



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 after the Divine Liturgy

Church School after Divine Liturgy
Trisagion for the departed in memory of
Archpriest Michael Mihalick

Wednesday, December 12

6:30 pm Vespers
7:00 pm Bible Study on **Evangelism in Acts**
Special Guest, **Fr John Parker**
Dean of St Tikhon's Seminary

Saturday, December 15

10:00 am to 1:00 pm Pan-Orthodox Choir
5:00pm Vespers and Cathedral Vigil

Sunday, December 16

9:00 am Adult Christian Education
9:30 am Yolka Practice for Church School
10:00 am Divine Liturgy
St Nicholas Day Dinner – **FREE FOR ALL**

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*

28th Sunday after Pentecost/Conception of the Theotokos

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA
OrthodoxPittsburgh.org
December 9, 2018

Announcements

➤ Next Sunday, **His Eminence, Archbishop Melchisedek** will lead us in the Divine Liturgy. After the Liturgy, we will gather for our annual St Nicholas Day Dinner. Due the generosity of the St Nicholas Sisterhood, **there is NO CHARGE for the dinner and everyone is strongly encouraged to attend** so that we can be together on this special day. Additionally our Church School will have a short "Yolka" (Christmas program) as we approach the Nativity Feast.

➤ **Icon Project Donations:** As work completes on this phase we are asking **everyone to participate financially in the continued iconographic work** in our temple. There are two ways you can participate and help to defray the costs of our incredible new icons:

- **Sponsor one of the new icons.** We are in need of donors for the following iconographic work:
 - **Holy Mandylion (Image of Christ "Made without Hands" and two angels \$2,000**
- **We are asking EVERY HOUSEHOLD** to consider donating \$100 (or whatever you are able, less or more) as a special year-end gift. Consider giving any special year-end gift beyond your regular donation to the icons.

➤ **All Angel Tree gifts are due today** to Donya Yewisiak. Thank you for your generosity in helping local families celebrate Christmas.

➤ This Wednesday, we will have as our special guest, **Fr John Parker, Dean of St Tikhon's Seminary in Eastern PA**, at our bible study for an open discussion on **Evangelization in Light of the Book of Acts**. Everyone is encouraged to come and meet this dynamic leader and missionary priest.

Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm:** *Known to be Hospitalized; (None). Home:* Georgiann Robes. *Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home:* Olga Bednar, Garnette Kerchum, Olga Tryszyn, Mary Zapp.

➤ **From Mat. Nancy K. Mell and Gregory Mell** for the departed servant, Dn. Joseph Mell; for the health of family. **From Charles A. Wasilko** for the health of (sisters) Doris & Marsha and Larry Polny. **From John & Olga** for the health of Anatoly & Galina Vilkov and Elizabeth Kowalcheck on her birthday & for her new son, Dmitri. **From Marsha Wasilko** for the health of the Wasilko family. **From Doris Wasilko** for the departed servants of the Wasilko and Dyczko families; for the health of the Wasilko family. **From Lindy Hamilton** for the health of Elaine Hamilton. **From Irina** for the departed servants, Olga and Anna; for the health of William, Marina, Artur, Andrei, Alex, Elena and Aleksei. **From Mat. Joni Soroka** for the departed servant, (mother) Barbara; for the health of (father) John. **From Mary Hoffman** for the departed servants, Dn. Dennis & Mat. Helen and Elsie; for the health of Marianne. **From Dawna Petkash Beckett** for the health of Robert Larnish & Michael Petkash.



Thank you

➤ to **Jan and Chuck Widell** for donating the December monthly Bulletin (\$60) in memory of the departed members of the Puskar and Morris families; to **Alex and Olga Noskov** for Holy Bread (\$50) in commemoration of their 25th wedding anniversary; to Donya Yewisiak for Altar Candles (\$50), and to **Fr Thomas and Mat Joni Soroka** for Incense (\$10) in memory of our departed mothers.

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.

Unexpected Joy

The "Unexpected Joy" Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos is painted in this way: in a room is an icon of the Mother of God, and beneath it a youth is kneeling at prayer. The tradition about the healing of some youth from a bodily affliction through this holy icon is recorded in the book of Saint Demetrius of Rostov, The Fleece of Prayer [See Judges 6: 36-40].



