

## 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



*Very Rev. Archpriest Elijah J. Bremer, Rector*  
412 Short Cut Road • Alum Bank, Pa 15521  
814-977-7397 • otets.ilya@yahoo.com

**Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem/Sunday of the Willows, 13 April 2025**

*"Fear not, daughter of Zion; Behold, your King is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt..."*

(John 12: 15)

## LITURGICAL SCHEDULE: 13 - 20 APRIL 2025

"Hosanna! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!' The King of Israel!" (John 12: 13)

<b>Sunday 13 April Tone 1</b>	<b>Entry of the Lord into Jerusalem Willowy Sunday</b> Epistle: Philippians 4: 4-9 Gospel: John 12: 1-18	<b>8:40 am</b> , Hours (CC) <b>9:00 am</b> , Liturgy (CC)
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~ Please see the schedule for Great Week & Pascha printed later in this bulletin ~

~ The entirety of Holy Week is a Period of Strict Fasting! ~

<b>Saturday/Sunday 19/20 April</b>	<b>The Bright &amp; Holy Day Pascha of the Lord</b>	<b>11:00 pm</b> , Matins & Procession (CC) <b>Midnight Divine Liturgy</b> (CC) Basket Blessing & Social to Follow
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~ Bright Week is a fast-free period – all foods are permitted the week following Pascha! ~

### ~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.

### Regarding the Rigors of the Upcoming Week...

Beginning on Holy Wednesday and continuing straight through Sunday morning, there are many services (sometimes two services per day) scheduled at Holy Assumption Orthodox Church. We encourage everyone to view these services not as individual events, but as a continuum – as a journey, in and of themselves, mirroring the journey Christ himself took in the days leading to his passion and resurrection. These are not chores, but opportunities to participate in the reality of our salvation (which is ongoing, and in which we are either actively participating, or ignoring). The church services are for the edification of the faithful. No faithful, no church. Please be mindful of the bulletin, and of the schedule. It is clearly posted, in multiple locations, in order to be of maximum benefit to parishioners and inquirers. Copies are on the bulletin board in the church hall, attached to every bulletin, and posted on the website (both as a PDF document, and in list format on the homepage). Please consult the schedule regularly to avoid missing services (both the recently held Unction/Healing Service, and Divine Liturgy for Lazarus Saturday were celebrated, but with only slight attendance).

Finally, a word regarding Pascha: please try to understand how significant the Resurrection is in the life of the Orthodox Church. Those who dismiss it clearly don't understand that it is the pinnacle of the Orthodox liturgical year. In the Orthodox Church, Pascha is considered the "Feast of Feasts" and is a mandatory celebration for all. We don't have a rigid concept of "holy days of obligation," but Pascha stands as the most significant feast, requiring participation in the extended services and celebrations. The obligation extends to both personal participation and upholding the traditions associated with Pascha, including the 40-day fast of Great Lent leading up to it and the joyful celebrations during Bright Week and the following Paschal period.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Red Taper Candles:** glory to God—an order of full-sized, red beeswax taper candles arrived just in time for Pascha! During Bright Week and the Paschal Season, please enjoy these beautiful candles in the traditional color of the Resurrection!

**Flowers for Pascha:** this week we will purchase followers for the tomb of Christ. This will be covered by the church general fund. Modesty and sensibility will govern our purchases, with the result being an elegant, simple, but well presented tomb. If you would like to help, please make a donation labeled "Pascha Flowers." Thank you!

**Recent Halušky & Minestrone Sale:** thank you to the volunteers who prepared food, as well as the parishioners and patrons who purchased it! While we covered our expenses and made a slight profit (for the roof fund), the attempt was not successful, and large quantities are still available. Anyone who would like pints or quarts can purchase them after Liturgy today. Both items are fasting appropriate for Holy Week. We hope every parishioner will consider taking some home for dinner, especially since they are fasting meals (what are you eating this week?). Thank you for helping us and supporting our church!

**Lenten Charity Projects:** we will wrap up our SPCA food drive and donation drive for the Woman's Help Center this week. Thank you to all who participated! Each donation will improve the life of a woman (and child) in need, as well as shelter pets waiting to be adopted. God bless your kindness!

