



## 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.

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Bulletin for Sunday, August 11, 2019

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### 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 - General Confession;

First Wed of the Month

(The Church is open at 4:30p for "Open Doors" - during fasting seasons or by appointment).

Thursday at 8:30a - Daily Matins

Saturday at 5:30p - Great Vespers

Sunday at 9:30a - Divine Liturgy

### Members of our Parish Council are:

Deacon Timothy Skuby - Attached

Greg Jankura - Council President

Michael Kuziak - Council Vice President

Natalie Kucharski - Council Treasurer

Glenn PenkoffLidbeck - Council Secretary

Kyle Hollis - Member at Large

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 Outreach Committee is collecting school supplies for the Clinton Family Services for this coming school year. Shopping lists will be left on the candle desk. Please have all school supplies here at church by August 11.

Funeral arrangements for Fr Steven Belonick are being handled by Adzima Funeral Home, Stratford, CT. Calling hours and services will take place at St. Dimitrie Orthodox Church, 504 Sport Hill Road, Easton, CT: calling hours, 2 p.m. to 5 p.m., on Sunday, August 11; Office of the Burial of a Priest, 5 p.m. on Sunday, August 11; Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m., on Monday, August 12, with a repast following. A select choir, directed by Robin Freeman of St. Vladimir's

Seminary, will sing the services. Burial will take place at St. Tikhon's Monastery Cemetery, St. Tikhon's Road, South Canaan, PA, beginning with a short Panikhida (Service for the Departed) at the gravesite at noon, on Tuesday, August 13, with a luncheon following in the seminary refectory (not to be confused with the monastery trapeza).

We will be commemorating the Dormition of Our Lady, the Theotokos, with a Vesperal Divine Liturgy on Wednesday evening (6pm). It would be fitting if the community would come together with a potluck dinner (fast free).

During this Feast, it is also traditional to bless flowers and herbs. Please bring your plants (potted or cut) to be blessed, so that you may adorn your homes accordingly.

Holy Tradition tells us that all the Apostles, with the exception of St. Thomas, were transported mystically to Jerusalem in order to be with the Mother of God - the Theotokos - as she reposed, and to be present at her burial. When the Apostle Thomas arrived the next day, the Apostles opened the tomb so that he could kiss her farewell. As the tomb was opened, the body of the Most Pure Virgin was missing, and the cave was filled with flowers and the sweet fragrance of Paradise. This was a sure sign of her great purity and holiness to the faithful.

Therefore as part of our celebration of Dormition we bless flowers and fragrant herbs - and the faithful traditionally keep

them in their homes. The herbs, used as natural medicine, are blessed in commemoration of the numerous healings and the extraordinary grace bestowed on the pilgrims at the blessed tomb of the Mother of God. During times of family strife or illness, it is a pious custom to place the flower petals in the house censer, together with the incense, and cense the whole house with it.

## Saints and Feasts

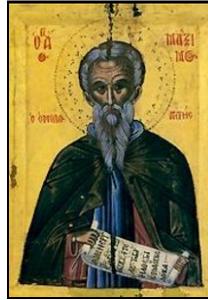


**August 11**

### **Euplus the Holy Martyr & Archdeacon of Cantania**

This Martyr was from Catania in Sicily and contested during the reign of Diocletian. He presented himself of his

own accord to Calvisianus the Governor, who put him to exceedingly harsh torments. As Euplus was on the rack, Calvisianus commanded him to worship Mars, Apollo, and Aesculapius; he answered he worshipped the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He was beheaded in the year 304.



**August 13**

### **Maximus the Confessor**

The divine Maximus, who was from Constantinople, sprang from an illustrious family. He was a lover of wisdom and an eminent theologian. At first, he was the chief private secretary

of the Emperor Heraclius and his grandson Constans. But when the Monothelite heresy became predominant in the royal court, out of hatred for this error the Saint departed for the Monastery at Chrysopolis (Scutari), of which he later became the abbot. When Constans tried to constrain him either to accept the Monothelite teaching, or to stop speaking and writing against it - neither of which the Saint accepted to do - his tongue was uprooted and his right hand was cut off, and he was sent into exile, where he reposed in 662. At the time only he and his few disciples were Orthodox in the East. See also January 21.



