



St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre Orthodox Church

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Services Schedule

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

Bulletin for Sunday, August 30, 2020

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

During this COVID era, services dates and times are subject to change. Please read the schedule provided withing the bulletin itself for the dates and times of services, and whether they will be held "in person" or streamed via Zoom.

Members of our Parish Council are:

Joseph Barbera - Council Member at Large
Dori Kuziak - Council Secretary
Natalie Kucharski - Council Treasurer
Glenn PenkoffLidbeck - Council President
Kyle Hollis - Member at Large
Roderick Seurattan - Council Vice President

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

Parish Pandemic Procedures - Updated

Please see the attached document and read it closely

Annual Meeting

In all likelihood, this year's Annual Meeting will be virtual. Nevertheless, despite the uncertainty of the times, we do need to ask

for nominations for the following: 2 positions on the parish council, 1 representative for the Diocesan Assembly, 1 representative for the All-American Council and 2 auditors. Please talk with Fr Steven or Dori Kuziak if you are willing to be nominated for any of these positions.

Stewardship Opportunity

Attached to this bulletin you will find a letter from the Kuziak family in support Orthodox Christian Mission Center.

Please be sure to double check the times of services on the schedule! If you wish to attend Liturgy, be sure to email Fr Steven to ask for a blessing. It is imperative that we have an accurate count of attendees.

Services will still be held via Zoom The invitation for which I am including below: [HERE](#)

Topic: All Services

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4716784843?pwd=dzB0MTY1cnVIUUFWNXBCako1ekZ0ZzC>

Meeting ID: 471 678 4843

Passcode: 1994

One tap mobile

+19292056099,,4716784843#,,,,,0#,,1994#
US (New York)

+13017158592,,4716784843#,,,,,0#,,1994#
US (Germantown)

Dial by your location

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)
+1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)
+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)
+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)
+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)
Meeting ID: 471 678 4843
Passcode: 1994
Find your local number:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kdFMiKJ5Cc>

I am also including the link where texts for services may be download: [HERE](#)

https://stalexischurch-my.sharepoint.com/:f/g/personal/schosk_stalex_e=0VpHla

Prayers, Intercessions and Commemorations



Archpriest
Dennis, Deacon
Timothy, Evelyn,
Katheryn, Robert,
Anne, Veronica, Richard,
Nancy, Susann, Carol,
Luke, Aaron, Alexander,
Gail, Vincent, Nina,
Ellen, Maureen
Elizabeth, Christopher,
Joshua, Jennifer Petra,
Olivia, Jessica ,Sean,
Sarah, Justin, Arnold,

Michael, Kirk, Carol-Anne, Anthony,
Natasha, Janice, Gene, John

The newly departed and ever memorable
Becky and Robert;

And in remembrance of Archbishop Nikon.

- 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 institutionalize, 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.

Many Years! to Dn Timothy and Maureen, Sarah and Justin and to Phyllis and Richard on the occasion of their anniversaries; and to Anastasia Littlefield on the occasion of her birthday.

Today we commemorate:

Translation of the Relics of Rt. Blv. Great Prince St. Alexander Nevsky (1724). Sts. Alexander (340), John (595), and Paul the New (784), Patriarchs of Constantinople. Repose of Ven. Alexander,

Abbot of Svir (1533). Uncovering of the Relics of St. Daniel, Prince of Moscow (1652). St. Christopher of Palestine (6th c.). St. Fantinus of Calabria (9th c.). Synaxis of the Serbian Hierarchs: Ss. Sava I (1237), Arsenius I (1266), Sava II (1269), Eustathius I (ca. 1285), James (1292), Nikodemos (1325), and Daniel (1338), Archbishops; Joannicus II (1354), Spyridon (1388), Ephraim II (after 1395), Macarius (1574), Gabriel I (1659), Patriarchs; and Gregory, Bishop.

