



## 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.

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Bulletin for Sunday, March 19, 2023

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### 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 Trinity Greek Orthodox Church on Park Avenue in Bridgeport

Collection will be taking this Sunday is for the needs of FORCC

### **Metropolitan's Visit**

His Beatitude will be visiting us on Sunday, April 2nd. We will have a formal greeting at the entrance, followed by his vesting in the center of the church. This will begin at approximately 9:15a. The choir should be here at no later than 9a. After liturgy, His Beatitude will be joining us for a lenten repast downstairs. There is a sign up sheet

on the candle desk, to help coordinate what should be brought. More details will be provided as the date for his visit approaches.

## **Confession and Pascha**

If you are intending to receive communion at Pascha Liturgy, please know that you are expected to have given confession before then. I certainly do not want to turn anyone away from the Paschal Chalice, but - to put it bluntly - there are some of you whom have not been to confession in sometime.

## **Prayers, Intercessions and Commemorations**



Please continue to pray for our catechumens, 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.

Veneration of the Cross. Martyrs Chrysanthus and Daria, and those with them at Rome: Claudius, Hilaria, Jason, Maurus, Diodorus the Presbyter, and Marianus the Deacon (283). Saint Innocent of Komél and Vologda disciple of Saint Nilus of Sora (Vologdá—1521). Martyr Pancharius, at Nicomedia (ca. 302).

## Parish Calendar

### Schedule of Services and Events

March 19 to March 27, 2023

#### Sunday, March 19

Sunday of the Holy Cross  
9:30AM Divine Liturgy  
4:00PM Lenten Deanery Services

#### Monday, March 20

Akathist to St Cuthbert  
Righteous Fathers slain at the Monastery of St. Savas

#### Tuesday, March 21

James the Confessor  
8:30AM Daily Matins  
1:30PM March Synaxis 3/21/2023 Zoom

Meeting  
6:00PM Council Meeting

#### Wednesday, March 22

Basil the Holy Martyr of Ancyra  
6:00PM Presanctified Liturgy

#### Thursday, March 23

The Holy Righteous Martyr Nicon and His 199 Disciples  
8:30AM Daily Matins  
7:00PM Book Study

#### Friday, March 24

Forefeast of the Annunciation of the Theotokos  
6:00PM Compline for the Annunciation

#### Saturday, March 25

Annunciation of the Theotokos  
8:30AM Divine Liturgy for the Annunciation

#### Sunday, March 26

Sunday of St. John Climacus  
9:30AM Divine Liturgy  
4:00PM [CT Deanery] Lenten Deanery Services

#### Monday, March 27

Martyr Matrona of Thessalonica

## Saints and Feasts

### March 19

#### Sunday of the Holy Cross

With the help of God, we have almost reached the middle of the course of the Fast, where our strength has been worn down through abstinence, and the full

difficulty of the labour set before us becomes apparent. Therefore our holy Mother, the Church of Christ, now brings to our help the all-holy Cross, the joy of the world, the strength of the faithful, the staff of the just, and the hope of sinners, so that by venerating it reverently, we might receive strength and grace to complete the divine struggle of the Fast.

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## **March 19**

### **The Holy Martyrs Chrysanthus and Daria**

Saint Chrysanthus, who was from Alexandria, had been instructed in the Faith of Christ by a certain bishop. His father, who was a senator by rank and a pagan, had him shut up in prison for many days; then, seeing the unchanging disposition of his mind, he commanded that a certain young woman named Daria be brought from Athens. She was a very beautiful and learned maiden, and also an idolater, and Chrysanthus' father wedded him to her so that he might be drawn away from the Faith of Christ because of his love for her. Instead of this however, Chrysanthus drew Daria unto piety, and both of them boldly proclaimed Christ and received the crown of martyrdom in 283, during the reign of Numerian, when they were buried alive in a pit of mire.

