

about the truth, my soul. But when you would pose certain questions to them, questions which burned deep within you, their words would get stuck in their throats. And saddened, you would go to other story-tellers, and would hear the same tale over again --a tale which, like all the others, only went so far, like a stretched rubber band.

And those who used to try to explain life to you, would only succeed in opening your eyes to death.

But behold, the One who resurrects is coming, and all-terrifying death flees in terror before Him. Here is a story for you about Life, one which death does not shorten, but lengthens.¹ Here is a story for you about Truth, one which provides answers to all your questions before you even pose them.

Here is the Guide for you, whose Way never ends; and once He begins to guide you, He does not go back.

Here is the Good Shepherd,² who values the life of one sheep above all the Sabbaths of the Jews.³ And here is the Healer, to whom the life of a penitent sinner is more valuable than Solomon's temple.⁴

Do not worry, my soul, about any of the sheep in your sheepfold -- not one of them will perish. Neither need you fret over the wolves around the sheep -- not one of them will escape. For your Shepherd has a sharp two-edged sword.

All the sheep are within you, and all the wolves are within you -- the progeny of your marriage with heaven and earth --and behold, my Favorite is coming in with a sharp two-edged sword.

Do not wail, if He hurts you with His sword. He is the Good Physician and He cuts out of you only that which is not you. Do not wail

for the strangers who brought you disease, and shame, and grievous wounds. Do not be afraid of the in-extinguishable fire, that He brings into you. For a long time the junk accumulated within you has been in need of a bonfire. The bonfire will last a long time, because the old junk within you has rotted. The pain that you feel is not your own, my soul, but is the pain of your other marriage and its -- illegitimate children. Do not lament, if He separates you from a father and a mother, and brothers and sisters.⁵ He will not separate you from anything that is of heaven. He would not even consider cutting a single heavenly bond. Indeed, He is only separating and purifying you from earth, and is cutting your bonds with earth.

If you were a chaste virgin, my soul, and saw with the unconfounded eye of celestial innocence, even you yourself would easily break these bonds, for you would see that in truth they do not even exist.

Hurry, my soul, and unite yourself with the Son of the Living God, for He is not waiting for me. Once you unite yourself with Him, behold, neither His sword nor His fire will be frightening to you, but will be as sweet as honey.

1. Cf. Luke 7:11-17, Mark 5:21-24, 34-43, and John 11:1-44.
2. Cf. John 10:1-30.
3. Cf. Luke 15:3-7.
4. Cf. John 9.
5. Cf. Gen. 12:1, Matt. 10:37 and 19:29.



St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre Orthodox Church

Address: PO Box 134, 108 E Main St, Clinton,
CT 06413-0134

Phone: 860-664-9434

Web: <http://www.stalexischurch.org>

Email: stalexis@ dneoca.org

Fr Steven Hosking

Rector

Phone: 860-866-5802 (Message)

Email: frsteve@stalexischurch.org

Services Schedule

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

Bulletin for Sunday, March 17, 2019

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 PenkoffLidbeck - 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

Church Directory

You will be receiving an electronic copy of a new church directory that Susan Egan is working on complete. Please review your contact information and send any corrections to Susan Egan (lsb@snet.net). There is also a copy of the directory at the candle desk that you can review as well.

2019 Pledge Analysis 2018

The pledge budget was \$99,250. Pledges totaled \$83,840 or 85% of budget. Total

parish income was \$88,205 or 89% of budget. Shortfall was \$11,045. Overall we ended the year with a \$7400 deficit which was funded from savings.

2019

The pledge budget is \$93,300. To date we have received \$56,300 in pledges from 22 members or 60% of budget. If we assume that the other 12 who pledged last year, but have not submitted a 2019 pledge, will give at their 2018 level, that will add in another \$25,700. Then we have the habitual 12 non-pledgers of whom 8 gave check contributions in 2018 that totaled \$2,225. The other four may have put cash in the basket, but since it's anonymous it then gets counted as cash/candle not pledge.

