



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, August 18, 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 - 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

Beginners' online Choral Conducting Course begins September 16

The Department of Liturgical Music of the Orthodox Church in America again will be offering an on-line course, "Choral Conducting for Beginners," beginning September 16, 2019.

"The class sessions are devoted to demonstrating basic conducting technique, beginning with elementary conducting patterns and concluding with an emphasis on conducting liturgical chant. The course will be limited to twelve participants." said Prof. David Drillock, department chair, who will teach the course.

The course will consist of 12 sessions, covered over a period of 13 weeks.

<https://www.oca.org/news/headline-news/beginners-online-choral-conducting-course-begins-september-16>

If you are interested in taking this course, please talk with Fr Steven.

Of What Life Do We Speak? Four Pillars for the Fulfillment of the Apostolic Work of the Church

<https://www.oca.org/holy-synod/statements/his-beatitude-metropolitan-tikhon/of-what-life-do-we-speak-four-pillars-for-the-fulfillment-of-the-apostolic>

The complete document can be download here: <https://www.oca.org/cdn/PDFs/synod/met-four-pillars.pdf>

The study guide can be download here: <https://www.oca.org/cdn/PDFs/synod/met-four-pillars-studyguide.pdf>

The study of the Metropolitan's work will take place on Tuesday mornings (after Matins) and Thursday evenings at 7pm. Please see the monthly calendar for specifics.

Prayers, Intercessions and Commemorations



William, Sophia, Robert, Ann, Evelyn, Nina, John, Alex, Vincent, James, Luke, Aaron, Kathryn, Veronica, Richard, Darlyne, Irene, Nancy, Susanne
All of our College Students: Alex, Sam, Nadia, Isaac and Matthew.

Many years! to Samuel Jankura on the occasion of his Names' Day and Birthday; and to Kaitlyn Luft, Kyle Hollis, Susan Egan and Theo Freeman on the occasion of their birthdays.

And to Fr Steven and Anne Hosking on the occasion of their Anniversary.

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 Dormition. Martyrs Florus and Laurus of Illyria (2nd c.). Martyrs Hermes, Serapion and Polyænus, of Rome (2nd c.). Hieromartyr Emilian and with him Martyrs Hilarion, Dionysius, and Hermippus (4th c.). Ss. John (674) and George (683), Patriarchs of Constantinople Ven. Macarius, Monk Repose of Ven. John, Abbot of Rila (946). Ven. Sophronius of St. Anne's Skete (Mt. Athos). Ven. Arsenios of Paros (1877).

Parish Calendar

Parish Calendar

August 18 to August 26, 2019

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

Tuesday, August 20

Samuel the Prophet
Skip Bray
8:30AM Daily Matins
9:00AM Book Study

Wednesday, August 21

The Holy Apostle Thaddeus
John Veneri
Hosking

Thursday, August 22

The Holy Martyr Agathonicus
8:30AM Daily Matins
7:00PM Book Study

Friday, August 23

Apodosis of the Dormition of our Most Holy
Lady the Theotokos and Ever Virgin Mary
Kyle Hollis
Kaitlyn Luft

Saturday, August 24

Theo Freeman
Susan Egan
Eutyches the Hieromartyr & Disciple of St.
John the Theologian
5:30PM Great Vespers

Sunday, August 25

Buildings and Grounds Ministry Meeting
10th Sunday of Matthew
9:15AM Reading of the 3rd Hour
9:30AM Divine Liturgy

Monday, August 26

The Holy Martyrs Adrian and Natalie
Ed Hayes

Saints and Feasts

August 18

Martyrs Florus and Laurus of Illyria

Commemorated on [August 18](#)



The Martyrs Florus and Laurus were brothers by birth not only in flesh but in spirit. They lived in the second century at Byzantium, and afterwards they settled in Illyria [now Yugoslavia]. By occupation they were stone-masons (their teachers in this craft were the Christians Proclus and Maximus, from whom also the brothers learned about life pleasing to God).

