



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, March 17, 2024

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- President
Sharon Hanson - Member at Large
Luba Martins - 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

We will once again have Pot Luck dinners on Wednesdays after Presanctified Liturgy to break the fast. Please bring your favorite Lenten Pot Luck meal to share with your fellow parishioners.

OUTREACH COMMITTEE is again sponsoring the Baby Bottle Campaign as our Lenten project to support 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. In the back of the church, you will find baby bottles to take home and fill with your loose change. Simply empty your change into the bottle every day. 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". Reuse

and repeat. The last to donate will be May 12th, the Sunday after Pascha. Contact Marlene Melesko with any questions: 860-739-4360 or mmelesko@sbcglobal.net

Prayers, Intercessions and Commemorations



Many Years! to Matthew Kuziak on the occasion of his birthday

Please pray for Sarah, Aaron, Evelyn, Victor and Blanche who are in need of God's mercy and healing.

- 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.

Please let Fr. Steven know via email if you have more names for which to pray.

- Departed: Lauren, Evelyn, Lillian, Edward, Matthew, Lois
- Clergy and their families: Mat. Ann, and Mat Nancy
- Catechumen: Robert, Abbie, Matthew, Joseph, Mary, Kevin and Lynn
- Individuals and Families: Susan, Luba, Suzanne, Gail Galina, Evelyn, Rosemary, John, Lucille, Karen, Oleg, Lucia, Victor, Melissa, Christine, Sebastian, Olga, Daniel & Dayna, Branislava, Alton, Richard, Kristen, Subdeacon Paul, Leonore, Robert,
- Birthdays and Name's Days this Month: Zachary and Michael Neiss, Kyra Elliot, Matthew Kuziak
- Anniversaries this Month:
- Expecting and Newborn: Anastasia and her unborn child
- Traveling: Anne Hosking, Dn Timothy and Maureen Skuby
- Sick and those in distress: Maria, Brian, Katy, Lauren, Charles, Blanche, Ryan, Mark

The Expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise. Ven. Aleksy (Alexius) the Man of God (411). Ven. Macarius the Wonderworker, Abbot of Kalyázinsk (Tver'—1483). Martyr Marinus. St. Patrick, Bishop of Armagh, Enlightener of Ireland (ca. 461).

Again we pray for those who have lost their lives because of the wars in Ukraine and in the Middle East: that the Lord our God may look upon them with mercy, and give them rest where there is neither sickness, or sorrow, but life everlasting.

Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, for those who are suffering, wounded, grieving, or displaced because of the wars in Ukraine and in the Middle East. Again we pray for a cessation of the hostilities against Ukraine and the Middle East, and that reconciliation and peace will flourish there, we pray thee, hearken and have mercy.

Parish Calendar

Schedule of Services and Events

March 17 to March 25, 2024

Sunday, March 17

Akathist to Patrick of Ireland
☐ Forgiveness Sunday
Akathist to St Alexis, Man of God
9:30AM Divine Liturgy
11:30AM Vespers of Forgiveness

Monday, March 18

Matthew Kuziak
✙☐ Cyril, Patriarch of Jerusalem
6:00PM Canon of St Andrew

Tuesday, March 19

✙☐ The Holy Martyrs Chrysanthus and Daria
8:30AM Lenten Matins
6:00PM Canon of St Andrew

Wednesday, March 20

Akathist to St Cuthbert
✙☐ Righteous Fathers slain at the Monastery of St. Savas
4:30PM Open Doors
6:00PM Canon of St Andrew

Thursday, March 21

✠ James the Confessor

8:30AM Lenten Matins

6:00PM Canon of St Andrew

Friday, March 22

✠ Basil the Holy Martyr of Ancyra

6:00PM Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts

Saturday, March 23

☼ First Saturday of Lent: The Commemoration of the Miracle of Kollyva wrought by Saint Theodore the Tyro
5:30PM Great Vespers

