chedules

	COFFEE HOUR	GREETERS	TELLERS	SERVERS
January 4	M. Leathers and D. Patel	L. Radomsky and M. Radomsky M. Stevens and G. Cattell Team B	M. Stevens and G. Cattell	Team B
January 11	A.T. Pelikan and J. Miranda	M. Leathers and D. Swisher	H. Torbic and R. Patel	Team A
January 18	E. George and M. Stevens	B. Roberts and E. Miranda	M. Fedkin and S. Stevens Team B	Team B
January 25	THON BENEFIT LUNCHEON	J. Fryncko and M. Fedkin	R. Patel and B. Haupt	Team A
February 1	POTLUCK	M. Thompson and PSU Student M. Stevens and G. Cattell Team B	M. Stevens and G. Cattell	Team B
February 8	H. Torbic and L. Georgiou	L. Radomsky and M. Radomsky S. Stevens and H. Torbic Team A	S. Stevens and H. Torbic	Team A
* Denotes Fast	Team A: A. Miranda, N. Pelikan, S. Oleynik, D. Stickles, J. Torbic, and J. Swisher. Team B: J. Cadman, C. Legaspi, N. McFarland, B. Oleynik, S. Patel, and L. Torbic.	leynik, D. Stickles, J. Torbic, and J. Swiss Farland, B. Oleynik, S. Patel, and L. To	her. Captains: D. Torbic, Jo. Stickles, rbic. and K. Kucheryavyy	Stickles, Yavyy

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VOL. 20 NO. 1 holytrinity-oca.org THEMISAGION

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCI



On Sunday, January 11, Holy Trinity faithful will gather asking Christ to be manifest in the waters of Spring Creek and the towns through which it flows. One week later, the Chapel of the Holy Spirit will call God's blessings upon the waters of Snyder County.

Even Greater Things Await Us

by Fr. John Reeves

The secular New Year comes near the middle of the twelve day Nativity-Theophany celebration. It has become a time to look both forward to what a new year hopefully portends as well as to assess the bane and blessings of the one just past.

The Theophany is likewise one of looking to Christ's revelation of Himself not merely at the River Jordan, in the past, but his Coming Again in glory, at the End of Time. We are in the tension between one revelation and the other, two manifestations of Christ that do not contradict each other. Rather the former is fulfilled by the latter.

Christ is made manifest at the River Jordan, revealing the Trinity to the world and giving man the hope of New Life in Christ by the saving waters of Baptism.

At His Second Coming, Christ will come again, with glory to judge the world and to receive into the fullness of His Kingdom all those who have united their lives with His. Good things have come to pass but greater ones await all who long for His Coming.

(continued, see FROM THE RECTOR'S DESK, next page)

New Year's Resolutions for Orthodox Christians

by Fr. Andrew Steven Damick

Thile New Year's resolutions are not particularly a feature of the Orthodox faith, change certainly is, and resolving to change based on times and seasons is certainly part of our liturgical tradition. So adapting the cultural custom of New Year's resolutions to become a better Orthodox Christian seems perfectly fine to me.

(continued, see NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS, last page)

■ THEOPHANY 2015

Have Your Home Blessed This Month

The entire month of January following Theophany is set aside for home blessings. The process is simple: give your preferences (*first*, *second*, *third*, etc.) of the shifts listed below using the form at *holytrinity-oca.org* or the sign-up sheets in the Narthex.

Within 48 hours of placing your request, you will be contacted with confirmation of the exact time of your appointment. Every effort will be made to accommodate your availability and any special needs or requests you may have.

To give as many as possible an opportunity to participate, a maximum of thirty minutes will be reserved for each blessing. The best way for you to show hospitality is to have your home clean and brightly lit. If possible, have a candle and bowl ready.

Everyone and everything in the home is blessed to bring Christ's sanctification, making each home a small church in essence. As with any Orthodox sacrament, there is absolutely no charge to have your home blessed. Requests can be made by anyone.