The prefect of Illyria, Likaion, sent the brothers to a nearby district for work on the construction of a pagan temple. The saints toiled at the structure, distributing to the poor the money they earned, while they kept strict fast and prayed without ceasing.

Once, the son of the local pagan-priest Mamertin carelessly approached the structure, and a chip of stone hit him in the eye, severely injuring him. Saints Florus and Laurus assured the upset father, that his son would be healed.

They brought the youth to consciousness and told him to have faith in Christ. After this, as the youth confessed Jesus Christ as the true God, the brothers prayed for him,

and the eye was healed. In view of such a miracle, even the father of the youth believed in Christ.

When the construction of the temple was completed, the brothers gathered the Christians together, and going through the temple, they smashed the idols. In the eastern part of the temple they set up the holy Cross. They spent all night in prayer, illumined with heavenly light. Having learned of this, the head of the district condemned to burning the former pagan priest Mamertin and his son and 300 Christians.

The martyrs Florus and Laurus, having been sent back to the prefect Likaion, were thrown down an empty well and covered over with earth. After many years, the relics of the holy martyrs were uncovered incorrupt, and transferred to Constantinople. In the year 1200 the Novgorod pilgrim Anthony saw them. Stephen of Novgorod saw the heads of the martyrs in the Pantokrator monastery around the year 1350.

Hymns of the Day

Resurrectional Apolytikion in the 8th Tone

From on high didst Thou descend, O Compassionate One; to burial of three days hast Thou submitted that Thou mightest free us from our passions. O our Life and Resurrection, Lord, glory be to Thee.

Apolytikion for Afterfeast of the Dormition in the 1st Tone

In giving birth, thou didst preserve thy virginity; in thy dormition, thou didst not forsake the world, O Theotokos. Thou wast translated unto life, since thou art the Mother of Life; and by thine intercessions dost thou redeem our souls from death.

Hymns of the Day in the 8th Tone

Tone 8 Troparion (Resurrection)

You descended from on high, O Merciful One!
You accepted the three day burial to free us from our sufferings!//
O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to You!

Tone 1 Troparion (Dormition)

In giving birth you preserved your virginity.
In falling asleep you did not forsake the world, O Theotokos.
You were translated to life O Mother of Life,//
and by your prayers you deliver our souls from death.

Tone 4 Troparion (Martyrs Florus and Laurus)

Let us praise as is meet, you faithful,
the most comely, radiant and divinely wise martyrs:
Most blessed Florus and all venerable Laurus,
who proclaimed to all the uncreated Trinity.
Suffering unto bloodshed,
they were adorned with brilliant crowns.//
Entreat Christ our God to save our souls!

Tone 8 Kontakion (Resurrection)

By rising from the tomb, You raised the dead and resurrected Adam.

Eve exults in Your Resurrection, and the world celebrates Your rising from the dead, O greatly Merciful One!

Tone 8 Kontakion (Martyrs Florus and Laurus)

Today all the world honors in glory the divinely wise Florus and Laurus as pious martyrs who suffered for Christ.

Through their prayers may we receive grace and mercy and be delivered from calamity and temptation, and from wrath and sorrow on the Day of Judgment!

Tone 2 Kontakion (Dormition)

Neither the tomb, nor death, could hold the Theotokos, who is constant in prayer and our firm hope in her intercessions. For being the Mother of Life, // she was translated to life by the One Who dwelt in her virginal womb.

Seasonal Kontakion in the 2nd Tone

Neither the grave nor death could contain the Theotokos, the unshakable hope, ever vigilant in intercession and protection. As Mother of life, He who dwelt in the ever-virginal womb transposed her to life.

Gospel and Epistle Readings

Epistle Reading

Prokeimenon. 8th Tone. Psalm 75.11,1.

Make your vows to the Lord our God and perform them.

Verse: God is known in Judah; his name is great in Israel.

The reading is from St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 3:9-17.

Brethren, we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building. According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and another man is building upon it. Let each man take care how he builds upon it. For no other foundation can any one lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any one builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw - each man's work will become manifest; for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work which any man has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire. Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? If any one destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and that temple you are.

