



St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre Orthodox Church

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Attached

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Services Schedule

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

Bulletin for Sunday, November 21, 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
Susan Davis- Council Elect
Carolyn Neiss - Vice President
Marlene Melesko - Council Member at Large
Susan Egan - Council Elect
Dn Timothy Skuby - Council Elect

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

Please remember to turn in the "pledge" portion of your stewardship form.

OUTREACH REQUEST: The Outreach Committee is once again asking for new toys for Christmas which will be donated to Safe Futures in New London, a safe-house for abused men, women and families. Please bring your new, unwrapped gifts to church no later than December 5th. Any questions, please contact Marlene Melesko at 860-739-4360. Thank you.

Reflections on the Nativity Fast: On the parish's Facebook page, I have been placing a daily reflection and readings. I encourage you to make these part of your meditations in preparation for the celebration of the Nativity of the Lord and Savior. If you don't

have access to Facebook (Meta), I have also placed these readings under a new link on our parish web page, called "Reflections and News". Simply follow the link on the main menu, or use this direct link: <https://stalexischurch.org/reflections>

Prayers, Intercessions and Commemorations



Archpriest Dennis,
Archpriest Michael,
Deacon Timothy, Evelyn,
Katheryn, Anne, Aaron,
Veronica, Richard,
Nancy, Susanne, Carol,
Alexander, Gail, Kelley,
Nina, Ellen, Maureen,
Elizabeth, Christopher,
Joshua, Jennifer, Petra,
Olivia, Jessica, Sean,
Sarah, Justin, Dayna and
Maria.

Please pray for our catecumens: Daniel, Gregory and David.

Many Years! to Alex Martins and Catherine on the occasion of their Name's Days; and to Christine Boyd on the occasion of her birthday.

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- Pray for: All those confined to hospitals, nursing homes, and their own homes due to illness; for all those who serve in the armed forces; widows, orphans, prisoners, victims of violence, and refugees;

- All those suffering chronic illness, financial hardship, loneliness, addictions, abuse, abandonment and despair; those who are homeless, those who are institutionalized, those who have no one to pray for them;
- All Orthodox seminarians & families; all Orthodox monks and nuns, and all those considering monastic life; all Orthodox missionaries and their families.
- All those who have perished due to hatred, intolerance and pestilence; all those departed this life in the hope of the Resurrection.

The Entry of the Most-Holy Theotokos into the Temple .

Parish Calendar

Schedule of Services and Events

November 21 to November 29, 2021

Sunday, November 21

The Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple
 9:30AM Divine Liturgy - Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple

Monday, November 22

Archippus the Apostle, Philemon the Apostle & his wife, Apphia, Onesimos the Disciple of Paul

Tuesday, November 23

A. Martins - N

Amphilochius, Bishop of Iconium
 8:30AM Daily Matins
 6:30PM Catechumens

Wednesday, November 24

Catherine the Great Martyr of Alexandria
 8:30AM Akathist to St Catherine
 5:30PM Akathist Glory to God for All Things

Thursday, November 25

Our Holy Father Clement, Pope of Rome

Friday, November 26

Christine Boyd - B

Saturday, November 27

James the Great Martyr of Persia
 Page - A
 5:30PM Great Vespers

Sunday, November 28

Daria Krawchuk - B
 9:15AM Divine Liturgy

Monday, November 29

Paramonus, Philumenus, and their 370 Companion Martyrs in Bithynia

Saints and Feasts

November 21

The Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple

According to the tradition of the Church, the Theotokos was brought to the Temple at three years of age, where she was consecrated to God and spent her days until she was fourteen or fifteen years old; and then, as a mature maiden, by the common

counsel of the priests (since her parents had reposed some three years before), she was betrothed to Joseph.