The sinful youth, who was nevertheless devoted to the Theotokos, was praying one day before the icon of the All-Pure Virgin before going out to commit a sin. Suddenly, he saw that wounds appeared on the Lord's hands, feet, and side, and blood flowed from them. In horror he exclaimed, "O Lady, who has done this?" The Mother of God replied, "You and other sinners, because of your sins, crucify My Son anew." Only then did he realize how great was the depth of his sinfulness. For a long time he prayed with tears to the All-Pure Mother of God and the Savior for mercy. Finally, he received the unexpected joy of the forgiveness of his sins.

Nativity Fast

We're encouraged to do the following things with God's help and through our effort:

- Eat less and give that money to the poor.
- Increase our prayer, scripture reading, silence and church attendance.
- Make a sincere confession and receive communion as often as possible.
- Fast from meat, (fish with backbones on weekdays), dairy, olive oil and wine (fish with backbones, wine, and olive oil are permitted every Saturday and Sunday)

Hymns and Readings for Today

Dec 9, 2018

Troparion of the Resurrection Tone 3

Let the heavens rejoice!
Let the earth be glad!
For the Lord has shown strength with His arm!
He has trampled down death by death!
He has become the first born of the dead!
He has delivered us from the depths of hell,
and has granted to the world great mercy.

Troparion of St Nicholas Tone 4

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.

Troparion Conception of the Theotokos Tone 4

Today the bonds of barrenness are broken:
God has heard the prayers of Joachim and Anna.
He has promised them beyond all their hopes to
bear the Maiden of God,
by whom the Uncircumscribed One was born as a
mortal Man;
He commanded an angel to cry to her:
"Rejoice, thou who art full of grace, //
the Lord is with thee!"

Kontakion of the Resurrection Tone 2

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, O my Savior, praises Thee forever!

Kontakion Conception of the Theotokos Tone 4

Today the universe rejoices,
for Anna has conceived the Theotokos through
God's dispensation, //
for she has brought forth the one who is to bear the
ineffable Word.

Prokeimenon (Psalm 118) Tone 3

Sing praises to our God, sing praises! Sing praises
to our King, sing praises!

Epistle of the Sunday (Colosians 1:12-18)

...giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us
to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in
the light. He has delivered us from the power of
darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the
Son of His love, in whom we have redemption
through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn
over all creation. For by Him all things were created
that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and
invisible, whether thrones or dominions or
principalities or powers. All things were created
through Him and for Him. And He is before all
things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the
head of the body, the church, who is the beginning,
the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He
may have the preeminence.

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."

Saint Anna (from Hebrew Hannah, meaning "favor" or "grace") of David's house and line, was the mother of the Virgin Mary and grandmother of Jesus Christ according to Christian Tradition. Mary's mother is not named in the canonical gospels, but according to the Gospel of James, an apocryphal document of the New Testament era, St Anna and her husband St Joachim, after years of childlessness, were visited by an angel who told them that they would conceive a child. St Anna promised to dedicate the child to God's service. St Joachim and St Anna are believed to have given Mary to the service of the Second Temple when the girl was three years old. The story bears a superficial similarity to that of the birth of Samuel, whose mother Hannah had also been childless.

St Joachim was St Anna's only husband. Ancient belief, attested to by a sermon of St John Damascene, was that St Anna married once. Mary, Mother of God, Mary of Clopas, and Mary Salomae, were first cousins. The sister of Saint St Anna was Sobe (Sovin) who was the mother of St Elizabeth.

*And suddenly there was with the
Angel a multitude of the heavenly
Hosts praising and saying: Glory to God!*



HOSTS SING ALLELUIA

PAN-ORTHODOX CHOIRS IN PERFORMANCE

11TH ANNUAL NATIVITY CONCERT

Come let us adore Him!

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2018 – 6:30 PM

Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church

123 Gilkeson Road (Across from the Galleria)

Mt. Lebanon (Pittsburgh), Pennsylvania 15228

Audience Communal Singing during concert

Free-will offering to support the work of FOCUS Pittsburgh

An Urban Center of FOCUS NA

