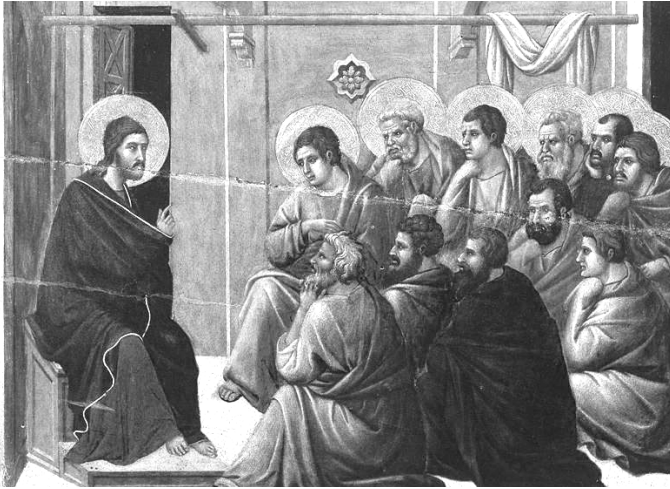




The Sunday Messenger

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH - WILKES BARRE, PA

+ The 34th Sunday after Pentecost + January 28th, 2024 + Synaxis of the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia



Hymns for Today

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews, while the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure body, Thou didst rise on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world. The powers of heaven therefore cried to Thee, O Giver of Life: "Glory to Thy Resurrection, O Christ! Glory to Thy Kingdom! Glory to Thy dispensation, O Thou Who lovest mankind!"

Today the Church of Russia forms a chorus in joy, praising her new martyrs and confessors; hierarchs and priests, royal passion-bearers, right-believing princes and princesses, venerable men and women, and all Orthodox Christians. Having laid down their life for faith in Christ during the days of godless persecution, they preserved the truth by the shedding of blood. By their protection, O long-suffering Lord, preserve our land in Orthodoxy till the end of the age.

As God, Thou didst rise from the tomb in glory, raising the world with Thyself. Human nature praises Thee as God, for death has vanished. Adam exults, O Master! Eve rejoices, for she is freed from bondage and cries to Thee: "Thou art the Giver of Resurrection to all, O Christ!"

Today the new martyrs of Rus' stand in white robes before the Lamb of God, and with the angels they sing to God the hymn of victory: "Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and praise, and honor, and power, and strength be to our God unto the ages of ages. Amen."

Please Sing Along!

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

Epistle Reading - Colossians 3:4-11

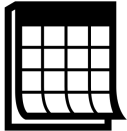
When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them. But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.

Gospel Reading - Matthew 22:35-46

Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" Jesus said to him, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked

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!*

them, saying, "What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?" They said to Him, "The Son of David." He said to them, "How then does David in the Spirit call Him 'Lord,' saying: 'The LORD said to my Lord, sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool'? If David then calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his Son?" And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.



This Week's Schedule

DOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

THIS 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

**Annual Parish Meeting w/ Parish Potluck
Following Divine Liturgy**

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THIS WEEK

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

6:30 PM: Akathist: "To the Mother of God"

THURS 11 AM: Bible Study

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Feast of the Meeting of Christ in the Temple

Thurs, Feb 1st @ 6:30 PM: Great Vespers

Fri, Feb 2nd @ 9 AM: Divine Liturgy

NEXT WEEKEND

Saturday, February 3rd

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

Sunday, February 4th

8:40 AM: 3rd & 6th Hours

9 AM: Divine Liturgy, Coffee Hour, Church School



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**.

Welcome Holy Resurrection Cathedral: We are blessed to have the faithful of Holy Resurrection Cathedral with us while Fr. Gregory is recovering. Please make yourself completely at home and join us for coffee hour! There will be a basket at the candlestand marked Holy Resurrection for your tithes and donations. May our Lord continue to strengthen Fr. Gregory for a speedy and complete recovery!

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.

TODAY - Annual Parish Council Meeting - Sunday, January 28th, 2024 following Divine Liturgy, all members are asked to attend our annual parish meeting.

Pierogi Project - February 9th & 10th (Fri-Sat). Please sign up in the vestibule. As always, we need as many pinching fingers as possible to make this project a success!

