

EST.



1974

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

DECEMBER 11TH, 2022 — 26TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Tone 1 — Sunday of the Forefathers. Ven.

Daniel the Stylite of Constantinople (489-90).

Martyrs Mirax, Acespsius and Aithalas, of Egypt

(7th c.). Ven. Luke the New Stylite of Chalcedon

(ca. 970-980). Ven. Nikon the Dry of the Kiev

Caves (Near Caves — 12th c.). Synaxis of all the

martyrs in Georgia, New Hieromartyrs Seraphim

(Chichagov), Metropolitan of Petrograd,

Archpriests Peter and Aleksy (1937 — Nov. 28th

O.S.), and Nikolaid (1941 — Nov. 28th O.S.).

Epistle: Col. 3:4-11

Gospel: Luke 14:16-24



UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, Dec. 11th:	Hours & Divine Liturgy — 9:10 AM Choir Rehearsal & Coffee Hour
Monday, Dec. 12th:	Preschool Church School — 10:45 AM Vigil for St. Herman of Alaska — 7 PM
Tuesday, Dec. 13th:	Hours & Divine Liturgy for St. Herman of Alaska — 9:15 AM Viewing for Ruth Huber, mother of Mat. Heidi Browne — 5-7 PM Requiem Service for Ruth Ruber — 7 PM (Viewing & Service at Fluehr Funeral Home on Richboro Road)
Wednesday, Dec. 14th:	Mirrors of Truth — 7 PM
Thursday, Dec. 15th:	Parish Council Meeting — 7 PM
Saturday, Dec. 17th:	Great Vespers and Confessions — 6 PM
Sunday, Dec. 18th:	Hours & Divine Liturgy — 9:10 AM Church School & Coffee Hour

Special Collection for Alaska: Today we are taking up a special collection for the Diocese of Alaska Clergy Endowment, as resolved at the most recent All-American Council. This collection will take place annually on the Sunday closest to the feast day of St. Herman of Alaska.

Upcoming Feasts: We will have Vigil for St. Herman of Alaska tomorrow, December 12th at 7 PM, with the Divine Liturgy on Tuesday, December 13th at 9:10 AM.

Adult Education for the Nativity Fast: Mirrors of Truth will meet on Wednesday, December 14th.

The Clergy Peer Learning Group will meet at St. Mark's on Friday, December 16th. The building will closed to all others during the meeting.

The Wrightstown Food Cupboard needs **coffee, tea and juices**. The Cupboard is a 501(c)3 charitable organization.

Birthdays: Sharon Burkett, Victoria Gibson, Elliot Hamerstone, Pdn. Gregory Moser,

Name Days: Sarah Browne, David Gibson, Stephen Karaffa, Jesse James Killough, Sonja Lengel, Nancy Letzo, Rebecca Sosedov, Benjamin Stell

Woods Services Secret Santa: Thank you to everyone who donated to the Secret Santa program at Woods Services. Your generosity (over \$790 to date) has enabled us to purchase all the items on our gift list, and to have some money left over to purchase birthday gifts for several residents throughout the year.



UPCOMING PRE- / POST-NATIVITY EVENTS

Monday, Dec. 12th	Vigil for St. Herman of Alaska — 7 PM
Tuesday, Dec. 13th	Hours & Divine Liturgy for St. Herman of Alaska — 9:15 AM
Friday, Dec. 23rd	Royal Hours of Nativity — 9:15 AM
Saturday, Dec. 24th	Hours & Divine Liturgy for the Eve of Nativity — 9:15 AM Nativity Vigil — 7 PM
Sunday, Dec. 25th	Hours & Divine Liturgy for Nativity — 9:10 AM
Monday, January 26th	Hours & Divine Liturgy for the Synaxis of the Theotokos — 9:10 AM

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

LIVING

Captive Hierarchs PAUL and JOHN

All those, everywhere, who care for the sick, the suffering and the vulnerable.