Gospel Reading

9th Sunday of Matthew

The Reading is from Matthew 14:22-34

At that time, Jesus made the disciples

get into the boat and go before him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up into the hills by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but the boat by this time was many furlongs distant from the land, beaten by the waves; for the wind was against them. And in the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear. But immediately he spoke to them, saying "Take heart, it is I; have no fear."

And Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, bid me come to you on the water." He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus; but when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me." Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "O man of little faith, why did you doubt?" And when they entered the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God." And when they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret.

Wisdom of the Fathers

The principle and source of the virtues is a good disposition of the will, that is to say, an aspiration for goodness and beauty. God is the source and ground of all supernal goodness. Thus the principle of goodness and beauty is faith or, rather, it is Christ,

the rock of faith, who is principle and foundation of all virtues. On this rock we stand and on this foundation we build every good thing (cf. I Cor. 3:11).

St. Gregory of Sinai

On Commandments and Doctrines no. 83, Philokalia Vol. 3 edited by Palmer, Sherrard and Ware; Faber and Faber pg. 228, 14th century

Beyond the Sermon



The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew.

(14:22-34)

The storm through which the Lord calmly and peacefully walked is a metaphor for the storms that rage inside of us. All scripture is

metaphorical. The deepest meanings lie below the surface.

There is a work usually ascribed to St. Symeon the New Theologian called "Three Forms of Prayer." Although some no longer believe he wrote it, it was written most certainly by an Orthodox theologian with a deep experience of prayer.

In one of those three forms, the writer instructs that the monk should go into his cell, sit on his stool, place his beard on his chest and look within. What will the novice see at first? Chaos. A cacophony of thoughts and emotions. St. Theophan uses the image of buzzing flies to describe it and

Buddha spoke of monkeys jumping from tree to tree.

The writer continues saying that at this point the monk must not be discouraged by what he sees. As no feeling is final, no storm is forever. Rather the monk should continue to sit patiently and practice faithfully no matter what. After an indeterminate time a great space will open within – a place of peace and calm. Remember that Peter failed at first to complete his stroll to Jesus on the water. And yet he rose up again by focusing on Jesus instead of his fear. That is how contemplative prayer happens; with persistence in practice, faith in God and in the knowledge that all matter of things will be well.

The storm is no match for the Spirit and persistent prayer.

The place of peace and calm, as this Gospel demonstrates, is exemplified in the Person of Christ. Where he is, there is perfect peace, where he is there is the kingdom, there is eternity, where he is storms no longer matter, waves appear as a smooth path, the wind is revealed to be the stirring of the Holy Spirit, the torrential rains a new baptism.

So we must dive into God. We must turn our attention to Christ. And where is he? Within. Where is his calm and peaceful kingdom?

Inside.

To walk on water we must dive deep into ourselves and into the kingdom within. St. Augustine knew about this. He wrote, "I entered into the innermost part of myself...I entered and saw with my soul's eye...an unchangeable light shining above the eye of my soul and above my mind...He who knows truth knows that light, and he who knows that light knows eternity. Love

knows it...I often do this. I find delight in it..." And from St. Gregory the Great writes of the mind being "carried away into the sweetness of heavenly contemplation," where it sees "the inmost realities as it were through a mist..." And Thomas Merton speaks of it like this: "A door opens in the center of our being and we seem to fall through it into the immense depths which, although they are infinite, are all accessible to us; all eternity seems to have become ours..."

This experience of God in contemplative prayer is accessible to everyone and Jesus told us how.

"But you, when you pray, enter into your closet, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly."

The closet is a metaphor for the heart, closing the door is a metaphor for vigilance in guarding the senses. The Lord's reference to doing this in secret refers to the need for solitude, stillness and silence for the Father, he says, "is in secret." This is how we must pray. This is how Jesus prayed. This is how we learn how to walk on water.

<http://www.stmaryorthodoxchurch.org/orthodox-walk-on-water>