



## 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, August 04, 2024

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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- 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) 322-2906, 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**

### **School Supplies for Clinton Family**

**Services:** The Outreach Committee is again collecting school supplies for the students in the Clinton school system. The following is a list of items requested by Family Services. The last Sunday to bring in supplies is August 11. Please leave any donations on the table downstairs.

Supplies needed for Clinton Family Services:

Markers (for younger children)

Rulers

Glue sticks

Plastic 3 ring folders

Highlighters, multi colors

3 or 5 subject lined notebooks...No "one subject notebooks", please

Colored pencils

Small denomination gift cards \$5 or \$10 to Staples would be great as well for miscellaneous items families need, like poster paper/project boards, etc. for school projects.

## **Joyous News**

Deirdre Garfield grandson, Timothy Issac Garfield was born, 7/31. A healthy almost 7 lbs, 20 inches. God grant the new-born Timothy, his parents and family Many Years!

## **Dormition Fast**

As we have no entered into the Dormition Fast, several of you have asked about *how* you should be fasting. In the shared folder, I have an article called "[A Primer on Fasting](#)". Follow the link, or you can access it directly in the shared folder in the To Read director. Of course, if you have specific questions, please do not hesitate to talk with me.

Also, as one of the four primary fasting seasons of the Church (and we did not have the Apostles' Fast this summer) I do encourage you to seek out confession.

## **Prayers, Intercessions and Commemorations**



Many Years! To Michael Kuziak and Susan Davis on the occasion of their birthdays; and to Valery and Jason Danilack-Federer who celebrate their anniversary.

- 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: Dennis, Galina, Olga, Mat Lillian, Dorothy
- Clergy and their families: Fr Sergei,
- Catechumen: Robert, Abbie, Matthew, Joseph, Mary, and Kevin
- Individuals and Families: Luba, Suzanne, Gail Galina, Evelyn, Rosemary, John, Daniel & Dayna, Kristen, Charles, Victor
- Birthdays and Name's Days this Month: Michael Kuziak, Susan Davis, Douglas Kuziak, Stasia

- Penkoff/Ledbeck, Samuel Jankura, Kyle Holis, Susan Egan, Anastasia Littlefield, Irene Kaiser
- Anniversaries this Month: Valery and Jason Danilack-Federer, Fr Steven and Anne Hosking, Dn Timothy and Maureen Skuby
- Expecting and Newborn: Lynn, David and their unborn child,
- Traveling: Michael, Jason, Demetra, Dn Timothy
- Sick and those in distress: Thomas, Sheri, Joanna, Joshua, Remy, Stormy, Scott

### **6th SUNDAY AFTER**

**PENTECOST — Tone 5.** Holy Seven Youths (“Seven Sleepers”) of Ephesus: Maximilian, Jamblicus, Martinian, John, Dionysius, Exacustodian (Constantine), and Antoninus (250). Martyr Eudoxia of Persia (362-364). Martyr Eleutherius of Constantinople (4th c.).

- 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

### St Alexis Parish

August 4 to August 12, 2024

#### Sunday, August 4

Michael Kuziak  
☐ 6th Sunday of Matthew  
Susan Davis  
9:30AM Divine Liturgy

#### Monday, August 5

‡ Forefeast of the Transfiguration of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ  
6:00PM Vigil of the Transfiguration

#### Tuesday, August 6

☐ Transfiguration of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ  
Holy Transfiguration  
8:30AM Liturgy for the Transfiguration  
7:00PM Bible Study on the Epistles of St John

#### Wednesday, August 7

Danilack-Federer  
‡ Afterfeast of the Transfiguration of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

#### Thursday, August 8

‡ Emilian the Confessor & Bishop of Cyzikos  
8:30AM Matins

#### Friday, August 9

‡ The Holy Apostle Matthias  
Akathist to St Herman  
Glorification of St. Herman

#### Saturday, August 10

Akathist to St Lawrence

☐ Laurence the Holy Martyr & Archdeacon of Rome  
5:30PM Great Vespers

#### Sunday, August 11

Deborah Bray  
☐ 7th Sunday of Matthew  
9:30AM Divine Liturgy

#### Monday, August 12

‡ The Holy Martyrs Photius and Anicetus of Nicomedia  
Douglas Kuziak

## Saints and Feasts

### August 04

#### Seven Holy Youths of Ephesus

The Seven Youths hid themselves in a certain cave near Ephesus in the year 250, to escape the persecution of Decius. By divine grace, a sleep came upon them and they slept for 184 years, until the reign of Saint Theodosius the Younger, when the doctrine of the resurrection was being assailed by heretics. They then awoke, that is, were resurrected, confirming in the sight of all the bodily resurrection; and again after a short time, by divine command, they reposed in the Lord in the year 434.

