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ST. MARK'S ORTHODOX CHURCH

DIOCESE OF EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

452 DURHAM ROAD, WRIGHTSTOWN, PA, 18940

(215) 860-9640

www.stmarksoca.org

Facebook: St. Mark's Orthodox Church, Wrightstown

Twitter: @stmarksoca

Instagram: @st.marksorthodox

JULY 24TH — SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Tone 5. Holy Martyrs and Passionbearers Boris & Gleb (in baptism Roman and David — 1015). Martyr Christina of Tyre (ca. 300). Ven. Polycarp, Archimandrite of the Kiev Caves (1182).

Epistle: Romans 12:6-14
Romans 8:28-39

Gospel: Matthew 9:1-8
John 15:17-16:2



UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, July 24th:	Hours & Divine Liturgy — 9:10 AM Litya for Raymonde Djokic, choir rehearsal, coffee hour
Monday, July 25th:	Viewing for Raymonde Djokic 5-7pm at St. Mark's; Panikhida 6:30pm
Tuesday, July 26th:	Funeral at St. Mark's followed by Burial of Raymonde Djokic — 11am
Wednesday, July 27th:	Akathist to St. Panteleimon w/ Anointing — 7 PM
Thursday, July 28th:	Parish Council Meeting - 7PM
Saturday, July 30th:	Vespers & Confessions — 6 PM

Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry Sunday is next Sunday; we will take up a second collection for OCPM.



Raymonde Djokic, our senior parishioner and age and grace, fell asleep in the Lord on Saturday, July 23rd. A Litya will be served following the Divine Liturgy today for her blessed repose. Funeral arrangements are not set at this time, but will be published to the parish via email. In the meantime, pray for her blessed repose, and for the consolation of her family who so deeply love her and are grieving their, and our, loss. They shared her with all of us, and we are all the better for it. So let us ask the Lord to grant them strength and consolation as he welcomes their beloved mother into the Mansions of the Righteous.

The Wrightstown Food Cupboard needs **juices, canned tuna & meats.**

Birthdays: Jesse James Killough, Carol Wanko

Name Days: Sandy Bohlender, Anna Kasmer, Jeanette Ruano, Linette Sedor, Katerina Sremenak, Deb Vivirito, Anna Yates

Wedding Anniversaries: Kevin and Margaret Karaffa

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

LIVING

Captive Hierarchs PAUL and JOHN

All those caring for the sick and suffering at this time throughout the world, especially our families and friends: Charles and Erin, Ann Marie, Joseph, Alexis, Aphrodite, Charla, Sandy

Ill-afflicted Archpriests Daniel and Michael

Matushki Elena, Laryssa, Lisa, Priscilla, Myra, Suzanne, Anne and Jennifer

Servants of God Charlotte, infant Luke, Ada, Larissa, Nicholas, Peter, Stephanie, Samuel, Sergei, Anna, Scott, Dennis, David, David, Garry, Vincent, Stephen, Raymond, Darrell, Andrew, Daniel, Amanda, Michael, Laura, Jason, Katina, Donna, Rebekah, Anthony, Alexander, Grover, Valerie, Raymonde, Anita, Jim, Peter, Jonathan, Gregory, Charles, Kyra, Margaret, Arlene, Vaughn, Helen, Nicholas, Elena, Nicholas, John, Alice, Edward, Sydney, Susan, John, Patricia, Ayla, Elizabeth, Sandra, Paul, Anatole, Maria, Julia, Charla, infant Jacob, Alexei.

DEPARTED

Newly departed: Pdn. Averky, Mat. Marion, Mat. Helen, Raymonde

Departed: All those who have died in service to their country, Archpriests Stephen and Vladimir, Mat. Mary, Priest George, Archpriest Paul, Kh. Shirley

VIGIL LIGHTS

FROM IRENE ARHIPOV

FOR THE HEALTH OF: SERGEI, PETER, STEPHANIE, ALEXANDRA, RAYMONDE, PENNY, NEWLY-BAPTIZED CHARLES, KATHERINE

IN MEMORY OF: WILLIAM, MARJORIE

FROM THE RISTVEY FAMILY

FOR THE HEALTH OF: RAYMONDE, CHARLOTTE, MARGARET, ANDREW, STEPHANIE, MARGARET, LORELLY, DELORES, HELEN, JOSEPH, KATHERINE

IN MEMORY OF: GEORGE, PETER, THOSE WHO HAVE LOST THEIR LIVES IN THE WAR IN UKRAINE

SISTERHOOD OF THE HOLY MYRRHBEARERS MISSION STATEMENT

We, the Sisterhood of the Holy Myrrhbearers, being called by God to minister to the faithful, define our mission statement as follows:

- To seek to have a deeper relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ, His holy Mother and His saints,
- To support and encourage one another in our spiritual growth in the Body of Christ, and
- To serve those in our church and community in whatever ways are needed.

