



St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre Orthodox Church

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Fr Steven Hosking

Rector

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Services Schedule

Please see our [online calendar](#) for dates and times of Feast Day services.

Bulletin for Sunday, December 30, 2018

Welcome



Jesus Christ taught us to love and serve all people, regardless of their ethnicity or nationality. To understand that, we need to look no further than to the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). Every time we celebrate the Divine Liturgy, it is offered "*on behalf of all, and for all.*" As Orthodox Christians

we stand against racism and bigotry. All human beings share one common identity as children of God.

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatian 3:28)

Weekly Services

Tuesdays at 8:30a - Daily Matins
Wednesdays at 6:00p - Daily Vespers (The Church is open at 4:30p for "Open Doors" - confession, meditation and reflection).
Thursday at 8:30a - Daily Matins
Saturday at 5:30p - Great Vespers
Sunday at 9:30a - Divine Liturgy

Members of our Parish Council are:

Greg Jankura - Council President

Natalie Kucharski - Council Treasurer

Kyle Hollis - Member at Large

Glenn PenkoffLedbeck - Council Secretary

Michael Kuziak - Council Vice President

Roderick Seurattan - Member at Large

Pastoral Care - General Information

- *Emergency Sick Calls* can be made at any time. Please call Fr Steven at (860) 866-5802, when a family member is admitted to the hospital.
- *Anointing in Sickness*: The Sacrament of Unction is available in Church, the hospital, or your home, for anyone who is sick and suffering, however severe.
- *Marriages and Baptisms* require early planning, scheduling and selections of sponsors (crown bearers or godparents). See Father before booking dates and reception halls!
- *Funerals* are celebrated for practicing Orthodox Christians. Please see Father for details. The Church opposes cremation; we cannot celebrate funerals for cremations.

Announcements

The progress of the iconography installation continues. Please check out our Facebook page for some photographic updates. Also Kyra Seurattan has also created an Instagram account for the parish

(@st.alexisorthodox) where you can see photographs of the Nativity celebration.

2019 Connecticut Special Olympics Penguin Plunge

Sarah Gaulin will, once again, jump in the cold waters for raising money for a great cause, the Connecticut Special Olympics!! Her husband, Justin, will also be participating. Hoping for "warmer" weather (at least 30 degrees)

Due to the complicated state budget, extreme cuts were made in various programs. Including Connecticut Special Olympics. Fundraisers like this helps out in many many ways. Please consider donating and help keep this program going strong.

When: March 3, 2019 (snow date TBA) Where: Ocean Beach Park in New London, CT
2 ways to donate to this awesome cause

- Donate online: www.soct.org - Ways to Give Penguin Plunge Shoreline Plunge Search by my name Donate
- Checks: Made out to Connecticut Special Olympics & mailed to my home address below

If any questions, don't hesitate to ask :)
sarahsenetcen@yahoo.com
15 Virginia Road Oakdale, CT 06370 860-309-6412
Thank you for your support

His Name Jesus [Matthew 1:25,] he had Him circumcised, he fled with the divine infant and His Mother into Egypt, and then chose their place of residence to be Nazareth, working as a carpenter, teaching and working with his Son, our Savior and Redeemer Jesus Christ. It is said by many sources that he reposed at the age of 110, right before the Lord Jesus began His public ministry.

As he lay dying, one apocryphal source tells us that Joseph cried out to the Lord, "Hail, my well-beloved Son. Indeed the agony and fear of death has encompassed me. But as soon as I heard thy voice, my soul is at rest. O Jesus of Nazareth! Jesus my Savior! Jesus, the deliverer of my soul! Jesus, my protector! Jesus, O sweetest name in my mouth, and in the mouth of all that love it!"