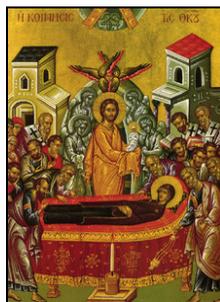
**August 13**

### **Tikhon of Zadonsk**

Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk was born in 1724 into a very poor family of the Novgorod province, and was named Timothy in holy Baptism. In his

youth he was sent to seminary in Novgorod where he received a good education and later taught Greek and other subjects. Having received the monastic tonsure with the name Tikhon, in the same year he was ordained deacon and priest, and appointed two years later as rector of the Seminary in Tver. In 1761 he was consecrated Bishop of Kexholm and Ladoga, and in 1763 nominated Bishop of Voronezh, a difficult diocese to administer because of its large size and transient population, which included many schismatics. Feeling the burden of the episcopacy to be beyond his strength, the Saint resigned in 1767, retiring first to the Monastery of Tolshevo, and later to the monastery at Zadonsk, where he remained until his blessed repose. In retirement, he devoted all his time to fervent prayer and the writing of books. His treasury of books earned him the title of "the Russian Chrysostom", whose writings he employed extensively; simple in style, replete with quotes from the Holy Scriptures, they treat mostly of the duties of Christians, with many parables taken from daily life. In them the Christian is taught how to oppose the passions and cultivate the virtues. A large collection of the Saint's letters are included in his works, and these give a wealth of spiritual guidance directed both to the laity and monastics. Saint Tikhon reposed in peace in 1783, at the age of fifty-nine. Over sixty years later, in 1845, when a new church was built in Zadonsk in place of the church where he was buried, it was necessary to remove his body. Although interred in a damp place, his relics were found to be whole and incorrupt; even his vestments were untouched by decay. Many miracles were worked by Saint Tikhon after

his death, and some three hundred thousand pilgrims attended his glorification on August 13, 1863. He is one of the most beloved Russian Saints, and is invoked particularly for the protection and upbringing of children.



**August 15**

**The Dormition of our Most Holy Lady the Theotokos and Ever Virgin Mary**

Concerning the Dormition of the Theotokos, this is what the Church has received from ancient times from the tradition of the Fathers. When the time drew nigh that our Savior was well-pleased to take His Mother to Himself, He declared unto her through an Angel that three days hence, He would translate her from this temporal life to eternity and bliss. On hearing this, she went up with haste to the Mount of Olives, where she prayed continuously. Giving thanks to God, she returned to her house and prepared whatever was necessary for her burial. While these things were taking place, clouds caught up the Apostles from the ends of the earth, where each one happened to be preaching, and brought them at once to the house of the Mother of God, who informed them of the cause of their sudden gathering. As a mother, she consoled them in their affliction as was meet, and then raised her hands to Heaven and prayed for the peace of the world. She blessed the Apostles, and, reclining upon

her bed with seemliness, gave up her all-holy spirit into the hands of her Son and God.

With reverence and many lights, and chanting burial hymns, the Apostles took up that God-receiving body and brought it to the sepulchre, while the Angels from Heaven chanted with them, and sent forth her who is higher than the Cherubim. But one Jew, moved by malice, audaciously stretched forth his hand upon the bed and immediately received from divine judgment the wages of his audacity. Those daring hands were severed by an invisible blow. But when he repented and asked forgiveness, his hands were restored. When they had reached the place called Gethsemane, they buried there with honor the all-immaculate body of the Theotokos, which was the source of Life. But on the third day after the burial, when they were eating together, and raised up the artos (bread) in Jesus' Name, as was their custom, the Theotokos appeared in the air, saying "Rejoice" to them. From this they learned concerning the bodily translation of the Theotokos into the Heavens.

These things has the Church received from the traditions of the Fathers, who have composed many hymns out of reverence, to the glory of the Mother of our God (see Oct. 3 and 4).