Parish Calendar

Services and Events

August 30 to September 7, 2020

Sunday, August 30

12th Sunday of Matthew
Anastasia Littlefield - B
Skuby - A
John, Amy & Kevin Andrews - B
9:30AM Divine Liturgy

Monday, August 31

The Placing of the Honorable Sash of the Most Holy Theotokos
Irene Kaiser - B
6:30PM Memorial for Archbishop Nikon

Tuesday, September 1

+Archbishop Nikon
Ecclesiastical New Year
Church New Year
8:30AM Daily Matins including the Indiction

Wednesday, September 2

Mammas the Martyr
Voytovich - A
6:30PM General Confession
7:00PM Parish Discussion

Thursday, September 3

Anthimus, Bishop of Nicomedeia
8:30AM Daily Matins

Friday, September 4

Gaulin - A
Righteous Priest Aaron
Babylas the Holy Martyr

Saturday, September 5

Holy Prophet Zacharias, Father of the Venerable Forerunner
5:30PM Great Vespers

Sunday, September 6

13th Sunday of Matthew
9:30AM Divine Liturgy

Monday, September 7

The Forefeast of the Nativity of the Theotokos

Saints and Feasts

August 30

Alexander, John, and Paul the New, Patriarchs of Constantinople

Saint Alexander was sent to the First Ecumenical Council in Nicaea as the delegate of Saint Metrophanes, Bishop of Constantinople (see June 4), to whose throne he succeeded in the year 325. When Arius had deceitfully professed allegiance

to the Council of Nicaea, Saint Alexander, knowing his guile, refused to receive him into communion; Arius' powerful partisans threatened that they would use force to bring Arius into the communion of the Church the following day. Saint Alexander prayed fervently that God might spare the Church; and as Arius was in a privy place relieving nature, his bowels gushed forth with an effusion of blood, and the arch-heresiarch died the death of Judas. Saint Alexander was Bishop from 325 until 337, when he was succeeded by Saint Paul the Confessor, who died a martyr's death at the hands of the Arians (see Nov. 6). The Saint John commemorated here appears to be the one who was Patriarch during the years 562-577, surnamed Scholasticus, who is also commemorated on February 21. He was from Antioch, where he had been a lawyer (scholasticus); he was made presbyter, then was sent to Constantinople as representative (apocrisiarius) of the Patriarch of Antioch, and was appointed Patriarch of Constantinople by the Emperor Justinian. Saint Paul was Bishop of Constantinople during the years 687 - 693, in the reign of Emperor Justinian II, and presided over the Quinisext Council in 692.

August 31

The Placing of the Honorable Sash of the Most Holy Theotokos

Although the historical accounts differ somewhat, the Deposition that is celebrated today took place most likely during the reign of Emperor Arcadius (395-408), when the precious Cincture of the Mother of God

was brought from Zela of Cappadocia to Constantinople, and placed in the Church of the Theotokos in the section of Chalcopratia.

September 01

Ecclesiastical New Year

For the maintenance of their armed forces, the Roman emperors decreed that their subjects in every district should be taxed every year. This same decree was reissued every fifteen years, since the Roman soldiers were obliged to serve for fifteen years. At the end of each fifteen-year period, an assessment was made of what economic changes had taken place, and a new tax was decreed, which was to be paid over the span of the fifteen years. This imperial decree, which was issued before the season of winter, was named Indictio, that is, Definitio, or Order. This name was adopted by the emperors in Constantinople also. At other times, the latter also used the term Epinemesis, that is, Distribution (Dianome). It is commonly held that Saint Constantine the Great introduced the Indiction decrees in A.D. 312, after he beheld the sign of the Cross in heaven and vanquished Maxentius and was proclaimed Emperor in the West. Some, however (and this seems more likely), ascribe the institution of the Indiction to Augustus Caesar, three years before the birth of Christ. Those who hold this view offer as proof the papal bull issued in A.D. 781 which is dated thus: Anno IV, Indictionis LIII -that is, the fourth year of the fifty-third Indiction. From this, we can deduce

the aforementioned year (3 B.C.) by multiplying the fifty-two complete Indictions by the number of years in each (15), and adding the three years of the fifty-third Indiction. There are three types of Indictions: 1) That which was introduced in the West, and which is called Imperial, or Caesarean, or Constantinian, and which begins on the 24th of September; 2) The so-called Papal Indiction, which begins on the 1st of January; and 3) The Constantinopolitan, which was adopted by the Patriarchs of that city after the fall of the Eastern Empire in 1453. This Indiction is indicated in their own hand on the decrees they issue, without the numeration of the fifteen years. This Indiction begins on the 1st of September and is observed with special ceremony in the Church. Since the completion of each year takes place, as it were, with the harvest and gathering of the crops into storehouses, and we begin anew from henceforth the sowing of seed in the earth for the production of future crops, September is considered the beginning of the New Year. The Church also keeps festival this day, beseeching God for fair weather, seasonable rains, and an abundance of the fruits of the earth. The Holy Scriptures (Lev. 23:24-5 and Num. 29:1-2) also testify that the people of Israel celebrated the feast of the Blowing of the Trumpets on this day, offering hymns of thanksgiving. In addition to all the aforesaid, on this feast we also commemorate our Saviour's entry into the synagogue in Nazareth, where He was given the book of the Prophet Esaias to read, and He opened it and found the place where it is written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, for which cause He hath anointed

Me..." (Luke 4:16-30).