The Sisterhood of the Holy Myrrhbearers met at the Moser's house last Sunday for our first social gathering. Our meeting bore much fruit. We would like to meet on the last Sunday of every month, alternating between the church location and different women's homes. Our August meeting will be on August 28th in the temple during coffee hour. We have designated the first Sunday of each month as "Sisterhood Sunday". Any women who would like to participate should bring a dish to share at coffee hour. We will collect donations that day, during coffee hour, for any pressing needs of which we have been made aware. Please see Julie Stell with any questions or concerns.

FROM THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

ONLINE GIVING PROGRAM: As a reminder, St. Mark's offers an Online Giving program to contribute to the support of the parish. One of the biggest benefits of online giving is the ability to set up scheduled recurring donations. This allows you to be faithful and consistent in your generosity and allows us to plan and budget consistently as a church.

Having more parishioners participate in scheduled, recurring giving is also important to financial institutions as we seek funding for our building expansion project by showing consistent month-to-month contributions.

If you are interested in participating in the Online Giving program:

1. Start here: <https://www.stmarksoca.org>
2. There is a DONATE button near the top of the page.
3. Help can be found by clicking on the Learn How or FAQ buttons next to the DONATE button.
4. If you have other questions, you may contact Kevin Swan at kswan353@verizon.net, or Andy Skordinski at andy.home@comcast.net.



COLLECTION INFORMATION

Sunday Collection (July 17))

Weekly general: \$1,648

Candles: \$86

Tech: \$400

Total: \$2,134

Online Giving (July 11-17)

Weekly general: \$1,373

Parish development: \$515

Total: \$1,888

Grand total: \$4,022

THE HOLY SYNOD'S STATEMENT ON SAME-SEX RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUAL IDENTITY

At last week's All-American Council, there was a resolution proposed to affirm the Church's stance on issues of same-sex relationships and sexual identity. This matter, however, falls outside the competence of the All-American Council, since, in the words of the Statute of the Orthodox Church in America, "All matters involving doctrine, canonical order, morals, and liturgical practice" are within the competence and jurisdiction of the Holy Synod. Nonetheless, meeting under the presidency of His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon, the Holy Synod has issued the following statement:

The Orthodox Church teaches that the union between a man and a woman in marriage reflects the union between Christ and His Church (Eph. 5). As such, marriage is by this reflection monogamous and heterosexual. Within this marriage, sexual relations between a husband and wife are an expression of their love that has been blessed by God. Such is God's plan for male and female, created in his image and likeness, from the beginning, and such remains his plan for all time. Any other form of sexual expression is by its nature disordered, and cannot be blessed by the Church in any way, whether directly or indirectly.

That said, the Holy Synod of Bishops expresses its pastoral concern and paternal love for all who desire to come to Christ and who struggle with their passions, temptations, and besetting sins, whatever those might be. The Church is a hospital for the sick; Our Lord has come as a physician to heal those who are ailing. Imitating our Savior, who stretched his arms wide on the Cross, we welcome with open arms all who desire the life of repentance in Christ.

Over the course of recent years, His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon and the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America have made numerous pronouncements affirming the Orthodox Christian teaching on marriage and sexuality. Metropolitan Tikhon, at the 18th All-American Council in Atlanta, Georgia, on July 20, 2015, in his opening address, stated that:

"... the Orthodox Church must continue to proclaim what she has always taught: that marriage is the union between one man and one woman and the Orthodox Church in America can in no way deviate from this teaching..."

Among the Holy Synod's affirmations of the same teaching are the "Synodal Affirmations on Marriage, Family, Sexuality, and the Sanctity of Life," from the 10th All-American Council, Miami, Florida, taking place from July 26-31, 1992; the "Synodal Reaffirmation of the SCOBA statement titled 'On the Moral Crisis in our Nation,'" issued May 17, 2004; and the synodal "Statement concerning the June 26 US Supreme Court decision," issued June 28, 2015.

Therefore, in accord with the timeless plan of God our Creator, the unchanging teaching of Christ the Savior announced through his holy apostles and their successors, and the consistent witness of the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church in America, the Holy Synod

affirms what the Scriptures clearly and plainly proclaim and the holy fathers unerringly confess, namely: that God made human beings in two sexes, male and female, in his own image, and that chaste and pure sexual relationships are reserved to one man and one woman in the bond of marriage.