November 22

Archippus the Apostle, Philemon the Apostle & his wife, Apphia, Onesimos the Disciple of Paul

Philemon, who was from Colossae, a city of Phrygia, was a man both wealthy and noble; Apphia was his wife. Archippus became Bishop of the Church in Colossae. All three were disciples of the Apostle Paul. Onesimus, who was formerly an unbeliever and slave of Philemon, stole certain of his vessels and fled to Rome. However, on finding him there, the Apostle Paul guided him onto the path of virtue and the knowledge of the truth, and sent him back to his master Philemon, to whom he wrote an epistle (this is one of the fourteen epistles of Saint Paul). In this epistle, Paul commended Onesimus to his master and reconciled the two. Onesimus was later made a bishop; in Greece he is honoured as the patron Saint of the imprisoned. All these Saints received their end by martyrdom, when they were stoned to death by the idolaters. Saint Onesimus is also commemorated on February 15.

November 22

Holy Martyr Cecilia and those with her

Saint Cecilia was of an illustrious Roman family. On being betrothed to Valerian,

she drew him to the Faith of Christ, and he in turn drew his own brother Tiburtius to the same. They contested in martyrdom during the reign of Diocletian, in the year 288.

November 24

Our Holy Father Clement, Pope of Rome

Saint Clement was instructed in the Faith of Christ by the Apostle Peter. He became Bishop of Rome in the year 91, the third after the death of the Apostles. He died as a martyr about the year 100 during the reign of Trajan.

November 25

Catherine the Great Martyr of Alexandria

Saint Catherine, who was from Alexandria, was the daughter of Constatas (or Cestus). She was an exceedingly beautiful maiden, most chaste, and illustrious in wealth, lineage, and learning. By her steadfast understanding, she utterly vanquished the passionate and unbridled soul of Maximinus, the tyrant of Alexandria; and by her eloquence, she stopped the mouths of the so-called philosophers who had been gathered to dispute with her. She was crowned with the crown of martyrdom in the year 305. Her holy relics were taken by Angels to the holy mountain of Sinai, where they were discovered many years later; the famous monastery of Saint Catherine was originally dedicated to the Holy

Transfiguration of the Lord and the Burning Bush, but later was dedicated to Saint Catherine. According to the ancient usage, Saints Catherine and Mercurius were celebrated on the 24th of this month, whereas the holy Hieromartyrs Clement of Rome and Peter of Alexandria were celebrated on the 25th. The dates of the feasts of these Saints were interchanged at the request of the Church and Monastery of Mount Sinai, so that the festival of Saint Catherine, their patron, might be celebrated more festively together with the Apodosis of the Feast of the Entry of the Theotokos. The Slavic Churches, however, commemorate these Saints on their original dates.

Hymns of the Day



Tone 5 Troparion (Resurrection)

Let us, the faithful,
praise and worship the
Word,
co-eternal with the
Father and the Spirit,
born for our salvation

from the Virgin;
for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in
the flesh,
to endure death,
and to raise the dead//
by His glorious Resurrection.

Tone 4 Troparion (Feast)

Today is the prelude of the good will of God,
of the preaching of the salvation of mankind.

The Virgin appears in the Temple of God,
in anticipation proclaiming Christ to all.
Let us rejoice and sing to her:
“Rejoice, O Fulfillment//
of the Creator’s dispensation!”

Tone 5 Kontakion (Resurrection)

You descended into hell, O my Savior,
shattering its gates as Almighty,
resurrecting the dead as Creator,
and destroying the sting of death.
You have delivered Adam from the curse, O
Lover of man,//
and we cry to You: “O Lord, save us!”

Tone 4 Kontakion (Feast)

The most pure Temple of the Savior;
the precious Chamber and Virgin;
the sacred Treasure of the glory of God,
is presented today to the house of the Lord.
She brings with her the grace of the Spirit,
therefore, the angels of God praise her://
“Truly this woman is the abode of Heaven!”

Instead of “It is truly meet...,” we sing:

Tone 4

The angels beheld the entrance of the Pure
One and were amazed.//
How has the Virgin entered into the Holy of
Holies?

Since she is a living Ark of God
let no profane hand touch the Theotokos.
But let the lips of believers unceasingly sing to
her,
praising her in joy with the angel’s song://
“Truly, you are more exalted than all, O pure
Virgin!”

