



## Welcome!

Whether you are searching for a new church home or just visiting, we are 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!

## Schedule This Week

### Sunday, December 10

10:00 am Divine Liturgy/Church School

### Tuesday, December 12

9:00 am Daily Matins

9:30 am to 12:00 pm Office Hours

### Wednesday, December 13

6:30 pm Daily Vespers

7:00 pm Bible Study

### Thursday, December 14

9:00 am Daily Matins

9:30 am to 12:00 pm Office Hours

### Saturday, December 16

4:30 pm Confessions

5:00 pm Great Vespers/Cathedral Vigil

### Sunday, December 17

10:00 am Divine Liturgy/Yolka

**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

Deacon John Skowron, Attached

Rdr James Wargo and Danielle Bartko, Choir Dirs

### Twenty-seventh Sunday after Pentecost

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA

OrthodoxPittsburgh.org

December 10, 2023

## Announcements

➤ Everyone is cordially invited to our **St Nicholas Day Dinner today** after the Divine Liturgy. Thank you to Tom Hoffman and Clayton Harris for organizing the cooking, to Marsha Wasilko and Leslie Wokutch for decorating the tables and to all those who assisted and will help today. God bless you!

➤ **Our annual Angel Tree drive almost complete!** If you've not had an opportunity to complete it online, **the list is also available today in print at the candle desk.** We have five children left. Would you please consider helping? Choose a child, purchase one or more new gifts that are suggested, and return it to the Church by next Sunday, December 17. Thank you! *The online list will be updated later this afternoon.*

➤ All women of the parish are invited to a **St Nick's Women Holiday Party** on Friday, December 15 at 6:00 pm (come anytime) at the home of Karlie Lewis in Fox Chapel. Contact Karlie for more info!

### Services for the Nativity of Christ

Friday, Dec 22 10:00 am Royal Hours

Saturday, Dec 23 5:00 pm Vigil

Sunday, Dec 24 10:00 am Divine Liturgy

Sunday, Dec 24 8:00 pm Festal Vigil

Monday, Dec 25 10:00 am Festal Liturgy

Tuesday, Dec 26 9:30 am Divine Liturgy

## Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm:** *Known to be hospitalized* Donya Yewisiak (*Beaver Hospital*); *Home:* John Mahalchak (son). *Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home:* Eleanor Kovacs, Natalie Popovich, Michael Soroka.  
➤ From **Mat. Nancy K. Mell & Gregory Mell** for the departed servants, Dn. Joseph Mell; for the health of family and Donya Yewisiak. From **Doris Wasilko** for the departed servant, Nicholas Hruch; for the health of Donya Yewisiak and Mat. Martha on her birthday-Many Years! From **Charles A. Wasilko** for the departed servant, Nicholas Hruch; for the health of Donya Yewisiak. From **Marsha Wasilko** for the departed servant, Nicholas Hruch; for the health of Donya Yewisiak. From **Mat. Joni Soroka** for the departed servant, mother, Barbara Naiser; for the health of father, John Naiser and Donya Yewisiak. From **Nancy Shaytar & George M. Shaytar** for the departed servant, George; for the health of Donya and Suzy. From **Richard & Sonia Blaha** for the newly departed servants, Olga, Sophia, and Carole; for the departed, parents, Pete, Dorothy, and brother, Robert; for the health of family, friends, siblings, serving soldiers, and newborn twins, Luca and Mila; for special intentions and peace. From **Irene Kulchock** for the health of Donya Yewisiak. From **Tatyana Sechler** for the departed servants, Polina, Galina, Slava, Luba, Bruce, Marina, Andrei, and Diana; for the health of Kristopher, Thomas, Tatyana, Daniel, Veronika, Nina, Roman, Olga, Andrey, Bernedette, and Stephen. From **John Mahalchak family** for the health of friends & family, John, Cheryl, Gregory, Cindy, Daniel, and Mary.

## Thank You

➤ to our **December donors:** **Jan Widell** (Bulletin \$60) in memory of departed members of the Puskar and Morris families; **Donya Yewisiak** (Holy Bread \$50) in memory of Matushka Olga Soroka; **Mat. Joni Soroka** (Altar Candles \$50) in memory of Barbara Naiser; **Lindy Hamilton** (Communion Wine \$40) in memory of twin brother, Russell Hamilton; **John Mahalchak Family** (Incense \$10) for friends and family.

**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.**

## Prepare!

**Prepare O Bethlehem, for Eden has been opened to all!** Step out of the normal routines of life, and to prepare ourselves. The Garden of Eden, that spiritual paradise that all of mankind had in the beginning, is about to be opened back up to us!

**“Adorn yourself O Ephratha”** Ephratha was the ancient name for the city of Bethlehem, which in Hebrew means “Fruitful”. It is a reminder for us that as a part of our preparation for the Nativity, we need to bear fruits of virtue in our life.

**“...for the tree of life blossoms forth from the Virgin in the cave!”** The Church shows honor here to our Mother, the blessed Virgin Theotokos, the woman who God waited thousands of years from the creation to find a suitable place to enter into the world.