### August 06

#### Transfiguration of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

Our Lord had spoken to His disciples many

times not only concerning His Passion, Cross, and Death, but also concerning the coming persecutions and afflictions that they themselves would endure. Since all these evils were near at hand, but the enjoyment of good things which they hoped to receive in their stead was yet to come, our Savior desired to give them full assurance, evidently and openly, concerning that glory which is prepared for those who endure to the end. Therefore, fulfilling that which He had promised shortly before, that "there be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in His Kingdom" (Matt. 16:28), He took His three foremost disciples and ascended Mount Tabor, where He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became white as the light. Suddenly, together with this dread and marvelous effulgence of light, there appeared those pinnacles of the Prophets, Moses and Elias, who spoke with the Lord Jesus concerning His saving Passion which was about to take place. Standing before Him as reverent servants, they showed that He is the Lord of both the living and the dead, for Moses came forth from Hades, having died many centuries before, and Elias, as it were from heaven, whither he had been taken up while yet alive. After a little while a radiant cloud overshadowed them and out of the cloud they heard that same voice which had been heard at the Jordan at the Baptism of Christ, testifying to the Divinity of Jesus and saying: "This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well-pleased; hear ye Him" (Matt. 17: 5).

Such are the marvels, truly worthy of God, celebrated in this present feast, which is an

image and prefiguring of the future state of the righteous, whose splendor the Lord spoke of, saying: "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun" (Matt. 13:43). It is because of this that the Kontakion of this Feast is said daily (when there is not a great feast) in the Service of the Typica in perpetual commemoration of the glory that will be the lot of the Saints. According to tradition, the Lord's Transfiguration came to pass forty days before His Crucifixion; this is why the Transfiguration is celebrated forty days before the Exaltation of the Cross.

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### **August 08**

#### **Emilian the Confessor & Bishop of Cyzikos**

This Saint was one of the illustrious Orthodox Bishops called to Constantinople by the holy Patriarch Nicephorus to defend the veneration of the holy icons against Leo the Armenian (see Mar. 8). Saint Emilian was sent into exile by Leo about the year 815, and gave up his soul to the Lord amidst many afflictions and sufferings for the sake of his confession.

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### **August 09**

#### **Matthias, Apostle of the 70**

After Judas by transgression fell from his apostleship (Acts 1: 25), and hanging himself out of despair ended his life with a wretched and shameful death (Matt. 27: 5), then, that the number of the Twelve not be

lacking, all the disciples gathered in one place after the Ascension of the Savior (the number of men and women being 120), and they chose two men from among them, Joseph, called Barsabas, who was also surnamed Justus, and Matthias, and they set them in the midst. Then they prayed to God and cast lots, "and the lot fell upon Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven Apostles" (Acts 1: 15-26). And thus, having taken the place of Judas, Matthias fulfilled the work of apostleship and the prophecy concerning Judas, which the Holy Spirit foretold by the mouth of David: "And his bishopric let another take" (Ps. 108(109):8). After this, it is said, Matthias preached the Gospel in Ethiopia, and completed his life there in martyrdom.

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## August 09

### Glorification of Venerable Herman of Alaska, Wonderworker of All America

<https://www.oca.org/saints/lives/2024/08/09/102241-glorification-of-venerable-herman-of-alaska-wonderworker-of-all>

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## August 10

### Laurence the Holy Martyr & Archdeacon of Rome

This Saint, who was born in Spain, was the Archdeacon of the Church of Rome, caring for the sacred vessels of the Church and distributing money to the needy. About the year 257, a harsh persecution was raised up against the Christians by Valerian. Pope

Sixtus, who was from Athens, was commanded to worship the idols, and refused; before his martyrdom by beheading, he committed to Laurence all the sacred vessels of the Church. When Laurence was arrested and brought before the Prefect, he was questioned concerning the treasures of the Church; he asked for three days' time to prepare them. He then proceeded to gather all the poor and needy, and presented them to the Prefect and said, "Behold the treasures of the Church." The Prefect became enraged at this and gave command that Laurence be racked, then scourged with scorpions (a whip furnished with sharp iron points - compare II Chron. 10:11), then stretched out on a red-hot iron grill. But the courageous athlete of Christ endured without groaning. After he had been burned on one side, he said, "My body is done on one side; turn me over on the other." And when this had taken place, the Martyr said to the tyrants, "My flesh is now well done, you may taste of it." And when he had said this, and had prayed for his slayers in imitation of Christ, he gave up his spirit on August 10, 258.

