

GENERAL & SACRAMENTAL INFORMATION

Regarding the Temple: In our tradition, the church temple is a house of prayer. Upon entering it, please refrain from unnecessary conversation before, during and after church services, most especially during the Divine Liturgy. Prior to divine services, or during coffee hour in the Church Hall is the appropriate place to exchange personal greetings and converse with one another. May God bless your reverence and piety!

Sick/Emergency Calls/Institutional Visitations: are answered as requests are received. All visitations are by request. Call to schedule an appointment.

Confessions: Are heard one half-hour before every service at Holy Assumption, and once a month at Ss. Peter & Paul. Special arrangements by necessity, and thereby, appointment only.

Sacraments of Illumination: In the case of infants, Baptism, Chrismation, & Eucharist are administered on ordinary Sundays of the church year, preferably in the context of Divine Liturgy. At least one sponsor must be of the Orthodox Faith and in good sacramental standing. The newly baptized must have one name that is Biblical or Christian in its origin.

What is Church Membership? By regulation, active membership in the church consists not merely in the payment of a set sum, or by fulfilling a *minimum* sacramental obligation, but rather in participation in the life of the church (commensurate with your physical ability). This includes entering into the spirit of the faith through regular and frequent attendance, participation in the divine mysteries, sustained financial support (at a percentage that reflects your ability), and adherence to the parish, diocesan, and national church statutes.

Receiving Communion: while all are welcome to pray with us, we politely offer a reminder that the Orthodox Church maintains a closed communion. All are welcome to Antidoron bread following the Divine Liturgy, but only prepared Orthodox Christians may receive the Eucharist. Orthodox Christians do not commune in non-Orthodox churches, and the non-Orthodox are not communed in an Orthodox Church. Thank you!

Lapsed Members: You are always welcome home, and we need you! Generally speaking, sincere Confession, Communion, and regular attendance are all that is required to begin parish life anew! See Fr. Elijah for specific details.

New Members/Adult Chrismation: new members are always welcome. In the case of interested adults seeking Chrismation, a period of catechesis prescribed by the pastor is necessary before the administration of Holy Mysteries. An Orthodox sponsor is required.

Weddings: A minimum six-month notice is requested. Either Bride or Bride-groom must be an Orthodox Christian, and a parishioner in good standing. Dispensations may be required for inter-faith marriages (the marriage of an Orthodox & any non-Orthodox person). Banns of matrimony published 3 weeks before ceremony. No Weddings performed during fasting seasons!!!

Burial in Church Cemetery: Burial in consecrated ground is reserved for the Orthodox and their spouses/children. Charity burials, or odd circumstances are at the rector's discretion. It is strongly encouraged to hold viewings and visitation of the reposed in the church.

Our Stewardship of the Church: "Lord Jesus Christ, Thou art the good steward, who redeemed Adam and Eve of their failed stewardship by offering Thyself for the life of the world. Thou didst teach us in the feeding of the multitudes that whatever we give to God is returned to us multiplied. Thou didst praise those good and faithful servants in the parable of the talents who returned to the Master their gifts. So help us to learn the joy of stewardship, remembering that everything we have comes from Thee and belongs to Thee. We know, Lord, that we often live in fear of the future and insecurity. Help us to remember the lilies of the field and so to trust in Thy providence. Grant to us a cheerful and generous spirit. Enkindle in the hearts of all Thy people a zealous love for Thee. For Thou art the Good Steward, and to Thee we give thanks, praise and glory, together with Thy Father who is from everlasting and Thine all holy good and life-giving Spirit now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen."

Prayer When Lighting A Candle: "Set our hearts on fire with love for Thee, O Christ our God, so that in this flame we may love Thee with all our heart, with all our mind, with all our soul and with all our strength, and our neighbors as ourselves, so that by keeping Thy commandments we may glorify Thee, the giver of all good gifts. Amen."

