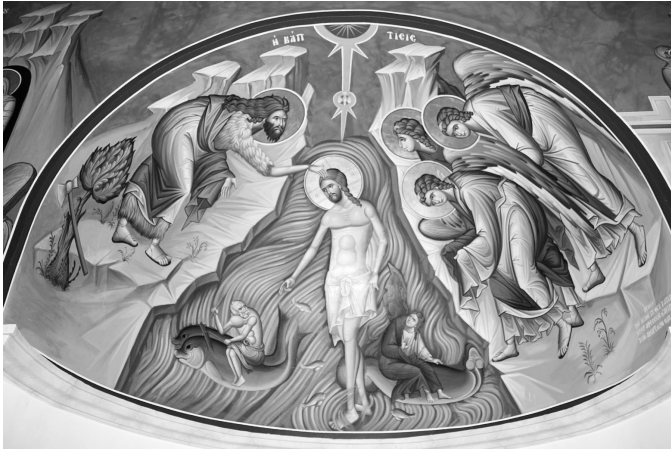




The Sunday Messenger

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH - WILKES BARRE, PA

+ The Sunday after the Theophany of Our Lord Jesus Christ + January 7th, 2024 + The Afterfeast of Theophany



Hymns for Today

The Angelic Powers were at Thy tomb; the guards became as dead men. Mary stood by Thy grave, seeking Thy most pure body. Thou didst capture hell not being tempted by it. Thou didst come to the Virgin, granting life. O Lord, Who didst rise from the dead, glory to Thee.

When Thou, O Lord, wast baptized in the Jordan, the worship of the Trinity was made manifest. For the voice of the Father bore witness to Thee, and called Thee His beloved Son; and the Spirit in the form of a dove confirmed the truthfulness of His word. O Christ our God, Who hast revealed Thyself and hast enlightened the world, glory to Thee.

The memory of the righteous is celebrated with hymns of praise, but the Lord's testimony is sufficient for thee, O Forerunner. Thou wast shown in truth to be the most honorable of the Prophets, for thou wast deemed worthy to baptize in the streams of the Jordan Him Whom they foretold. Therefore, having suffered for the truth with joy, thou didst proclaim to those in hell God Who appeared in the flesh, Who takes away the sin of the world, and grants us great mercy.

The river Jordan trembled, and was driven back, filled with fear at Thy coming in the flesh, while John drew back in awe as he fulfilled the ministry of the Spirit. The ranks of Angels stood amazed when they beheld Thee baptized in the stream. And we who were in darkness are filled with light. We praise Thee, O God made manifest, as Thou dost enlighten all.

Today Thou hast shone forth to the world, O Lord, and the light of Thy countenance has been marked on us. Knowing Thee, we sing Thy praises: "Thou hast come and revealed Thyself, O unapproachable Light."

Please Sing Along!

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

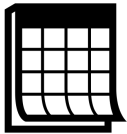
Epistle Reading - Acts 19:1-8

And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" So they said to him, "We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit." And he said to them, "Into what then were you baptized?" So they said, "Into John's baptism." Then Paul said, "John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus." When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. Now the men were about twelve in all. And he went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading concerning the things of the kingdom of God.

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!

Gospel Reading - John 1:29-34

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.' I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water." And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God."



This Week's Schedule Holy Trinity Orthodox Church

THIS WEEKEND

The Great Feast of the Theophany of Our Lord Jesus Christ

Friday, January 5th

6:30 PM: Compline & Matins for Theophany

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Saturday, January 6th

9 AM: Divine Liturgy for the Feast w/ Blessing of Water

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

Sunday, January 7th

8:10 AM: Resurrectional Matins w/ Hours

9 AM: Divine Liturgy, Coffee Hour, Church School

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THIS WEEK

+++ House Blessings All Week +++

*There will be no services or Bible Study this week.
We will return to our normal schedule next week,
God willing!*

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NEXT WEEKEND

Saturday, January 13th

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

Sunday, January 14th

8:40 AM: 3rd & 6th Hours

9 AM: Divine Liturgy, Coffee Hour, Church School,
Parish Council @ 11:30 AM



ANNOUNCEMENTS & Upcoming Parish Events

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Parish Council is the second Sunday of each month. Our next meeting is **SUN, Jan 14th**.