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## 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 (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.

#### **Tone 4 Troparion (Holy Youths)**

Your seven holy martyrs, O Lord, through their sufferings have received incorruptible crowns from You, our God. For having Your strength, they laid low their adversaries, and shattered the powerless boldness of demons.//  
Through their intercession, save our souls!

#### **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 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.

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

#### **Tone 4 Troparion (Holy Youths)**

Your seven holy martyrs, O Lord, through their sufferings have received incorruptible crowns from You, our God. For having Your strength, they laid low their adversaries, and shattered the powerless boldness of demons.//  
Through their intercession, save our souls!

*now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

#### **Tone 6 Kontakion (Steadfast Protectress)**

Steadfast Protectress of Christians, ☩Constant Advocate before the Creator; despise not the entreating cries of us sinners, ☩but in your goodness come speedily to help us who call on you in faith. ☩Hasten to hear our petition and to intercede for us, ☩O Theotokos, for you always protect those who honor you!

#### **COMMUNION HYMN**

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! Alleluia (3X)

### **Gospel and Epistle Readings**

#### **Epistle Reading**

##### **Prokeimenon. 5th Tone. Psalm 11.7,1.**

You, O Lord, shall keep us and preserve us.  
Verse: Save me, O Lord, for the godly man has failed.

**The reading is from St. Paul's Letter**

## **to the Romans 12:6-14.**

Brethren, having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; he who teaches, in his teaching; he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who contributes, in liberality; he who gives aid, with zeal; he who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with brotherly affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Never flag in zeal, be aglow with the Spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints, practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.

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## **Gospel Reading**

### **The Reading is from Matthew 9:1-8**

At that time, getting into a boat Jesus crossed over and came to his own city. And behold, they brought to him a paralytic, lying on his bed; and when Jesus saw their faith he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven." And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say 'Rise and walk?' But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins" he then said to the paralytic

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-- "Rise, take up your bed and go home." And he rose and went home. When the crowds saw it, they were afraid, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to men.

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## **Wisdom of the Fathers**

Through the toil of prayer and the anguish of your heart commune with those who are grieved at heart, and the Source of mercy will be opened up to your petitions.

### **St. Isaac of Syria**

*Unknown, 7th century*

If your heart is brazenly confident of your works and knowledge, then know that this foreshadows impending tribulation.

### **St. Isaac of Syria**

*The Four Books, 7th century*

## **Beyond the Sermon**





The Gospel story teaches us that faith enables God to heal us. Sometimes, it is not our faith but the faith of others that brings God's healing. Salvation is not merely between "me and Jesus." It includes the entire people of God, the Church, which is to be a hospital

for souls.

Jesus crosses to the northwestern side of the Sea of Galilee and goes to the area where He grew up, around Capernaum and Nazareth. This region of Galilee is inhabited by Jewish people who worship the God of Israel, where most of His disciples lived. The people gather to hear from a prophet and healer named Jesus. Some want to listen to the Lord teach about the Kingdom of God, the love of God, righteousness, forgiveness, and eternal life. Some are there for healing. Some had faith because they witnessed His divine power and glory as He traveled with His disciples, preaching and healing the people. Others are skeptics, such as the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Scribes (scholars of the Jewish law).

However, a small group of people full of faith and love decide to bring their paralyzed friend to Jesus because they believe He can help. These are people whose hearts burn with faith in God and believe that

Jesus is a great Prophet of God, full of the Holy Spirit, with the power to heal. In this way, they were full of faith, hope, and love. When Jesus witnesses their faith, He tells the man with paralysis, "Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven." Some Scribes say to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, says, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise and walk?' But that you may know that the

Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins," He then says to the man with paralysis, "Rise, take up your bed and go home." Declaring the man's sins are forgiven is a bold statement. Everyone present, knowing that the Lord had healed many other sicknesses, expected a healing to take place. However, the Lord chooses to start with the healing of the soul before the healing of the body. The Lord's declaration that the man's sins are forgiven brings spiritual healing and manifests the eternal work of salvation. Of course, this is shocking to many. Miraculous as it is, it is one thing to witness God healing a person's body by the power of the Holy Spirit through the work of Christ. However, it is quite another matter altogether for someone to declare that a man's sins are forgiven. We also see this today in the life of the Church. There are holy people living

among us who are known for having gifts (in Greek: χαρίσματα), such as clairvoyance or whose prayers for healing the sick and suffering are quickly answered by God.