Sunday, March 24

☼ Sunday of Orthodoxy

9:30AM Divine Liturgy

4:00PM Deanery Lenten Vespers

Monday, March 25

☼ Annunciation of the Theotokos

Saints and Feasts

March 17

Forgiveness Sunday

The Holy Fathers have appointed the commemoration of Adam's exile from the Paradise of delight here, on the eve of the holy Forty-day Fast, demonstrating to us not by simple words, but by actual deeds, how beneficial fasting is for man, and how harmful and destructive are insatiety and the transgressing of the divine commandments. For the first commandment that God gave to man was that of fasting, which the first-fashioned received but did

not keep; and not only did they not become gods, as they had imagined, but they lost even that blessed life which they had, and they fell into corruption and death, and transmitted these and innumerable other evils to all of mankind. The God-bearing Fathers set these things before us today, that by bringing to mind what we have fallen from, and what we have suffered because of the insatiety and disobedience of the first-fashioned, we might be diligent to return again to that ancient bliss and glory by means of fasting and obedience to all the divine commands. Taking occasion from today's Gospel (Matt. 6:14-21) to begin the Fast unencumbered by enmity, we also ask forgiveness this day, first from God, then from one another and all creation.

March 17

Alexios the Man of God

Saint Alexis was born in old Rome of illustrious parents named Euphemianus and Aglais, and at their request was joined to a young woman in marriage. However, he did not remain with her even for one day, but fled to Edessa, where he lived for eighteen years. He returned to Rome in the guise of a beggar and sat at the gates of his father's house, unknown to all and mocked by his own servants. His identity was revealed only after his death by a paper that he had on his person, which he himself had written a little before his repose. The pious Emperor Honorius honoured him with a solemn burial. The title "Man of God" was given to him from heaven in a vision to the Bishop of Rome on the day of the Saint's

repose.

March 17

Patrick the Enlightener of Ireland

Saint Patrick, the Apostle of the Irish, was seized from his native Britain by Irish marauders when he was sixteen years old. Though the son of a deacon and a grandson of a priest, it was not until his captivity that he sought out the Lord with his whole heart. In his Confession, the testament he wrote towards the end of his life, he says, "After I came to Ireland - every day I had to tend sheep, and many times a day I prayed - the love of God and His fear came to me more and more, and my faith was strengthened. And my spirit was so moved that in a single day I would say as many as a hundred prayers, and almost as many at night, and this even when I was staying in the woods and on the mountain; and I would rise for prayer before daylight, through snow, through frost, through rain, and I felt no harm." After six years of slavery in Ireland, he was guided by God to make his escape, and afterwards struggled in the monastic life at Auxerre in Gaul, under the guidance of the holy Bishop Germanus. Many years later he was ordained bishop and sent to Ireland once again, about the year 432, to convert the Irish to Christ. His arduous labours bore so much fruit that within seven years, three bishops were sent from Gaul to help him shepherd his flock, "my brethren and sons whom I have baptized in the Lord - so many thousands of people," he says in his Confession. His apostolic work was not accomplished without much "weariness

and painfulness," long journeys through difficult country, and many perils; he says his very life was in danger twelve times. When he came to Ireland as its enlightener, it was a pagan country; when he ended his earthly life some thirty years later, about 461, the Faith of Christ was established in every corner.

March 18

Cyril, Patriarch of Jerusalem

This Saint was born in 315, and succeeded Maximus as Archbishop of Jerusalem in 350. He was zealous for the Orthodox Faith, and was a defender of the poor. He was exiled three times by the Arian Emperors Constantius and Valens. But after their death, he was recalled to his throne; he reposed in peace in 386. Of his writings, the most prominent are his catechetical lectures, which are considered the most ancient systematic summary of Christian teaching. Before Saint Cyril, there had been two dioceses, one of Jerusalem, and one of Holy Sion; under Saint Cyril, they were united into one bishopric. See also May 7.

March 19

Chrysanthos & Daria the Martyrs

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.

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.

March 23

Nikon the Holy Martyr & his 200 Companion Martyrs

Saint Nikon was from Neapolis (Naples) in Italy. His father was an idolater and his mother a Christian. At first he was a soldier, but later he went to the East, where he was baptized and in time became a bishop. After some years, he returned to the West and came to Sicily, where he and many of his disciples were put to death by beheading because they would not worship the idols.

Hymns of the Day



Tone 8 Troparion (Resurrection)

You descended from on high, O Merciful One!
You accepted the three day burial to free us
from our sufferings!//
O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to
You!

