



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, August 25, 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) 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

Red House

As was discussed at our special meeting last Sunday, we will begin preparations for making use of the red house. The first, and perhaps obvious use, is to arrange my office space. This would mean moving the bookshelves, desks, and filing cabinets from the kitchen. Imagine the room in the kitchen then!

In addition to arranging office space, I would also like to set up a reading library. I will be donating my entire book collection to the parish, as well as a computer for the office. If anyone has a bookcase, comfy chair, office table and chairs etc that they would like to put to use within the red house, please let me know. We will begin

to make the transition soon. Thank you.

Fr Steven

Further Considerations

If you have an idea for the use of the Red House, please share it with myself or any member of the council. Any and all ideas (that do not compromise the tax exempt status, or the teachings of the Church will be considered).

The following is a brief synopsis of the last Parish Council meeting held on 20 August 2024.

Financial Report for June: Income for the month of May totaled \$5,861 and expenses totaled \$11,263, resulting in a loss for the month of \$5,402. We did purchase 500 gallons of heating oil at \$3.38/gallon - total cost was \$1,690.

Power Washing Church: Thank you to Greg Jankura for completing this project.

Annual Meeting: The annual meeting is scheduled for 3rd Sunday in November, 17 November 2024. Please save this date.

Parish Council and Auditor Vacancies: Three Parish Council members are completing their terms - Susan Davis, Susan Egan and Fr Deacon Timothy. One of the auditors is also completing her term - Natalie Kucharski. The nominating committee will be contacting members to fill these positions. Please consider serving.

Prayers, Intercessions and Commemorations



Many Years! To Edward Hayes, Anastasia Littlefield and Irene Kaiser on the occasion of their birthdays. And to Dn Timothy and Maureen Skuby on the occasion of 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: Galina, Olga, Mat Lillian,

- Dorothy
- Clergy and their families: Fr Sergei, Fr Ceriphim
- Catechumen: Robert, Abbie, Matthew, Joseph, Mary, and Kevin
- Individuals and Families: Luba, Suzanne, Gail Galina, Evelyn, Rosemary, John, Daniel & Dayna, Kristen, Charles, Victor, Susan
- Birthdays and Name's Days this Month: Michael Kuziak, Susan Davis, Douglas Kuziak, Stasia PenkoffLedbeck, 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, Dn Timothy, Maureen
- Sick and those in distress: Thomas, Sheri, Joanna, Joshua, Remy, Stormy, Scott, Anne, Noah

Today's commemorated feasts and saints

9th SUNDAY AFTER

PENTECOST — Tone 8. Return of the Relics of the Apostle Bartholomew from Anastasiopolis to Lipari (6th c.). Holy Apostle Titus of the Seventy, Bishop of Crete (1st c.). Ss. Barses and Eulogius, Bishops of Edessa, and St. Protogenes, Bishop of Carrhæ, Confessors (4th c.). St. Menas, Patriarch of Constantinople (536-552).

- 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 25 to September 2, 2024

Sunday, August 25

9th Sunday of Matthew
9:30AM Divine Liturgy

Monday, August 26

The Holy Martyrs Adrian and Natalie
Ed Hayes

Tuesday, August 27

Pimen the Great
8:30AM Matins
7:00PM Bible Study on the Epistles of St John

Wednesday, August 28

‡ Moses the Black of Scete

Thursday, August 29

‡ Beheading of the Holy and Glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John
8:30AM Matins

Friday, August 30

‡ Apodosis of the Feast of the Forerunner
Anastasia Littlefield - B
Skuby - A

Saturday, August 31

The Placing of the Honorable Sash of the Most Holy Theotokos
Irene Kaiser - B
5:30PM Great Vespers

Sunday, September 1

Ecclesiastical New Year
+Archbishop Nikon
Church New Year
9:30AM Divine Liturgy

Monday, September 2

Mammas the Martyr

Saints and Feasts

August 25

Return of the Body of Bartholomew the Glorious Apostle

Concerning the Apostle Bartholomew, see June 11

August 25

Titus the Apostle of the 70

Saint Titus was a Greek by race, and an idolater. But having believed in Christ through the Apostle Paul, he became Paul's disciple and follower and labored with

him greatly in the preaching of the Gospel. When Paul ordained him Bishop of Crete, he later wrote to him the Epistle which bears his name. Having shepherded in an apostolic manner the flock that had been entrusted to him, and being full of days, he reposed in peace, some ninety-four years of age.