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## **March 20**

### **Cuthbert the Wonderworker, Bishop of Lindisfarne**

Saint Cuthbert was born in Britain about the year 635, and became a monk in his youth at the monastery of Melrose by the River Tweed. After many years of struggle as a true priest of Christ, in the service both of his own brethren and of the neglected Christians of isolated country villages, he became a solitary on Farne Island in 676. After eight years as a hermit, he was constrained to leave his quiet to become Bishop of Lindisfarne, in which office he served for almost two years. He returned to his hermitage two months before he reposed in peace in 687. Because of the miracles he wrought both during his life and at his tomb after his death, he is called the "Wonderworker of Britain." The whole English people honoured him, and kings were both benefactors to his shrine and suppliants of his prayers. Eleven years after his death, his holy relics were revealed to be incorrupt; when his body was translated from Lindisfarne to Durham Cathedral in August of 1104, his body was still found to be untouched by decay, giving off "an odour of sweetest fragrancly," and "from the flexibility of its joints representing a person asleep rather than dead." Finally, when the most impious Henry VIII desecrated his shrine, opening it to despoil it of its valuables, his body was again found incorrupt, and was buried in 1542. It is believed that after this the holy relics of Saint Cuthbert were hidden to preserve them from further desecration.

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## **March 25**

### **Annunciation of the Theotokos**

Six months after John the Forerunner's conception, the Archangel Gabriel was sent by God to Nazareth, a town of Galilee, unto Mary the Virgin, who had come forth from the Temple a mature maiden (see Nov. 21).

According to the tradition handed down by the Fathers, she had been betrothed to Joseph four months. On coming to Joseph's house, the Archangel declared: "Rejoice, thou Full of Grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women." After some consideration, and turmoil of soul, and fear because of this greeting, the Virgin, when she had finally obtained full assurance concerning God's unsearchable condescension and the ineffable dispensation that was to take place through her, and believing that all things are possible to the Most High, answered in humility: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." And at this, the Holy Spirit came upon her, and the power of the Most High overshadowed her all-blameless womb, and the Son and Word of God, Who existed before the ages, was conceived past speech and understanding, and became flesh in her immaculate body (Luke 1:26-38).

Bearing in her womb the Uncontainable One, the blessed Virgin went with haste from Nazareth to the hill country of Judea, where Zacharias had his dwelling; for she desired to find Elizabeth her kinswoman and rejoice together with her, because, as she had learned from the Archangel, Elizabeth had conceived in her old age. Furthermore, she wished to tell her of the great things that the Mighty One had been well-pleased to bring to pass in her, and she greeted Elizabeth and drew nigh to her.

When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, she felt her six-month-old babe, Saint John the Baptist, prophesied of the dawning of the spiritual Sun. Immediately, the aged Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and recognized her as the Mother of her Lord, and with a great voice blessed her and the Fruit that she held within herself. The Virgin also, moved by a supernatural rejoicing in the spirit, glorified her God and Savior, saying: "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour," and the rest, as the divine Luke hath recorded (1:39-55)

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## Hymns of the Day



### **Tone 7 Troparion (Resurrection)**

By Your Cross You  
destroyed death.  
To the thief You opened  
Paradise.  
For the Myrrhbearers  
You changed weeping

into joy.

And You commanded Your disciples, O Christ  
God,  
to proclaim that You are risen, //  
granting the world great mercy.

### **Tone 1 Troparion of the Cross**

O Lord, save Your people,  
and bless Your inheritance!  
Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians  
over their adversaries;  
and by virtue of Your Cross, //  
preserve Your habitation!

## **Tone 7 Kontakion (Cross)**

Now the flaming sword no longer guards the gates of Eden;  
it has been mysteriously quenched by the wood of the Cross.  
The sting of death and the victory of hell have been vanquished;  
for You, O my Savior, have come and cried to those in hell://  
"Enter again into Paradise!"

### **(Instead of the Trisagion, we sing:)**

Before Your Cross, we bow down in worship,  
O Master,  
and Your holy Resurrection we glorify.