Tone 4 Troparion (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.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the
Holy Spirit,

Tone 5 Kontakion (St. Alexis)

Let us, the faithful praise the Priest Alexis,
a bright beacon of Orthodoxy in America, a
model of patience and humility,
a worthy shepherd of the Flock of Christ.
He called back the sheep who had been led
astray
and brought them by his preaching to the
Heavenly Kingdom.

now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Tone 6 Kontakion (from the Lenten Triodion)

O Master, Teacher of wisdom,
Bestower of virtue,
Who teach the thoughtless and protect the
poor,
strengthen and enlighten my heart!
O Word of the Father,

let me not restrain my mouth from crying to
You:
“Have mercy on me, a transgressor, //
O merciful Lord!”

COMMUNION HYMN

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him
in the highest!
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Gospel and Epistle Readings

Epistle Reading

Prokeimenon. 8th Tone. Psalm 75.11,1.

Make your vows to the Lord our God and
perform them.

Verse: God is known in Judah; his name is
great in Israel.

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Romans 13:11-14; 14:1-4.

Brethren, salvation is nearer to us now than
when we first believed; the night is far gone,
the day is at hand. Let us then cast off the
works of darkness and put on the armor of
light; let us conduct ourselves becomingly as
in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness,
not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in
quarreling and jealousy. But put on the Lord
Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the
flesh, to gratify its desires.

As for the man who is weak in faith, welcome
him, but not for disputes over opinions. One
believes he may eat anything, while the weak
man eats only vegetables.

Let not him who eats despise him who abstains, and let not him who abstains pass judgment on him who eats; for God has welcomed him. Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for God is able to make him stand.

Gospel Reading

Forgiveness Sunday

The Reading is from Matthew 6:14-21

The Lord said, "If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

"And when you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Wisdom of the Fathers

Spiritual delight is not enjoyment found in things that exists outside the soul.

St. Isaac of Syria

Unknown, 7th century

Do we forgive our neighbors their trespasses? God also forgives us in His mercy. Do we refuse to forgive? God, too, will refuse to forgive us. As we treat our neighbors, so also does God treat us. The forgiveness, then, of your sins or unforgiveness, and hence also your salvation or destruction, depend on you yourself, man. For without forgiveness of sins there is no salvation.

St. Tikhon of Zadonsk

Unknown, 18th century

The Faith We Hold



Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh
On Forgiveness
July 19, 1970

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

The world around us is full of hatred and turmoil, and however close we may feel to one another, however much we perceive a momentary peace in our hearts, "how near we are always to a moment when peace breaks down, when tensions become stronger than our sense of oneness and when strife sets in. And at those moments we must learn something which is at the very core of our relationship with men and our relationship with God, we must learn to forgive. And we do not achieve it because we expect forgiveness to be at first what it can only be at last, the Joy of reconciliation, the Joy that is born from the discovery that darkness is conquered by light, that joy has set in where bitterness and sadness were. But this is not where forgiveness begins and it is not our victory, this is a gift of mercy both divine and human forgiveness which begins at the moment when offended, humiliated, betrayed, we can say in our hearts or aloud to the person who has done this "whatever you have done, I love you enough to take on all the consequences of your frailty, all the consequences of the evil which is stronger than your good will, and I will bear these consequences because my love does not falter!"

This is what God does to us; this is what absolution is when we receive it in the sacrament or penance, after our confession. Forgiveness is not given to us by God because we have already changed, neither

does He forgive us because we shall change. We may change as a result of forgiveness if we only understand what it all means, but God does not wait until we have changed to forgive, otherwise no one would be forgiven. When we receive absolution, when we are granted forgiveness from God, it always means that God says: I know all the depth of your faults, I know all your betrayals, I know how far from Me you are, I know that your heart is grown cold and your mind darkened, I know that your will is not strong and yet, I witness before the whole of creation that My love does not falter, that My love remains whole, that it belongs to you unreservedly; it was My joy, it has become crucifixion. It was our common life, it has now become the moment when I am on the Cross and you have brought me to it; you have been shouting "crucify Him, crucify Him", you have been walking around this Cross saying "If Thou art the Son of God, come down from the Cross." You are responsible for it and yet my last word is: "Forgive, Father, he does not know what he is doing. Forgive Father, she does not know what she is doing." And God takes upon Himself, by forgiving us, by witnessing that His love remains unshaken, He takes upon Himself final solidarity with us. He says to us: I called you into being, to share all My life, you have renounced it and reject it. Then I shall share all your life. I called you into eternity and bliss; you have opened up a depth of hell, I will walk into this hell. I will become man and share all the limitations, all the finitudes, all the cruelty of the human condition which you have created. I will share it to the last, to the very point where

your betrayal means the loss of God, and the loss of life. ВѢЖѢMy God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me" is the cry of Him who has willed to share with us everything, even our loss of God, because He wants to share all that is our life, because of love, and because of faith. Because not only does He love us, but He has faith in us, that all that won't be in vain.

