



Welcome to St. Michael's Orthodox Church

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

1182 Ashland Street, Greensburg, PA 15601

www.stmichaelsgreensburgpa.org

Rev. Fr. David Hyatt, Pastor

Sunday, January 5, 2025

Office Hours:

Tuesday – 9am – 12pm

Thursday – 9am – 4pm

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Fr. David Hyatt – Cell Phone:

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Fr. David Hyatt:

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This Week

Sunday, January 5th

8:45 AM – Orthros

10:00 AM – Divine Liturgy

11:15 AM – Church School

11:30 AM – Indoor Blessing of the Waters

1:00 PM – Baptism/Chrismation Service

Monday, January 6th

Feast of the Theophany of Christ

Postponed – Outdoor Blessing of Water

(Twin Lakes Park)

Wednesday, January 8th

6:00 PM – Vespers

(Confession Follows)

Saturday, January 11th

4:30 PM – Catechism Class

6:00 PM – Great Vespers

(Confession Follows)

Sunday, January 12th

8:45 AM – Orthros

10:00 AM – Divine Liturgy

11:15 AM – Church School

12:00 PM – Adult Choir Practice

12:00 PM – Inquirer's Class

Divine Liturgy Variables on Monday, January 6, 2025

Feast of Theophany transferred to Sunday, January 5th

The Theophany of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ

APOLYTIKION OF THE THEOPHANY OF CHRIST IN TONE ONE

When Thou, O Lord, wast baptized in the Jordan, worship of the Trinity wast made manifest; for the voice of the Father bore witness to Thee, calling Thee His beloved Son. And the Spirit in the likeness of a dove confirmed the truth of His word. O Christ our God, Who hast appeared and enlightened the world, glory to Thee.

KONTAKION OF THE THEOPHANY OF CHRIST IN TONE FOUR

On this day Thou hast appeared * unto the whole world, * and Thy light, O Sovereign Lord, * is signed on us who sing Thy praise * and chant with knowledge: Thou hast now come, * Thou hast appeared, O Thou Light unapproachable.

THE ANTI-TRISAGION HYMN (Sung in place of "Holy God")

As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Alleluia. (thrice)

ST. BASIL LITURGY MEGALYNARION

All creation rejoiceth in thee, O thou who art full of grace: the angelic hosts and the race of men. O hallowed temple and spiritual paradise, glory of virgins, of whom God was incarnate and became a little child, even our God who is before all the ages; for he made thy womb a throne, and thy body more spacious than the heavens. All creation rejoiceth in thee, O thou who art full of grace. Glory to thee.

KOINONIKON (COMMUNION HYMN) OF THEOPHANY IN TONE 8

The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men. Alleluia.

MEGALYNARION OF THE THEOPHANY OF CHRIST IN TONE TWO

Magnify, O my soul, her who is more honorable and more exalted in glory than the heavenly hosts. Verily, all tongues are at a loss to praise thee properly; and every mind, even though transcending the world, is distracted in thy praise, O Theotokos. But because thou art good, accept our faith, having known our divine longing. Wherefore, since thou art the helper of Christians, we do magnify thee.

EPISTLE — Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7

My son Titus, the grace of God has appeared for the salvation of all men, training us to renounce irreligion and worldly passions, and to live sober, upright, and godly lives in this world; awaiting our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, Who gave Himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity and to purify for Himself a

Live-Streaming Services

Holy Transfiguration Monastery

Ellwood City, PA

Holy Cross Monastery

Wayne, WV

St. Tikhon's Monastery

Waymart, PA

Serving Schedule

Jr. Altar Boys

01/05 – Breccan Daniels

01/12 – Noor Sahawneh

Fellowship – Clean Up Crew

01/05 – Still Needed

01/12 – Mark & Kathy Bleibtrey

Lock Up

01/05 – Caroline Hill

Fellowship Hour Clean Up

The **Signup Sheet** is on the bulletin board outside of the kitchen. The cleanup guide and supplies are provided for your use, and Raymounda Chaho will provide guidance as needed.

Thank You from the Hyatts

What a joy it was to journey through the Nativity Fast and then celebrate the Birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, with our St. Michael's parish family. We were very blessed by your most kind and generous cards and gifts. As we enter this new year together, we pray that God will continue to bless St. Michael's with much spiritual fruit.

Fr. David, Kh. BethAnn & Sons

Baptism/Chrismation Service All are invited!

