



St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre Orthodox Church

Address: PO Box 134, 108 E Main St, Clinton,
CT 06413-0134

Phone: 860-664-9434

Web: <http://www.stalexischurch.org>

Email: stalexis@ dneoca.org

Fr Steven Hosking

Rector

Phone: 860-866-5802 (Message)

Email: frsteve@stalexischurch.org

Dn Timothy Skuby

Attached

Phone: (808) 341-1813

Email: dntimothy@stalexischurch.org

Services Schedule

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

Bulletin for Sunday, March 05, 2023

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:

Greg Jankura - Vice President

Susan Davis- Council Member at Large

Carolyn Neiss - President

Marlene Melesko - Council Member at Large

Susan Egan - Treasurer

Dn Timothy Skuby - Secretary

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

Lenten Deanery Service at 4pm

Holy Ghost Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church
1510 E Main St
Bridgeport, CT 06608
United States

OUTREACH MINISTRY is sponsoring a Lenten project--the Baby Bottle Campaign through Zoe for Life, an Orthodox organization located in Ohio who supports pregnant women before and after they have a baby by providing counseling and baby supplies. They have sent us baby bottles to take home and fill with your loose change. Once your bottle is full, please convert

the change into bills and bring your donation to church, putting it in the collection basket in the back of the church earmarked "Zoe for Life". The last day to donate will be April 30th, the second Sunday after Pascha.

Contact Marlene Melesko with any questions: 860-739-4360 or mmelesko@sbcglobal.net

The following is a brief synopsis of the last **Parish Council meeting** held on 21 February 2023.

- Pledge Analysis - To date we have received pledges from 26 members, 3 non-members and have 6 implied pledges for a total of \$91,889. (Note: An implied pledge is one that a member did not submit a pledge card but has donated the same amount for the 1st two months of the year and we expect that to continue). 12 members have not submitted a pledge card and they will be contacted by letter in the near future.

- Tax Letters - Tax letters for parishioners were sent out in January/February.

- CDs - The Parish Council has decided to move \$20,000 from savings to the checking account in order for us to open up two different six-month CDs paying 2.5%. Each CD will be in the amount of \$10K and will be set up three months apart. This will allow the parish more flexibility if we need these monies for emergency purposes.

- Lenten Education - Similar to last year, a short presentation/discussion will take place at Coffee Hour, based on the third book (Triodion & Lent) in the series "A Year of the Lord Liturgical Bible Studies." This will take place after the Post Communion Prayers and after Father is downstairs. For those who are not in attendance, content

of each session will be provided in the Bulletin. The program will start on March 5th.

- Outreach Committee

- It was decided to reinstate Pot Luck dinners on Wednesdays after Presanctified Liturgy. Please join us and bring a Lenten dish to share.

- Zoe for Life is an Orthodox organization located in Ohio who supports pregnant women before and after the birth of their baby. The committee decided to participate in the "Baby Bottle" campaign during Lent for the Orthodox organization Zoe for Life. Each parish family will be given a baby bottle provided by Zoe for Life. The families will fill the bottles with change during Lent, have the change converted to "bills" and then the committee will send the donated funds to Zoe for Life after Pascha

Prayers, Intercessions and Commemorations



Many Years! to Kyra Elliott - Seurattan on the occasion of her birthday and Name's day.

Please continue to pray for our catecumens, David, James, Brent, Mark and Anthony (and his family).

Please pray for Evelyn Leake who is in need of

God's mercy and healing; and for Kelley Hosking-Billings.

- 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.

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT — Tone 5. Sunday of Orthodoxy. Martyr Conon of Isauria (1st c.). Finding of the Relics of Rt. Blv. Theodore, Prince of Smolensk and Yaroslavl', and his children Ss. David and Constantine, Wonderworkers of Yaroslavl' (1463). Monastic Martyr Adrian of Poshekhónsk (Yaroslavl'—1550). Martyr Onesimus of Isauria (1st c.). Martyr Conon the Gardener, of Pamphylia (3rd c.). Virgin Martyr Irais (Raïssa) of Antinoë in Egypt (ca. 308). Martyr Eulogius, of Palestine. Martyr Eulampius, of Palestine. St. Mark the Faster, of Egypt (5th c.). St. Hesychius the Faster, of Bithynia (ca. 790).