That is forgiveness. That is the kind of forgiveness to which we are called each of us with regard to each other, indeed not to this extents, not to this depth and magnitude; but we are called to say: however cold your heart has become to me, mine is warm enough for both. We cannot share blessedness, I will share hell with you, and not only the hell which others have created for you, no, the very hell which is in your heart for me to live in. Unless we can say this, we cannot say that we begin our way to forgiveness. Oh, how much we wish to be able to say: the wounds which you have dealt on me are healed, the distress is over, peace, peace divine has come, but that comes after the agony of the Garden, it comes after the betrayal or the crucifixion, it comes after the death on the Cross, after the dereliction that kills, after three days when we lie numb and dead in the tomb. It comes when resurrection comes. Then we, who have forgiven, are risen in such a way that we can communicate life, life with abundance, life eternal, not before.

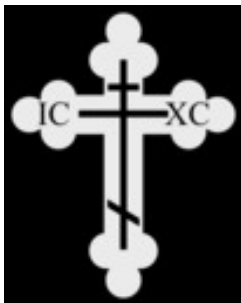
And so, here we are, in a life were nothing is unspoiled by tension, by strife, by coldness, by darkening, by hatred, by dividedness, here we are, given by God an example and indeed a challenge and an opportunity. Live in hell, walk into it. If you walk into it with a love that does

not hesitate to die then hell will cease to be hell. When Christ descended into hell, into the place where God is not, when He descended into it as a man who had accepted to lose God in order to remain with man, He brought into it the fullness of His Godhead and hell is no more the place where God is not. If it is anything, it is it is a place where we bewail our treason, our lovelessness, not a place from which God has turned away.

And what if we have no love, what if we cannot afford even this? If we have no love that will make us say "I will share with you dereliction, the Fall, hell, godlessness," then we must be prepared to say: ВѢЖѢI am like you, how can I judge you?" and humbly stay together where we are together helpless, broken, fearful, defeated, turning to God and saying "help us both, because we have both lost love, we have both lost life".

How wonderful it is to be able at any moment to come to a God who can absolve, forgive, because He has chosen to be with us, while we refused or proved unable to be with Him, and what joy it is to think that we can even in our fault, even in our weakness do the same with each other, break down, explode hell, make it a place of redemption, of reconciliation, of life instead of death. Glory be to God for that He has revealed us and for that He gives us power to recreate heaven where we have made hell. Amen!

The Back Page



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- <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)
(<https://bit.ly/StA-Calendar>)

Facebook - @stalexisorthodox

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

Join Zoom Meeting

- http://bit.ly/St_Alexis_Zoom



CTD – OCAGB LENTEN VESPERS 2024

Sunday, **March 24** – 1st Sunday of Lent

Sunday of Orthodoxy – Vespers

4:00 pm OCAGB: St. Dimitrie, Easton

Sunday, **March 31st** – 2nd Sunday of Lent

St. Gregory Palamas – Vespers

4:00 pm Holy Trinity, Bridgeport

Sunday, **April 7th** – 3rd Sunday of Lent

Veneration of the Holy Cross – Vespers -FORCC Sunday

4:00 pm: St. John the Baptist, Bridgeport

CT Deanery – St. Nicholas, Pittsfield, MA

Sunday, **April 14th**- 4th Sunday of Lent

St. John Climacus – Vespers

4:00 pm: OCAGB: St. Nicholas Syrian, Bridgeport

Sunday, **April 21st**: 5th Sunday of Lent

St. Mary of Egypt – Holy Unction

4:00 pm, Three Saints, Ansonia

Sunday, **April 28th** Palm Sunday

Bridegroom Matins

4:00 pm: CT Deanery: All Saints, Hartford.