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.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

February Birthdays: Mary Gurka (2/1), Cassandra Mahaffey (2/2), Amelia Stankiewicz (2/3), Subdeacon Thomas Donlick (2/6), Sebastian Neal (2/6), Emma Sofrenovic (2/7), Paul Tumavitch (2/9), Mitchell Rivera (2/14), David Mills (2/19), Jeremiah Haugh (2/21), Sandy Serafin (2/23), Alexanne Conklin (2/24), Andrew Rivera (2/28) **Anniversaries:** Brian & Kristi Benczkowski

This Week's Birthdays & Anniversaries: Josie Bisset (1/31), Mary Gurka (2/1), Cassandra Mahaffey (2/2), Amelia Stankiewicz (2/3)

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*



Words of Wisdom From the Saints & Teachers

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The Greatest Virtue is Love

The New Commandment

The commandments to love God and neighbor are found in the law of Moses. They are not commandments for God's people. They are the commandments "written on men's hearts" and given "by nature" itself (Rom

2.14–15). They are the commandments given by God, in His Words, to man "from the beginning" (1 Jn 2.7).

In the new covenant Church of Christ, however, there is a "new commandment" (1 Jn 2.8). It is the "new commandment" given by Jesus Himself to those who believe in Him.

A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another (Jn 13.34).

The new element in this "new commandment" is not the teaching of love, for this was written in the law. The new element is that believers in Christ must love as Christ Himself loves. The new commandment is to love "as I have loved you."

Christian love must be the perfect love of Christ Himself which is wholly divine. Christian love must be the totally self-emptying love of the Lord Himself. It must be the divine love of God the Father poured into men's hearts by the very Spirit of God. It must be the love that is absolutely faithful, perfect, eternal and divine.

Of all the men who ever lived on this earth, or who ever will live, only one has fully fulfilled the two great commandments of God; only one has lived absolutely and perfectly according to God's laws; only one has loved the Father with all of His heart, mind, soul, and strength, and His neighbor as Himself. This is Jesus Christ, the child of Mary according to the flesh. There is no one righteous before God's law but Jesus. Only He has lived according to the law and by the teachings of the prophets. He alone is the one who has "fulfilled the law and the prophets" (cf. Mt 5.17, 7.12). He alone, of all men, has loved with perfect, sinless, dispassionate love.

He committed no sin; no guile was found on His lips. When He was reviled, He did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten; but He trusted to Him who judges justly. He Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By His wounds you have been healed (1 Pet 2.22–24; cf. Is 53).

Having no sin, Jesus took our sins upon Himself and became sin "for us men and for our salvation" (Nicene Creed). In this the perfect love of God was perfected in a

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, Barbara Pascoe, Elizabeth Hutz, Melanie Bishop, Delores Voda, Nicole Hapeman, David Goobic, David Lezinsky, Michael Yeosock, Fr. Gregory White, Mary Gurka **Departed:** Archpriest Moses Berry

human being, that all humans might share in the love and glory of God. As all of the holy fathers have said, “He became what we are, that we might become what He is . . . God became man that man might become god.”

For our sake God made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God (2 Cor 5.21).

His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness . . . that you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of passion, and become partakers of the nature of God (2 Pet 1.3–4).

Since . . . the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise partook of the same nature, that through death He might destroy him who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage.

Therefore He had to be made like His brethren in every respect, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people. For because He Himself suffered and was tempted, He is able to help those who are tempted.

For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize [i.e., co-suffer] with our weaknesses, but One who in every respect has been tempted as we, yet without sinning (Heb 2.14–18, 4.15–16).

God has given us His love in Jesus. When a person is “in Christ” he can love with the love of God. This is the “new commandment,” that men filled with the Holy Spirit should love with the love of God Himself.

In his first letter to the Corinthians, Saint Paul describes the perfect love which is Christ’s gift of God to men in the Holy Spirit. He describes what Christian love is: the chief gift of the Spirit of God, who is love.

Through the love of Christ, men are called to bear, believe, hope and suffer all things. This is what Christ has done. This is what love does. The one who does this has fulfilled the “new commandment” of Jesus and abides in the love of God. The one who does this abides in God Himself, and already possesses eternal life as a member of His Kingdom.



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 (1/21): \$2,242

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