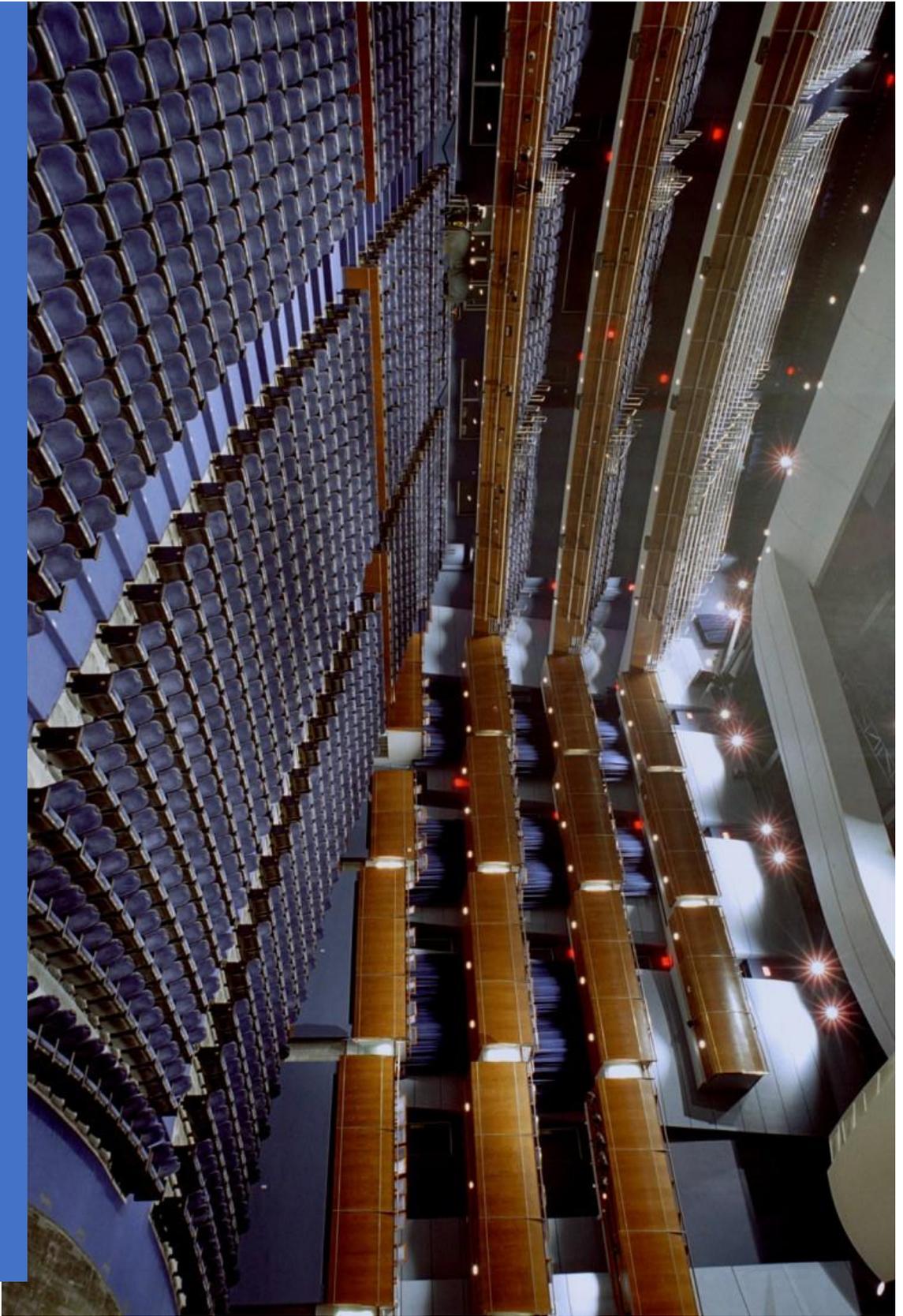
AERIAL SHOT OF THE METROPOLIA CENTER



Answer Key (Clockwise from top left)

St. Andrew Cemetery / St. Andrew Church / Ukrainian History & Education Center – Patriarch Mstyslav Museum / Consistory Administrative Offices / Ukrainian Cultural Center





This auditorium seats 2,500 people!



*This is what 2,500 people
looks like!*