As we celebrate the Nativity in the Flesh of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, let us reflect: Out of love, the Lord descend from on high, becoming poor that we might be rich, out of love, He emptied Himself, and took the form of a servant. Out of love, He reconciled and healed the nature of man so that we might partake of those things which eye has never seen or hath ever entered into the heart of man. This is a feast of the love of God: God so loved the world, that He gave (as the greatest gift to all) His Only Begotten Son.... Christ is the answer to all our needs. Christ is the answer to all of our problems. Christ is the Life in our death, Christ is the joy in our sorrows, Christ is the

strength in our weakness. Out of His great love, He clothed Himself in flesh to seek that which was lost. Without Him, we are lost, our life is death and our love remains

enclosed within our own small world. What is it that we are doing or can do repay debt of love? Love is only repaid by love. Let us love not in word but in deed by placing the Lord on the Throne of our heart. Let us love one another not in word but in deed through a spirit of kindness and gentleness, setting aside the darkness of hate and bitterness and choosing to follow the way of Christ. Let us love one another and show mercy and compassion to each other so that God may find us worthy of His love. Let us love one another, so that with one heart and one mouth we may confess the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

tradition can tell us about the one who protected and nurtured not only our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ but also the our Most Pure and Blessed Lady, Theotokos and ever Virgin Mary.

The Hymnography for this feast exclaims: "O Joseph, tell thou the glad tidings to David, the ancestor of God, for thou hast seen a Virgin give birth; with the shepherds didst thou give glory; with the Magi didst thou worship; by an angel wast thou instructed. Entreat Christ God, that He save our souls!"

Joseph, at the time of his betrothal to the Most Pure Virgin Mary, was about eighty years old. It was said by St. Epiphanius that out of all the men in Israel there was none to be found more fitting and righteous than Joseph. He was of the same tribe as Mary (the House of David, the Tribe of Judah), elderly, and had led an irreproachable, trustworthy, and honorable life. The betrothal was a protection and deception to the devil who knew the prophecies about a Virgin who was to give birth to the Savior and was keeping a watchful eye for the One that was to be born.

In the time of Christ, the people of Israel had a very father-centered, paternal form

of family life. The fatherless and the widows where often denied justice in the time of Christ, having no man to defend their rights. The blessed Jerome tells us that there was a threefold purpose accomplished by Joseph's betrothal to the Virgin: a quiet obscurity was assured for Christ until the appointed moment, second, there was an impenetrable defense against slander

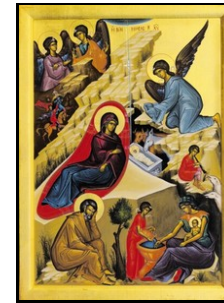
for the all-Holy Virgin, and third, a masculine defense was provided for both her and the divine infant.

Joseph was a widower and had many children from his previous marriage, among whom was the youngest one, James the (half) brother of the Lord whom we also commemorate today. From the book, *The Life of the Virgin Mary*, we are told that "God ordained the family unit as a vital part of human society. And what a great reward and honor awaited Joseph and all his house! One of his sons would be of the inner twelve Apostles (Jude); one would become the first Bishop of Jerusalem (James); and his daughter Salome, the Myrrh-bearer would give birth to the two Apostles and 'sons of thunder,' James and John. And let us also not forget that Joseph's brother, Cleopas, was one of the Seventy Apostles."

In all things, Joseph provides us with an image of humility, of righteousness, and of goodness of the highest degree. He nurtured, protected, guided and helped the Lord and the Ever-Virgin Mary in a way that was so special and unique that it behooves us to honor him with never silent hymns and to call upon his intercessions with fervent hearts. How could the Lord fail to honor the one who cared and loved Him so much! The just Joseph, though his hands were covered with the calluses of the carpenter, yet his spirit

was refined and elevated with the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures. Though he took no part in the conception and incarnation of Christ, he was to be called the father of the Lord. He fulfilled all the duties of a father towards a son: He called

Saints and Feasts



December 30

Sunday after Nativity

On the Sunday that falls on or immediately after the twenty-sixth of this month, we make commemoration of Saints Joseph, the Betrothed of

the Virgin; David, the Prophet and King; and James, the Brother of God. When there is no Sunday within this period, we celebrate this commemoration on the 26th.