2015 Home Blessing Schedule

LOCATION	AVAILABLE DATES AND TIMES		
Eastern Centre County (16801,-27,-28,-51) including Downtown State College, State College (South Atherton), Boalsburg, Centre Hall, Houserville, Lemont, and Pine Grove Mills.	Thursday, January 8 Tuesday, January 13 Friday, January 16 Wednesday, January 21 Saturday, January 24	7pm-9pm 10am-12pm; 7pm-9pm 10am-12pm; 2pm-4pm 10am-12pm; 3pm-5pm 1pm-4pm	
Penn State Campus (16802)	Thursday, January 22	7pm-9pm	
Western Centre County (16803,-68,-70) including State College (North Atherton), Park Forest, Pine Grove Mills, Port Matilda, and Stormstown.	Friday, January 9 Wednesday, January 14 Saturday, January 17 Tuesday, January 20 Thursday, January 29	10am-12pm; 2pm-4pm 10am-12pm; 3pm-5pm 1pm-4pm 10am-12pm; 7pm-9pm 7pm-9pm	
Northern Centre County (16823,-53) including Bellefonte, Milesburg, and Zion.	Saturday, January 10 Thursday, January 15 Friday, January 23	1pm–4pm 7pm–9pm 10am–12pm; 2pm–4pm	
Snyder County (178xx)	Sunday, January 18	1pm-4pm	
Other Locations/Make-ups	Tuesday, January 27 Wednesday, January 28 Friday, January 30 Saturday, January 31	10am–12pm; 7pm–9pm 2pm–4pm 10am–12pm; 2pm–4pm 1pm–4pm	

Read the Old Testament.
The Old Testament is filled with all kinds of fascinating stories, prayers, songs, poetry, etc. But most of us have almost no idea that it has much other than Adam and Eve, Noah and Jonah. And we're probably a little fuzzy on some of those details. If God prepared the world for the coming of Jesus by what He did in the Old Testament, how can we think we'll be prepared for His coming into each of our own lives without any of that same preparation?

Attend an adult education class. Don't sell yourself short. You are probably pretty smart about many things. Why don't you use that same talent to get smart about your faith? [Holy Trinity has many to choose from—the Women's Fellowship begins a new book study on January 13 at 7 p.m.; the Adult Study Group returns March 5.]

13 Volunteer.
Do something in your parish or in your community that benefits other people without giving you any kind of material gain. And do it without expecting recognition. Your recognition will come from God in His Kingdom. You don't need it from anyone else...

Go to confession.

There are lots of Orthodox
Christians who go to confession only once a year—or maybe even
never. Like people who never go to the
doctor, what that means is that you think
everything is perfectly fine and you need
no help. Literally, it means that you do
not think you need the gift of forgiveness
that comes in the sacrament of absolution.
I don't know about you, but I'm a sinner.
I mean, I sin every day. I have a problem.
I'm a sinner. I need to confront my sins
directly in confession...

Read a spiritual book.
There are few things that get us into another story, another way of looking at life, like a good book.
And a good spiritual book can help to retrain your mind to become like the mind of Christ. Most of us do not have the mind of Christ. We have the mind of something else. Our minds are filled with distractions, necessities and the cares of this world. But the extended meditation on what is good and true and beautiful that can come from a good spiritual book can help to change all that. And you know what? That change helps to bring us peace. And that's something that each of us needs a whole lot more of.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Fr. Damick is the pastor of St. Paul Antiochian Orthodox Church in Emmaus, PA. He has authored several books and articles, including this one, which are all available at *ancientfaith.com*.

New Women's Book Study Begins

Starting Tuesday, January 13 at 7 p.m. in the Parish Hall and continuing biweekly into Lent the Women's Ministry will study *Becoming a Woman of Excellence* by Cynthia Heald. The classes are for all women ages 18 and up and will last approximately 90 minutes each. Call/text Laura Rush at 808-6345 for information.

Spaghetti Lunch to Benefit THON

You can help the Penn State Orthodox Christian Fellowship qualify to have dancers at THON this year while joining the fight against pediatric cancer. Simply enjoy a delicious spaghetti lunch prepared by our students on Sunday, January 25 after Liturgy. All proceeds from a free will offering will be donated.

By Request, Potlucks to Return

The results of the potluck poll are in: Two-thirds of respondents want them to continue; a clear majority opted for a monthly meal. Therefore the post-liturgy potlucks will resume February 1 and take place every first Sunday thereafter. See Jean Miranda for details.