Parish Calendar

Schedule of Services and Events

March 5 to March 13, 2023

Sunday, March 5

Sunday of Orthodoxy
9:30AM Divine Liturgy
4:00PM Lenten Deanery Services

Monday, March 6

42 Martyrs of Amorion in Phrygia

Tuesday, March 7

The Holy Martyred Bishops of Cherson:
Basileus, Ephraim, Eugene, Capito,
Aetherius, Agathodorus, and Elpidius
8:30AM Daily Matins
9:00AM Book Study

Wednesday, March 8

Theophylact the Confessor, Bishop of
Nicomedia
6:00PM Presanctified Liturgy

Thursday, March 9

The Holy Forty Martyrs of Sebastia
8:30AM Daily Matins
7:00PM Book Study

Friday, March 10

Quadratus the Martyr & his Companions
Kyra Elliot

Saturday, March 11

Second Saturday of Lent
5:30PM Great Vespers

Sunday, March 12

Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas

9:30AM Divine Liturgy
4:00PM Lenten Deanery Services

Monday, March 13

Removal of the relics of Nicephorus,
Patriarch of Constantinople

Saints and Feasts

March 05

Sunday of Orthodoxy

For more than one hundred years the Church of Christ was troubled by the persecution of the Iconoclasts of evil belief, beginning in the reign of Leo the Isaurian (717-741) and ending in the reign of Theophilus (829-842). After Theophilus's death, his widow the Empress Theodora (celebrated Feb. 11), together with the Patriarch Methodius (June 14), established Orthodoxy anew. This ever-memorable Queen venerated the icon of the Mother of God in the presence of the Patriarch Methodius and the other confessors and righteous men, and openly cried out these holy words: "If anyone does not offer relative worship to the holy icons, not adoring them as though they were gods, but venerating them out of love as images of the archetype, let him be anathema." Then with common prayer and fasting during the whole first week of the Forty-day Fast, she asked God's forgiveness for her husband. After this, on the first Sunday of the Fast, she and her son, Michael the Emperor, made a procession with all the clergy and people and restored the holy icons, and again adorned the Church of Christ with them. This is the holy deed that all we

the Orthodox commemorate today, and we call this radiant and venerable day the Sunday of Orthodoxy, that is, the triumph of true doctrine over heresy.

March 05

Conon the Gardener

This saint lived during the reign of emperor Decius in 251. He came from the town of Nazareth. He left his hometown and went to the city of Mandron, in the province of Pamphylia. There he stayed at a place called Karmela or Karmena cultivating a garden which he used to water and plant with various vegetables. From this garden he obtained what is necessary for life. He had such an upright and simple mind that, when he met those who wished to arrest him and saw that they greeted him, he also greeted in return from the bottom of his soul and heart. When they told him that governor Publius called the saint to go to him, the saint answered with simplicity: "What does the governor need me, since I am a Christian? Let him call those who think the way he does and have the same religion with him." So, the blessed man was tied and brought to the governor, who tried to move him to sacrifice to the idols. But the saint sighed from the bottom of his heart, cursed the tyrant and confirmed his faith in Christ with his confession, saying that it is not possible to be moved from it even though he might be tortured cruelly. So, for this reason they nailed his feet and made the saint run in front of the governor's coach. But the saint fainted in the street. Having fallen on his knees, he prayed and, thus,

he commended his holy soul to the hands of God.

March 08

Theophylaktos, Bishop of Nicomedeia

Theophylact was from the East; his native city is unknown. In Constantinople he became a close friend of Tarsius, who afterwards became Patriarch of Constantinople (see Feb. 25). Theophylact was made Bishop of Nicomedia. After the death of Saint Tarsius, his successor Nicephorus (see June 2) called together a number of Bishops to help him in fighting the iconoclasm of Emperor Leo the Armenian, who reigned from 813-820. Among them was Euthymius, Bishop of Sardis (celebrated Dec. 26), who had attended the holy Seventh Ecumenical Council in 787 - he was exiled three times for the sake of the holy icons, and for defying the Emperor Theophilus' command to renounce the veneration of the icons, was scourged from head to foot until his whole body was one great wound, from which he died eight days later, about the year 830; Joseph of Thessalonica (see July 14); Michael of Synnada (see May 23); Emilian, Bishop of Cyzicus (see Aug. 8); and Saint Theophylact, who boldly rebuked Leo to his face, telling him that because he despised the long-suffering of God, utter destruction was about to overtake him, and there would be none to deliver him. For this, Theophylact was exiled to the fortress of Strobilus in Karia of Asia Minor, where, after 30 years of imprisonment and hardship, he gave up his holy soul about