August 26

Adrian & Natalia the Martyrs & their 33 Companion Martyrs in Nicomedia

The holy Martyrs Adrian and Natalie confessed the Christian Faith during the reign of Maximian, in Nicomedia, in the year 298. Adrian was a pagan; witnessing the valor of the Martyrs, and the fervent faith with which they suffered their torments, he also declared himself a Christian and was imprisoned. When this was told to his wife Natalie, who was secretly a believer, she visited him in prison and encouraged him in his sufferings. Saint Adrian's hands and feet were placed on an anvil and broken off with a hammer; he died in his torments. His blessed wife recovered part of his holy relics and took it to Argyropolis near Byzantium, and reposed in peace soon after.

August 26

Icon of the Mother of God of Vladimir

In all probability, the icon of the *Mother of God of Vladimir* was painted in Constantinople. In the twelfth century,

Patriarch Luke Chrysoberges sent it to Kiev to Great Prince Yuri Dolgruky. The icon was kept in the convent at Vyshgorod, whence the holy Prince Andrew of Bogoliubovo brought it to Vladimir. The icon is one of the most venerated in Russia, having been carried by princes in military campaigns, prayed before by rulers for the welfare of the people, and flocked to by the faithful of all walks of life. At the election of the metropolitans and patriarchs, the names of the candidates were placed before this holy icon, and after prayer, the lot chosen; Patriarch Tikhon the Confessor was elected this way. The icon is celebrated also on June 23 and May 21, the last feast being established to commemorate the deliverance of Moscow in 1521 from the onslaught of the Tartar Khan Makhmet-Girei.

August 28

Moses the Black of Scete

Saint Moses, who is also called Moses the Black, was a slave, but because of his evil life, his master cast him out, and he became a ruthless thief, dissolute in all his ways. Later, however, coming to repentance, he converted, and took up the monastic life under Saint Isidore of Scete. He gave himself over to prayer and the mortification of the carnal mind with such diligence that he later became a priest of exemplary virtue. He was revered by all for his lofty ascetical life and for his great humility. Once the Fathers in Scete asked Moses to come to an assembly to judge the fault of a certain brother, but he refused. When they

insisted, he took a basket which had a hole in it, filled it with sand, and carried it on his shoulders. When the Fathers saw him coming they asked him what the basket might mean. He answered, "My sins run out behind me, and I do not see them, and I am come this day to judge failings which are not mine." When a barbarian tribe was coming to Scete, Moses, conscious that he himself had slain other men when he was a thief, awaited them and was willingly slain by them with six other monks, at the end of the fourth century. He was a contemporary of Saint Arsenius the Great (see May 8).

August 29

Beheading of the Holy and Glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John

The divine Baptist, the Prophet born of a Prophet, the seal of all the Prophets and beginning of the Apostles, the mediator between the Old and New Covenants, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, the God-sent Messenger of the incarnate Messiah, the forerunner of Christ's coming into the world (Esaias 40: 3; Mal. 3: 1); who by many miracles was both conceived and born; who was filled with the Holy Spirit while yet in his mother's womb; who came forth like another Elias the Zealot, whose life in the wilderness and divine zeal for God's Law he imitated: this divine Prophet, after he had preached the baptism of repentance according to God's command; had taught men of low rank and high how they must order their lives; had admonished those whom he baptized and had filled them with the fear of God, teaching them that

no one is able to escape the wrath to come if he do not works worthy of repentance; had, through such preaching, prepared their hearts to receive the evangelical teachings of the Savior; and finally, after he had pointed out to the people the very Savior, and said, "Behold the Lamb of God, Which taketh away the sin of the world" (Luke 3:2-18; John 1: 29-36), after all this, John sealed with his own blood the truth of his words and was made a sacred victim for the divine Law at the hands of a transgressor.