**Next Weekend:** we're still not sure about this one, but a nun from St. Elizabeth Convent, Belarus, is scheduled to visit our parish with goods from their religious and liturgical supply store. The nuns run a rehabilitation program for adults struggling from a variety of conditions. Unfortunately, arranging accommodation for Sister Valeria has been difficult (St. John's guest house here in town is unavailable). Additionally, we are not entirely sure that Sister Valeria (because of the Paschal Schedule) will be available on Pascha morning. At this point, all we can say is presume she will join us for Liturgy. Indeed, her presence would be a blessing. Any goods purchased from the convent directly support their mission, so please keep this in mind! Thank you!



## HOLY WEEK & PASCHAL SCHEDULE

Please remember that all services are celebrated in Holy Assumption Orthodox Church, Central City (designated by CC in parenthesis). We may have two church buildings, but for all practical purposes, we are one church family, with the expectation that everyone is welcome at Holy Assumption, and will celebrate with us as one family in faith.

Sunday 13 April	Willow Sunday	Divine Liturgy, 9 am (CC)
Wednesday 16 April	Divine Liturgy of St. Gregory	Presanctified Liturgy, 6 pm (CC)
Thursday 17 April	Divine Liturgy of St. Basil (Institution of Eucharist)	Divine Liturgy, 4 pm (CC)
Thursday 17 April	Reading of 12 Passion Gospels (Strasti)	Matins of Holy Friday, 6 pm (CC)
Friday 18 April	Entombment Vespers & Procession (Nadhrobne)	Vespers, 6 pm (CC)
Saturday 19 April	Harrowing of Hell Divine Liturgy of St. Basil	Divine Liturgy, 10 am (CC)
Saturday Evening 19 April	Removal of Shroud, Procession, & Matins	Matins, 11 pm (CC)
Sunday 20 April	Resurrection of the Lord	Paschal Liturgy & Basket Blessing(CC) Immediately following Matins
Monday 21 April	Bright Monday	Divine Liturgy, 9 am (CC)



*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. Sasha	Abp. Melchisedek Mat. Laryssa	Abp. Michael Fr. Jim	Fr. Michael Mat. Sarah	Mat. Valeria Archimandrite Seraphim	
Allison	Elaine	Charles	Katie	Mike	Pat
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	Scott	Jon	Rhonda
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
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	Matthew	James
Mike	Hannah	Mike	Lubomyr	Tom	Lilly

**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!



## HOLY WEEK IN THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

*(borrowed from the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North America, edited to reflect our usage)*

The eight days that comprise Holy Week in the Orthodox Church express the spiritual summit of the Church's liturgical life. The focus on the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Christ proceeds in a physically, psychologically and spiritually moving series of services that defy the limitations of space and time to bring the Orthodox Christian into the moment of the events commemorated. The elegant beauty of the services so move the faithful that it is not uncommon to see tears flow as people feel mystically participating in the events of the last week of Jesus' earthly ministry.

The Saturday of Lazarus (the day before Palm Sunday) recalls the last public miracle of Jesus in raising Lazarus from the dead. This act serves as a reassurance that the Passion Jesus Himself will face in the week ahead will not end in death and corruption. The hymnody emphasizes that Christ is fully human and Divine.

**Sunday of the Willows** is a celebration of the Lord's triumphant entry into Jerusalem. On this day we bless willow branches (in traditions of Mediterranean descent, palm branches are used, and often folded into ornate crosses), which are held by the faithful throughout the Divine Liturgy. The hymnody reflects both the raising of Lazarus and the humility of the King who enters Jerusalem on the foal of an ass.

The (Bridegroom Matins) services of Holy Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday focus on the End Times. There is an urgency in the tone of the services as, successively, the innocent suffering of the Patriarch Joseph in the Old Testament, the parable of the Ten Virgins, and the anointing by the sinful woman (traditionally identified as Kassiani) is brought to mind in anticipation of the events to follow. Of particular beauty is the "Hymn of Kassiani" on Tuesday night, in which the faithful identify themselves with the sinful woman, both repentant and grieving at the suffering Jesus will endure for our salvation.