Sharing Christ's Love

The Great Commission icon became an impromptu but fitting place for parishioners to drop off packages for the St. Nicholas Tree. In all, 40 families received gifts through your generosity and our partnership with Strawberry Fields. Thank you.

■ ORTHODOX SPIRITUALITY

Make These 15 New Year Resolutions

Here are some suggestions for Orthodox Christians resolving to change for the better in the New Year, things every Orthodox Christian can do.

Get serious about coming to church (more).
If you're not serious about coming to church weekly, it's time to get serious. This is eternal life we're talking about, not a religious club. And if you're already coming to church weekly, consider adding at least one service per week...
Your priest and other parishioners are there praying, including praying for you. Why don't you join them? You won't regret it.

Come to church on time. If you show up late, you are late. And if you leave early, you are skipping out. What you show up on time for tells the world what you find important. It's what you find indispensable. And when you show up late to church, it also tells your fellow parishioners that you don't consider church very important. And it also communicates it to your kids. And you can be assured that they will imitate you. Come at least ten minutes early. That says you are serious. You know what also says you're serious?

Tithe.
Nothing says you're serious like giving 10% of your income to something. Giving 10% to God sounds crazy to a lot of people, but the reality is that it's actually totally normal for many Christians—even for generations.
Orthodox people in the US aren't used to tithing (10%) or even giving some other percentage, mainly because many of their forebears across the sea gave to their churches just by paying their taxes. That

doesn't work anywhere in the Englishspeaking Orthodox world. Your taxes do not go to support your church... If you're not up for 10% yet, then try 8%. Or 6%. Or whatever. But go on record, and get disciplined about giving. Don't give until it hurts, but until it actually feels good.

Pray at home. Even if all you do is say the "Our Father" when you wake up (saying it three times a day is the most ancient known prayer rule), you will notice a change in how you think and feel about your faith. It will become more present for you and will define you more. Oh, and, parents? It will have a huge impact on your kids. Watching parents pray at home and (in time) joining them in that prayer is one of the biggest contributions that kids can receive toward their long-term spiritual viability. If you don't bring the faith home, you can forget about it mattering in the long run, either for you or your kids.

Sing along at church. And stand more. The choir and chanters are there to lead you in prayer, not to entertain you or pray instead of you. Yes, it is possible to pray with them silently, but there are few things more spiritually invigorating than singing your prayers. So if you're able, you should. And while you're at it, [try standing more]... It's certainly easier to sing while standing.

Memorize a psalm.

Memorizing Scripture is a
great thing for many reasons,
but psalms are especially powerful, because
they are all prayers. Pick your favorite one
to memorize...[t]here are plenty to choose
from. Pick a short one or a long one. Just
make it your own. Try praying it every
day.

Encourage your priest. Your priest is a human being just like you are. And while he shouldn't live for praise, you can help him see that his hard work is appreciated by telling him so. Your job isn't to tell him that he shouldn't want praise—he has a father-confessor to tell him that. Your job is to love him. And saying encouraging things to him is part of that love. You don't have to shower him with compliments. Just tell him that what he's doing matters to you. There is nothing better for a parish's health than an encouraged priest. If he feels like what he's doing matters, he will love doing it. And he will also strive to get better at it, too. So even if you do feel like he needs to improve, the best way to help him do that is to inspire him, not to complain at him.

Invite someone to church. Did you know that 82% of the unchurched say that they would come if invited? Did you know that only 2% of church members invite someone to church in a given year? Think of at least one person you know who isn't in church. Make him or her a spiritual priority this year. Pray every day for that person. And when the time is right, give the invitation. Statistically speaking, they are probably going to say yes. And when you make the invitation, don't say, "You should come to church with me sometime." "Sometime" is no time. Say, "We're celebrating the Divine Liturgy this Sunday at 10 a.m. at my church. Can I pick you up and bring you with me?"

1 Visit a monastery.
Monasteries aren't just for monks and nuns. They're for all Christians. They are not only spiritual havens but also spiritual powerhouses.
And don't just visit once and say you did it. Develop a relationship.

■ FROM THE RECTOR'S DESK

Look Forward to What Christ Will Do

As the parish looks forward this year, we take stock of a number of things which we could not have foretold last year, the most obvious one being the acquisition of Trinity House next door. Now it consumes much discussion and time for planning, what it will look like and how we will develop future ministries for greater service.

