



ST. ELIAS MARONITE CHURCH

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Rectory
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 7, 2011

Birmingham Christian Lebanese Community Celebrates Its 13th Annual Festival April 29 & 30, 2011

Contact: Paul Bolus - (205) 521-8402 or Ron Council - (205) 250-9900 or (205) 966-6803

NOTE: Opportunities for photos and live coverage:

Cooking sessions are 9 – 2, in St. Elias' large kitchen.

Church member teams will be preparing Lebanese food:

Saturday, March 12 - Variety Lebanese dishes

Monday, March 14 - Youth will be in attendance helping with signs and grounds

Saturday, March 19 - Variety Lebanese dishes

And the week of the Festival April 25, through the Festival

St. Elias Maronite Catholic Church

Celebrating its 13th Annual

Lebanese Food and Festival April 29 & 30, 2011

St. Elias Maronite Catholic Church will celebrate its 13th Annual Lebanese Food and Cultural Festival 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Friday and Saturday, April 29 & 30. Admission to the Festival entertainment and tour events is free and open to the public, and traditional Lebanese food will be available throughout both days. Paul Bolus, Co-Chairman of the Lebanese Food and Cultural Festival, said, "The St. Elias Food and Cultural Festival has shared 25% of proceeds amounting to over \$220,000 in the past 12 years with area charities as a way for the church to give back and demonstrate, by example, the Christian value of giving to those in need."

Visitors may select from Lebanese delicacies that will be offered during the two-day Festival. There will be Baked Kibbee, Rolled Grape Leaves, Spinach Pies, Baked Kibbee and Falafel Sandwiches, Tabouleh (Lebanese Salad), Grilled Lebanese Lemon Chicken, Homus and Pita Bread.

LaVonne Williamson, Chairperson of Heritage and Cultural Information for the Festival, said, "Traditional, healthy Lebanese food is an essential part of our culture and is prepared by members using recipes handed down for generations. Great care and preparation is taken with the time intensive preparation of our food, including Kibbee, our most popular dish."

Desserts include a variety of baklawa, kiak (Lebanese sugar cookie) and Lebanese ice cream. Prices will range from \$2 for most desserts to \$3.00 for individual spinach and meat pies, to plates of food for \$10.00 and up. Friday lunchtime delivery will be available by calling at 252-3867, or placing deliveries on-line at www.stelias.org for any delivery over \$75.00 to the southside or downtown area.

Traditional dances will be performed by young people on an indoor stage beginning at 6 p.m. Friday and at 12:30 p.m. Saturday and will continue throughout the afternoon and evening. The New York based *Amin Sultan Lebanese Band* will perform on stage in a large tent 6 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. nightly.

Hourly guided tours, starting on the front steps of the historic church with its renovated interior, will be available from 11 a.m. until 7 p.m., and self-guided tours may be taken 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., both days with a 5-6 p.m. exclusion Saturday during the Saturday Vigil Liturgy which all are welcomed to attend. A special exhibit of artifacts and information about St. Elias Church may be viewed in the Heritage Room in the Church Hall during the festival.

Silent auctions will be held both days. Items for sale at fixed prices include cookbooks, coin dancing belts, hats, T-shirts and cups.

St. Elias is located at 836 8th Street, South, between University Blvd. and 10th Ave., South. Parking shuttles will operate from 5 – 9 p.m. Friday and Saturday from the UAB Parking Lot 15R on 10th Ave., South, next to the Epic School parking lot.