



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, July 18, 2021

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)

Members of our Parish Council are:

Joseph Barbera - Council Member at Large
Dori Kuziak - Council Secretary
Carolyn Neiss - Vice President
Marlene Melesko - Council Member at Large
Kyle Hollis - President
Roderick Seurattan - Treasurer

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

Dormition Fast

This fast begins August 1st. I strongly encourage you to use the fast as an opportunity to renew your Baptism through confession, particularly as many have not yet fully returned to a full liturgical life. If you have not yet returned to a full sacramental life, through receiving the Eucharist, please consider talking with me as to how we might accomplish this.

Faith Study

There will be no Faith Study this coming Thursday (7/22) as all the clergy of New England will be on a Zoom call with His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon.

Nun-Martyrs Gr. Duchess Elizabeth and Barbara

This Sunday is the commemoration of one of our Patrons (whose relics have been placed in the altar), St Elizabeth the New Martyr. Because it is also the observance of the Fathers of the first Six Ecumenical Councils, the commemoration for St Elizabeth and her companion is deferred. Please remember to ask for her intercessions for this parish.

Troparion — Tone 4

Emulating the Lord's self-abasement on the earth, / you gave up royal mansions to serve the poor and disdained, / overflowing with compassion for the suffering. / And taking up a martyr's cross, / in your meekness / you perfected the Saviour's image within yourself, / therefore, with Barbara, entreat Him to save us all, O wise Elizabeth.

Kontakion — Tone 3

In the midst of worldliness, / thy mournful heart dwelt in Heaven; / in barbaric godlessness, / your valiant soul was not troubled; / you longed to meet your Bridegroom as a confessor, / and He found you worthy of your martyric purpose. / O Elizabeth, with Barbara, / your brave companion, / pray to your Bridegroom for us.

Presentation of New Catechumens

On Sunday, July 25th, Gregory Hawkins and Daniel Cummings will be received into the catechumenate of the Church. This brief ceremony will be performed between the Third Hour and the beginning of Liturgy.

Prayers, Intercessions and Commemorations



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

Natasha, Gene, John, John, Michael, Kelley,
Krisha, Alix, Natalie, Edward, Nathan, Caila,
Julianna, Paul, John, Jacob, Lynn, Anna,
Richard, Robert, Dorothy, Elaina

Many Years to: to Marie-Christine deGiers and
Christine Jankura on the occasion of their
Name's Days; and to Glenn PenkoffLedbeck on
the occasion of his birthday.

Memory Eternal to Olga Kurcharski on this
anniversary of her repose.

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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, intolerance and pestilence; all those departed this life in the hope of the Resurrection.

Fathers of the 1st Six Ecumenical Councils.
Martyr Emilian of Silistria in Bulgaria (363).
Martyr Hyacinth of Amastridea (4th c.). Ven.
John the Long-suffering of the Kiev Caves
(Near Caves—1160). Ven. Pambo, Recluse, of
the Kiev Caves (Far Caves—13th c.). Ven.
Pambo, Hermit, of Egypt (4th c.). Monastic
Martyrs Grand Duchess Elizabeth and Barbara
(1918—July 5th O.S.).

Parish Calendar

Parish Calendar

July 18 to August 2, 2021

Sunday, July 18

New Martyr Elizabeth
Sunday of the Holy Fathers of the 4th
Ecumenical Council
9:15AM Divine Liturgy

Monday, July 19

Repose of Olga Kurcharski

Macrina the Righteous, sister of St. Basil
8:30AM Akathist to St Seraphim of Sarove

Tuesday, July 20

Mother Maria Skobtsova
The Glorious Prophet Elias (Elijah)
8:30AM Akathist to Prophet Elijah
6:30PM Parish Council Meeting

Wednesday, July 21

John and Symeon the Fool for Christ
4:30PM Open Doors

Thursday, July 22

Mary Magdalene, the Holy Myrrh-bearer and
Equal to the Apostles

Friday, July 23

Phocas the Holy Martyr, Bishop of Sinope

Saturday, July 24

Christina the Great Martyr of Tyre
Glenn PenkoffLidbeck
9:00AM Great Vespers

Sunday, July 25

Repose of Sonja Geyer
Reception of Catecumens
5th Sunday of Matthew
9:15AM Divine Liturgy

Monday, July 26

Akathist to Venerable Moses of Carpathians
Repose of St. Jacob Netsvetov
Paraskeve the Righteous Martyr of Rome
Samuel Boyd
8:30AM Akathist to St Jacob Netsvetov