the year 845. Leo the Armenian, according to the Saint's prophecy, was slain in church on the eve of our Lord's Nativity, in 820.

March 09

40 Martyrs at Lake Sebaste

These holy Martyrs, who came from various lands, were all soldiers under the same general. Taken into custody for their faith in Christ, and at first interrogated by cruel means, they were then stripped of their clothing and cast onto the frozen lake which is at Sebastia of Pontus, at a time when the harsh and freezing weather was at its worst. They endured the whole night naked in such circumstances, encouraging one another to be patient until the end. He that guarded them, named Aglaius, who was commanded to receive any of them that might deny Christ, had a vision in which he saw heavenly powers distributing crowns to all of the Martyrs, except one, who soon after abandoned the contest. Seeing this, Aglaius professed himself a Christian and joined the Martyrs on the lake, and the number of forty remained complete. In the morning, when they were almost dead from the cold, they were cast into fire, after which their remains were thrown into the river. Thus they finished the good course of martyrdom in 320, during the reign of Licinius. These are their names: Acacius, Aetius, Aglaius, Alexander, Angus, Athanasius, Candidus, Chudion, Claudius, Cyril, Cyrion, Dometian, Domnus, Ecdicius, Elias, Eunoicus, Eutyches, Euty chius, Flavius, Gaius, Gorgonius, Helianus, Heraclius, Hesychius, John, Lysimachus,

Meliton, Nicholas, Philoctemon, Priscus, Sacerdon, Severian, Sisinius, Smaragdus, Theodulus, Theophilus, Valens, Valerius, Vivianus, and Xanthias.

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 2 Troparion (Sunday of Orthodoxy)

We venerate Your most pure image, O Good
One;
and ask forgiveness of our transgressions, O
Christ our God.
Of Your own will You were pleased to ascend
the Cross in the flesh
and deliver Your creatures from bondage to
the Enemy.
Therefore with thankfulness we cry aloud to
You:
"You have filled all with joy, O our Savior,//
by coming to save the world."

Tone 8 Kontakion (Sunday of Orthodoxy)

No one could describe the Word of the Father;
but when He took flesh from you, O Theotokos,
He accepted to be described,
and restored the fallen image to its former
state by uniting it to divine beauty.//
We confess and proclaim our salvation in
words and images.

(Instead of "It is truly meet...", we sing the following)

Hymn to the Theotokos

All of creation rejoices in you, O Full of Grace:
the assembly of angels and the race of men.
O sanctified temple and spiritual paradise,
the glory of virgins,
from whom God was incarnate and became a
Child -
our God before the ages.
He made your body into a throne,
and your womb He made more spacious than
the heavens.
All of creation rejoices in you, O Full of Grace.
Glory to you!

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

Prokeimenon. 4th Tone. Daniel 3.26,27.

Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of our
fathers.

Verse: For you are just in all you have done.

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-40.

Brethren, by faith Moses, when he was grown
up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's
daughter, choosing rather to share ill-
treatment with the people of God than to enjoy
the fleeting pleasures of sin. He considered
abuse suffered for the Christ greater wealth
than the treasures of Egypt, for he looked to
the reward.

And what more shall I say? For time would fail
me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson,
Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the
prophets -- who through faith conquered
kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises,
stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging
fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won
strength out of weakness, became mighty in
war, put foreign enemies to flight. Women
received their dead by resurrection. Some
were tortured, refusing to accept release, that
they might rise again to a better life. Others
suffered mocking and scourging, and even
chains and imprisonment. They were stoned,
they were sawn in two, they were killed with
the sword; they went about in skins of sheep
and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated -- of
whom the world was not worthy -- wandering
over deserts and mountains, and in dens and
caves of the earth.