This was Herod Antipas, the Tetrarch of Galilee, the son of Herod the Great. This man had a lawful wife, the daughter of Arethas (or Aretas), the King of Arabia (that is, Arabia Petraea, which had the famous Nabatean stone city of Petra as its capital. This is the Aretas mentioned by Saint Paul in II Cor. 11:32). Without any cause, and against every commandment of the Law, he put her away and took to himself Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip, to whom Herodias had borne a daughter, Salome. He would not desist from this unlawful union even when John, the preacher of repentance, the bold and austere accuser of the lawless, censured him and told him, "It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife" (Mark 6: 18). Thus Herod, besides his other unholy acts, added yet this, that he apprehended John and shut him in prison; and perhaps he would have killed him straightway, had he not feared the people, who had extreme reverence for John. Certainly, in the beginning, he himself had great reverence for this just and holy man. But finally, being pierced with the sting of a mad lust for the woman Herodias, he laid

his defiled hands on the teacher of purity on the very day he was celebrating his birthday. When Salome, Herodias' daughter, had danced in order to please him and those who were supping with him, he promised her -- with an oath more foolish than any foolishness -- that he would give her anything she asked, even unto the half of his kingdom. And she, consulting with her mother, straightway asked for the head of John the Baptist in a charger. Hence this transgressor of the Law, preferring his lawless oath above the precepts of the Law, fulfilled this godless promise and filled his loathsome banquet with the blood of the Prophet. So it was that that all-venerable head, revered by the Angels, was given as a prize for an abominable dance, and became the plaything of the dissolute daughter of a debauched mother. As for the body of the divine Baptist, it was taken up by his disciples and placed in a tomb (Mark 6: 21 - 29). Concerning the finding of his holy head, see February 24 and May 25.

Hymns of the Day



You!

Tone 4 Troparion (St. Alexis)

O righteous Father Alexis, our heavenly

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

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 3 Troparion (Apostles)

Holy Apostles Bartholomew and Titus, entreat the merciful God,//
to grant our souls forgiveness of transgressions!

Tone 8 Kontakion (Resurrection)

By rising from the tomb, You raised the dead and resurrected Adam.
Eve exults in Your Resurrection,//
and the world celebrates Your rising from the dead, O greatly Merciful One!

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.

Tone 4 Kontakion (St. Bartholomew)

You have appeared to the universe as a great sun,
shining with the radiance of thy teachings and awesome miracles.//
You enlighten those who honor you, O Apostle of the Lord, Bartholomew.

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

Tone 2 Kontakion (St. Titus)

Titus, worthy of all praise and preacher

of Christ's mysteries,
you were Paul's companion, and with him
taught us the doctrine of God.
Therefore we cry out to you://
"Never cease to intercede for the sake of us
all!"

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. 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 First Letter to the Corinthians 3:9-17.

Brethren, we are God's fellow workers; you
are God's field, God's building. According to
the grace of God given to me, like a skilled

master builder I laid a foundation, and
another man is building upon it. Let each
man take care how he builds upon it. For no
other foundation can any one lay than that
which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if
any one builds on the foundation with gold,
silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw -
each man's work will become manifest; for
the Day will disclose it, because it will be
revealed with fire, and the fire will test what
sort of work each one has done. If the work
which any man has built on the foundation
survives, he will receive a reward. If any
man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss,
though he himself will be saved, but only as
through fire. Do you not know that you are
God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in
you? If any one destroys God's temple, God
will destroy him. For God's temple is holy,
and that temple you are.

