



Welcome!

Whether you're searching for a new church home or just visiting, we're glad you're with us today. If you have a prayer request, are looking for more information about the Orthodox Faith, would like to join our parish, or would like to speak with Fr Thomas, we invite you to fill out a visitor's card and drop it in the offering basket as your offering today.. We want to get to know you! God bless you!

This Week

Today – Christmas Eve

End of Liturgy – Memorial for the Departed
In memory of Barbara Naiser (✝ 2016)
***No Coffee Hour Today

8:00 pm – Vigil of the Nativity
Monday, December 25 – Nativity of our Lord
10:00 am – Festal Divine Liturgy

Tuesday, December 26 – Synaxis of the Theotokos
9:30 am – Divine Liturgy

Saturday, December 30
5:00 pm – Great Vespers

Sunday, December 31
10:00 am – Divine Liturgy
***No Adult Class or Church School

Please bring Leftover Cookies to Share

Monday, January 1 – Circumcision of XC/St Basil
9:30 am – Divine Liturgy

To our Visitors: Holy Communion is reserved for Orthodox Christians who prepare themselves by prayer and fasting. Non-Orthodox visitors are welcome to come forward to venerate the cross and receive the Antidoron (blessed bread) at the conclusion of the service.

Archpriest Thomas Soroka, *Rector*
Deacon Luke Loboda, *Attached*
Mat. Janet Mihalick, *Choir Director*

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA
OrthodoxPittsburgh.org
Dec 24, 2017

Announcements

➤ **We are in need of your** generous donations for Christmas flowers which adorn our temple. You may use the envelopes earmarked for Christmas flowers, or give your donation at the candle desk. Thank you and God bless you!

➤ Please make every effort to **attend the Divine Services which celebrate the Nativity of Christ.** This is the way in which Orthodox Christians celebrate the feast. Family gatherings, opening presents with family, Christmas dinner – all of these things are good and perfectly acceptable – but they are meaningless without acknowledging through worship the One Who Saves Us.

Let us be glad in the Lord, dearly-beloved, and rejoice with spiritual joy that there has dawned for us the day of ever-new redemption, of ancient preparation, of eternal bliss. For as the year rolls round, there recurs for us the commemoration of our salvation, which promised from the beginning, accomplished in the fullness of time will endure for ever; on which we are bound with hearts up-lifted to adore the divine mystery: so that what is the effect of God's great gift may be celebrated by the Church's great rejoicings. For God the almighty and merciful, Whose nature as goodness, Whose will is power, Whose work is mercy: as soon as the devil's malignity killed us by the poison of his hatred, foretold at the very beginning of the world the remedy His piety had prepared for the restoration of us mortals: proclaiming to the serpent that the seed of the woman should come to crush the lifting of his baneful head by its power, signifying no doubt that Christ would come in the flesh, God and man, Who born of a Virgin should by His uncorrupt birth condemn the despoiler of the human stock. Thus in the whole and perfect nature of true man was true God born, complete in what was His own, complete in what was ours. (*St Leo the Great*)

Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm: Known to be Hospitalized (none)**
Home: Jack Saban, Georgiann Robes, George Shaytar. *Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home:* Olga Bednar, Stephanie Kowal, John Shaytar, Olga Tryszyn, Mary Zapp.

Vigil Lights from Mat. Nancy K. Mell and Gregory Mell for the departed servant, Dn. Joseph Mell; for the health of family. **From Marsha Wasilko** for the health of the Wasilko family. **From Charles A. Wasilko** for the departed servant, (uncle) Joe Dichko. **From Doris Wasilko** for the departed servants from the Wasilko and Dyczko families; for the health of the Wasilko family. **From John & Nancy Pravlochak** for the health of our grandchildren. **From Mat. Joni Soroka** for the departed servants, (mother) Barbara (12/24/16) and (mother in law) Mat. Olga (12/31/07). **From Alexandria Tirpak** for the departed servant, Fr. John~Memory Eternal; for special intention. **From Donya Yewisiak** for the departed servants, Matushka Olga and Barbara Naiser; for the health of Reader Leonard. **From George & Nancy Shaytar** for the health of Mary Ann Lugin and the Shaytar family. **From John Kowalcheck & Olga Cozzi** for the health and salvation of our families; for the health of Anatoly & Galina Vilkov.