## Parish Calendar

### Service and Events

August 11 to August 19, 2019

#### Sunday, August 11

Deborah Bray  
8th Sunday of Matthew  
Fellowship and Stewardship Ministry  
Isabel Chobor  
9:15AM Reading of the 3rd Hour  
9:30AM Divine Liturgy  
2:00PM Calling Hours for Fr Steven Belonick  
5:00PM Office of the Burial of a Priest

#### Monday, August 12

Afterfeast of the Transfiguration of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ  
Douglas Kuziak  
10:00AM Divine Liturgy for Fr Steven Belonick

#### Tuesday, August 13

Apodosis of the Transfiguration  
8:30AM Daily Matins

#### Wednesday, August 14

Forefeast of the Dormition of our Most Holy Lady the Theotokos and Ever Virgin Mary  
4:30PM Open Doors  
6:00PM Vespers Divine Liturgy  
8:00PM Community Potluck

#### Thursday, August 15

The Dormition of our Most Holy Lady the Theotokos and Ever Virgin Mary  
8:30AM Akathist in Honor of the Dormition

#### Friday, August 16

Stasia PenkoffLidbeck  
33 Martyrs of Palistine  
Translation of the Image of Our Lord

and God and Savior, Jesus Christ

### Saturday, August 17

Myron the Martyr of Cyzicus  
5:30PM Great Vespers

### Sunday, August 18

Evangelism and Outreach Ministry meeting  
9th Sunday of Matthew  
William Glenn Watson  
Sam Jankura  
9:15AM Reading of the 3rd Hour  
9:30AM Divine Liturgy

### Monday, August 19

Andrew the General & Martyr & his 2,593  
soldiers

## Prayers, Intersessions and Commemorations



William, Sophia, Robert,  
Ann, Evelyn, Nina, John,  
Alex, Vincent, James,  
Luke, Aaron, Kathryn,  
Anastasia, Malcolm,  
Veronica, Richard,  
Darlyne, Irene, Nancy,  
Susanne

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

Many years! to Douglas Kuziak and Stasia  
PenkoffLedbeck on the occasion of their  
birthdays

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 Transfiguration.** Holy  
Martyr and Archdeacon Euplus (Euplius) of  
Catania (304). Martyrs Basil and Theodore of  
the Kiev Caves (Near Caves—1098). St.  
Theodosius (Prince Theodore of Ostrog) of the  
Kiev Caves (Far Caves—1438). Virgin Martyr  
Susanna and those with her: Martyrs Gaius,  
Pope of Rome, Presbyter Gabinus, his brother  
and the father of Susanna, Maximus,  
Claudius, and his wife Praepedigna and their  
sons Alexander and Cutias (295-296). St.  
Niphon, Patriarch of Constantinople (Mt.  
Athos—1515).

## Hymns of the Day

### Tone 7 Troparion (Resurrection)

By Your Cross You destroyed death.  
To the thief You opened Paradise.  
For the Myrrhbearers You changed weeping  
into joy.  
And You commanded Your disciples, O Christ  
God,  
to proclaim that You are risen, //  
granting the world great mercy.

### **Tone 7 Troparion (Transfiguration)**

You were transfigured on the mountain, O  
Christ God,  
revealing Your glory to Your Disciples as far as  
they could bear it.  
Let Your everlasting Light also shine upon us  
sinners,  
through the prayers of the Theotokos! //  
O Giver of Light, glory to You!

### **Tone 4 Troparion (Martyr Euplus)**

Your holy martyr, Euplus O Lord,  
through his sufferings has received an  
incorruptible from You, our God.  
For having Your strength, he laid low his  
adversaries,  
and shattered the powerless boldness of  
demons. //  
Through his intercessions, save our souls!

### **Tone 7 Kontakion(Resurrection)**

The dominion of death can no longer hold  
mankind captive,  
for Christ descended, shattering and  
destroying its powers.

Hell is bound, while the Prophets rejoice and  
cry:  
"The Savior has come to those in faith; //  
enter, you faithful, into the Resurrection!"

### **Tone 1 Kontakion (Martyr Euplus)**

With the love of Christ as your only defense,  
you stood in the midst of your ^fight and said:  
"I endure this struggle willingly and with  
confidence!"  
You rejoiced, O Euplus, to offer your head to  
the sword  
and so you completed your course.