Tuesday, July 27

Repose of Ann Kiernan
Akathist to St Panteleimon
Panteleimon the Great Martyr & Healer
8:30AM Akathist to St Panteleimon

6:30PM Catecumenate

Wednesday, July 28

Prochoros, Nicanor, Timon, & Parmenas the
Apostles of the 70
4:30PM Open Doors

Thursday, July 29

The Holy Martyr Callinicus
Chobor
7:00PM Faith Study

Friday, July 30

Silas, Silvan, Crescens, Epenetus and
Andronicus the Apostles of the 70

Saturday, July 31

Forefeast of the Precious Cross
5:30PM Great Vespers

Sunday, August 1

Procession of the Lifegiving Cross
6th Sunday of Matthew
9:30AM Divine Liturgy followed by Lessor
Blessing of Water

Monday, August 2

Akathist to St Stephen
Translation of the Relics of Stephen the
Protomartyr

Saints and Feasts

July 18

Sunday of the Holy Fathers of the 4th Ecumenical Council

On the Sunday that falls from the 13th to the
19th of the present month, we chant the
Service to the 630 Holy and God-bearing
Fathers who came together for the

4th Ecumenical Council who assembled in Chalcedon in 451, to condemn Eutyches, who taught that there was only one nature, the divine, in Christ after the Incarnation, and Dioscorus, Patriarch of Alexandria, who illegally received Eutyches back into communion and deposed Saint Flavian, Patriarch of Constantinople, who had excommunicated Eutyches.

In the Slavic tradition, on this Sunday, the Fathers of the first six Ecumenical Councils are all commemorated.

July 19

Translation of the Holy Relics of Righteous Seraphim of Sarov

The uncovering of the holy relics of Saint Seraphim of Sarov on July 19, 1903 was attended by many thousands, among them the foremost of the clergy and royalty; the holy Tsar Nicholas II (see July 4) was one of the bearers of the relics in procession, and the Grand Duchess Elizabeth (see July 5) wrote an eyewitness account of the many miracles that took place. Not only had the Saint foretold the coming of the Tsar to his glorification, and that from joy they would chant "Christ is Risen" in summer, but he had also left a letter "for the fourth sovereign, who will come to Sarov." This was Nicholas II, who was given the letter when he came in 1903; the contents of the letter are not known, but when he had read it, the Tsar and future Martyr, though not a man to show his emotions, was visibly shaken. For the life of Saint Seraphim, see January 2.

July 20

The Glorious Prophet Elias (Elijah)

Elias of great fame was from Thisbe or Thesbe, a town of Galaad (Gilead), beyond the Jordan. He was of priestly lineage, a man of a solitary and ascetical character, clothed in a mantle of sheep skin, and girded about his loins with a leathern belt. His name is interpreted as "Yah is my God." His zeal for the glory of God was compared to fire, and his speech for teaching and rebuke was likened unto a burning lamp. From this too he received the name Zealot. Therefore, set aflame with such zeal, he sternly reprov'd the impiety and lawlessness of Ahab and his wife Jezebel. He shut up heaven by means of prayer, and it did not rain for three years and six months. Ravens brought him food for his need when, at God's command, he was hiding by the torrent of Horrath. He multiplied the little flour and oil of the poor widow of Sarephtha of Sidon, who had given him hospitality in her home, and when her son died, he raised him up. He brought down fire from Heaven upon Mount Carmel, and it burned up the sacrifice offered to God before all the people of Israel, that they might know the truth. At the torrent of Kisson, he slew 450 false prophets and priests who worshipped idols and led the people astray. He received food wondrously at the hand of an Angel, and being strengthened by this food he walked for forty days and forty nights. He beheld God on Mount Horeb, as far as this is possible for human nature. He foretold the destruction of the house of Ahab, and the

death of his son Ohozias; and as for the two captains of fifty that were sent by the king, he burned them for their punishment, bringing fire down from Heaven. He divided the flow of the Jordan, and he and his disciple Elisseus passed through as it were on dry land; and finally, while speaking with him, Elias was suddenly snatched away by a fiery chariot in the year 895 B.C., and he ascended as though into heaven, whither God most certainly translated him alive, as He did Enoch (Gen. 5:24; IV Kings 2: 11). But from thence also, after seven years, by means of an epistle he reproached Joram, the son of Josaphat, as it is written: "And there came a message in writing to him from Elias the Prophet, saying, Thus saith the Lord God of David thy father, Because thou hast not walked in the way," and so forth (II Chron. 21:12). According to the opinion of the majority of the interpreters, this came to pass either through his disciple Elisseus, or through another Prophet when Elias appeared to them, even as he appeared on Mount Tabor to the disciples of Christ (see Aug. 6).