HOLY ASSUMPTION ORTHODOX CHURCH

629 Sunshine Avenue • Central City, Pa. 15926

SS. PETER AND PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

Tipple Road • Goodtown, Pa. 15530



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21st Sunday Post-Pentecost
17 November 2024

*"Daughter, be of good cheer;
Your faith has made you well. Go in peace."
(Luke 8: 48)*

LITURGICAL SCHEDULE: 17 - 24 NOVEMBER 2024

Sunday 17 November Tone 4	21st Sunday Post-Pentecost <i>Epistle:</i> Galatians 2:16-20 <i>Gospel:</i> Luke 8: 41-56	8:40 am, Hours of Prayer (CC) 9:00 am, Divine Liturgy (CC)
Sunday 24 November Tone 5	22nd Sunday Post-Pentecost <i>Epistle:</i> Galatians 6:11-18 <i>Gospel:</i> Luke 10:25-37	8:40 am, Hours of Prayer (PH) 9:00 am, Divine Liturgy (PH)

~ Upcoming ~

Wednesday 27 November	Thanksgiving Molieben <i>All Are Welcome!</i>	6:00 pm (CC)
Thursday 28 November	Civil Thanksgiving Holiday	Start of Nativity Fast <i>See Announcements</i>
Sunday 1 December	Second Announcement: Annual Meeting following Liturgy (CC)	

~Important Considerations ~

All persons are present at their own risk. Please refrain from attending if you are currently sick, or if you were exposed to a contagious disease. Also understand that if you do not attend Church for more than three weeks without just cause, according to canon law you must go to confession prior to receiving Holy Communion.

ГЛАВА ІНЄЄЄ ХРІСТУ!

THANKSGIVING IS A STATE OF BEING, PART II: WHY SHOULD WE THANK GOD?

There is nothing more *Orthodox* than Thanksgiving. Though the origins of the Thanksgiving holiday are not Orthodox (nor the pumpkin pie), the concept behind it all – giving thanks to God for all He has given us – definitely is. It is on Thanksgiving Day that Orthodox Christians have a chance to help humankind look deeper into itself. If we are to call Thanksgiving a holiday (“holy day”), it must be more than remembering the pilgrims. It must be more than visiting with family and gorging ourselves on a sumptuous feast. Thanksgiving is a state of being, one that we need to cultivate and make perpetual, present every day of our lives.

On Thanksgiving Day, Orthodox Christians have a unique opportunity to show the rest of America what this day is all about. Those who fled religious persecution and landed here understood why this holy day was so special. They celebrated their safe arrival in real communion with one another. They gave thanks to God for all the bountiful gifts with which He blessed them. And so, we should all do the same. This is a day to reflect on the things for which we are grateful. And then take time in prayer to thank God for those things.

But *why* should we thank Him? **Because the life He gave us is sacred.** Above all things God has given us, the chief among those is life itself. He created us in His image and likeness. God gave us the breath of life; He is the source of our being and the reason for our existence. In His love, Almighty God created us to commune with Him, and now we can have that kind of life with Him in the Church. So perhaps the better question is: why *shouldn't* we thank Him, for our very life and all the blessings within it?

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Liturgy Next Sunday, A Reminder: please remember that Divine Liturgy next Sunday is at 9 am in Pine Hill. All are welcome, and dare say, expected, to attend. Please join us for church!

Upcoming Thanksgiving Service: please note the change--our annual Thanksgiving Molieben will be celebrated on Wednesday, 27 November 2024 at 6 pm. Everyone is invited, and encouraged to bring family and friends. A simple coffee (decaffeinated) and cookie social will follow.

Short Article Series: this week is excerpt #2 from an article “Thanksgiving Is A State of Being.” Please take some time to read each of the excerpts in preparation for our secular observation of Thanksgiving.

Altar & Volunteer Society Announcement: volunteers will meet on Wednesday, 20 November at 1 o'clock pm to clean and decorate in preparation for filming “Christmas in the Alleghenies: A Season of Grace.” Everyone is welcome to attend, and we are grateful for the help. Thank you!

Church Needs & Wants in Preparation for the Nativity of Christ: for those wondering, there are needs that accompany every season of the church year, and there are needs that arise only periodically. This week, a candle delivery brought fifteen boxes of 7-day vigil candles, five boxes of taper candles, a bag of frankincense, a box of charcoal, and votive globes for the sanctuary lamp. These are standard needs. In addition, our altar-sized Liturgikon (the book of the Divine Liturgy) needed to be replaced. Father purchased an updated version from St. Tikhon’s Monastery for \$50. In the next few weeks, we will need more disposable Zapivka cups and high-quality wine for Zapivka during the Nativity Season (something special for the season). These are incidental, extraordinary needs, and if anyone would like to help the church cover them, please speak with Fr. Elijah. Thank you for being attentive to the needs of our parish!