### **Tone 7 Kontakion(Transfiguration)**

On the mountain You were transfigured, O  
Christ God,  
and Your Disciples beheld Your glory as far as  
they could see it;  
so that when they would behold You crucified,  
they would understand that Your suffering was  
voluntary,  
and would proclaim to the world //  
that You are truly the Radiance of the Father.

*(Instead of "It is truly meet ...," we sing:)*

Magnify, O my soul, the Lord Who was  
transfigured on Mount Tabor!  
Your childbearing was without corruption;  
God came forth from your body clothed in  
flesh,

and appeared on earth and dwelt among men. Therefore we all magnify you, O Theotokos.

### *Communion Hymns*

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest!

O Lord, we will walk in the light of Your countenance, and will exult in Your name forever. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

## Gospel and Epistle Readings

### Epistle Reading

#### **8th Sunday of Matthew**

#### **The Reading is from St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 1:10-17**

Brethren, I appeal to you by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree and that there be no dissensions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment. For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there is quarreling among you, my brethren. What I mean is that each one of you says, "I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apollos," or "I belong to Cephas," or "I belong to Christ." Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispos and Gaius; lest any one should say that you were baptized in my name. (I did baptize also the household

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of Stephanas. Beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized any one else.) For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.

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### Gospel Reading

#### **8th Sunday of Matthew**

#### **The Reading is from Matthew 14:14-22**

At that time, Jesus saw a great throng; and he had compassion on them, and healed their sick. When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a lonely place, and the day is now over; send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy food for themselves." Jesus said, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." They said to him, "We have only five loaves here and two fish." And he said, "Bring them here to me." Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass; and taking the five loaves and the two fish he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and broke and gave the loaves to the crowds. And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children. Then he made the disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds.

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### Wisdom of the Fathers

And another thing too we learn,

the self-restraint of the disciples which they practised in necessary things, and how little they accounted of food.

### **St. John Chrysostom**

*Homily 49 on Matthew 14, 4th Century*

For being twelve, they had five loaves only and two fishes; so secondary to them were the things of the body: so did they cling to the things spiritual only. And not even that little did they hold fast, but gave up even it when asked.

### **St. John Chrysostom**

*Homily 49 on Matthew 14, 4th Century*

## **Reflection**



What Does the Word  
“Church” Mean?

Every Sunday the Creed is said in Church in which Christians say the words, “I believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church.” It many ways it is an odd

thing to say. In the Creed we confess things that are matters of faith, things contestable, maybe even controversial. Thus we confess that God the Father Almighty made the heaven and the

earth, including all things visible (such as animals and men) and invisible (such as angels). This is not beyond dispute, and many people manage to dispute it, believing either that the universe always existed or that it began without any help from God. It is similar with our confession of Jesus Christ as light from light, true God from true God, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, and raised from the dead three days after He died. This is a matter of faith, and so it finds its way into the Creed. But the Church? Surely the existence of the Church is hardly a matter of faith. We do not need faith to believe in the Church—we can see churches all around us. Why is the Church in the Creed?

In fact we often do not know the meaning of the words we are saying when we confess that we believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church. Sometimes we mean by the words something not much more than “we believe in the existence of an institution which is very good and worthy of respect.” This is not quite what the Creed is getting at.

Let us look first at the term “church”—in Greek *ekklesia*. The word “church” is used in lots of ways. Most often the term refers to the building in which the Christians meet for worship. If I say, “I’ll meet you at the church at noon,” I am obviously referring to the building used for Sunday services. Sometimes, in an earlier day, the term meant simply “the clergy,” so that if a young man answered the question about what career he had chosen by saying, “I am going into the church,” we meant he was seeking ordination as a priest. More often by “the

church” people mean “the Christians” wherever they might meet for services. Often too by the term “the church” people mean an institution, as the Smithsonian is an institution or as the British Crown is an institution. I suspect that most people when they say the Creed mean something rather like this. When they confess belief in the Church they mean to express loyalty to a venerable institution. The institution came into existence in the time of Jesus and now has branches or spiritual franchises in many places, including our little congregation down the street.