The baptism/chrismation service for eight catechumens who will be received into the Orthodox Church will occur Sunday afternoon. ALL are invited to attend the celebration of the sacraments of holy baptism and chrismation

Many years to Giuliana Reda

(Daughter of Anthony & Ruba Reda, and Granddaughter of Jihad & Georgette Nicola) who was received Holy Baptism & Chrismation on Saturday, January 4th.

people of His own who are zealous for good deeds. When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of deeds done by us in righteousness, but in virtue of His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit, which He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that we might be justified by His grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life.

THE GOSPEL – Matthew 3:13-17

At that time, Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented Him, saying, "I need to be baptized by Thee, and Thou dost come to me?" But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now; for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. And when Jesus was baptized, He went up immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and alighting on Him; and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, with Whom I am well pleased."



Theophany Home Blessings

A **sign-up sheet** is available in the **window by the church office** to have your home blessed by Fr. David during the Theophany season.

During the days following the Feast of the Theophany (January 6th), it is customary for the Priest to visit the homes of his parishioners, bringing with him the "Jordan Water" for the traditional Theophany House Blessing. All who reside in the household should make every effort to be present for the Blessing.

In anticipation of the arrival of the Priest to the house, the lampada, hand-censer and incense in the family's icon corner should be prepared. (If there is no icon corner, a small table should be placed on the eastern wall of the main room of the dwelling; the table, covered with a white cloth, should be set with one or more icons standing upright, a candle in a candlestand, a hand-censer and incense). A small bowl along with several sprigs of evergreen bound together with a ribbon should also be placed in the icon corner (or on the table), along with a clearly printed list of the Baptismal names of the members of the household.

Upon the arrival of the Priest, he is to be greeted by all of the family members, each of whom asks the Priest's blessing and reverences his right hand. Then a family member lights the lampada (or candle) and hand-censer and turns off all televisions, radios, etc. in the home. Lights should be turned on in all the rooms of the house that are to be blessed. Then the entire family gathers with the Priest before the icon corner (or table) to begin the Theophany House Blessing.

The Priest, vested in cassock and exorasson and facing the icons, blesses and dons his epitrachelion saying the usual vesting prayer. He then places incense upon the lighted charcoal in the hand-censer and blesses it saying the usual prayer. He then places his hand-cross at the icon corner (or on the table) and, after pouring "Jordan Water" into the bowl provided by the family, he blesses himself while intoning the service.

Prayers of Oblation

...for the health of Samar Khalil by her husband, Karim Khalil
...in memory of Diana Roberts and Irene Papas by Dina Papas

Intercessory Prayer List (Orthodox & Non-Orthodox)

Please pray for the following people this week. ***Names will remain on the list for 2 weeks.*** Please send an email to Fr. David to add a name for prayer or write your request down on a piece of paper and put it in the offering plate. Please include your name in case there is a need for clarification. Thank you.

MAT. SOPHIE Daniels recovering from stress fractures in her spine.

The VICTIMS and FAMILIES of those killed and injured in New Orleans and Las Vegas in the terroristic attacks.

All those suffering with illness and disease, both acute and chronic.

All those affected by events in Syria, Lebanon, Ukraine, Russia, and throughout the world.

CATECHUMENS at St. Michael: BOB Gunther, DAVE Bartholomew, STACIE Bartholomew, RYAN Bartholomew, VICTORIA Gray, MAT Hahey, PAMELA Johnson, GARRETT Kalinowski, NICHOLAS Lehman, BRANDON Miele, DEBBIE Paulus, DOUG Gilliland, ROSCO (ROBERT) Ross.

Inquirer's Class

Join us the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month for our Inquirer's Class, Journey to Fullness. We meet in the multi-purpose classroom at the end of the education hallway.

New Year's Eve Party Thank You

Thank You to all who helped to host the New Year's Eve party at St. Michael's, and all who attended. We had around 40 adults and 11 children! A good time was had by all as we welcomed in 2025.

Sincerely,
Raymounda Chaho



Registration for Antiochian Village Camp opens today, January 5th @ 5pm!
<https://avcamp.org/programs/summer-camp/>



St. Michael's Bookstore

Shop at the Bookstore for your House Blessing supplies: incensors, incense, incense boxes and spoons, beeswax votives, charcoal, and icons.

Also, available are many children's books to help children learn what the season means. May your Theophany season be blessed!