As such, we affirm that sexual relationships are blessed only within the context of a marriage between one man and one woman. Motivated by love and out of sincere care for souls, we call those who suffer from the passion of same-sex attraction to a life of steadfast chastity and repentance, the same life of chastity and repentance to which all mankind is called in Christ.

We call upon all clergy, theologians, teachers, and lay persons within the Orthodox Church in America never to contradict these teachings by preaching or teaching against the Church's clear moral position; by publishing books, magazines, and articles which do the same; or producing or publishing similar content online. We reject any attempt to create a theological framework which would normalize same-sex erotic relationships or distort humanity's God-given sexual identity. The holy apostle Paul writes that such teachings will "increase to more ungodliness," and that such a "message will spread like gangrene" (2 Tim 2:16-17), misleading the faithful and inquirers seeking the truth.

Any clergy, theologian, teacher, or lay person who contravenes our directive thus undermines the authority of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America by disregarding the Holy Synod's consistent and unwavering teaching on these matters. We call on any such persons to cease their disruptive activities, which threaten the peace and tranquility of the Orthodox Church in America, cause scandal and uncertainty, and tempt those who struggle against their disordered passions to stumble. Consequently, those who teach these errors become participants in the sin of those whom they have tempted or whom they have failed to correct, and thus should seek remission of this sin in the mystery of holy confession. Those who refuse correction open themselves to ecclesiastical discipline.

Thus, we, the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in Americas, conclude by once again affirming that all clergy, theologians, teachers, and lay persons of the Orthodox Church in America should teach nothing other than the fullness of the Orthodox faith, which is the fullness of the saving truth.

We remind our faithful and clergy that every person of goodwill is welcome to visit our parishes. However, reception into the Church, and continued communion in Christ at the sacred Chalice, is reserved for those who strive to live a life of repentance and humility in light of these God-given truths, conforming themselves to the commandments of God as the only path of salvation in Christ. All of us are sinners, but it is for precisely this reason that Our Lord Jesus Christ calls us to "Repent and believe in the Gospel, for the kingdom of God is at hand" (Mk. 1:15).



SERVICE SCHEDULE

Hours + Divine Liturgy:	9:10 AM (Sundays & feast days)
Great Vespers / Vigil:	6 PM (Saturdays) 7PM (Eve of feast) 6PM (Eve of feast – Sundays)
Confessions:	Saturdays after Vespers & by appointment
Akathist Service:	9:30 AM (Wednesdays)
Panikhidas/Lityas:	as requested

CLERGY

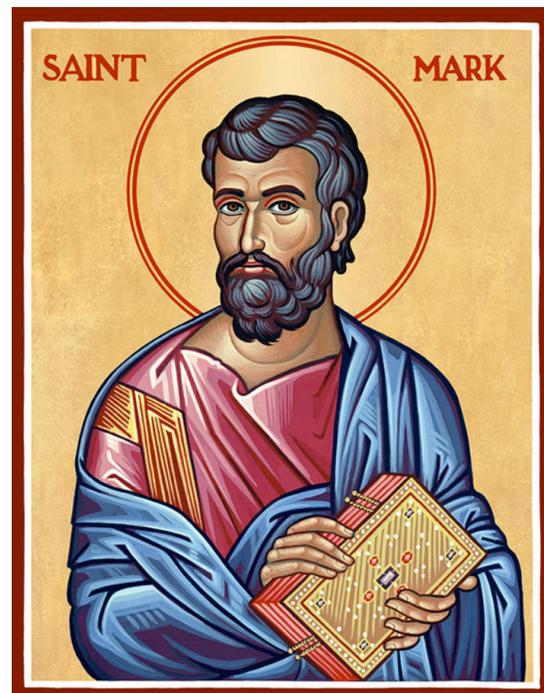
V. Rev. Raymond Martin Browne, *Rector*
(570) 906-1388 (cell)
stmarksorthodoxchurch@gmail.com

Protodeacon Gregory Moser, *Attached*
V. Rev. Michael Sekela (Retired), *Attached*
Subdeacon: Dustin Joseph Crosby
Readers: G. Peter Bohlender
Marek Szeliga
Sergei Arhipov

LAY LEADERSHIP

CHOIR DIRECTORS: Daria Cortése
Mat. Martha Moser
Sergei Arhipov (Emeritus)

CHURCH SCHOOL COORDINATORS: Mat. Martha Moser
Julie Stell



Baptisms: Children must have **Orthodox Godparents** who provide a letter from their parish priest. Parents and Godparents are required to attend two preparatory classes. Please make scheduling arrangements by contacting Fr. Martin directly.

Weddings: Arrangement should be made **at least six months** prior to the wedding; scheduling is subject to the Church's liturgical calendar. Please speak with Fr. Martin **before making reception arrangements.**