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him
in the highest! (Ps. 148:1)
I will receive the cup of salvation and call on
the Name of the Lord. (Ps. 115:4)
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Gospel and Epistle Readings

Epistle Reading

Prokeimenon. 3rd Tone. Luke 1: 46-48.

My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit
rejoices in God my Savior.

Verse: For he has regarded the humility of his
servant.

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 9:1-7.

BRETHREN, the first covenant had regulations for worship and an earthly sanctuary. For a tent was prepared, the outer one, in which were the lampstand and the table and the bread of the Presence; it is called the Holy Place. Behind the second curtain stood a tent called the Holy of Holies, having the golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, which contained a golden urn holding the manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail. These preparations having thus been made, the priests go continually into the outer tent, performing their ritual duties; but into the second only the high priest goes, and he

but once a year, and not without taking blood which he offers for himself and for the errors of the people.

Gospel Reading

The Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple The Reading is from Luke 10:38-42, 11:27-28

At that time, Jesus entered a village; and a woman called Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. But Martha was distracted with much serving; and she went to him and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve you alone? Tell her then to help me." But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things; one thing is needful. Mary has chosen the good portion, which shall not be taken away from her." As he said this, a woman in the crowd raised her voice and said to him, "Blessed is the womb that bore you, and the breasts that you sucked!" But he said, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"

Wisdom of the Fathers

What Mary might well have said to Martha, the Lord, anticipating her, replied that she had left everything to sit at the Lord's feet, and bless God all day long. You see,

her sitting was for love's sake.

St. Makarios the Great

Homily XII, 4th Century

But that God's word may be made clearer, listen to this. If any one loves Jesus, and attends to Him in earnest, and not in a casual way, but in love abides by Him, God is already devising to make some return to that soul for its love, although the man does not know what he is to receive or what portion God is about to give to the soul.

St. Makarios the Great

Homily XII, 4th Century

Beyond the Sermon



Sermon for the Entry of the Theotokos into the Temple (2018)

+ Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Saviour, save us. Amen.

Sometime ago, I read an article by a prominent Orthodox bishop who claimed that, historically, the Entry of the Theotokos

into the Holy of Holies could not have taken place. He said that Jewish law forbade anyone to enter the Holy of Holies except the High Priest, and him only once a year. He also said that it would have been even more impossible for a woman to enter into the Holy of Holies; Jewish law prohibited this. (It is true that Jewish law did forbid this, but actually many of the major events in the Gospel would also fall under the prohibition of Jewish law.) This critical approach to faith, contrary to what you might think, is not new. From the Virgin Birth to the Resurrection of Christ, our Orthodox Faith has always fallen under the critical eye of those who think in a worldly way. Some of Our Saviour's own disciples fell away because they could not believe that He could give them His flesh to eat and His blood to drink in Holy Communion. From the very beginning, the Church has had a long history of fighting heresies and proclaiming the truth. But today this critical approach has become very widespread and even dominant in many mainline churches.

True Christianity is a mystical religion filled with miraculous events. Think of the great mystery of the invisible God taking on flesh and walking among us, think of the appearance of the Holy Trinity at the Baptism of Christ, the divine light that shone from Christ at His Transfiguration, His glorious Ascension into heaven, and the descent of the Holy Spirit as tongues of fire upon the Apostles. All of these events, so fundamental to our salvation, defy space and time and all the laws of nature. And remember that Our Saviour also said. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall

he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go to my Father.” (John 14:12-14) Dear brothers and sisters, the miraculous events of the Gospel are certainly not the end of salvation history. The history of Christ’s Holy Church is a history of miracles, of God acting in the world, acting in our lives, healing incurable illnesses and resolving impossible problems. Think of the miraculous Myrrh-Streaming Icon of the Theotokos that just visited the Monastery on Pilgrimage Weekend. If we limit the activity of God to only what we can prove or understand then we are limiting God’s omnipotent power and restraining his infinite mercy. We are turning our backs on God, turning our backs on all of the Holy Scriptures and the tradition of the Church. To reduce our faith to what can only be proven historically and physically would be to alter it so fundamentally that it would no longer bear any resemblance to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the experience of the Church.