### **(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**

The light of Your countenance has shone on us, O Lord. (Ps. 4:7a)  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

## **Gospel and Epistle Readings**

### **Epistle Reading**

**Prokeimenon. 6th Tone. Psalm 27.9,1.**

O Lord, save your people and bless your inheritance.

Verse: To you, O Lord, I have cried, O my God.

**The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:1-6.**

BRETHREN, since we have a high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness. Because of this he is bound to offer sacrifice for his own sins as well as for those of the people. And one does not take the honor upon himself, but he is called by God, just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, "Thou art my Son, today I have begotten thee"; as he says also in another place, "Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek."

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## Gospel Reading

### Sunday of the Holy Cross

**The Reading is from Mark 8:34-38; 9:1**

The Lord said: "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? For what can a man give in return for his life? For whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." And he said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power."

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## Wisdom of the Fathers

The key to knowledge is the humility of Christ. The door of the Kingdom of Heaven is open, not to those who only know in their learned minds the mysteries of faith and the commandments of their Creator, but to those who have progressed far enough to live by them.

### ***St. Bede the Venerable***

*Unknown, 8th century*

To deny oneself means to give up one's bad habits; to root out of the heart all that ties us to the world; not to cherish bad thoughts and desires; to suppress every evil thought; to avoid occasions of sin; not to desire or to do anything out of self-love, but to do everything out of love for God. To deny oneself, according to St. Paul means "to be dead to sin. . . but alive to God."

### ***St. Innocent of Alaska***

*The Lenten Spring, SVS Press, p. 147, 19th Century*

## Beyond the Sermon



Metropolitan Anthony of  
Surozh  
SUNDAY OF THE  
CROSS  
18 March 1990

In the Name of the  
Father, the Son, and the  
Holy Ghost.

As we progress deeper and deeper into the weeks of Lent, we can say with an ever-growing sense of gratitude and of joy, of a serene and exulting joy the words of a Psalm, 'My soul shall live, and with gratitude I will give glory to the Lord'.

In the first week of Lent we have seen all the promises of salvation given in the Old Testament fulfilled: God became man, salvation has come, and all hopes are possible. And then, in the second week of Lent, we had the glorious proclamation

of all the Saints of Christendom that not only did God come and dwell in our midst, but He has poured out upon us, into the Church, and into every human soul ready to receive Him the presence, the transforming gift of the Holy Spirit that makes us gradually commune ever deeper to the Living God until one day we become partakers of the Divine nature.

And today, if we ask ourselves, 'But how that? How can we be forgiven, how can evil be undone?' - one step brings us deeper into gratitude, deeper into joy, deeper into certainty when we consider, when we contemplate the Cross.

There is a passage of the Gospel in which we are told that when Christ spoke of salvation and of its conditions, Peter said to Him, 'Who then can be saved?' - and Christ answered, 'What is not possible to men is possible for God!'. And He Himself came; the fullness of God abided in a human person, and He has power to forgive because He is the victim of all the evil, all the cruelty, all the destructiveness of human history. Because indeed, no one but the victim can forgive those who have brought evil, suffering, misery, corruption and death into their lives. And Christ does not only forgive His own murderers, when He says, 'Father, forgive - they don't know what they are doing': He goes beyond this, because He had said, 'Whatever you have done to one of My smaller brethren and sisters, you have done it to Me' - not only in good, but indeed, the worst: because in compassion, in solidarity He identifies with every sufferer: the death, the pain, the agony of each of those who suffer is His. And so, when He prays, 'Father, forgive! They do not know what they are doing, what they have been

doing', He prays for each of us not only in His own name, but in the name of all those upon whom evil has visited because of human sin. But it is not only Christ who forgives; everyone who has suffered in soul, in body, in spirit, - everyone is called to grant freedom to those who have made him suffer.