Upcoming Season of Prayer, Fasting, and Charity: in the next few weeks, we will engage in projects to benefit our local area and beyond. As usual, we will participate in the supply drive for Birthright of Somerset County, and we will adopt a family for the Christmas Season. We know this is a trying time for everyone, but it is also a time to manifest our gratitude to God for all of the good things we enjoy. Look for more information in the coming weeks, and as always thank you, and many God continue to bless your good works.



ALL ABOUT THANKSGIVING

by: Fr. Lawrence Farley



The Christian Faith is all about thanksgiving. Our secular North American society thinks that thanksgiving is moderately important, and so it has a wonderful Thanksgiving Day feast once a year. I love this feast. Every October in Canada—my calendar tells me it is held in November in the US—when the leaves start to turn colour and the days become a little cooler, we gather if possible with our extended families and sit down to a turkey dinner. There are no pilgrims and no Plymouth Rock in sight up north, but the rejoicing in family warmth and domestic coziness is the same, I suspect, both north and south of the border. I do love Thanksgiving Day, even if in many secular households not everyone gives thanks to God for the day’s bounty. At least once a year our all-too-often self-entitled culture tells us that it is good to give thanks and to be grateful.

It is otherwise in the Church. In the Church, we are to give thanks not just once a year, but always, so that every day is a thanksgiving day. We are taught this at Vespers: “I will sing praises to my God while I have my being!” (from Psalm 104). We are taught this at Matins: “Let every breath praise the Lord!” (from the Praises). We are taught this at Divine Liturgy: “It is meet and right to hymn You, to bless You, to praise You, to give thanks to You, and to worship You in every place of Your dominion” (from the Anaphora). Praise and thanksgiving is what we do as Christians, not just once a year, but all day, every day. Obviously we don’t do this as successfully as we should. That is why we need the constant liturgical reminders. But it defines our Christian Faith nonetheless. That is why the main liturgical service, the one that reconstitutes us each week as the Body of Christ and forms the liturgical context for everything else, is called “the Eucharist”—from the Greek *eucharistia*, thanksgiving. Thanksgiving not only defines us as Christians, but also as human beings—not surprisingly, if the soul (as the second century Christian apologist Tertullian noted) is “naturally Christian.” That is, what separates us from the animals is the ability to transcend ourselves and the realm of the senses and appetites through thanksgiving. My cat, lovely thing that she is, was not made in the image of God, and so cannot transcend the realm of the appetites and the senses in which she lives. She might love me (or might not; with cats it’s sometimes hard to tell), but even if she does love me, she never expresses it in thanksgiving. When I fill her food dish, she never stops, looks up at me and meows a word of doxology or gratitude. She simply chows down as if I do not exist. That’s okay. She’s just an animal. But we are not just animals, but strange and glorious amalgams of the animal and the spiritual, a kind of amphibian, living in both of the physical world and the angelic realm. As such we can transcend the merely physical in which we usually live, and rise up to God. Man is, as Father Alexander Schmemmann once reminded us, *homo adorans*—“worshiping man”—and this capacity to worship is what constitutes the divine image in us.

Our annual secular reminder of this in the autumn is wonderful. Yet even more wonderful is our weekly reminder every Sunday. For there we are not simply reminded to give thanks, but through our weekly liturgical *eucharistia* are able to rise above the world, and commune with God, and find healing for our broken and ailing hearts. Family and turkey are great. The Kingdom of God is even better.