Holy Theophany: The Baptism of Jesus and the Blessing of the Waters

Today, January 6, Orthodox Christians celebrate another of the Twelve Great Feasts of the Christian Church -- the Theophany, or, as it is also called, the Epiphany. It is the day that Jesus is baptized in the River Jordan by the holy prophet and "forerunner" John, the day that Jesus of Nazareth, stepson of the aging carpenter Joseph, is revealed also to be the Christ, the Son of the eternal God.

That's pretty big talk, admittedly. Still, it is a vision that we are pleased to affirm, and (here's one additional mystery) it is something that by thus affirming we gradually come to behold. As with many beauties, this is apprehended only by those who are willing to see.

Early on, both the Nativity of Christ and the Theophany were celebrated on this same day, Jan. 6, but in the 4th Century the feasts were separated and the Christmas celebration was moved to December 25th, a day on which the pagans -- as Metropolitan Hierotheos has written -- "celebrated the sun god, and the Christians the Sun of Righteousness," the Light of the world.

Historically, the Forerunner John -- that famous wild man who lived on nuts and wild honey, and dressed in camel hair -- was in the habit of calling errant Jews to repentance, and a good many of them were pleased to receive his words. He also baptized them, as a performance of the new birth and new life to which they were committing themselves. While he was going about it, this same John was also in the habit of quoting Scripture, in particular the following passage from the Prophet Isaiah:

The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make His paths straight. Every valley shall be filled and every mountain and hill brought low; the crooked places shall be made straight and the rough ways smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'

The four Evangelists' accounts of the event are found in Matthew 3:13-17, Mark 1:9-11, Luke 3:21-22, and John 1:32-34, and each of their stories goes pretty much like this passage according to Saint Matthew:

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. And John tried to prevent Him, saying, 'I need to be baptized by You, and...'

(Continue on next page)

You are coming to me?' But Jesus answered and said to him, 'Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.' Then John allowed Him. This is when the story becomes very, very good. And, in case you had wondered, this is where our larger story also bears, for Orthodox Christians, both the revelation of Jesus as the Christ and the implication of the mystery at the center of our specifically Trinitarian Faith, alluding as it does to One God in Three Persons.

When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on Him. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying 'This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased.'

The troparion sung during our celebration of the feast indicates how we have come to appreciate this curious phenomenon:

*When You, O Lord were baptized in the Jordan
The worship of the Trinity was made manifest,
For the voice of the Father bore witness to You
And called You His beloved Son,
While the Spirit, in the form of a dove,
Confirmed the truthfulness of His word.
O Christ, our God, You have revealed Yourself
And have enlightened the world, glory to You!*

Perhaps of increased importance, as well -- and surely of some interest even to those who do not share our faith -- this is the Great Feast when our minds are most directed to the sanctification of the earth itself, and to the healing, the recovery of the stuff of our creation. This is when we celebrate what we call "The Great Blessing of the Waters."

Following further prophetic readings from Isaiah and the accounts of the Gospels, our priest plunges the holy cross into a basin of water, three times, each time entreating the Lord -- who blessed the waters of the Jordan by entering into it -- to hear our prayer:

Incline your ear and hear us, Lord, who accepted to be baptized in Jordan and to sanctify the waters, and bless us all, who signify our calling as servants by the bending of our necks. And count us worthy to be filled with your sanctification through the partaking and sprinkling of this water. And let it be for us, Lord, for healing of soul and body. For you are the sanctification of our souls and bodies, and to you we give glory, thanksgiving and worship, with your Father who is without beginning, and your All-holy, good and life-giving Spirit, now and forever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

We repeat, at this time, the troparion above, and follow that hymn with this brief, but rich kontakion.

Today You have shown forth to the world, O Lord, and the light of Your countenance has been marked on us. Knowing You, we sing Your praises. You have come and revealed Yourself, O unapproachable Light.

I am often asked what it is that distinguishes early Eastern Christianity -- that is, Orthodoxy -- from most other expressions of the Christian Faith. My sense of that distinction is simple but profound: the Orthodox Church is all about healing, it is about the recovery of that divinity -- His very countenance -- that has been marked on us. Orthodoxy teaches us that this healing begins with the soul, extends to the body, and extends to all creation. We are not about spiritual transcendence of the material world, but about re-infusing that world with His Life-giving Spirit. This recovery is what is figured -- is physically performed -- by the particular baptism we celebrate today.

A blessed Theophany to all!

(Written by Scott Cairns, January 5, 2011)