

Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm:** *Known to be hospitalized (none); Home:* Bob Brewster, John Mahalchak (son). Nancy Shaytar, Natalie Tooeh, William Warnak. *Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home:* Natalie Popovich, Michael Soroka.

➤ **Vigil Lights** From **Mat. Nancy K. Mell & Gregory Mell** for the departed servant, Dn. Joseph Mell; for the health of family. From **Doris Wasilko** for the departed servant, grandmother, Susan Wasilko; for the health of the Wasilko family. From **Marsha Wasilko** for the departed servants, parents, Charles & Mary and grandmother, Susan Wasilko (1-15-1980). From **Charles A. Wasilko** for the departed servant, Baba-Susan Wasilko. From **Mat. Joni Soroka** for her departed father, John (40 day); for the health of Fr. Tom, Melanie, Jackie, and Natalie. From **John Mahalchak Family** for the health of friends and family, John, Cheryl, John, Daniel, Mary, Gregory and Cindy. From **John & Olga** for the health of Galina Vilko; for the protection of Daniel and Adam in their travels. From **Nancy Shaytar** for the health of Fr Thomas Soroka, Barbara Float, Michael Soroka, and Bob Brewster, and for special intentions; For departed servants, husband George, mother Sophia Kraynak, John Shaytar, and James Shaytar.

➤ **The monthly donation sheet** for 2025 is available at the candle desk. Please note that the monthly donation for bulletins has been reduced to \$30 since we have discontinued the Vestal color covers.

"Let us remember one another in concord and unanimity. Let us on both sides always pray for one another." (St Cyprian of Carthage 3c.)

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.

This Week in Church School

Today's lesson: Hannah and Samuel

Scripture reference: I Samuel 1-4

Questions to ask/review:

- Who was Hannah? What did she pray for?
- What did she promise the Lord? How did she fulfill her promise?
- How is Hannah's story similar and different to the recent feast of the Meeting of Our Lord in the Temple?
- How did God speak to Samuel as a boy? How does He speak to us?
- Did Samuel know immediately that it was the Lord speaking? How did he learn this?
- What did the Lord tell Samuel? Did he want to tell Eli?
- How do you suppose Eli felt receiving such a prophecy? How was the prophecy fulfilled?
- Who were the Israelites fighting? What happened to Eli's sons? Why? To the Ark?
- Who took Eli's place as priest and judge?

Suggested Activities at home:

- Have a family "sleepover" where the family sleeps in the same room. Children can sleep on a mat like Samuel.

Prayer: Lord, let us hear Your voice in the quiet times, as did Samuel.

According to the Church Fathers, "spiritual blindness" refers to a state where individuals are unable to perceive spiritual truths due to a hardened heart and lack of faith, often described as being "darkened in their understanding" and unable to see the light of God, with prominent figures like Augustine highlighting the concept through biblical stories like the healing of the blind man, where physical blindness symbolizes spiritual blindness that can only be cured by Christ.



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 use the QR Code as your offering today. Please join us downstairs following the service. We want to get to know you! God bless you!



This Week

Sunday, January 19

10:00 am Divine Liturgy / Church School

Tuesday, January 21

9:00 am Daily Matins

9:30 am to 12:00 pm Office Hours

Wednesday, January 22

6:30 pm Daily Vespers

7:00 pm Bible Study

Thursday, January 23

9:00 am Daily Matins

9:30 am to 12:00 pm Office Hours

Saturday, January 25

3:30 pm Exploring Orthodoxy

4:30 pm Confessions

5:00 pm Parish Vigil

Sunday, January 26

10:00 am Divine Liturgy / Church School

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

Thirtieth Sunday After Pentecost

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA

OrthodoxPittsburgh.org

January 19, 2025

Announcements

➤ Matushka Suzanne Senyo fell asleep in the Lord yesterday afternoon after a ten-year battle with cancer. Funeral arrangements have not yet been announced. She and Fr Michael were attending our parish for about a year beginning in 2019. May her memory be eternal!

➤ This week we will be introducing all parishioners to **our new online giving portal, ChurchTrac**. We are encouraging everyone to consider moving to this secure and easy method of financially supporting our parish. The amount of bookkeeping time has increased greatly with the number of parishioners. Handling cash and checks is fraught with security and accuracy issues. Online giving reduces bookkeeping time and gives everyone an instant status of their giving at any time. However, those who wish to maintain giving via envelopes will be provided with envelopes for home and at church. Complete information will be provided this week. Please see Kristie Mertz if you have questions or for more information.

➤ **2025 Calendars** are available in the vestibule. Thank you to Szal Funeral Home of McKees Rocks for their continued support.