Is any among you afflicted? Let him pray. Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save him, the Lord shall raise him up”

– James, 5: 14-15

	Abp. Nathaniel Mat. Valeria Fr. Jim	Abp. Melchisedek Mat. Sasha Fr. Ray	Abp. Michael Mat. Suzanne Mat. Joanne	Fr. Michael Mat. Laryssa	
Allison	Elaine	Charles	Bernadette	Janet	Katie
Sandi	Stephanie	Sophie	Nancy	Chrystyna	Damian
Noah	Emma	Henry	Natalia	Peter	Ashley
Mary-Evelyn	Bryan	Gregory	Debbie	Nancy	Mike
Donna	Kevin	Nick	Anne	Nick	Agnes
Robert	Mary Etta	Cory	Sharon	Kara	Michelle M.
Helen	Sandy	Kenneth	Jaida	Scott	Jon
Bill	Sam	Betty	Jerry	Allan	Julie
Charles	Dakota	Kathy	Sue	Debbie	Ruth
Mary-Elizabeth	Darcel	Jennifer	Mary	Karis	Jeremiah
Lisa	Thelma	Shane	Mary Ann	Peter	Lawrence
Jonathan	Tammy	Kathie	Chris	Larry	Matthew Julie
Betty Lou	Renée	Alexandra	Roxanne	Alexis	Gordon
Izzy	James	Curtis	Lita	Suzanne	Shirley-Ruth
George	Jean	Dale	Allen	Steven	Jim
Mitch	Johnnie	Charles	Nancy	Annette	Darren
Johnnie-Mac	David	Agnes	Barbara	Katherine	Joseph
Jan	Larry	Daniel	Monica	Dwain	Michael
Magdalena	Dorothy	Francesca	Kara	Andrew	Tim
Taissia	Daniel	Barbara	Mary Ann	Dave	Ashley
James	Eric	Mary-Louise	Barbara	Denise	Rachelle
Andy	Andrea	Amanda	John, Jr.	Mike	Jean
Ann	Mark	Samantha	Susan	Mary	Maria
Robert	Tim	Don	Mary Ann	Judith	Roxanne
Phyllis	George	Mary	Heidi	Dee Ann	Christine
Jeanne	Tim	Samantha	Bernie	Gene	Kim
Eleanor	John	Dave	Chuck	Anna-Sophie	Betty
Ray	Helen	Maryann	Julia	Jim	Antoinette
Shirley	Greg	Megan	Bob	Ann-Marie	Marie
Walt	Edward	Shaun	Hayes	Sue Y.	Donna
Betty	Robert	Jennifer	Ron	Linda	Gloria
Judy	Richie	Ray	McKenzie	Brady	Betty
Richard	Josephine	Shirley	Sandy	Karl	Gail
Janet	Tammy	Donna	John S.	Paige	Michelle B.
Pastor Dave	Keith	Johannes	Marcella	Linda	Gladys
Tammy	Jodi	Nancy K.	Rod	Larry	Ansley
Marsha	George	Louise	Jessica	Rob	Matthew
Michelle N.	Mike	Hannah			

Do you have prayer intentions? Remember you may add or remove intentions at any time. You do not have to be members of our parish, or even Orthodox to be placed on the list!



JUST REACH OUT IN HUMBLE FAITH

By: Fr. Philip LeMasters

Even in a small parish like ours, it is not hard to see that people are different from another in many ways. We have different interests, personal backgrounds, and opinions on all kinds of things. We do not all look or dress alike. But what we have in common as Orthodox Christians is far more profound than any of that. Our salvation is not in any conventional human characteristic or endeavor, but in the healing mercy of Jesus Christ.

In today's gospel passage, two very different people approached Him in humble faith and received new life as a result. Jairus was a ruler of the synagogue, an upstanding man in the Jewish community. We do not know the name of the other person, but she had little in common with Jairus. She was a woman who had been bleeding for twelve years, and had spent all her money on treatments that did not help her. She was not only poor, but also considered unclean because of the flow of blood. As a result, she would have been alone, for anyone who had physical contact with her would also become unclean. She could not even enter the Temple or have a normal social life. For twelve years, she had lived as someone cut off from God and from everyone else.

Jairus sought out the Lord and asked Him to heal his daughter, who was dying. But the woman could not even do that. She knew how others viewed her and perhaps she even viewed herself as a miserable, isolated, unclean woman not worthy of the attention of the Messiah. She did not ask Him to lay hands on her for healing, for that would make Him unclean also. She may have thought that He would have refused to heal her for that very reason. She was understandably embarrassed to have a public discussion with Christ about her medical condition. But she had enough faith and hope in Him to reach out and touch the hem of His clothing in the middle of a large crowd. Perhaps she could get what she wanted without drawing attention to herself.