Saint Joseph (whose name means "one who increases") was the son of Jacob, and the son-in-law - and hence, as it were, the son - of Eli (who was also called Eliakim or Joachim), who was the father of Mary the Virgin (Matt. 1:16; Luke 3:23). He was of the tribe of Judah, of the family of David, an inhabitant of Nazareth, a carpenter by Trade, and advanced in age when, by God's good will, he was betrothed to the Virgin, that he might minister to the great mystery of God's dispensation in the flesh by protecting her, providing for her, and being known as her husband so that she, being a virgin, would not suffer reproach when she was found to be with child. Joseph had been married before his betrothal to our Lady; they who are called Jesus' "brethren and sisters" (Matt. 13:55-56) are the children of Joseph by his first marriage. From Scripture, we know that Saint Joseph lived

at least until the Twelfth year after the birth of Christ (Luke 2:41-52); according to the tradition of the Fathers, he reposed before the beginning of the public ministry of Christ.

The child of God and ancestor of God, David, the great Prophet after Moses, sprang from the tribe of Judah. He was the son of Jesse, and was born in Bethlehem (whence it is called the City of David), in the year 1085 before Christ. While yet a youth, at the command of God he was anointed secretly by the Prophet Samuel to be the second King of the Israelites, while Saul - who had already been deprived of divine grace - was yet living. In the thirtieth year of his life, when Saul had been slain in battle, David was raised to the dignity of King, first, by his own tribe, and then by all the Israelite people, and he reigned for forty years. Having lived seventy years, he reposed in 1015 before Christ, having proclaimed beforehand that his son Solomon was to be the successor to the throne.

The sacred history has recorded not only the grace of the Spirit that dwelt in him from his youth, his heroic exploits in war, and his great piety towards God, but also his transgressions and failings as a man. Yet his repentance was greater than his transgressions, and his love for God fervent and exemplary; so highly did God honour this man, that when his son Solomon sinned, the Lord told him that He would not rend the kingdom in his lifetime "for David thy father's sake" (III Kings 12:12). Of The Kings of Israel, Jesus the Son of Sirach testifies, "All, except David and Hezekias

and Josias, were defective" (Ecclus. 49:4). The name David means "beloved."

His melodious Psalter is the foundation of all the services of the Church; there is not one service that is not filled with Psalms and psalmic verses. It was the means whereby old Israel praised God, and was used by the Apostles and the Lord Himself. It is so imbued with the spirit of prayer that the monastic fathers of all ages have used it as their trainer and teacher for their inner life of converse with God. Besides eloquently portraying every state and emotion of the soul before her Maker, the Psalter is filled with prophecies of the coming of Christ. It foretells His Incarnation, "He bowed the heavens and came down" (Psalm 17:9), His Baptism in the Jordan, "The waters saw Thee, O God, The waters saw Thee and were afraid" (76:15), His Crucifixion in its details, "They have pierced My hands and My feet They have parted My garments amongst themselves, and for My vesture have they cast lots" (21:16, 18). "For My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink" (68:26), His descent into Hades, "For Thou wilt not abandon My soul in Hades, nor wilt Thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption" (15:10) and Resurrection, "Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered" (67:1). His Ascension, "God is gone up in jubilation" (46:5), and so forth.

As for James, the Brother of God, see October 23.

Lives of the Saints

Sunday after the Nativity: Commemoration of the Holy Righteous David the King, Joseph the Betrothed, and James the Brother of the Lord

The Holy Prophet-King David, Saint Joseph the Betrothed, and Saint James the Brother of the Lord are commemorated on the Sunday after the Nativity. If there is no Sunday between December 25 and January 1, their commemoration is moved to December 26.

At an early date, some churches in the East began to commemorate certain important figures of the New Testament at the time of Theophany, and later during the Nativity season. In Syria, for example, Saint Stephen (December 27), Saints James (April 30) and John (September 26), and Saints Peter and Paul (June 29) were commemorated near the end of December.

In Jerusalem, the saints mentioned above were combined with a feast that the Jews of Hebron celebrated on December 25 or 26 in honor of the Old Testament Patriarch Jacob. Later on, the Christians substituted Saint James (October 23) for Jacob, and then the commemoration of the Brother of the Lord became associated with his ancestor King David. In time, Saint Joseph was linked with Saints David and James.

Saint Joseph the Betrothed was of the lineage of King David. In his first marriage, he had four sons and two daughters. After

dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there till I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." And he rose and took the child and his mother by night, and departed to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt have I called my son."

Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, was in a furious rage, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: "A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they were no more." But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead." And he rose and took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaos reigned over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. And he went and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

Wisdom of the Fathers

At His birth [He] is laid in a manger, and abides in an inn, and takes a mother of low estate; teaching us to think no such thing a disgrace, and from the first outset trampling under foot the haughtiness of man, and bidding us give ourselves up to virtue only. For why do you pride yourself on your country, when I am commanding thee to be a stranger to the whole world?

St. John Chrysostom

Homily 9 on Matthew 2, 4th Century

Reflection



Homily for the Sunday
After Nativity

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Today, on this 4th Day After the Nativity of our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ, we commemorate the Holy Righteous Ones: the Prophet David, James the Brother of the Lord and Joseph the Betrothed. This is the only commemoration of St. Joseph the betrothed in the Orthodox Church. Much of his life in the Gospel account is shrouded in silence. However, there are many things that the Church's

you saw a Virgin great with child;
you gave glory with the shepherds;
you worshipped with the Magi;
you received the news from the Angel.//
Pray to Christ God to save our souls!

Tone 3 Kontakion (of the Righteous Ones)

Today godly David is filled with joy;
Joseph and James offer praise.
The glorious crown of their kinship with Christ
fills them with great joy.
They sing praises to the One ineffably born on
earth,
and they cry out: "O Compassionate One, save
those who honor You!"

Tone 3 Kontakion of the Feast

Today the Virgin gives birth to the
Transcendent One,
and the earth offers a cave to the
Unapproachable One.
Angels with shepherds glorify Him;
the Wise Men journey with the star,//
since for our sake the eternal God was born as
a little Child!

Gospel and Epistle Readings

Epistle Reading

Prokeimenon. 4th Tone. Psalm

67.35,26.

God is wonderful among his saints.
Verse: Bless God in the congregations.

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 1:11-19.

Brethren, I would have you know that the gospel which was preached by me is not man's gospel. For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ. For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it; and I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers. But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord's brother.

Gospel Reading

Sunday after Nativity The Reading is from Matthew 2:13-23

When the wise men departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a

he became a widower, Saint Joseph led a life of strict temperance. He was chosen to be the husband and guardian of the Most Holy Theotokos, who had taken a vow of virginity.

An angel told him of the Incarnation of the Son of God through her. Saint Joseph was present when the shepherds and the Magi worshiped the new-born divine Infant. On the orders of the angel, he fled into Egypt with the Mother of God and the Infant Jesus, saving them from the wrath of King Herod. He lived in Egypt with the Virgin Mary and the divine Child, working as a carpenter. Saint Joseph reputedly died at the age of one hundred.

Saint Joseph is commemorated on the Sunday after the Nativity. If there is no Sunday between December 25 and January 1, his Feast is moved to December 26. The Righteous Joseph is also commemorated on the Sunday of the Holy Forefathers.

The Holy Prophet-King David was a forefather of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the flesh. The youngest son of Jesse, David shepherded a flock of sheep belonging to his father. He was distinguished by his deep faith, and he zealously fulfilled the will of God.

During a battle with the Philistines, he vanquished the giant Goliath in single combat, which decided the outcome of the war in favor of the Israelites. He endured many things from King Saul, who saw him as a favorite of the people and his rival. David, however, showed his own decency and magnanimity. Twice, when he had the possibility of killing Saul, he did not do so.

After Saul and his son perished, David was proclaimed king of the southern part of Israel, and after Saul's second son was killed, he became king of all Israel. He built a new capital, Jerusalem ("the City of Peace"), and a new tabernacle. His great wish to build a Temple was not realized. It was foretold to him that his son would build the Temple.

The life of the Prophet David was darkened by a grievous falling: he took Uriah's wife for himself, and sent Uriah to his death in battle. He was also an example of great repentance, humbly and with faith bearing the sorrows sent in punishment for his sins. Saint David gave a model for repentance in Psalm 50/51. King David died in great old age with steadfast faith in the coming of the promised Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ. His divinely-inspired Psalter is widely used in the divine services and in personal prayers. (See the Books of Kings and Chronicles).

The holy Prophet-King David is invoked by those facing a difficult situation, such as an interview, etc.