The word miracle is defined in a secular way by the dictionary thus: “A surprising and welcome event that is not explicable by natural or scientific laws and is therefore considered to be the work of a divine agency.” So often, modern man is tempted to disassemble true Christianity and to create something that is more palatable for those with weak faith: something so bland that it can be easily adapted to any life style, so undemanding that personal morality becomes irrelevant, and so unchallenging that no one is made to feel uncomfortable. But today, dear brothers and sisters, we gather here to celebrate one of these extraordinary events, one of these

great miracles that clearly defies the Jewish Law and goes against history: the Great Feast of the Entry of the Holy Theotokos into The Temple. Today we commemorate the day that the Holy Virgin Mary as a three-year-old child was brought to the Temple to the Holy of Holies, to be reared far away from the noise and distractions of the world. There in the House of God she was nourished by the sacred presence of God in His holy Sanctuary.

In the Old Testament, God was hidden from His people behind the veils of the Holy of Holies. No one was ever allowed to see Him or to enter His presence; only the High Priest, and then only once a year. With the Entry of the young Virgin Mary into the Temple all of this begins to change radically. God is changing the Jewish Law and becoming visible and approachable. The Holy Theotokos was raised in the Holy of Holies, and after nine years when she departed the Temple God dwelt with her. And in only a few years after her departure from the Temple she would become herself the living Temple of God, the Gate through which Christ Himself would enter this world. She would bring forth the Eternal Word, Jesus Christ Himself. The invisible and unapproachable God hidden in the Holy of Holies would not only become visible to His people and to all creation but become a man and walk among us. Through the Theotokos, God enters this world and dwells among us. He is no longer hidden from us.

When the Holy Virgin enters the Holy of Holies, it is the beginning of a new covenant between God and man, the end of the many centuries of man’s alienation from God,

and the end of our bondage to sin. We also, you might say, like the Theotokos, have been brought here to this holy temple to be protected from the noise and distractions of the world. Here in this quiet, remote holler of West Virginia we have been placed by God, so that we too, like the Theotokos, can grow spiritually. Here in this monastery, in our little holler on this little mountain, we have been planted. Here under the watchful eye of the Mother of God, we are nourished with spiritual food and protected from the distractions of our world.

She dwelt in the Holy of Holies in the presence of God. She grew up in His presence and remained in His presence for the rest of her life even after leaving the Temple. In celebrating this feast, this particular feast which is the patronal feast of our holler, we too are called to dwell always in His presence. But how sad that we who are called to dwell in His presence here in this holy temple so often choose to ignore God. We stand here in His presence, in this Holy of Holies just like Mary did, but we choose to daydream and imagine that we are somewhere else. Here in this holy temple during the sacred and Divine Liturgy, when heaven and earth meet, when Christ Himself comes down upon our altar to dwell within us, we choose to look away. We so often freely choose the trivial over the sublime.

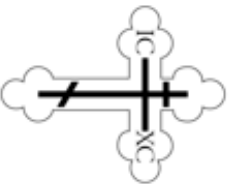
When we look at the holy face of the Mother of God in the icons, we see a woman, a human being just like us, but one who is filled with peace, because she chose not to look away but to keep her gaze always fixed on Him. No matter what happened in her

life, she did not look away from Him. This is the source of her deep inner peace that is undisturbed by the turmoil of this world.

On this holy and miraculous day, may we have the faith to enter with her into the presence of God and remain there forever. Amen.

<https://www.holycross.org/blogs/sermons-homilies/sermon-for-the-entry-of-the-theotokos-into-the-temple-2018>





ST. ALEXIS ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH

A Church in the New England Diocese
of the Orthodox Church in America
Rev. Steven Hosking • Rector

“The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. As it is written, He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever. He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way for all your generosity, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God.”

II Cor 9: 6-11

Stewardship Commitment

PROPORTIONAL GIVING

The following is a guide to help you visualize what a particular percentage of income equals in dollar amounts in determining your monthly pledge.