Of the 22 pledgers, 2 decreased while 6 increased their pledges. That resulted in a net loss of \$1,040 in pledges over 2018.

2019 pledgers(22)	\$56,300
2019 implied pledgers(12)	\$25,700
2019 non pledgers(12)	\$ 2,225

Total projected \$84,225 or 90% of budget, leaving us with a potential shortfall of \$9,075.

Saints and Feasts



March 17

Alexis the Man of God

Saint Alexis was born in old Rome of illustrious parents

Gospel Reading

Sunday of Orthodoxy

The Reading is from **John 1:43-51**

At that time, Jesus decided to go to Galilee. And he found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael, and he said to him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" Nathanael said to him, "How do you know me?" Jesus answered him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." Nathanael answered him, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" Jesus answered him, "Because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You shall see greater things than these." And he said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."

Wisdom of the Fathers

Peter, when after so many miracles and such high doctrine he confessed that, "Thou art the Son of God" (Matt. xvi. 16), is called "blessed," as having received the revelation from the Father;

St. John Chrysostom

Homily 21 on John 1, 1. B#58, pp. 72, 73, 4th Century

... while Nathanael, though he said the very same thing before seeing or hearing either miracles or doctrine, had no such word addressed to him, but as though he had not said so much as he ought to have said, is brought to things greater still.

St. John Chrysostom

Homily 21 on John 1, 1. B#58, pp. 72, 73, 4th Century

Reflection



Prayers by the
Lake by Bishop
Nikolai
Velimirovich

LIX

How many, many times, my soul, you have sobbed for someone who knew the way, had seen the truth, and possessed life. You thirstily used to entrust yourself to many expert runners, who would lead you along every way to a certain point, and would then take you back. You used to listen to many who told tales

Tone 2 Troparion (Sunday of Orthodoxy)

We venerate Your most pure image, O Good One;
and ask forgiveness of our transgressions, O Christ our God.
Of Your good will You were pleased to ascend the cross in the flesh
and deliver Your creatures from bondage to the Enemy.
Therefore with thankfulness we cry aloud to You:
"You have filled all with joy, O our Savior, //
for You alone have come to save the world."

Tone 8 Kontakion (from the Lenten Triodion)

No one could describe the Word of the Father;
but when He took flesh from you, O Theotokos,
He accepted to be described,
and restored the fallen image to its former state by uniting it to divine beauty. //
We confess and proclaim our salvation in words and images.

Gospel and Epistle Readings

Epistle Reading

Prokeimenon. 4th Tone. Daniel 3.26,27.

Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of our fathers.

Verse: For you are just in all you have done.

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-40.

Brethren, by faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to share ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.

And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets -- who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign enemies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated -- of whom the world was not worthy -- wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

named Euphemianus and Aglais, and at their request was joined to a young woman in marriage. However, he did not remain with her even for one day, but fled to Edessa, where he lived for eighteen years. He returned to Rome in the guise of a beggar and sat at the gates of his father's house, unknown to all and mocked by his own servants. His identity was revealed only after his death by a paper that he had on his person, which he himself had written a little before his repose. The pious Emperor Honorius honoured him with a solemn burial. The title "Man of God" was given to him from heaven in a vision to the Bishop of Rome on the day of the Saint's repose.



