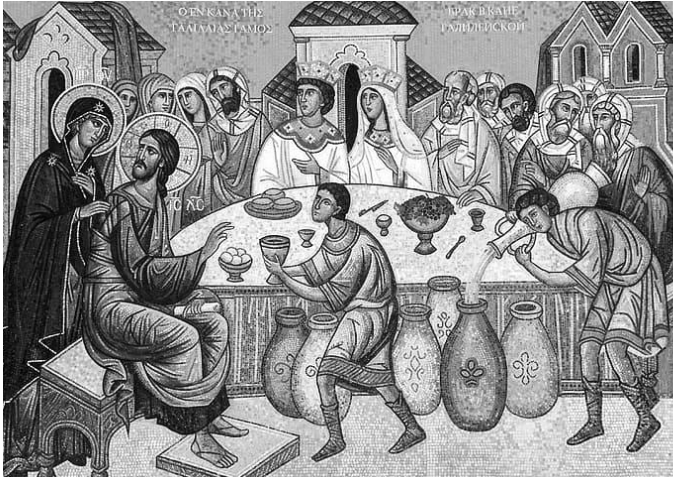




# The Sunday Messenger

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH - WILKES BARRE, PA

+ The 33rd Sunday after Pentecost + January 21st, 2024 + Ven. Maximus the Confessor



## Hymns for Today

Thou didst descend from on high, O Merciful One! Thou didst accept the three day burial to free us from our sufferings! O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to Thee!

O Champion of Orthodoxy, teacher of purity and of true worship, the enlightener of the universe and the adornment of hierarchs; all wise Father Maximus, thy teachings have gleamed with light upon all things. Intercede before Christ God to save our souls!

Thy holy martyr Neophytus, O Lord, through his sufferings has received an incorruptible crown from Thee, our God. For having Thy strength, he laid low his adversaries, and shattered the powerless boldness of demons. Through his intercession, save our souls!

By rising from the tomb, Thou didst raise the dead and resurrect Adam. Eve exults in Thy Resurrection, and the world celebrates Thy rising from the dead, O greatly Merciful One!

The Thrice-radiant Light took up abode in thy soul, O all-blissful father, and displayed it as an elect vessel,

manifest to the ends of the earth. O blessed Maximus, thou didst explain hard-to-grasp doctrines with brilliance and clarity, proclaiming the transcendent and unoriginate Trinity to all.

Thou didst shine forth from the mount like lightning, glorifying Christ through thy struggles and death as a martyr. Therefore, thou hast received an unfading crown, O Great-martyr Neophytus.

## Please Sing Along!

Singing the hymns and responses to the litanies along with the choir throughout the Divine Liturgy is encouraged!

## Epistle Reading - Colossians 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 Reading - Matthew 22:1-14

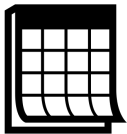
And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said: "The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. Again, he sent out other servants, saying, 'Tell those who are invited, "See,

**DEAR GUESTS AND FRIENDS:** A most sincere and heartfelt welcome to you from our community. According to the ancient traditions of the Orthodox Church, the Sacrament of Holy Communion is to be administered only to Orthodox Christians who have prepared to receive the Holy Sacrament through prayer and fasting. If you have questions please let us know!

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I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding.” But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them. But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.’ So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests. But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. So he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ For many are called, but few are chosen.”