And so, we can see why Christ says, 'Forgive so that you may be forgiven' because both the victim and the culprit are tied in one knot of solidarity and reciprocal responsibility. Only the victim can say, 'Lord - forgive him, forgive her', and only then can the Lord say, 'I do!'. But do you realise what responsibility it puts on each of us with regard to all and everyone? But also the depth, the glorious depth of hope which opens up to us when we look at the Cross and see that in solidarity with all mankind Christ taking upon Himself all the suffering of the world, accepting to die an impossible death has said in the name of all the sufferers, 'Yes, - we forgive!'

This is one more step towards freedom, this is one more step towards the moment when we will be faced with Christ's resurrection that engulfs us also because the risen Christ is risen and is offering all and each of us the fullness of eternal life.

And so again, and again we can say that Lent is a spring of a new life, a new time, a time of renewal, not only in repentance, but in being taken by Christ Himself as the shepherd took the lost sheep, as the Lord took up His Cross, brought it to the place of death, and undid death, undid evil by forgiveness and giving His life. Once more we are confronted with another step of our freedom and of newness. Let us enter ever

deeper into this mystery, into this wonder of salvation, and rejoice in the Lord, and rejoicing, step after step, more and more, let us also express our gratitude by newness of life. Amen!

## The Faith We Hold



Metropolitan Anthony of  
Sourozh  
ON CONFESSION  
4th Sermon

In the Name of the  
Father, the Son and the  
Holy Spirit. Amen.  
For the fourth time I  
endeavour to speak on  
Confession. And what I

want to touch upon is the mystery of forgiveness. When we come to Confession, as I have said before, we come into the presence of God. But God is not a judge; God is our Saviour. God is our Friend, the one who has loved us in such a way that He has given His life that we may believe in His love, and given His life to save us from condemnation. And it is to Him, as to a Friend, and to a Saviour, that we come.

We confess to Him, we open our hearts to Him. We tell Him, as I tried to explain on other occasions, all that separates us from Him; not lists of formal sins but what we feel in our hearts is our unfaithfulness; what we feel in our hearts separates us, because in spite of the words of love and of veneration which we pronounce, we act in a way that nails Him to the cross again.

We lie; and we create a world in which only

death can triumph. We reject our neighbour and we close our own way into the Kingdom of God, because unless we can say, «Our Father» and not «My Father», there is no place for us in His Kingdom.

And so we ask the Lord for forgiveness - but not a formal word that will say, «You have been unworthy of My friendship, but I'm great-hearted and I forgive». No, that is not the point. It's not that kind of forgiveness which we must seek. It's a true reconciliation, in which we pour out our heart to God, the truth that there is to be said, in which we tell Him all the ways in which we have been unfaithful to Him - not only directly, but being unfaithful to our neighbour, to our friends, to our relatives, to anyone around us. The way, also, in which we have treated the world He has created with contempt and indifference - a world which He has so loved as to call it into existence.

And when we have said that, we must ask Him, as I have said a minute before, for reconciliation. «Let us be friends again, Lord. I know I have not changed yet. It is only Your friendship - unshakeable, faithful, that can prompt me to become different. If You reject me, if You turn away from me, I have no reason to change. I am damned, I am damned in this world, whatever happens in the future world.» The only reason why I can change is that the Lord said, «In spite of all, I remain your friend. In spite of all, I love you with all My life and all My death. Can you in response to this love show a little faithfulness? I don't expect from you a total, immediate change. But change step by step. Hold on to Me. I will support you, I'll help you, I'll protect you, I'll guide you, I'll give you strength - but do change.

And when you receive forgiveness in My name from the priest, don't imagine that the past does not exist. The past will have gone only when you have become so alien to this past that it is no longer yours.»

It may sound very strange. But we all live a complex life. I remember an old woman who came and said to me that she does not know how to live. She spends her whole nights seeing in her dreams and in her memories all the evil she has done. She went to the doctor, who gave her pills, and it was only worse because from her memories it became hallucinations. What can she do?