March 17

Patrick, Enlightener of Ireland

Saint Patrick, the Apostle of the Irish, was seized from his native Britain by Irish marauders when he was sixteen years old. Though the son of a deacon and a grandson of a priest, it was not until his captivity that he sought out the Lord with his whole heart. In his Confession, the testament he wrote towards the end of his life, he says, "After I came to Ireland - every day I had to tend sheep, and many times a day I prayed - the love of God and His fear came to me more and more, and my faith was strengthened. And my spirit was so moved that in a single

day I would say as many as a hundred prayers, and almost as many at night, and this even when I was staying in the woods and on the mountain; and I would rise for prayer before daylight, through snow, through frost, through rain, and I felt no harm." After six years of slavery in Ireland, he was guided by God to make his escape, and afterwards struggled in the monastic life at Auxerre in Gaul, under the guidance of the holy Bishop Germanus. Many years later he was ordained bishop and sent to Ireland once again, about the year 432, to convert the Irish to Christ. His arduous labours bore so much fruit that within seven years, three bishops were sent from Gaul to help him shepherd his flock, "my brethren and sons whom I have baptized in the Lord - so many thousands of people," he says in his Confession. His apostolic work was not accomplished without much "weariness and painfulness," long journeys through difficult country, and many perils; he says his very life was in danger twelve times. When he came to Ireland as its enlightener, it was a pagan country; when he ended his earthly life some thirty years later, about 461, the Faith of Christ was established in every corner.



March 17

Sunday of Orthodoxy

For more than one hundred years the Church of Christ was troubled by the

persecution of the Iconoclasts of evil belief, beginning in the reign of Leo the Isaurian (717-741) and ending in the reign of Theophilus (829-842). After Theophilus's death, his widow the Empress Theodora (celebrated Feb. 11), together with the Patriarch Methodius (June 14), established Orthodoxy anew. This ever-memorable Queen venerated the icon of the Mother of God in the presence of the Patriarch Methodius and the other confessors and righteous men, and openly cried out these holy words: "If anyone does not offer relative worship to the holy icons, not adoring them as though they were gods, but venerating them out of love as images of the archetype, let him be anathema." Then with common prayer and fasting during the whole first week of the Forty-day Fast, she asked God's forgiveness for her husband. After this, on the first Sunday of the Fast, she and her son, Michael the Emperor, made a procession with all the clergy and people and restored the holy icons, and again adorned the Church of Christ with them. This is the holy deed that all we the Orthodox commemorate today, and we call this radiant and venerable day the Sunday of Orthodoxy, that is, the triumph of true doctrine over heresy.

Parish Calendar

Service and Events

March 17 to March 25, 2019

Sunday, March 17

Akathist to Patrick of Ireland

Sunday of Orthodoxy
Stephanie Ruperto
Evangelism and Outreach Ministry meeting
Akathist to St Alexis, Man of God
9:30AM Divine Liturgy
4:00PM Deanery Vespers

Monday, March 18

Matthew Kuziak
Andrew Boyd

Tuesday, March 19

The Holy Martyrs Chrysanthus and Daria
8:30AM Daily Matins
9:00AM Bible Study

Wednesday, March 20

Akathist to St Cuthbert
Righteous Fathers slain at the Monastery of St. Savas
4:30PM Open Doors
6:00PM Presanctified Liturgy

Thursday, March 21

James the Confessor
8:30AM Daily Matins
7:00PM Bible Study

Friday, March 22

Basil the Holy Martyr of Ancyra

Saturday, March 23

The Holy Righteous Martyr Nikon and His 199 Disciples
5:30PM Great Vespers

Sunday, March 24

Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas
Buildings and Grounds Ministry Meeting
9:30AM Divine Liturgy
4:00PM Deanery Vespers

Monday, March 25

Annunciation of the Theotokos

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: Matthew Kuziak 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:

Sunday of Orthodoxy. Ven. Aleksey (Alexius) the Man of God (411). Ven. Macarius, Abbot and Wonderworker of Kalyázinsk (Tver'—1483). Martyr Marinus. St. Patrick, Bishop of Armagh, Enlightener of Ireland (ca. 461).

Hymns of the Day

Tone 1 Troparion (Resurrection)

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews, while the soldiers were guarding Your most pure ^body, You rose on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world. The powers of heaven therefore cried to You, O Giver of Life: "Glory to Your Resurrection, O Christ! Glory to Your ^Kingdom!// Glory to Your dispensation, O Lover of mankind!"