Ill-afflicted Clergy Archbishop +MELCHIZEDEK, Archpriests James, Stephen, Daniel and Michael

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

Servants of God Monk Nicodemos, Charlotte, infant Luke, Larissa, Nicholas, Peter, Stephanie, Samuel, Sergei, Anna, Raymond, Andrew, Valerie, Charles, Margaret, Elena, Ayla, Sandra, Anatole, Maria, Julia, infant Jacob, Michael, Nancy, Eileen, Steven, Constance, Angela, Hunter, Jon Smith, Anselmo Pappas Scandalis

DEPARTED

Newly departed: Richard, Pdn. Paul, Igumen Victorin

Departed: Ivan, Met. +HERMAN, Thomas, Michael, Venus, Helen, Anthony, 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, STEPHANIE, PETER, ALEXANDRA, ALEXANDRA, RUTH, ANNA

IN MEMORY OF: BORIS, NICKOLI, MARY, BRADLEY

FROM ANONYMOUS
FOR THE HEALTH OF: BARBARA, FATHER DAN SKVIR, PRESBYTERA TASSIE
IN MEMORY OF: ANASTASIA, CLEOPATRA, CHARLES

FROM THE PITRA FAMILY
FOR THE HEALTH OF: FR. PAUL & MAT. MARY SHAFRAN'S 75TH ANNIVERSARY
IN MEMORY OF: EDWARD V. INGLE (10/12/48-11/21/22)
FR. VOLODYMYR'S FATHER WHO PASSED AWAY UNEXPECTEDLY ON 12/3/22 WHILE ATTENDING CHURCH
SERVICES IN UKRAINE
PEARL HARBOR DAY (12/7/41)

"Art Thou the One who is to come?" The sons of earth ask the One born of the Virgin, O my soul. But the One born of the Virgin glistens with maternal light amid the sons of earth, who are as dark as extinguished days.

The flaming seraphim shine in His eyes; the sapient cherubim sit upon His lips; the lordly thrones bolster His stance. Seeing Him alone, a Leader without an earthly army, every sane person is convinced that this could be a leader of an awesome and enormous army of invisible powers.

And behold, surrounded by the angelic hosts, thy Leader, O soul, opens His mouth and speaks:

"In truth, I am the One for whom thou hast been waiting; do not hope for another. If thou hast been searching for the way, I am the Way. I am thy tomorrow, from today until the end of time. Everything good that thou hast been expecting from the days of tomorrow is within Me. Today, thy tomorrow is fulfilled in Me. And no day, from now until the last day, will bring thee what I am bringing thee.

"Lo, I am the Day that has no beginning and no end. I am the treasury of every future that exists, and I am the Way to that treasury. The future in its entirety cannot give thee so much as a kernel of good, unless it borrows it from Me. All the prophets have pointed out the way that leads to Me. All the ways of the prophets come to an end and lose themselves in Me.

"From this time forth I am the only Way, and outside Me are only regions without roads or ways. Like many streams flowing into a single river and then losing their way, so have all the prophets flowed into Me, and from this time forth I direct the course of life. Whoever continues to follow the ways of the prophets further will be following paths that no longer exist, and will injure themselves.

"The prophets came to show the way; I have come to be the Way.

"Whoever wishes to follow Me must follow Me not with his feet alone, but with all his soul, with all his heart, and with all his mind. My way is long, and whoever trusts solely in his feet will drop from exhaustion.

"When children want to keep up with giants, they must forgo walking on their own feet and sit on the shoulders of the giants. Whoever wants to keep up with Me must renounce his feet, his soul, his heart and his mind. Whoever renounces all this, I shall take upon My feet, into My soul, into My heart and into My mind. And he will not be heavy for Me, nor shall I be tiring for him. However, anyone who fails to renounce everything cannot overtake or detain Me along the way.