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## This Week's Schedule Holy Trinity Orthodox Church

### **THIS WEEKEND**

Saturday, January 20th

9 AM: Friends of the Poor

5 PM: 9th Hour (4:50), Great Vespers, Confession

Sunday, January 21st

8:10 AM: Resurrectional Matins w/ Hours

9 AM: Divine Liturgy, Coffee Hour, Church School, Fundraising Committee Meeting @ Coffee Hour

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### **THIS WEEK**

WED 11 AM - 1:30 PM: Private Prayer in Church

6:30 PM: Akathist: “Glory to God for All Things”

THURS 11 AM: Bible Study

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### **NEXT WEEKEND**

Saturday, January 27th

9:30 AM: Divine Liturgy - Ordination of Dn Kirill Zawatski to the Holy Priesthood

5 PM: 9th Hour (4:50), Great Vespers, Confession

Sunday, January 28th

8:10 AM: Resurrectional Matins w/ Hours

9 AM: Divine Liturgy, Coffee Hour, Church School  
**Annual Parish Meeting w/ Parish Potluck  
Following Divine Liturgy**

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

& Upcoming Parish Events

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**Parish Council is the second Sunday of each month. Our next meeting is SUN, Feb 11th.**

**Friends of the Poor is the second Saturday of each month. The next gathering will be SAT, Feb 10th.**

**Parish Potlucks are usually the last Sunday of each month. Our next potluck is SUN, Jan 28th.**

**TODAY - FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE MEETING -** Fundraising committee meeting Sunday, January 21st following Divine Liturgy at Coffee Hour. Anyone interested in being part of the committee is welcome to attend.

**Sat, January 27th @ 9:30 AM - Ordination of Dn Kirill Zawatski to the Priesthood:** All parishioners and friends of Dn Kirill and Olivia Zawatski are invited to attend his ordination to the Priesthood here at Holy Trinity. Parishioners are also invited to attend the reception at St. Michael's Orthodox Church in Old Forge. Please sign up on the signup sheet in the back if you'd like to attend.

**Annual Parish Council Meeting/ Nominations for Office -** Sunday, January 28th, 2024 following Divine Liturgy, all members are asked to attend our annual parish meeting. **Election for church council officers will be conducted. Open positions include Treasurer and Trustee.** Qualification for election into office per HTOC bylaws requires that one be at least 21 years of age; a voting member of the parish for at least one year for trustees and 2 years two years for officers; an active communicant of the sacraments (confession / communion); meet all canonical requirements of the faith; and a person of the church in conduct and speech.

If you would like to serve on the Parish Council please contact one of the members of this year’s nominating committee – Andy Kondratick, Donna Stankeiwicz, Dan Brisk, or Fr. Innocent.

**GIVING ENVELOPES:** The 2024 Giving Envelopes are available at the candle stand. If you would like envelopes and there is not a box in the back for you, OR if you received envelopes and would no longer like to receive them, please see Greg Polk or Deborah Mills.

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### **2024 Parish Calendars are here!**

A very special thank you to David, Michael and Patricia Yeosock and the Yeosock Funeral Home for sponsoring this year’s beautiful calendar published by St. Tikhon’s Monastery. Pick up your free calendar at the candle stand. One calendar per family please.

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### **2024 HOME BLESSINGS**

PLEASE READ FOR INSTRUCTIONS

If you would like to have your house blessed there is still plenty of time! See Fr. Innocent to make an appointment. Fr. Innocent and the family look forward to this joyful time with each one of you! You can prepare for our visit by having an icon, candle, bowl for holy water, and list for living & departed.

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## **Birthdays & Anniversaries**

**January Birthdays:** Colleen King (1/1), Mary Krill (1/1), Greg Polk (1/4), Melissa Donlick (1/5), Sonja Kay (1/6), Margaret Krout (1/7), Jerry Stankiewicz (1/8), Gabrielle Kenzakoski (1/10), David Welgus (1/11), Odin Rivera (1/18), Amanda Benczkowski (1/17), Margaret Pregman (1/17), Deborah Zbegner (1/21), Ray Sofrenovic (1/21), Matthias Haugh (1/22), Josie Bisset (1/31), Amanda Benczkowski, Matthias Haugh **Anniversaries:** Warren & Nadine Breisch (1/13)

**This Week’s Birthdays & Anniversaries:** Deborah Zbegner (1/21), Ray Sofrenovic (1/21), Matthias Haugh (1/22)

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**Charitable giving in 2023 made possible by your tithes and donations.**