The Holy Apostle James, Brother of the Lord, was the eldest son of Joseph the Betrothed from his first marriage with Solomonia. The Apostle James is remembered after the Feast of the Nativity of Christ together with his father Joseph and the Prophet-King David, since he accompanied his family on the Flight into Egypt and lived there with the Infant Jesus, the Mother of God and Joseph. Later, he returned to Israel with them.

After the Ascension of the Lord, Saint James

was the first Bishop of Jerusalem, gaining the great esteem not only of Christians, but also of Jews. He was thrown from the roof of the Jerusalem Temple because he had publicly preached to the people about the God-Manhood of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Apostle James is also commemorated on October 23.

Parish Calendar

Service and Events

December 30, 2018 to January 7, 2019

DECEMBER

Sunday, December 30

Sunday after Nativity
9:30AM Divine Liturgy

Monday, December 31

Apodosis of the Nativity of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ
6:00PM Service of Thanksgiving for the New Year (Moleben)

JANUARY

Tuesday, January 1

Circumcision of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
8:30AM Akathist to St Basil the Great

Wednesday, January 2

Akathist to St Seraphim of Sarov
Forefeast of the Theophany of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
Akathist to St Juliana the Merciful

Thursday, January 3

Malachi the Prophet
8:30AM Daily Matins

Friday, January 4

Synaxis of the 70 Holy Apostles

Saturday, January 5

Saturday before Epiphany
5:30PM Great Vespers with Great Blessing of Water

Sunday, January 6

The Theophany of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ
Liturgical and Education Ministry meeting
Theophany
9:30AM Divine Liturgy
11:00AM Blessing of Long Island Sound

Monday, January 7

Synaxis of John the Holy Glorious Prophet, Baptist, & Forerunner
Liberty Page - B

Prayers, Intercessions and Commemorations



William, Sophia, Robert, Ann, Evelyn, Nina, John, Alex, Luke, Kathryn, Anastasia, Malcolm, Veronica, Darlyne, Irene, Nancy, Elena, Jevon, the new born Stella Anna, Ivan and Joscean.

And for... Sofie, Katrina, Olena, Valeriy, Olga, Tatiana, Dimitri, Alexander

and Maxim.

All of our College Students: Alex, Kaitlyn, Jack, Sam, Connor, Nadia, Isaac and Matthew.

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Many Years! to: Aaron Hosking on the occasion of his birthday.

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Pray for: All those confined to hospitals, nursing homes, and their own homes due to illness; for all those who serve in the armed forces; widows, orphans, prisoners, victims of violence, and refugees;

All those suffering chronic illness, financial hardship, loneliness, addictions, abuse, abandonment and despair; those who are homeless, those who are institutionalized, those who have no one to pray for them;

All Orthodox seminarians & families; all Orthodox monks and nuns, and all those considering monastic life; all Orthodox missionaries and their families.

All those who have perished due to hatred and intolerance and all those departed this life in the hope of the Resurrection.

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Today we commemorate:

Afterfeast of the Nativity of Christ. Sunday after Nativity. Holy Righteous Ones: Joseph the Betrothed, David the King, and James the Brother of the Lord. Virgin Martyr Anysia at Thessalonica (285-305). Martyr Zoticus, Keeper of Orphans (4th c.). Apostle

of the Seventy, Timon the Deacon (1st c.). Martyr Philoterus of Nicomedia (311). Ven. Theodora of Cæsarea in Cappadocia (8th c.). Ven. Theodora of Constantinople (10th c.). Monk Martyr Gideon of Karakallou (Mt. Athos—1818). St. Makáry, Metropolitan of Moscow and All Russia (1563).

Hymns of the Day

Tone 6 Troparion (Resurrection)

The angelic powers were at Your tomb; the guards became as dead men. Mary stood by Your grave, seeking Your most pure body. You took captive hell, // not being tempted by it. You came to the Virgin, granting life. // O Lord, Who rose from the dead, glory to You.

Tone 4 Troparion (for the Feast)

Your Nativity, O Christ our God, has shone to the world the light of wisdom. For by it, those who worshipped the stars, were taught by a star to adore You, the Sun of righteousness, and to know You, the Orient from on high. // O Lord, glory to You!

Tone 2 Troparion (of the Righteous Ones)

Proclaim the wonder, O Joseph, to David, the ancestor of God;