"I am the Way, and he who follows My way does not journey alone, but with Me. The prophets used to point out the way hither, or thither, or over in that direction, because they were not themselves the way. I cannot point out the way: hither or thither, or over in that direction; nor can I leave any of My wayfarers to journey without Me. Whoever wishes to follow My way, I Myself shall carry.

"I tell thee one thing more: I am what is desired tomorrow, and the way to tomorrow. Without Me, thou canst not find the way to what thou dost desire tomorrow, nor canst thou expect it."

O God-bearing Son, have mercy on us and begin leading us to Thyself.

CHORAL CORNER

Q: Why are there multiple tonal systems? Why don't all Orthodox choirs sing Byzantine chant, which is the original chant of the Church?

A: It's true that the Byzantine chant tradition is centuries older than Znamenny chant (also called Stolp chant), the earliest style native to what is now the Russian Orthodox Church. When Great Prince Vladimir brought his subjects and lands into the Orthodox Church in 988, they were under the authority of the Patriarch of Constantinople, who sent Greek hierarchs to shepherd the new Slavic flock. These hierarchs traveled with entourages that included liturgical singers, and the Byzantine chant style certainly had a tremendous impact in newly-illuminated Rus'. However, various cultural, political and geographical factors led to the eventual evolution of uniquely Slavic liturgical chant styles that retained some Byzantine influence, but were also shaped by contact with Western liturgical singing (predominantly in Lithuania and Poland, which eventually became Roman Catholic, and also from Orthodox Bulgaria), and the musical traditions of newly-converted former pagans in rural areas. Another important factor in the musical evolution of the nascent Russian Orthodox Church was the scarcity of liturgical books. Rus' had neither paper nor the printing press, so manuscripts were hand-copied on parchment, an expensive and time-consuming process. In monasteries, the cost was prohibitive, so their liturgical books were written on *tree bark* (!), which was an affordable but decidedly non-durable solutions. The traditions of liturgical singing, therefore, were passed down orally, leaving the door open for both accidental changes and intentional improvisations that, over time, became part of the accepted canonical chant tradition. As the Orthodox Church spreads throughout the world, new musical traditions will continue to emerge. This is a positive thing, because while Orthodox doctrine and theology will never change, effective musical evangelism incorporates elements from the existing musical sensibilities of a given people to do some musical bridge-building, connecting new souls with the ancient Faith.

Question for next week: *Why does the choir always sing different different hymns during clergy communion? It seems like the selection changes every week.*

Note: You can find previous Choral Corner entries posted at <https://www.dariacortese.com/my-blog>.

FROM THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

St. Mark's now has an Amazon Smile wishlist, which will allow donors to purchase needed supplies such as paper towels and have them shipped directly to the parish. The list may be viewed at <https://tinyurl.com/2s4fc5zp>.

Purchasing an item from this list will generate a receipt from Amazon you may use for tax purposes.

If you want your donation to appear on your parish contribution statement, please submit your receipt to Andy Skordinski.

11/27 Counting

General — \$963

Candles — \$87

Food Cupboard — \$10

Total — \$1,060

Online Giving (11/21-11/27)

General — \$1,628

Total — \$1,628

GRAND TOTAL: \$2,688

12/4 Counting

General — \$1,744

Candles — \$130

Church Store — \$25

Secret Santa — \$670

Ukraine — \$10

Total — \$1,060

Online Giving (11/28-12/4)

General — \$2,578

Total — \$2,578

GRAND TOTAL: \$5,107



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:	9:15 AM (Wednesdays)
Panikhidas/Lityas:	as requested