*Thank you!*

**THROUGH YOUR GENEROSITY, our Holy Trinity Community was blessed to assist Our Lord in service and support of charities within and outside our community in 2023.**

*International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC)  
Ukrainian War Relief  
St. Vincent DePaul's Soup Kitchen  
St. Tikhon's Seminarians (Dn Kirill & Dn Damian)  
Commission for Economic Opportunity  
HTOC Friends of the Poor Ministry  
(Homeless & Poor of Wilkes Barre)  
United Children’s Home  
Hazelton Homeless Community Center*

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### **TODAY, Jan 21st** **The Kingdom of Heaven**

When Christ will come in glory at the end of the ages, and God will be all in all, then will come the new heaven and new earth foretold by the prophet Isaiah and described in the book of Revelation (cf. Is 65.17–66.24).

*Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband; and I heard a great voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be with them; He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away.”*

*And He who sat upon the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.” Also He said, “Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.” And He said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water without price from the fountain of*

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**PARISH PRAYER LIST Living:** Cynthia Dulsky, Nadine Breisch, Evelyn Kosmiski, Mat. Elizabeth, Jeri Basarab, Fr. Theodore Orzolek, Vladimir & Marie Dutko, Tom & Joan Austin, Joan Lello, Mary Gurka, Barbara Pascoe, David, Elizabeth, Lydia, Melanie Bishop, Delores Voda, Nicole Hapeman, David Goobic, David Lezinsky, Mat Melanie **Departed:** Archpriest Moses Berry

the water of life. He who conquers shall have this heritage, and I will be his God and he shall be my son. But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the polluted, as for murderers, fornicators, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their lot shall be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death” (Rev 21.1–8).

Behold I am coming soon, bringing my recompense to repay everyone for what he has done (Rev 22.12).

“He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love.”

**Colossians 1:13**

To gain the “heritage” of the New Jerusalem is the whole meaning of life, the sole purpose of man’s being created by God. “He who conquers shall have this heritage.” And as Saint Paul has said simply, “We are more than conquerors through Him who loved us” (Rom 8.37).

For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom 8.38–39).

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of His glory He may grant you to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have power to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God (Eph 3.14–19).

To be “filled with all the fullness of God”—this, and this alone, is what Orthodox spirituality is about.



# The Treasury

“... but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. + Jesus Christ

**Monthly Cost to Keep the Church Open: \$12,305**  
**Weekly Cost to Keep the Church Open: \$2,840**  
**Collections last Sunday (1/14): \$1,907**

## PROPORTIONAL GIVING

*Assessing our personal giving for the coming new year.*

Proportional giving is the practice of returning to the Lord a portion of the financial treasure He has blessed us with in this life. We offer our gifts in gratitude for His. This principle is found in both the Old and New Testament scriptures. Because it is proportional, what is returned to Him is different for each family and household. The giving chart below offers a starting point for giving based on a range of weekly incomes along with a range of giving levels beginning at 10%, the ideal for a Christian tithe if one is capable, down to 2%. Our goal as we journey through life is to offer increasingly more of what God has given us back to Him, just as we give more of our heart. *Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also* (Matt 6:21). This, of course, is done freely and out of love for God and His Church, not in response to an outward rule (*Freely you have received, freely give* - Matt 10:8). May this chart be helpful for you in prayerfully determining your level of giving this coming new year, challenging yourself to return to God the good portion of His financial blessings.

| Weekly Income | 10%   | 5%    | 4%   | 2%   |
|---------------|-------|-------|------|------|
| \$200         | \$20  | \$10  | \$8  | \$4  |
| \$500         | \$50  | \$25  | \$20 | \$10 |
| \$750         | \$75  | \$37  | \$30 | \$15 |
| \$1000        | \$100 | \$50  | \$40 | \$20 |
| \$1500        | \$150 | \$75  | \$60 | \$30 |
| \$2000        | \$200 | \$100 | \$80 | \$40 |