And I said to her, «Remember, God grants us not only once to live through our life but to live and relive our lives time and again until all the evil of it is expurgated. When evil stands up from the past before you, ask yourself: now, with the experience of life I have acquired, now, would I be the person I was then? Would I say these murderous words, would I do such and such action which was evil? And if you can say sincerely: oh no, with what I have learnt from life, now, placed in the same situation, I would never, never do the same - then you can say, 'Lord, forgive me this particular moment of my past', and know that you are free. If you can say that with all your heart, with all sincerity, with all the truth there is in you, then it will not come back to you».

And so it happened to this old woman. And so it should happen to each of us. We can not in a moment be free of our past. We must renounce the evil there is in it. We must turn to Christ our God and promise to struggle for faithfulness, ask for His help, and then, step by step free ourselves of the past. It does not mean that we are not forgiven, because forgiven means accepted

in love, accepted with tenderness by someone who will never forget our weakness, never forget what has gone wrong with us, because to forget means that he will expose us to the same temptation without protection.

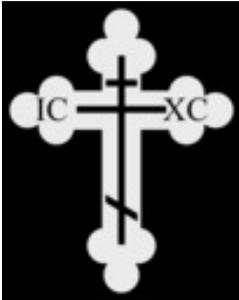
I remember a woman who was a drunkard, who was treated for a long time in hospital, who came back home healed. And to feast her return the family put a bottle of wine on the table; and it was the end; because they thought she was healed, but they did not realise that there was still frailty in her.

And so it is with us when we receive forgiveness from God. Yes, our estrangement from Him is gone. Yes, there is nothing that separates us from Him as far as love is concerned - His love - and as far as our longing - our longing - is concerned. But we must struggle and change and become new, new creatures, with His help. Forgiveness does not erase the past. It heals it in cooperation between God and us.

Let us therefore come to Confession in this spirit. Let us confess ourselves daily to God, sincerely; open our hearts, make our peace with Him, enter into reconciliation; and know that reconciliation means that we have undertaken to be faithful to Him; and fight, and fight ourselves, and fight evil, and fight for the people around us, whom we wound, and for God, Whom we crucify.

Let us reflect on this. And then, when we come to Confession, the prayer of Absolution will have a true and real meaning: the re-establishment of a friendship that cannot be broken on God's part, but was broken on ours and is now restored in intention. And this intention must be determination; and determination must be action, and new life in us. 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](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/4716784843>

### 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.



Church of the Holy Advent - 81 East Main Street - Clinton, CT 06413

March 1, 2023

Dear Colleague in Ministry,

An invitation to your faith community to join us on Sunday, June 4<sup>th</sup> at 12:30 pm. The plan is simple:

- Invite all the congregations of Clinton;
- dress casually, bring a picnic lunch for your family, and folding chairs and or a blanket;
- come prepared to have fellowship and fun;
- participate in a Corn Hole contest (\$20 per team entry fee). The winning team designates to what charity the money is sent. **Participation in this event is not required.**

It's been a rough three years. We've not had many opportunities for gatherings. When we had them, they were not well attended due to the ongoing challenge of COVID. Many folks – clergy and laity alike - are experiencing compassion fatigue and general malaise. Let's change that. Let's offer the opportunity to gather as communities of faith within the community of Clinton with no agenda other than to enjoy each other's company. We've missed seeing you.

Aside from the bullet points as appear above, the plan for the gathering is fluid, so if you have any ideas or requests, we hope you will let us know so we might add to the plan.

We hope you will widely publicize this offering and encourage your congregation to attend. Should you want further information, please contact our Senior Warden, John Wagner, at [JRWagner04@gmail.com](mailto:JRWagner04@gmail.com). We do hope you will join us on June 4<sup>th</sup>. We will gather at the gazebo on the green and go from there; you can make use of ample parking in the Pierson School parking lot. We do hope you will join us on June 4<sup>th</sup>.

Faithfully,

The Rev. Carol D. Gadsden, Priest-in-Charge

860. 669. 2232  
[office@holyadventclinton.org](mailto:office@holyadventclinton.org)