**“Her womb is a spiritual paradise planted with the Divine Fruit: For if we eat of it, we shall live forever and not die like Adam.”** We are reminded of how through mankind's sin, death entered into the world. We went from paradise and walking with God Himself, to centuries of walking in the opposite direction.

**“Christ comes to restore the image which He made in the beginning.”** We are called as human beings to something greater...a greater life and existence than the one that we are living in right now. We are reminded that we don't have to wait in order to experience it! That life is available to us right now. Our Lord has literally opened up the door for us to restore the icon of God that is planted within our hearts, that we continually cover up with the dirt of our sins and human weaknesses. The door is open. The narrow path is laid out in front of us. This Nativity Season offers us the chance to once again guide our footsteps towards new life. Celebrate it! That life is available to us right now. (*Fr Gabriel Bilas*)

# Hymns and Readings for Sunday, December 10

## **Tone 2 Troparion** (Resurrection)

When Thou didst descend to death, O Life immortal,  
Thou didst slay hell with the splendor of Thy Godhead.  
And when from the depths Thou didst raise the dead,  
all the powers of heaven cried out://  
“O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory to Thee!”

## **Tone 4 Troparion** (St Nicholas)

You appeared to your flock as a rule of faith,  
an image of humility, and a teacher of abstinence.  
Because of your lowliness heaven was opened to you!  
Because of your poverty riches were granted to you!  
O holy Bishop Nicholas,  
pray to Christ our God to save our souls.

## **Tone 8 Troparion** (Martyrs)

Having slain the fiery ragings and fierce movements of the passions through their ascetic labors,  
the Martyrs of Christ, Menas, Hermogenes, and Eugraphus,  
received grace to dispel the afflictions of the infirm and to work wonders both while alive and after death.  
It is a truly great wonder that naked bones pour forth healing.//  
Glory to our only God and Creator!

## **Tone 2 Kontakion** (Resurrection)

Hell became afraid, O almighty Savior,  
seeing the miracle of Thy Resurrection from the tomb!  
The dead arose! Creation, with Adam, beheld this and rejoiced with Thee,//  
and the world, my Savior, praises Thee forever.

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

## **Tone 1 Kontakion** (Martyrs)

Let us sing praise in honor of the glorious Menas,  
and of his companions, the holy Hermogenes and Eugraphus.  
For they have honored the Lord and fought for His glory.  
They are worthy of numbering with the Angels in heaven,//  
and are bountiful in their miracles.

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

## **Tone 6 Kontakion of the Theotokos**

Steadfast protectress of Christians,  
constant advocate before the Creator,  
do not despise the cry of us sinners,  
but in your goodness come speedily to help us who call on you in faith.  
Hasten to hear our intercessions and to intercede for us, O Theotokos  
For you always protect those who honor you.

## **Tone 2 Prokeimenon** (Resurrection)

The Lord is my strength and my song; / He has become my salvation. (Ps. 117:14)

## **Epistle of the Sunday** (Ephesians 6:10-17)

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;

## **Gospel of the Sunday** (Luke 17:12-19)

Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. And they lifted up their voices and said, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!”

So when He saw them, He said to them, “Go, show yourselves to the priests.” And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed.

And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan.

So Jesus answered and said, “Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?” And He said to him, “Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well.”

## **Communion Hymn**

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! (Ps. 148:1) Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

# On the Nativity

What shall I say to you; what shall I tell you? I behold a Mother who has brought forth; I see a Child come to this light by birth. The manner of His conception I cannot comprehend.

Nature here rested, while the Will of God labored. O ineffable grace! The Only Begotten,

Who is before all ages, Who cannot be touched or be perceived, Who is simple, without body, has now put on my body, that is visible and liable to corruption. For what reason? That coming amongst us he may teach us, and teaching, lead us by the hand to the things that men cannot see. For since men believe that the eyes are more trustworthy than the ears, they doubt of that which they do not see, and so He has deigned to show Himself in bodily presence, that He may remove all doubt.

Christ, finding the holy body and soul of the Virgin, builds for Himself a living temple, and as He had willed, formed there a man from the Virgin; and, putting Him on, this day came forth; unashamed of the lowliness of our nature.

For it was to Him no lowering to put on what He Himself had made. Let that handiwork be forever glorified, which became the cloak of its own Creator. For as in the first creation of flesh, man could not be made before the clay had come into His hand, so neither could this corruptible body be glorified, until it had first become the garment of its Maker.

What shall I say! And how shall I describe this Birth to you? For this wonder fills me with astonishment. The Ancient of days has become an infant. He Who sits upon the sublime and heavenly Throne, now lies in a manger. And He Who cannot be touched, Who is simple, without complexity, and incorporeal, now lies subject to the hands of men. He Who has broken the bonds of sinners, is now bound by an infants bands. But He has decreed that ignominy shall become honor, infamy be clothed with glory, and total humiliation the measure of His Goodness.

For this He assumed my body, that I may become capable of His Word; taking my flesh, He gives me His spirit; and so He bestowing and I receiving, He prepares for me the treasure of Life. He takes my flesh, to sanctify me; He gives me His Spirit that He may save me. (*Chrysostom*)