And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

Gospel Reading

Sunday of Orthodoxy

The Reading is from John 1:43-51

At that time, Jesus decided to go to Galilee. And he found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael, and he said to him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" Nathanael said to him, "How do you know me?" Jesus answered him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." Nathanael answered him, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" Jesus answered him, "Because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You shall see greater things than these." And he said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."

Wisdom of the Fathers

Peter, when after so many miracles and such high doctrine he confessed that, "Thou art the Son of God" (Matt. xvi. 16), is called "blessed," as having received the revelation from the Father;

St. John Chrysostom

Homily 21 on John 1, 1. B#58, pp. 72, 73, 4th Century

... while Nathanael, though he said the very same thing before seeing or hearing either miracles or doctrine, had no such word addressed to him, but as though he had not said so much as he ought to have said, is brought to things greater still.

St. John Chrysostom

Homily 21 on John 1, 1. B#58, pp. 72, 73, 4th Century

Beyond the Sermon



Become a Living Icon:
Homily for the Sunday
of Orthodoxy

At the end of Liturgy today, we will parade around the church carrying our icons in celebration of the

Sunday of Orthodoxy, which commemorates the restoration of icons to the church after the period of iconoclasm many centuries ago. We do so because Icons are not mere works of decorative art to us; they are windows to heaven which remind us that the Son of God really has become one of us, with a visible human body, and that we are called to become like the saints whose images are portrayed in them. For we are all icons of God, created in His image and likeness. Jesus Christ is the new Adam Who has restored and healed every dimension of our fallen humanity, and brought us into the very life of the Holy Trinity. It may help us to think of Lent as a time to make ourselves better icons of the Lord.

When we recall the great saints of the Old Testament mentioned in today's reading from the Epistle to the Hebrews, we are humbled by their faithfulness, obedience, and humility. But even they "did not receive the promise, God provided something better for us that they should not be made perfect apart from us." As hard as it is to believe, we have been blessed beyond them, for God's promises in Jesus Christ were not fulfilled in their lifetimes; they hoped for what they did not receive, but their lives were still icons of faithful anticipation of the Messiah.

We live many generations after the New Testament saints Peter, Andrew, and Nathanael encountered Jesus Christ. And the Lord's promise to Nathanael, "you shall see the heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man," is the fulfillment of all the hopes and dreams of the Old Testament. In Jesus Christ, humanity and God are united; no longer shut out of paradise, we are raised

to the life of the Heavenly Kingdom by our Lord. Our destiny is not for the dust and decay of the tomb, but for life everlasting because of His glorious third-day resurrection.

In Lent, we take small, humble, imperfect steps to open ourselves to this new life in Christ, to become better living icons—living images—of what it means for human beings to share in God's salvation. The point of Lent is not to punish ourselves or simply to make us feel guilty, miserable, or deprived. Instead, the purpose of our spiritual exercises is to help us share more fully in the promise fulfilled in Jesus Christ. We want His holiness, love, mercy, and blessing to reshape every dimension of our lives, to be evident in how we go through the day, in how we treat others, in what we say, think, and feel. And the more we grow in His image and likeness, the more we will become our true selves. Icons portray particular human beings whose lives have shown brightly with the holiness of God. The unbelievable truth is that, in Christ Jesus, we may do the same. No matter our age, health, occupation, family circumstances, personality quirks, or anything else, we too may become living, breathing manifestations of our Lord's salvation when we open ourselves to His healing mercy through prayer, fasting, forgiveness, generosity to the needy, and all the various forms of spiritual nourishment given through the life of the Church.

There could be no greater optimism about us than what we proclaim on the Sunday of Orthodoxy. We not only carry icons, we are icons. We not only venerate icons, we are called to become living proof of what happens to a human being who enters into

the eternal blessedness of God, even as we walk around Abilene. Let this sink in: What the Old Testament saints hoped for, we possess. This Lent, let's take Jesus Christ as His word, and prepare—with humility, persistence, and mindfulness- to “see the heaven open and angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.” For that is the good news of our salvation.

March 23, 2013 · Fr. Philip LeMasters

The Faith We Hold



On Confession
2nd sermon
26th September 1999

In the Name of the
Father, the Son and the
Holy Spirit. Amen.
I have been asked to
give a couple of sermons
on Confession. This is my
second sermon on the

subject.