July 20

Mother Maria Skobtsova, New-Martyr of France

Saint Maria Skobtsova of Paris lived a life devoted to serving the poor and the marginalized. She was born Elizaveta Pilenko in 1891 in Riga, Latvia to devout Russian Orthodox parents. Her father died when she was fourteen, and her grief led her to atheism. As a young teenager she became involved in the socialist

and intellectual circles in St. Petersburg. By eighteen she was a published poet and married to a Bolshevik. Her desire to actively serve the needy - more than simply discuss social change - led her back to a faith in Christ. She then became the first woman accepted to study at the Theological Academy of the Alexander Nevsky Monastery in St. Petersburg.

After the Bolshevik Revolution, she was elected Mayor of Anapa but had to flee Russia for Paris in 1923. Elizaveta was inspired to devote her life completely to serving the poor after her daughter, Nastia, died of meningitis in 1926. After her second marriage ended in 1932, Metropolitan Evlogii of Paris tonsured her a nun with the name Maria and blessed her to live a "monasticism in the world" devoted to social service.

Initially devoted to the Russian emigres in Paris, she founded a sanatorium along with homes to serve single mothers, families, and single men. By 1937, 120 dinners were served each day. Much of the work she did herself: begging for food, cooking the soup, and even embroidering the icons for their chapel.

By 1942, Maria's work turned to assisting the Jewish population. She helped Father Dimitri Klepinin issue fake baptismal certificates for Jews that came to their aide. In a mass arrest in July of that year, 12,884 Jews were taken to a sports stadium before being transferred to Auschwitz. Maria spent three days visiting the prisoners, bringing them food, and even rescuing some of the children by smuggling them out in trash cans. She also aided Jews in escaping

to Southern France which was unoccupied by the Nazis.

Maria was arrested in February, 1943, and was sent to Ravensbruck concentration camp in Germany. For two years, she raised the spirits of her fellow prisoners, helping them remember their human dignity. She led discussion groups on literature, history, and theology, despite her weakening health. On March 31, 1945, a short time before the camp was rescued, Saint Maria was taken to the gas chambers; some prisoners say she took the place of a fellow Jewish prisoner.

On January 18th, 2004, the Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate recognized Mother Maria Skobtsova as a saint along with her three fellow workers who also died in German concentration camps: her son Yuri, Fr. Dimitri Klepinin, and Ilya Fondaminsky. They are all commemorated in the Orthodox Church on July 20th.

July 22

Mary Magdalene, the Holy Myrrh-bearer and Equal to the Apostles

Saint Mary was from Magdala in Galilee on the Sea of Tiberias, and for this was named Magdalene. When the Lord Jesus cast out seven demons from her, from which she had been suffering, she became His faithful and inseparable disciple, following Him and ministering unto Him even to the time of His crucifixion and burial. Then, returning to Jerusalem together with the rest of the Myrrh-bearers, she prepared the fragrant

spices for anointing the body of the Lord. And on the Lord's day they came very early to the tomb, even before the Angels appeared declaring the Resurrection of the Lord. When Mary Magdalene saw the stone taken away from the tomb, she ran and proclaimed it to Peter and John. And returning immediately to the tomb and weeping outside, she was deemed worthy to be the first of the Myrrh-bearers to behold the Lord arisen from the dead, and when she fell at His feet, she heard Him say, "Touch Me not." After the Lord's Ascension, nothing certain is known concerning her. Some accounts say that she went to Rome and later returned to Jerusalem, and from there proceeded to Ephesus, where she ended her life, preaching Christ. Although it is sometimes said that Saint Mary Magdalene was the "sinful woman" of the Gospel, this is nowhere stated in the tradition of the Church, in the sacred hymnology, or in the Holy Gospels themselves, which say only that our Lord cast seven demons out of her, not that she was a fallen woman. "Madeleine" is a form of Magdalene.

July 24

Christina the Great Martyr of Tyre

Saint Christina was from Tyre in Syria, the daughter of a pagan named Urban. Enlightened in her heart to believe in Christ, she broke her father's idols, made of gold and silver, and distributed the pieces to the poor. When her father learned this, he punished her ruthlessly, then cast her into prison. The rulers subjected her to

imprisonments, hunger, torments, the cutting off of her breasts and tongue, and finally impalement, in the year 200, during the reign of the Emperor Septimius Severus.