Gospel Reading

9th Sunday of Matthew

The Reading is from Matthew 14:22-34

At that time, Jesus made the disciples get
into the boat and go before him to the other
side, while he dismissed the crowds. And
after he had dismissed the crowds, he went
up into the hills by himself to pray. When
evening came, he was there alone, but the
boat by this time was many furlongs distant
from the land, beaten by the waves; for the
wind was against them. And in the fourth
watch of the night he came to them, walking
on the sea. But when the disciples saw him
walking on the sea, they were

terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear. But immediately he spoke to them, saying "Take heart, it is I; have no fear."

And Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, bid me come to you on the water." He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus; but when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me." Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "O man of little faith, why did you doubt?" And when they entered the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God." And when they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret.

Wisdom of the Fathers

The principle and source of the virtues is a good disposition of the will, that is to say, an aspiration for goodness and beauty. God is the source and ground of all supernal goodness. Thus the principle of goodness and beauty is faith or, rather, it is Christ, the rock of faith, who is principle and foundation of all virtues. On this rock we stand and on this foundation we build every good thing (cf. I Cor. 3:11).

St. Gregory of Sinai

On Commandments and Doctrines no. 83, Philokalia Vol. 3 edited by Palmer, Sherrard and Ware; Faber and Faber pg. 228, 14th century

Christ did not command the winds to cease at that time, but Himself stretched forth His hand and took hold of Peter, because here faith was required of him. When we do not do our part, divine (grace) slows and stands still. . . it was not the wind that did Peter harm; his lack of faith sank him. Where faith is fruitful, firm and strong, none of the evils that may befall us can do us any harm.

St. John Chrysostom

The Gospel Commentary edited by Hieromonk German Ciuba, 2002, 4th Century

Beyond the Sermon



After feeding thousands of people with just five loaves of bread and two fish, Jesus dismisses the crowds and even His disciples, and He stays behind on the mountain, alone, to pray at night. Jesus Christ is the Son of God, but He takes on our human nature to unite it with His Divine

Nature. He heals our humanity by uniting it to His Divinity. The Lord, Who created the heavens and the earth, and holds all things in the palm of His hands in His divine love, finds time to be alone with

the Father to pray. We are called to imitate Christ in all things, especially when we come to God in prayer. As the Lord takes time for Himself, alone, for prayer and contemplation, so He teaches us to take time for ourselves for prayer and contemplation.

In the meantime, the disciples have taken the boats to cross the Sea of Galilee to the western shore, towards the region of Capernaum. Many skilled fishermen, such as Peter, James, and John, navigate the Sea of Galilee constantly. However, this night, the wind was too strong. It is late and dark, and it is the “fourth watch of the night,” which means between 3 am and 6 am. They are afraid, especially because the Lord is not in the boat with them.

Jesus shows that He is greater than Moses as He had fed thousands of people in the desert by multiplying the five loaves and the two fish. Now, once again, He calls to mind familiar Old Testament disclosures of God. When the Israelites left Egypt by the command of God, they reached the Red Sea. At that time, God told Moses to stretch out his staff so the Sea could be parted, and the Israelites crossed safely to the other side. That event also happened right before the daybreak, after a strong wind blew all night (Exodus 14). Here, Jesus is fulfilling the conquering of the Sea, not by parting it with a staff, but by walking on its water. He is also fulfilling the Psalm, which, speaking of God, says, “Those who go down to the sea in ships . . . cried to the Lord in their affliction,

and He commanded the storm, and it became a breeze, and its waves were still . . . Let them give thanks to the Lord for His mercies” (Psalm 106).

Jesus walks across the water and comes to His disciples. In the Old Testament, the waters of the sea often serve as a symbol of death and new life emerging. Now, the Son of God comes to help His disciples, to deliver them from death, to be with them, to calm the storm, and to cross with them to the other side. The Lord was not in the boat when

the storm arose, but He was still with them because He knew everything and was praying.