In fact the church is not an institution, however many outward similarities to an institution it may possess. The term *ekklesia* (the Greek version of the Hebrew *qahal*) meant a gathering, an assembly. People assembled or gathered—that is, they left their homes to congregate in a particular place for a particular reason, and the result of all that individual assembling was an assembly. After they had gathered, they constituted a gathering. The assembly could be called for a number of purposes, either secular or religious. One could assemble to select a king, as Israel assembled to select King Saul [1 Samuel 10]. One could assemble to prepare for war, as Israel did to wage war on the tribe of Benjamin [Judges 20]. One could assemble for a religious convocation as Israel did when they repented before God at Mizpah [1 Samuel 7]. One could assemble to debate a civic problem, as the silversmiths of Ephesus did when they met to protest against the work of Saint Paul [Acts 19]. This last example is particularly instructive: those who assembled were

pagans, and men motivated mostly by financial concern, despite their loudly professed civic devotion to Artemis of the Ephesians. Their assembly almost turned into a riot until the town clerk quieted the crowd and told them to go home. Then, as Luke reports, “When he said this, he dismissed the *ekklesia*”—i.e. the crowd which had gathered together. These men, pagans motivated by secular concerns at a town hall meeting, were an *ekklesia*—an assembly.

That is the word used in the New Testament to describe Christian liturgical experience. Individual Christians left their respective homes on Sunday to assemble and gather in a particular prearranged place. Having assembled, they were an assembly. Having gathered, they were a gathering. But not just any assembly or gathering—they were an assembly to which Christ pledged His presence. Whenever they assembled together to remember Him at the Eucharist He promised that He would be in their midst, even if the assembly were so small that only two or three were there [Matthew 18:20]. (The Greek of this last passage is interesting: Christ promises to be among them even if only two or three assemble—in Greek *sunago*, the same word used in the word “synagogue,” which was the word James used to describe the Christian assembly in James 2:2.) Christian assembly/*ekklesia* is what happens after the Christians assemble. It is not so much an institution as an event. For at that assembly Christ manifests His presence as He promised He would. One can there talk of the *ekklesia* or church in the plural because Christians assembled in many assemblies

throughout the world. One can also talk of the ekklesia or church in the singular, because wherever one went throughout the world one found the same Christ in every single assembly. The assembly in Thessalonica was the same as the assembly in Corinth because Christ was equally present in both. Christ's presence made the different assemblies into one Assembly—one Church.

From this, three things follow.

First, one cannot consider oneself a part of the assembly unless one actually assembles, because that is what the word "assembly" means. Membership in the Ekklesia of God is not like membership in the Public Library. I am a member of the library in that I still have my library card and it does not expire. I may not have set foot in the library for years, but the card still works. It is otherwise with the Church. If you didn't assemble on Sunday, we were not a part of the assembly, and if you haven't attended the Eucharist for years, you are no longer a part of the Church. It is easily remedied—to be a part of the assembly, just go next Sunday and assemble. (If it really has been years since you partook of the Eucharist, going to confession is also recommended.) The name "Christian" is the term for one who assembles regularly, and one forfeits the right to use the name if you never assemble.

Secondly, one should assemble on Sunday with the expectation of meeting Christ there. That is the whole reason for assembling. Valuable as sermons are and uplifting as the choir sounds one mostly assembles to meet the Lord and to be fed

with His Body and Blood. We go in our brokenness to be healed, and in our filthiness to be washed clean. We assemble because the only one who can heal and cleanse is there and He has promised to do both for us if we come in penitence and faith.

Finally, if we plan on assembling on Sunday we must live in anticipation of this event on the six days previous. The priest will call us to the Chalice by saying the words, "The holy things for the holy!"—or, in another possible translation, "The sanctified things for the saints!" The usual New Testament term for a believer is the word "saint" [Greek *agios*], which is what we are. A saint is not a sinless person, but a person who belongs to God and who is striving to please Him, whatever his or her rate of success. It is as saints that we assemble, which is why the priest uses that term. As members of the Ekklesia and the Household of God we must strive to become what we are.

<https://oca.org/reflections/fr.-lawrence-farley/what-does-the-word-church-mean>