CLERGY

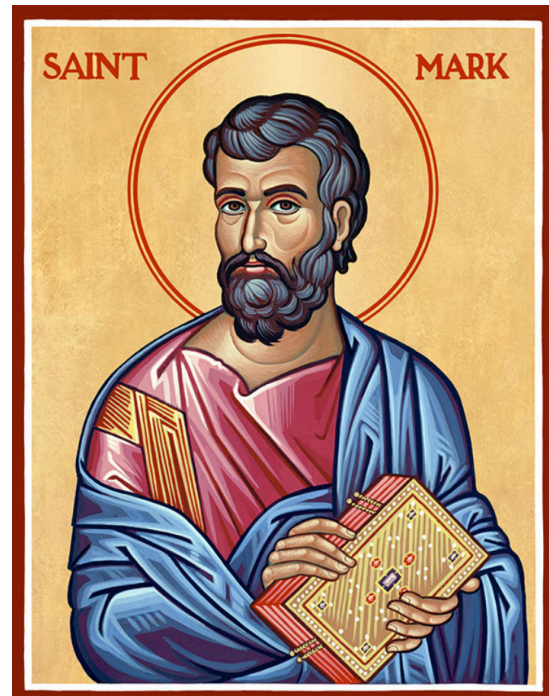
V. Rev. Raymond Martin Browne, *Rector*
(570) 906-1388 (cell)
stmarksorthodoxchurch@gmail.com

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

LAY LEADERSHIP

CHOIR DIRECTORS: Daria Cortése
Mat. Martha Moser
Sbn. 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.**

An Appeal from His Grace, Bp. ALEXEI of Sitka & Alaska

Christ is in our midst!

At the 2022 All-American Council, His Beatitude Metropolitan TIKHON graciously gave me the blessing to make a presentation on behalf of the good Orthodox native peoples of Alaska. I spoke at length about their heroic and often heart-breaking struggles to be faithful to the Orthodox faith in the face of physical and emotional abuse from heterodox missionaries and a government not supportive of their culture and “foreign” religion, our common Orthodox faith. I referred to the difficulties of the faithful remaining Orthodox in communities who not only have no priest to serve the liturgy or hear their confessions, but who also face pressures from protestant pastors who prey on our native peoples and disparage their faith. I also spoke about the conditions of my clergy whose salaries are \$26,000 below the poverty line for a family of four in Alaska. And about these conditions, I seek your help.

Through the generosity of your parish and your parishioners, we can begin to change this situation by your assistance in establishing the Alaskan Native Rural Clergy Stipend Endowment. By conservative estimates, we can provide our Alaskan rural priests with an additional \$80/month from the interest of a one-million-dollar endowment. That may not seem like a very large increase, but for a priest with a \$7,200/year stipend, it is a 13% increase, raising his stipend to \$8,160/year. This is more than tithe, a tithe that your parish can offer to America’s “poor Saints in Jerusalem,” to the land through which Orthodox sanctity first reached our shores.

If every parish and community in the Orthodox Church in America would pledge \$100/month for two years, we will be able to establish the Clergy Stipend Endowment. Alternatively, it can be established if each parish could simply locate twelve donors to offer a one-hundred-dollar donation once a year for two years. His Beatitude has already personally pledged \$10,000 a year to help this fund be established. In practical terms, this supplement will enable your parish to provide a warm coat for a child, a little more heating fuel for a warm home in below freezing weather, or just some store-bought food on the table. I was told that a Yupik parent told his child who expressed the desire to be a priest, “Son, you’ll be poor, your entire life. I don’t want to see you destitute.” Establishing this fund is a response, a clear response, that our Church strives to take care of her own.

I ask that you share this information with your parish and your parish council. If you have parishioners who desire to give alms for themselves or their loved ones, please share it with them as well. Please help these your brothers and these your sisters, living lives that would be hard for many of us to imagine. Their parishioners offer what they can, but most villagers are unemployed and struggle themselves with poverty. Help and they will be sincerely grateful. Help and their children will be grateful for milk on the table. Our Lord is asking your help in the persons of these priests and our Lord will bless you accordingly for helping Him feed and clothe those in need. May God bless you richly for your kindness and generosity to those in need. For your convenience, this is the link to our website: odosa.org/current-fund-raisers.

Gratefully Yours in Christ,

+ALEXEI
Bishop of Sitka and Alaska