And when she did reach out to Him in that way, she was healed. She had not made Christ unclean or been refused or humiliated by Him; instead, He had made her well. Of course, she was terrified when the Savior asked, "Who touched me?" She kneeled before Him in humility, shaking with fear, and confessed to Him— and to everyone else—that she was the one. Who knows just what was going through her mind in that moment when the Lord said, "Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace."

Did you notice that, before her healing, she had not said anything to Christ, not even identifying herself to Him? She never asked Him for anything, probably because she was too embarrassed and afraid to do those things. But she still did what little she could, at least reaching out to Him in faith. The Son of God knew who had touched Him, of course, but asked who it was in order to give her an opportunity to confess her faith, to make clear to herself and everyone else that His healing mercy extended even to her. In doing so, He showed that His abundant mercy extends even to those so broken and discouraged that they can just barely bring themselves to reach out to Him.

If we are honest, we will recognize ourselves in her humble example. Who is not embarrassed and discouraged due to some long-term struggle, some weakness or burden that we have virtually lost hope of overcoming? We may have experienced an embarrassment or humiliation so profound that we can barely acknowledge it to ourselves, much less to God or to other people. For whatever reason, we may have come to believe that we are unclean and unworthy of His mercy or of healthy

relationships with others. It may seem impossible to find the words to express our sufferings either in conversations with those closest to us or in prayer. Like that poor woman, we may feel alone, unworthy, and ashamed.

When that is our situation, we must follow her example of touching the hem of His garment, of reaching out to Christ for help as best we can. Even as He did not embarrass or reject her, He will not turn us away. He will respond graciously, as He always does to humble, sincere people who come to Him with faith, love, and repentance. Instead of us somehow making Him unclean, He will work through our faith to bring healing, mercy, and strength.

Jairus approached the Savior differently, openly asking Him to heal his dying daughter. But his faith was then put to a very difficult test. The girl died, but the Lord said that she was only sleeping. Everyone ridiculed Christ for that statement, but Jairus somehow believed the astonishing word of the Lord: "Do not be afraid; only believe, and she will be made well."

How hard it must have been for Jairus and his wife to hear this news and to believe in the Lord's promise. Their daughter had just died and the mourning had already begun. It was time to get ready for the funeral, and here was Christ denying the obvious. Their faith was put to the test, but they somehow still believed. And the Lord did as He said: He brought the girl back to life.

This healing was not as simple as Jairus had hoped. He was probably the kind of person used to getting what he wanted. If anyone could expect the help of the Messiah, it was an upstanding leader of the synagogue. But just as Abraham's faith was tested by the command to sacrifice Isaac, his faith was tested when his daughter actually died. It is one thing to heal the sick, but quite another to believe that someone can raise the dead. But probably with great fear and doubt, Jairus still managed to believe. He trusted Christ as best he could. And through that little bit of faith, the Lord showed His power over the grave and His unfathomable mercy for His suffering sons and daughters.

The differences between Jairus and the bleeding woman in social standing and reputation were ultimately irrelevant for how they stood before the Lord. The key point is that they did not stand; instead, they kneeled before Him in humble faith. Human characteristics and differences are ultimately irrelevant when it comes to our ability to follow the example of these two people. Though we will all do it differently in some ways, we can all open the wounds and sorrows of our lives to Him for healing as best we can in humble faith. We may still doubt, but there is no doubt that He will hear us and respond as is best for our salvation, for the healing of our souls. We must not judge ourselves or others as though it were up to us to determine who is worthy of Christ's blessing. Let this sink in: None of us is worthy or deserves anything from Him. Our hope is not in ourselves or what anyone owes us, but in the gracious mercy which He gives to all who reach out to Him from the depths of their souls with even a small bit of humble faith.

If you ever despair of the possibility of being healed and transformed by our merciful Savior, remember the woman who merely touched the hem of His garment and the man who somehow trusted that Christ could bring his daughter back to life. If you ever think that sin and death will have the last word about you, turn to the One Who went to the Cross, the tomb, and Hades in order to bring us into the eternal joy of His resurrection. If we come to Him in humble faith, presenting all our wounds for His healing as best we can, He will not send us away. Instead, He will heal our souls by His gracious mercy and make us already participants in life eternal.