It should be noted that to the present day, the Church has always celebrated the beginning of the New Year on September 1. This was the custom in Constantinople until its fall in 1453 and in Russia until the reign of Peter I. September 1 is still festively celebrated as the New Year at the Patriarchate of Constantinople; among the Jews also the New Year, although reckoned according to a moveable calendar, usually falls in September. The service of the Menaion for January 1 is for our Lord's Circumcision and for the memorial of Saint Basil the Great, without any mention of its being the beginning of a new year.

September 05

Holy Prophet Zacharias, Father of the Venerable Forerunner

According to the opinion of many Fathers of the Church, based on an ancient tradition, this is the Zacharias whom, as our Lord said, the Jews slew between the temple and the altar (Matt. 23:35), first, because even after the Virgin Mary gave birth, he continued to refer to her as virgin and number her among the virgins; second, because Zacharias' son John was not found during the slaughter of the Innocents, since the elderly Elizabeth had taken him and carefully hid him while he was yet an infant, in an unnamed place somewhere in the desert, where, according to the Evangelist, "the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his showing unto Israel" (Luke 1:80). When

the child was not found, his father was slain by Herod's command.

Hymns of the Day



Tone 3 Troparion (Resurrection)

Let the heavens rejoice!
Let the earth be glad!
For the Lord has shown
strength with His arm.
He has trampled down
death by death.

He has become the first born of the dead.
He has delivered us from the depths of hell,
and has granted to the world//
great mercy.

Tone 2 Troparion (Forerunner)

The memory of the righteous is celebrated
with hymns of praise,
but the Lord's testimony is sufficient for you,
O Forerunner.
You were shown in truth to be the most
honorable of the Prophets,
for you were deemed worthy to baptize in the
streams of the Jordan Him
Whom they foretold.
Therefore, having suffered for the truth with
joy,
you proclaimed to those in hell God Who
appeared in the flesh,
Who takes away the sin of the world//
and grants us great mercy.

Tone 4 Troparion (SS. Alexander, John, and Paul)

O God of our Fathers,
always act with kindness towards us;
take not Your mercy from us,
but guide our lives in peace//
through the prayers of the Patriarchs
Alexander, John, and Paul!

Tone 3 Kontakion (Resurrection)

On this day You rose from the tomb, O
Merciful One,
leading us from the gates of death.
On this day Adam exults as Eve rejoices;
with the Prophets and Patriarchs//
they unceasingly praise the divine majesty of
Your power.

Tone 5 Kontakion (Forerunner)

The glorious beheading of the Forerunner
became an act of divine dispensation,
for he preached to those in hell the coming of
the Savior.
Let Herodias lament, for she entreated lawless
murder,
loving not the Law of God, nor eternal life,//
but that which is false and temporal.

Tone 8 Kontakion (SS. Alexander, John, and Paul)

Set a flame by the love of Christ, O glorious
ones,
you took up the yoke of His precious Cross,
revealing yourselves as
followers in His footsteps by your way of life,
and you became partakers of His divine glory,
divinely-wise Alexander, with wonderful John
and glorious Paul.
As you stand before His throne, earnestly

pray for our souls!

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him
in the highest! (Ps 148:1)
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Gospel and Epistle Readings

Epistle Reading

Prokeimenon. 3rd Tone. Psalm 46.6,1.

Sing praises to our God, sing praises.

Verse: Clap your hands, all you nations.

The reading is from St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 15:1-11.