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 8 Troparion (Fathers)

You are most glorious, O Christ our God!
You have established the Holy Fathers as
lights on the earth.
Through them You have guided us to the true
Faith.//
O greatly compassionate One, glory to You!

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 8 Kontakion (Fathers)

The Apostles' preaching and the Fathers' doctrines have established one Faith for the Church.

Adorned with the robe of truth, woven from heavenly theology,//
It defines and glorifies the great mystery of piety.

Tone 3 Prokeimenon (Resurrection)

Sing praises to our God, sing praises! / Sing praises to our King, sing praises!
(Ps. 46:6)

V. Clap your hands, all peoples! Shout to God with loud songs of joy! (Ps. 46:1)

Tone 4 Prokeimenon (Song of the Three Holy Children)

Blessed are You, O Lord God of our fathers, / and praised and glorified is Your Name forever! (Song of the Three Holy Children, v. 3)

Tone 3
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

V. In You, O Lord, have I hoped; let me never be put to shame! (Ps. 30:1a)

V. Be a God of protection for me, a house of refuge in order to save me! (Ps. 30:2b)

Tone 1

V. The Lord, the God of gods, speaks and summons the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting. (Ps. 49:1)

Communion Hymn

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

Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous; praise
befits the just! (Ps. 32:1)
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Gospel and Epistle Readings

Epistle Reading

The Reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Romans 6:18-23

Brethren, having been set free from sin, you have become slaves of righteousness. I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once yielded your members to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now yield your members to righteousness for sanctification.

When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. But then what return did you get from the things of which you are now ashamed? The end of those things is death. But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the return you get is sanctification and its end, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Gospel Reading

The Reading is from Matthew 8:5-13

At that time, as Jesus entered Capernaum, a centurion came forward to him, beseeching him and saying, "Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, in terrible distress." And he said to him, "I will come and heal him." But the centurion answered him, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; but only say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this,' and he does it." When Jesus heard him, he marveled, and said to those who followed him, "Truly, I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such faith. I tell you, many will come from east and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth." And to the centurion Jesus said, "Go; be it done for you as you have believed." And the servant was healed at that very moment.

Wisdom of the Fathers

"But whosoever shall do and teach," said He, "shall be called great." For not to ourselves alone, should we be profitable, but to others also; since neither is the reward as great for him who guides himself aright, as for one who with himself adds also another.

St. John Chrysostom

Homilies 15 and 16 on Matthew 5, 4th Century

Since he who cannot teach himself, yet attempts to set others right, will have many to ridicule him. Or rather such a one will have no power to teach at all, his actions uttering their voice against him.

St. John Chrysostom

Homilies 15 and 16 on Matthew 5, 4th Century

Beyond the Sermon



Grand Duchess Elizabeth

Saint Elizabeth was the older sister of Tsarina Alexandra, and was married to the Grand Duke Sergius, the governor of Moscow. She converted to

Orthodoxy from Protestantism of her own free will, and organized women from all levels of society to help the soldiers at the front and in the hospitals.

Grand Duke Sergius was killed by an assassin's bomb on February 4, 1905, just as Saint Elizabeth was leaving for her workshops. Remarkably, she visited her husband's killer in prison and urged him to repent.

After this, she began to withdraw from her former social life. She devoted herself to the

Convent of Saints Martha and Mary, a community of nuns which focused on worshipping God and also helping the poor. She moved out of the palace into a building she purchased on Ordinka. Women from the nobility, and also from the common people, were attracted to the convent.

Saint Elizabeth nursed sick and wounded soldiers in the hospitals and on the battle front. On Pascha of 1918, the Communists ordered her to leave Moscow, and join the royal family near Ekaterinburg. She left with a novice, Sister Barbara, and an escort of Latvian guards.

After arriving in Ekaterinburg, Saint Elizabeth was denied access to the Tsar's family. She was placed in a convent, where she was warmly received by the sisters.

At the end of May Saint Elizabeth was moved to nearby Alopaevsk with the Grand Dukes Sergius, John, and Constantine, and the young Count Vladimir Paley. They were all housed in a schoolhouse on the edge of town. Saint Elizabeth was under guard, but was permitted to go to church and work in the garden.

On the night of July 5, they were all taken to a place twelve miles from Alopaevsk, and executed. The Grand Duke Sergius was shot, but the others were thrown down a mineshaft, then grenades were tossed after them. Saint Elizabeth lived for several hours, and could be heard singing hymns.

The bodies of Saint Elizabeth and Saint Barbara were taken to Jerusalem in 1920, and buried in the church of Saint Mary Magdalene.