He tests their faith, but He knows exactly when to come to them in their hour of need.

This is also true in our lives. We are on a journey to the Kingdom of God. We sail across the sea of this life, and even if we are experienced sailors, it is inevitable that, at times, the winds will blow against us, and the waves will threaten to sink us. It might, sometimes, feel as though the Lord is not with us because we are only focusing on the danger; we are focusing on the trial.

However, the Lord is always with us. He lives inside

our hearts, He knows all things, and He loves us infinitely. Christ tramples death by death

and, therefore, tramples on the waves which threaten to drown us. He walks on them. He is victorious over them.

Christ’s victory over the storm is our victory. If our focus is on Him, we also walk

securely over the waves and the storms of life, not because we have any power to do so on our own, but because He gives us His strength when we ask. He says to us, "Come!"

Jesus reveals Himself as the God of Heaven and Earth, of the seas and all that is in them. Christ is the Lord of the natural elements: earth, water, fire, and air. He is the Lord of life;

He rules over all things and loves us unconditionally.

Sometimes, like Peter, we go to Christ feeling strong and full of faith, but other times our faith falters because we take our gaze off Christ. Instead, we begin to focus on the storm around us. When we do that, we fear. When we worry, our faith diminishes, and

we begin to sink. However, the Lord does not abandon us, just as He does not let Peter sink. All Peter has to do is to call out to the Lord, saying, "Lord, save me!" Jesus immediately reaches out His hand and catches him, saying, "O man of little faith, why did you doubt?"

The Lord then pulls Peter out of the water and out of his fear. The Lord grabs Peter, much like how we see Him grabbing the wrists of Adam and Eve in the icon of the Resurrection. Their hands are not able to grasp Him, but He holds them up with His firm grip on their wrists, pulling them out of the grave with the power of His life and love.

We pray in the petitions in every service: "Help us, save us, O Lord." The first word in the Greek petition is «ἀντιλαβοῦ» (antilavou), which means "take me by my hand." Jesus

takes Peter by his hand and saves him as he is drowning, and He does the same with us. He answers our prayers when we cry out to Him, and He always helps us. Teaching prayer,

Saint Paisios of Mount Athos says, "I send a signal (prayer), I ask for help. I constantly ask

for help from Christ, from Panagia, from the Saints, for myself, and for others. If I do not ask, I will not get helped." The moment we think we have lost everything, including hope,

is the time to cry out: "Lord, save me!" And He answers our prayer for whatever is beneficial for our salvation and the salvation of others.

When we accept the love of God and put our trust in Him, then fear begins to disappear. Jesus says to us, "Take heart, it is I; have no fear!" There is no fear in love because perfect love casts out fear (1 John 4:18). To abide in God's love is to trust in Him,

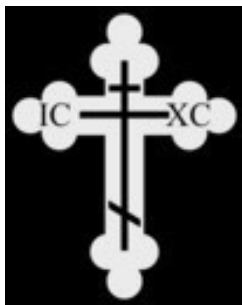
to come to Him in prayer, to spend time alone with Him in communion. When our hearts

are open to His love, the storms of life cannot sink us because He is with us. The grace of

God brings about faith in our hearts, and with strong faith, we can work miracles through

His power and love.

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



Suggested Uses for the Red House

Parish Office Conference Room
Classroom Room
Storage Room

Overnight Usage

Bishop and entourage
emergency stay

Small Chapel

Daily service(s) for guests

Confession

Library and Reading Room

Thrift Store

Exchange and Resource "Store" for those in need

Coffee/Tea Shop Bookstore

Mission Resource and Conference Center

Retreat Center

Orthodox Counseling Center

Deanery/Diocese A/V Center Deanery/
Diocese Liturgical Supply Storage and
Exchange