In many Orthodox dioceses, Wednesday Evening is the occasion for the **Sacrament of Holy Anointing**. In our Archdiocese, the Archbishop forbids this celebration during Holy Week, preferring instead to celebrate it prior to Palm Sunday. More than a blessing of Holy Oil for the sick, the service functions as a transition from the expectation of the Passion to a spiritual participation in the last days of Christ. The focus is on repentance and the assurance of healing (spiritual as well as physical) through the Person of Jesus Christ.

On Holy Thursday the **Vespertal Liturgy of the Last Supper** is celebrated. The Gospel Reading is a masterful combination of readings that recount the Last Supper, institution of the Holy Eucharist, and betrayal, arrest, and condemnation of Jesus. The hymnody centers on betrayal of Judas with allusions to the three Old Testament readings which each focus on the innocence of Jesus as a lamb led to the slaughter.

**Matins of the Passion** (12 Gospels, or "Strasti") follows on Thursday evening. The complete Passion narratives of each of the Gospels are read in three sections each to dramatically tell the story of the Passion and Death of Jesus. During the service, the faithful are spiritually transported into the events being described by the carrying of the Cross. The sense of terror and despair becomes palpable, and it is not uncommon for people to weep at this point. The service continues with a growing sense of dread and grief as the Gospels recount the Death of Jesus.

Holy Friday is truly a day of mourning. In some parishes, the **Royal Hours** are read with prophecies from the Old Testament and the Epistles noting both the tragedy of Innocent Suffering and the assurance of victory through the Cross.

In the afternoon, the **Entombment Vespers** (Nadhrobne) occurs. Prophecies, Readings and Hymns again bring the faithful into the midst of events as the story of the Crucifixion is recounted and death of Jesus is affirmed. At the point of the Gospel narrative wherein Jesus is taken down from the Cross, the priest exits the Sanctuary and removes the Icon corpus from the cross, wraps in a white shroud and slowly takes it into the Sanctuary. Again, the silence of the moment can prove overwhelming and often tears are seen on the faces of many. As the service proceeds, the priest emerges again, this time carrying the Epitaphios (a large stiff cloth with the icon image of Jesus being laid in the tomb). The procession ends at the Kouvouklion — a carved table with dome that represents a Funeral Bier — where the Epitaphios is laid out to be revered by the faithful.

In some parishes, the Evening, the faithful gather for the **Lamentations**. The Church joins with the Angelic Hosts in mourning the death of the Deathless One.

Holy Saturday begins with the **Vespertal Liturgy of the First Proclamation of the Resurrection** (the Harrowing of Hell). The Resurrection is proclaimed with a strong association drawn to Passover and Baptism. Before the Gospel the priest scatters bay leaves, laurel leaves or rose petals throughout the whole church as a sign of the triumph and victory over death. Traditionally, converts to Orthodoxy are Baptized either before or immediately after this service.

The Night of Holy Saturday features the most moving and joyous celebration in the Orthodox Church. The **Resurrection Matins** begin with a **Procession**. The Church grows ever darker until all lights and candles are extinguished. Suddenly, the priest exits the Sanctuary with a light candle, singing, "Come, take the light from the Light that is never overtaken by night." The tension that has been building throughout the week breaks as one by one candles are lit from the paschal candle, the church suddenly breaking forth into light. Singing the Hymn "Christ is Risen," all process outside the Church, the doors are closed and the Resurrection Gospel is proclaimed. The Matins of the Resurrection begins outside the church with jubilant singing of "Christ is Risen" and incensing of the faithful. When the doors are finally opened the Church is resplendent with all lights on and candles burning. The Archangels doors are open (and remain open throughout Bright Week, the period between Pascha and the Sunday of St. Thomas). Matins concludes in an air of joy and celebration. The clergy shout "Christ is Risen!" and the faithful respond, "Truly, He is Risen!" throughout the remainder of the Service. The usual ending of the service is replaced with the singing of Christ is Risen and the celebration of the **Resurrectional Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom**.

In conclusion, Holy Week in the Orthodox Church is more than attending a series of services, it is a weeklong experiencing of the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. The hymnody, readings, and overall arrangement of the services combine to powerfully witness to the central Truth of our Salvation. Those who faithfully participate in the services truly walk the way of the Cross and experience the joy of the Resurrection.