These miracles are also true of the Saints, for those of us who pray for their assistance (intercession).

What is unique here is that Jesus spoke in a way only God could speak. Only God can forgive sins. We forgive those who have wronged us because the Lord tells us to do so. Even so, we do not have the right to declare that someone's sins be forgiven because

only God has the power and authority to do this.

Some in the crowd immediately begin to doubt and wonder who but God alone can forgive sins. The Lord hears their thoughts and knows their hearts before they utter

words. In His love and compassion, however, Jesus uses their doubt to build up their faith and performs a miracle to demonstrate His divinity and power. He explains to them, with

clear reasoning, that "your sins are forgiven" is easy to utter because there is no visible, physical evidence to support it. However, to say, "Rise, take up your bed, and go home" is a statement proven by its effect.

Jesus heals both soul and body with His word alone. He is the Word who created the heavens and the earth, and the Word of God incarnate. He is the Word who brings the light of the Kingdom of God to shine in our hearts. He is the Word who recreates,

re-shapes, and heals us. He is the Word that gives us meaning and purpose and restores us

to eternal life. This transformation happens to us every day when we choose to be close to God and open ourselves to His presence, grace, and love, living the sacramental life of the Church. The sacraments of Holy Baptism, repentance and Holy Confession, the Holy

Eucharist, and Holy Unction are all channels of God's forgiveness and grace. Through them, we enter the Kingdom of God, and reunite with Him.

Jesus has the power and authority to heal the man with paralysis by the power of His word, and so He can also forgive his sins. The man getting up is proof that the One who heals by the power of God is the same One who forgives by the power of being the Son of God. In this way, Christ's coming into the world through His incarnation releases humanity from its shackles.

As Saint John Chrysostom says, "Do you see how He indicates Him to be Creator both of souls and bodies? He heals, therefore, the palsy (types of paralysis) in each of the

two substances and makes the invisible evident by that which is in sight." The healing of

the soul is an even greater miracle than the healing of the body because it is a healing that can last for all eternity.

True repentance is central to our spiritual life with Christ. We all require repentance because no one is sinless by nature

— except Jesus. The spiritual life begins with repentance until our very last breath. Our good and loving God created Adam and Eve in His image and likeness. We are created in God's image by His choice, and we can be like Him by our choices. Becoming like God means being deified by grace and, ultimately, becoming one with Him for all eternity.

The Scribes rightly point out that only God has the power to forgive sins. And later, Christ hands this authority to His disciples and their successors, the Bishops and Priests, through the Holy Sacraments of the Church. The forgiveness of our sins brings about a reconciliation between us and God, and this reconciliation is the restoration of our life and our eternal purpose. We are created to be in communion with God, not apart. And when our communion is broken because of our sinful choices, God, in His limitless love, provides restoration through forgiveness and reconciliation.

Before the Fall, Adam and Eve could effortlessly converse with God. They were innocent, pure, and meek before God. It is this state of untainted communion with God that we strive to return to through a life of repentance and forgiveness. Forgiveness of sins and the healing of the image of God, that is the human person, is the very salvation that our Savior Jesus Christ offers us.

Repentance is a "second baptism" every time we confess our sins and return to Christ in humility and faith. As Saint Paul says, "Where sin increased, grace abounded

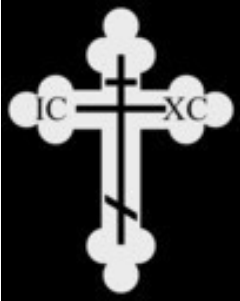
all the more" (Romans 5:20). The Christian life is grace upon grace. We are called not simply to be believers of Christ but to become His disciples. A Christian, a follower of Christ, recognizes that no sin is greater than the love of God. Regardless of how extraordinary we

perceive our sin to be, God is eager to forgive us if we, in turn, are willing to repent. God asks that when we fall, we try to get back up. In the spiritual life, getting up again after falling is how we participate in the Lord's Resurrection here and now.

What is needed is for us to have faith, hope, and love. The man with paralysis is forgiven and receives salvation, as well as his friends who helped him because of their faith.

We read that "when Jesus saw their faith," He healed their friend. We come to Christ in faith and hope because we love Him and our neighbor. When we help our neighbor, we are also helped by God. Let us continually come to Him, knowing His love forgives and restores us. He heals the paralysis of our bodies, hearts, and souls. When He does so, we resurrect and begin our journey home to our eternal destiny with God in His Kingdom.

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

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