Brethren, I would remind you in what terms I preached to you the gospel, which you received, in which you stand, by which you are saved, if you hold it fast -- unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in

vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God which is with me. Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

Gospel Reading

12th Sunday of Matthew

The Reading is from Matthew 19:16-26

At that time, a young man came up to Jesus, kneeling and saying, "Good Teacher, what good deed must I do, to have eternal life?" And he said to him, "Why do you call me good? One there is who is good. If you would enter life, keep the commandments." He said to him, "Which?" And Jesus said, "You shall not kill, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother, and You shall love your neighbor as yourself." The young man said to him, "All these I have observed; what do I still lack?" Jesus said to him, "If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." When the young man heard this he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions.

And Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly, I say to you, it will be hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." When the disciples heard this they were greatly astonished, saying, "Who then can be

saved?" But Jesus looked at them and said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

Wisdom of the Fathers

The sign that thou lovest God, is this, that thou lovest thy fellow; and if thou hatest thy fellow, thy hatred is towards God. For it is blasphemy if thou prayest before God while thou art wrath. For thy heart also convicts thee, that in vain thou multipliest words: thy conscience rightly judges that in thy prayers thou profitest nought.

St. Ephraim the Syrian

ON ADMONITION AND REPENTANCE.

Wherefore then doth Christ thus reply to him, saying, "There is none good?" Because He came unto Him as a mere man, and one of the common sort, and a Jewish teacher; for this cause then as a man He discourses with him. And indeed in many instances He replies to the secret thoughts of them that come unto Him.

St. John Chrysostom

Homily 63 on Matthew 19, 4th Century

Beyond the Sermon



[“When It’s Safe” Means Never](#)

by [Fr. Stephen Lourie](#)

At every liturgy in the Orthodox Church, just before the singing of the Nicene Creed, the priest or the deacon intones the words, “The doors! The doors!” This call dates back to the earliest times, when the doors of the church had to be barred shut, to prevent outsiders (in those days, Roman soldiers) from entering the church, witnessing those who confessed the faith, seizing them, and killing them.

Being a Christian was not safe.

Centuries later, under the Muslim Turks, Crypto-Christians – those who lived publically as Muslims, but secretly as Orthodox Christians – attended Liturgy in secret churches, often hidden beneath secret doors in the floors of their own homes, or in unknown caves. In rural villages, Orthodox priests sometimes posed as Muslim imams just to maintain their cover. If such a village of Crypto-Christians was discovered, everyone – from the old

people down to the infants - was put to the sword.

Being a Christian was not safe.

Centuries later, under Communist regimes, faithful Christians would meet secretly in grey concrete apartment blocks, where priests would baptize for little ones who had been brought by their grandmothers, without the knowledge of the parents - a legitimate excuse for the parents to give to the atheist authorities if the family was ever caught. In the most severe Communist regimes, a handful of faithful would gather outside a city or town for a clandestine nighttime Liturgy, served by a priest brought in from far away to avoid the prying eyes of local authorities. In all these cases, the faithful knew, if they were found out, the punishment would be a swift execution, or worse - a slow and painful death in a concentration camp.

Being a Christian was not safe.

In the last few months, faithful around the world have experienced the closure of our churches, the prohibition of the public celebration of Holy Week, and the effective ban by bishops and civil authorities in different places on the reception of Holy Communion. In most places, churches have now reopened (at least in part).

Yet formal studies and informal observations show that about one-third of those who regularly attended holy services at the start of this year have now become accustomed to staying home on Sundays and feast days, and have not returned to church.

Perhaps good habits have been broken. Perhaps laziness has set in. Perhaps the lure of Sunday breakfast in bed has proven seductive.

Yet what has covered all the human laziness and brokenness behind the spiritual falling away is a single self-deception.

These are the words, "I will return to church when it is safe again."

Curiously, one does not hear the same phrase repeated in relation to the liquor store - i.e. I will return to the liquor store when it is safe again. Nor does one hear it applied to the purchase of groceries: grocery stores seem somehow protected from all sicknesses, and remained so throughout the recent worldwide crisis.

Neither does one hear this phrase when it comes to the workplace - i.e. I will refrain from making an income, because the risk to my health is too high. I will return to work when it is safe again.

No, it seems only churches suffer from the unique level of danger - just as they did throughout the earlier part of this year, making them more risky than public transport and dollar stores combined.

The truth is, in the current climate of madness, many Orthodox Christians have not only shifted from realistic medical precaution to social hysteria, they have also found social hysteria to be a most convenient cloak for avoiding anything inconvenient or difficult.

Have to visit a relative? Not until it's safe again.

Have to finish some difficult job? Not until it's safe again.

And how about going back to church every Sunday morning...?