➤ The **Annual Parish Meeting** will be held on Sunday, January 26. Only members in good standing may participate.



Hymns and Readings for Sunday, January 19

Tone 5 Troparion (Resurrection)

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word,
co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit,
born for our salvation from the Virgin;
for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the
flesh,
to endure death,
and to raise the dead//
by His glorious Resurrection.

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 1 Troparion (Ven. Macarius)

O dweller of the wilderness and angel in the
body,
thou wast a wonderworker, O our God-bearing
Father Macarius.
Thou didst receive heavenly gifts through
fasting, vigil, and prayer,
healing the sick and the souls of those drawn to
thee by faith.
Glory to Him Who gave thee strength!
Glory to Him Who granted thee a ^crown!//
Glory to Him Who grants healing to all!

Tone 5 Kontakion (Resurrection)

Thou didst descend into hell, O my Savior,
shattering its gates as Almighty,
resurrecting the dead as Creator,
and destroying the sting of death.
Thou hast delivered Adam from the curse, O
Lover of man,//

and we cry to Thee: “O Lord, save us!”

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

Tone 4 Kontakion (Ven. Macarius)

The Lord truly placed thee in the house of
abstinence,
as a star enlightening the ends of the earth,//
Venerable Macarius, Father of Fathers.

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Tone 6 Kontakion (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 5 Prokeimenon (Resurrection)

Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us / and preserve us
from this generation forever. (Ps. 11:7)

Epistle Colossians 3:12-16 (Sunday)

Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved,
put on tender mercies, kindness, humility,
meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one
another, and forgiving one another, if anyone
has a complaint against another; even as Christ
forgave you, so you also must do. But above all
these things put on love, which is the bond of
perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your
hearts, to which also you were called in one
body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ
dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and
admonishing one another in psalms and hymns
and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your
hearts to the Lord.

Gospel Luke 18:35-43 (Sunday)

Then it happened, as He was coming near
Jericho, that a certain blind man sat by the road
begging. And hearing a multitude passing by, he
asked what it meant. So they told him that Jesus
of Nazareth was passing by. And he cried out,
saying, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”

Then those who went before warned him that he
should be quiet; but he cried out all the more,
“Son of David, have mercy on me!”

So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be
brought to Him. And when he had come near, He
asked him, saying, “What do you want Me to do
for you?”

He said, “Lord, that I may receive my sight.”

Then Jesus said to him, “Receive your sight;
your faith has made you well.” And immediately
he received his sight, and followed Him,
glorifying God. And all the people, when they
saw it, gave praise to God.

Communion Hymn

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

What makes persons to be truly human
and gives them their specific value, are
not their physical or intellectual
capacities, but the grace of having a share in the
resurrection of Christ, of being able, from now on,
to live and to die eternal life.

"He who loves his life will lose it, but he who hates
his life in this world will keep it unto life eternal"
(John 12:25).

True Christians, with the total gift of themselves to
God, treasure this one unique truth. They live this
one unique joy. He who loses his life in this world,
will save it. The life of a Christian, therefore, is a
losing and a finding.

Orthodox Christians are persons raised up, sharing
in the resurrection of Christ. Their mission is not
to affect something by their thoughts or to
organize something by their own capacities, but by
their lives to bear witness to the conquest of death.
And they do this only by burying themselves like a
grain of wheat in the earth.

"Truly, truly I say to you, unless a grain of wheat
falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but
if it dies, it bears much fruit. He who loves his life
loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will
keep it for eternal life" (John 12:24).

The true Christian is one who has been raised from
the dead, an image of the risen Christ. He or she
shows that the immaterial is not necessarily
spiritual, and that the body is not necessarily
fleshly. By “spiritual” is meant everything that has
been sanctified by the mystery of the Cross and
Resurrection of Christ, whether material or
immaterial; that is, everything which has been
transfigured by God’s uncreated divine energies
through Christ and the Holy Spirit.

The true Christian reveals the spiritual mission of
what is created and bodily. At the same time she
or he reveals the tangible, concrete existence of
what is uncreated and immaterial. The true
Christian is a person who is totally wedded to this
mystery. He or she has the sacred task of
celebrating, in the midst of the Orthodox Church,
the salvation of all created things.

The true Christians’ purpose in life is not to
achieve their individual progress or integration.
Their purpose is to serve the whole mystery of
salvation, by living not for themselves, but for Him
who died and rose again for us, and thereby living
for all of their brothers and sisters, and the whole
of humanity.

This becomes possible because the true Christian
does not live according to his or her own will, but
according to the universal, catholic will and
tradition of Christ’s holy Church. (Archimandrite
Vasileios, retired Abbot of Iviron Monastery)