Friends of the Poor is the second Saturday of each month. The next gathering will be **SAT, Jan 13th**.

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

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.

TAKE POINSETTIAS HOME: Anyone who would like to take home a Poinsettia from the front of the church is welcomed to do so today after Liturgy. Thank you to all who donated towards beautifying the church this Nativity season for Our Lord in remembrance to your loved ones.

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.

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 will be available in the back of the church TODAY. 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.

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.

2024 HOME BLESSINGS

PLEASE READ FOR INSTRUCTIONS

The Blessing of Homes will begin **Tuesday, January 9th**. The order in which homes are blessed will follow the normal pattern. Please see the schedule below. You can prepare for our visit by having an icon, candle, bowl for holy water, and list for living & departed. If you do not want your home blessed please indicate so on the signup sheet in the vestibule. If you have not had your home blessed in past years, but would like to this year, let Fr. Innocent know so he can add you to the schedule. Fr. Innocent and the boys look forward to this joyful time with each one of you!

Home Blessing Schedule

Tues, Jan 9th: Miners Mill & Parsons (1:00 PM – 5 PM)

!!! Please note the time change above for Tuesday !!!

Wed, Jan 10th: Hudson, Plains, Laflin, Pittston, Moosic Area, Bald Mountain (11 AM – 5 PM)

Thurs, Jan 11th: Mountaintop, Hanover Twp, Nanticoke Area (11 AM – 5 PM)

Tues, Jan 16th: Wilkes Barre City & Township, Kingston & Westside, and homes missed earlier (11 AM – 5 PM)

By Appointment: Back Mountain, Outside of Area

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 Kenzacoski (1/10), David Welgus (1/11), Odin Rivera (1/18), Amanda Benczkowski (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: Margaret Krout (1/7), Jerry Stankiewicz (1/8), Gabrielle Kenzacoski (1/10), David Welgus (1/11), Warren & Nadine Breisch (1/13)

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*

TODAY, Jan 7th

The Synaxis of the Holy Glorious Prophet, Forerunner & Baptist John

In the Orthodox Church it is customary, on the day following the Great Feasts of the Lord and the Mother of God, to remember those saints who participated directly in the sacred event. So, on the day following the Theophany of the Lord, the Church honors the one who participated directly in the Baptism of Christ, placing his own hand upon the head of the Savior.

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:** Rosalie, Mary Ann Lepa, Stanley Cramton, Ioan, Irene

Saint John, the holy Forerunner and Baptist of the Lord, whom the Lord called the greatest of the prophets, concludes the history of the Old Testament and opens the era of the New Testament. The holy Prophet John bore witness to the Only-Begotten Son of God, incarnate in the flesh. Saint John was accounted worthy to baptize Him in the waters of the Jordan, and he was a witness of the Theophany of the Most Holy Trinity on the day of the Savior's Baptism.



The holy Prophet John, the son of the Priest Zachariah and Righteous Elizabeth, was related to the Lord on His mother's side. The holy Forerunner, John, was born six months before Christ. The Archangel Gabriel announced his birth in the Temple at Jerusalem, revealing to Zachariah that a son was to be born to him.

Through the prayers offered beforehand, the child was filled with the Holy Spirit. Saint John prepared himself in the wilds of the desert for his great service by a strict life, by fasting, prayer and sympathy for the fate of God's people.

At the age of thirty, he came forth preaching repentance. He appeared on the banks of the Jordan, to prepare the people by his preaching to accept the Savior of the world. In church hymnology, Saint John is called a "bright morning star," whose gleaming outshone the brilliance of all the other stars, announcing the coming dawn of the day of grace, illumined with the light of the spiritual Sun, our Lord Jesus Christ.



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 (12/31): **\$1,656**

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