Brethren, attending the holy services of the Orthodox Church – Sundays or feast days – has never been safer than it is today. The truth is, however, it has never been safe to be a Christian.

In the catacombs around Rome rest the remains of more martyrs for Christ than live in my home city – over half a million martyrs. Being a Christian and going to church was always a risk for them – and so it will be for every generation of Christian, unto ages of ages.

So please, kindly set aside the idea that you will return to the holy services “when it’s safe”. That day will never come.

You will either make up your mind to live as a Christian and return to church, or you won't.

Dear Family and Friends,

Glory to Jesus Christ!

We hope this finds you well and staying healthy. This summer our family has accepted the challenge to participate in the **2020 Virtual Trek4Missions**. We're asking you to please help us in this important effort to support the training and building up of Orthodox missionaries, (for information about OCMC, you can visit <https://www.ocmc.org/>).

Our family believes in mission! Seven of us have been on Orthodox mission trips, one of us is an OCMC board member, and one an Orthodox Youth Mission Team (OYMT) leader (and we've got another teen prepping to go next year!).

Team Cardinal pledges to complete 400 miles of walking, running, hiking, biking and kayaking by Sept. 14th for Orthodox mission work. We are hoping to raise funds and awareness for OCMC's work of making disciples of all nations, bringing people to Christ and His Church. Did you know there are over 1 billion people who have yet to hear the Gospel message? OCMC is committed to sending missionaries to reach them.

OCMC is supported by individuals like you and me. Donations large and small help OCMC to recruit, train, send, and support missionaries who are taking up their cross to follow Christ.

Join us to help send disciples and change lives! We hope you will support these efforts by donating to our team page. Together we can help bring the life-transforming Gospel into the world.

Whatever you can give will help - it all adds up! ***In fact, a donor has pledged to match every dollar contributed up to \$4,000.*** We greatly appreciate your support. You can stay informed by accessing our personal <http://secure.ocmc.org/goto/Team-Cardinal> and visit facebook [2020 Virtual Trek4Missions](#) to get updates on this year's Trek.

It's fast and easy to support our efforts by making your tax-deductible donation online using the link below. If you would prefer, you can send your contribution to the address listed below.

Sincerely,
Team Cardinal

To donate, click [here](#).

Or if you prefer, mail your donation, to:
Susan Sulich
81 Rita Dr
New Fairfield, CT06812-4618
United States

Make all checks payable to: Orthodox Christian Mission Center

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Matthew 28:19



St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre
Orthodox Christian Church

Parish Pandemic Procedures

With the recent spike in COVID cases here in CT (mostly do to the outbreak in Danbury and college campuses) we will putting the following procedures into place in order to continue to insure the health and safety of those whom come into the church.

Before you ask for my blessing to attend service, the following questions must be answered:

- Have you or anyone in your household felt ill with respiratory symptoms in the past 24 hours?
- Have you had an elevated temperature of 100.4 or more in last few days?
- Will you notify Fr. Steven if you test Covid positive within 14 days of attending a Liturgy? (This can remain confidential but it will allow the Priest to notify all who attended Liturgy @ same time as person who tested positive.)
- Have you or any member of your household been in contact with anyone who has tested positive for Covid-19?
- Have you traveled outside the borders of CT in the past week? Where? (CT Covid travel Advisory List to be updated weekly?)

If you answer “yes” to any of these questions, you will not receive the priest’s blessing to attend.

If you arrive at the church without the priest’s blessing, you will be asked to stand in the back of the church, reserving socially distant seating for those who have followed procedure. You will still be expected to answer the questions above. If you answer “yes” to any of them, the priest and/or deacon will ask you to leave for the safety of the parishioners.

If you arrive at the church and your temperature is between 99 and 100.4 degrees, the priest and/or the deacon will be notified and you will be asked to stand in the back of the church.

If you arrive at the church and your temperature is 100.4 degrees or above, the priest and/or deacon will be notified and you will be asked to leave the church for the safety of the rest of the parishioners.

All other procedures as outline in the Parish Reopening Plan and found in the Guidelines proved by the Synod of Bishops of the OCA (which can be found in the shared folder - <http://bit.ly/St-Alexis>) remain in effect.

Please know that these procedures are meant not to discriminate against any individual, but are put in place to maintain the heath and safety of those who wish to attend services. Thank you for your consideration and attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.