Monthly Income	Gift	2%	4%	6%	8%	10%
\$2000		\$ 40	80	120	160	200
\$3000		\$ 60	120	180	240	300
\$4000		\$ 80	160	240	320	400
\$5000		\$ 100	200	300	400	500
\$6000		\$ 120	240	360	480	600
\$7000		\$ 140	280	420	560	700
\$8000		\$ 160	320	480	640	800
\$9000		\$ 180	360	540	720	900

“Treasure” — your tithes and offerings — are utilized for the ongoing operations and ministries of the Parish, including:

- Facility Maintenance and Utilities
- Administrative Costs
- Parish Life Activities
- Required Clergy Conferences
- Pastoral Subsistence Package
- Diocese Giving
- Sunday School Activities
- Ministry Expenses
- Worship Related Expenses

These are managed through the Operating Fund. The balance in the operating fund as of August, 2021 is approximately \$117,194.

DESIGNATED GIFTS & FUNDS

In addition to tithes and offerings that support the operations and ministries of the Parish, Designated Gifts for Sr Elizabeth Fund may be made. Designated gifts (including *in memoriam*) which are managed separately from the Operating Fund support a variety of needs; beautification, outreach, evangelization and in particular for parishioners with special financial needs (the St Elizabeth Fund). The balance in these Parish restricted funds as of August, 2021 is: \$14,518.

My Annual Pledge for 2021 is given below:

Title (Operating Fund): \$ _____

Other Giving: \$ _____, for _____ Please indicate designation, e.g. “St Elizabeth Fund”

NAME

SIGNATURE

Ministries	Roles	Coordinator	Already Involved	Wish to be Involved
Building & Grounds	Building & Repair Skills	Vice President		
	Gardening			
	Church Clean-up			
	Red House Liaison			
Church School	Sunday Assistant	Member at Large 1		
	Sunday School Teacher			
	Adult Coordinator			
Hospitality	Greeter	Member at Large 2		
	Host Hospitality Gathering			
Library	Organize and Maintain	Vice President		
Outreach	College Ministries	Member at Large 2		
	Guild of St Elizabeth			
	Tract Rack			
	Coordinate Community OR			
	Coordinate Mart'l & Int'r OR			
Parish Life	Lunch Clean-up	Member at Large 1		
	Refreshments on Sunday			
	Organize Kitchen & Parish Hall			
	Special Events Volunteer			
Pastoral Care	Correspondence	Fr Steven		
	Visitation of the Sick			
Youth Ministry	Advisor/Meeting Facilitator			
	Event Chaperone			
Miscellaneous	Baby/sitter for Events	Secretary		
	Bookkeeper	(Treasurer)		
	Name Day Card			
	Phone Reminders			

Ministries	Roles	Coordinator	Already Involved	Wish to be Involved
Worship	Altar Care	Fr Steven		
	Altar Server			
	Bake Altar Bread			
	Reader			
	Choir			
	Flower Arranging			
	Candles			

Please indicate which ministry of the Parish in which you would like to be involved. A member of the Parish Council or Parish Ministry will be in touch with you with regards to how you might become more involved.

- Fellowship and Stewardship including Coffee Hour, Greeting and Hospitality etc.
- Outreach and Evangelization including Communications, community outreach, coordinating and organizing outreach etc.
- Buildings, Grounds and Maintenance including cleaning (both inside and outside) etc.
- Education and Liturgical including Readers, Choir and teaching etc.
- Ad Hoc Ministries Strategic Planning” for the parish, ByLaws Review

Name: _____

GIVING OF TIME AND TALENT
As Ministry of the Church

“What is the implication, the meaning, the reality of baptism, chrismation, membership in the Church? The definition of church membership is not something that we can read in the statutes. It is simply “to serve.” All are called to minister. The people of God are called to minister, not to be ministered to, but to minister.”

- Fr Sergei Glagolev



Parish Shared Folder

<http://bit.ly/St-Alexis>

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4716784843?pwd=dzB0MTY1cnVIUUFWNXBCako1ekZ0Zz09>

Meeting ID: 471 678 4843

Passcode: 1994

One tap mobile

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

Dial by your location

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4716784843?pwd=dzB0MTY1cnVIUUFWNXBCako1ekZ0Zz09>