When we come to Confession we come to meet a friend face to face. We are not coming to be judged and condemned. We do not come in terror of what will happen. We come to the One who, being God, beyond suffering, beyond death, has chosen, for the love of us, to become Man, to take upon Himself all our human destiny and to give His life for us. His life, His death are to us evidence that we are so loved of God that we can come up to Him whether we are good or bad with hope that He will receive us with open arms; that if anyone is to cry over our unworthiness and our sins it is

Him, for compassion, for pity, for love - with a readiness, as He said in a vision to one of the saints, that if there was only one sinner in the world He would again become Man and again die for him, because He cannot endure the thought of anyone perishing.

This is the God, the Christ, to Whom we come when we come to Confession - to the One who is open to us with all His life and death; One who waits for us to come to be healed, to be consoled, to be supported - not to be condemned, not to be judged.

And then, what is the role of the priest? In the prayer which is read before Confession we are told, 'I am but a witness'. What does it mean? A witness to what? To the fact that you have come? That would not be enough. But if you think of what witnesses are: there are accidental, occasional witnesses. You are present in the street when an accident takes place. You are asked: what did happen? You are neither in favour of the ones or the others. You are just telling what your eyes have seen. It's for others to judge and to know.

There are other forms of witness. At times a friend of ours is brought to judgement. And we come to defend him, to testify for him, to save him. That's another kind of witness.

And then there is the witness which the Holy Gospel mentions speaking of St. John the Baptist: as the friend of the Bridegroom, the one who comes to the wedding, invited both by the bride and the bridegroom, because he is the nearest, the closest, to them both. And he is there to share their joy, the miracle of their encounter, the miracle of a blessing that will come upon them and out of two make one, unite them so that they are inseparable for ever in the mystery of eternal love, of divine love

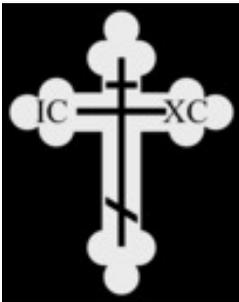
shared with them.

This is the position of the priest. He is called by Christ to be before the person, the sinner, a witness to the fact that he, the sinner, is loved, that Christ is there, that He has no other desire or intention but the salvation and the joy eternal of the one who has come today. And the priest comes also in the name of the sinner saying: Christ, my God, our Lord, this person has sinned, yes, but look, he trusts in You, he believes in You, we all love him with the same love as You possess. We are prepared to give our lives for him to be reconciled and find peace and joy and be at one with You, our Lord, our God, our Saviour, our Lover.

When you come to Confession next time, think of these things. Think of the way you come: not with fear of punishment or of rejection but with open heart to pour out everything evil or doubtful there is in this heart. And Christ will receive you. Your confession may be to Him a new crucifixion but He accepts it. He doesn't reject it. He does not reject you. Come, open your heart, speak in all truth to Him, knowing that you are loved beyond judgement, to the point of sacrifice and death: His death, and your life - life in time and life eternal. Amen.



The Back Page



Parish Shared Folder (for all documents, bulletins etc)
- <http://bit.ly/St-Alexis>

The QR Code here may be used as well.

Parish Web Site -

<http://www.stalexischurch.org> ; [calendar](#)
(<https://bit.ly/StA-Calendar>)

Facebook - @stalexisorthodox

Youtube Channel - https://bit.ly/StA_Youtube

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://bit.ly/StA-Zoom>

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/kdeWbDJDW9>

Troparion to St Alexis

O righteous Father Alexis, / our heavenly intercessor and teacher, / divine adornment of the Church of Christ! / Entreat the Master of All / to strengthen the Orthodox

Faith in America, / to grant peace to the world / and to our souls, great mercy!

Troparion to St Herman

O blessed Father Herman of Alaska, / north star of Christ's holy Church, / the light of your holy life and great deeds / guides those who follow the Orthodox way. / Together we lift high the Holy Cross / you planted firmly in America. / Let all behold and glorify Jesus Christ, / singing his holy Resurrection.

Troparion to St Elizabeth

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.