Thank You

➤ to our December bulletin donors: **Jim and Leslie Wokutch** given in blessed memory of Deacon Joseph Mell and Olga Mell.

➤ to our December donors! Holy Bread (\$50), Communion Wine (\$40) and Incense (\$10) from **Jim and Leslie Wokutch** in memory of Dn Joseph Mell and Olga Mell. Altar Candles (\$50) from **Donya Yewisiak** in memory of Matushka Olga Soroka

Vespers Gospel

(Luke 2:1-20) And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city.

Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger."



And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us." And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.

St Nicholas Church will strive to glorify God through Orthodox Christian worship, sincere love and care for one another, and service to those in need around us.

Hymns and Readings for Today

Troparion of the Resurrection Tone 4

When the women Disciples of the Lord learned from the Angel

the joyous message of the Resurrection, they cast away the ancestral curse and elatedly told the Apostles:

“Death is overthrown!

Christ God is risen, granting the world great mercy!”

Troparion of the Fathers Tone 2

Great are the accomplishments of faith, for the three Holy Youths rejoiced in the flames as though at the waters of rest; and the Prophet Daniel appeared a shepherd to the lions as though they were sheep. So by their prayers, O Christ God, save our souls!

Troparion of the Forefeast Tone 4

Mary was of David's seed, so she went with Joseph to register in Bethlehem. She bore in her womb the Fruit not sown by man. The time for the birth was at hand. Since there was no room at the inn, the cave became a beautiful palace for the Queen.// Christ is born, raising up the image that fell of old.

Kontakion of the Fathers Tone 1

Rejoice, O Bethlehem! Prepare thyself, O Ephratha!

The Lamb is on her way to give birth to the Chief Shepherd she carries in her womb.

The God-bearing Forefathers will rejoice, beholding Him, and with the shepherds, they will glorify the Virgin nursing Him.

Kontakion of the Forefeast Tone 3

Today the Virgin comes to the cave to give birth to the Eternal Word. Hear the glad tidings and rejoice, O universe! Glorify with the angels and the shepherds

the Eternal God, Who is willing to appear as a little child!

Prokeimenon of the Fathers Tone 4

Blessed art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Thy name forever

Epistle of the Sunday before the Nativity (Heb 11:9-19,17-23, 32-40)

By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called," concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.

By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff. By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones.

By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command.

And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented - of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth.

And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

Gospel of the Sunday before the Nativity (Mt 1:1-25)

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham:

Abraham begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot Judah and his brothers. Judah begot Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez begot Hezron, and Hezron begot Ram. Ram begot Amminadab, Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon. Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David the king.

David the king begot Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah. Solomon begot Rehoboam, Rehoboam begot Abijah, and Abijah begot Asa. Asa begot Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat begot Joram, and Joram begot Uzziah. Uzziah begot Jotham, Jotham begot Ahaz, and Ahaz begot Hezekiah. Hezekiah begot Manasseh, Manasseh begot Amon, and Amon begot Josiah. Josiah begot Jeconiah and his brothers about the time they were carried away to Babylon.

And after they were brought to Babylon, Jeconiah begot Shealtiel, and Shealtiel begot Zerubbabel. Zerubbabel begot Abiud, Abiud begot Eliakim, and Eliakim begot Azor. Azor begot Zadok, Zadok begot Achim, and Achim begot Eliud. Eliud begot Eleazar, Eleazar begot Matthan, and Matthan begot Jacob. And Jacob

begot Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ.

So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations, from David until the captivity in Babylon are fourteen generations, and from the captivity in Babylon until the Christ are fourteen generations.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.

Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins. So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel, which is translated, "God with us."

Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS.

Communion Hymn (Psalm 148)

Praise the Lord from the heavens! Praise Him in the highest! *Of the Forefathers:* Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous! Praise befits the just

Please consider giving a special year-end gift to our parish!