The parish has responded generously to the challenge with more than \$100,000 raised in short order to help purchase, remodel and refurbish. This was added to the more than \$100,000 which we already had in the building fund.

The only item we really need a sponsor for is the handicapped-accessible restroom for the first floor. (Its \$10,000 price tag can be whittled down to size by several individuals who might choose to donate a portion of the overall cost. It can be paid out over the next three years if desired. Check the new thermometer in the narthex to gauge our progress.)

Don't forget though that while our Capital Campaign raised money for purchase, our weekly and monthly pledges and offerings are needed in response to the cost of maintenance and operations. We face an approximately 10% increase in expenses over 2014. Regular, systematic, and sacrificial giving will be the key. Join with your rector and raise your pledge for 2015.

If you don't receive offering envelopes in the mail monthly, please let the church office know to get on the list. Remember, parish expenses are constant whether or not one is at church each week.

In all that we do let us look forward to what Christ is doing in our midst during 2015. He really surprised us in 2014. ■

Also from Father's Desk...

▶ Help fill our vans to the March for Life! Holy Trinity will provide free transportation to the 42nd March for Life in Washington, D.C., on Thursday, January 22. The trip is sponsored by our campus and Sunday School ministries. Our goal is to fill two 15-passenger vans with parishioners of all ages.

The rally is held on the National Mall beginning at noon. Our delegation will join fellow Orthodox from around the country in marching up to the Supreme Court where a prayer service will be led by Metropolitan Tikhon and other hierarchs.

The pilgrimage departs from the church parking lot promptly at 6:30 a.m., and returns by 10 p.m., stopping each way at the Sheetz in Duncannon at approximately 8 a.m./p.m. to pick up and drop off Chapel members. Participants should wear warm clothing, pack a lunch, and bring money for a dinner stop on the way home. RSVPs to events@holytrinity-oca.org are appreciated.

- ➤ New this year: e-Tithing. You can now arrange for your bank to draft a regular amount from your checking account, wherever you bank, each month and deposit it in the parish's account. There is no cost to you for this convenient way to donate regularly to the church. See Dn. Alex or email info@holytrinity-oca.org for information.
- > The Chapel of the Holy Spirit is looking forward to getting its own building project underway this spring, once all the permits have been obtained. The Chapel has relocated to the MACC, a community center in Beaver Springs for its worship services. The move has already attracted a new family to begin worshipping regularly with its community. Worshipping with the Chapel is a wonderful experience as we continue to build up the Church beyond our parish. Services are at 10:00am each Sunday.

Holy Trinity Calendar

All events take place at 119 South Sparks Street in State College, unless where noted.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
28 Sunday After Nativity Holy Righteous Ones: Joseph the Betrothed, David the King, and James the Brother of the Lord Matins, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am	29	30	Trisagion for Joy Torbic, 6:30pm Great Vespers, 7pm		January 1 Circumcision of Christ St. Basil the Great Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Open House, 2pm-5pm @ 125 Wildernest Ln., Port Matilda (Oleynik's)	St. Seraphim of Sarov Matins/Tonsure of Sr. Helene (Krenitsky), 8:30am @ Transfig. Monastery, Ellwood City (Church transportation departs at 5:30am.)	Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions
January 4 Sunday Before Theophany Matins, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am	5 Eve of the Theophany Royal Hours, 10am Great Vespers/Litiya/Great Blessing of Water, 7pm	THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST Matins, 8am Divine Liturgy, 9am Great Vespers, 7pm	Synaxis of St. John the Baptist Divine Liturgy, 8am Trisagion for Clay (Marc) Bond, 9:30am Vespers, 5:30pm Confessions	7	8	9	Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions
St. Theodosius/Sun. After Theo. Matins/Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am Parish Council Installation, 11:45am Outdoor Blessing of Water, 1pm @ Spring Creek Park. Pavilion 2 Jr. OYA Monthly Activity, 6pm	12	Clergy Meeting, 11:45am Homeless Ministry, 4pm @ Centre House, 217 E. Nittany Ave. Women's Bible Study: Becoming a Woman of Excellence, 7pm	Vespers, 5:30pm Confessions Parish Council Meeting, 7pm	- 1	15 Penn State OCF: Dinner and Discussion, 6pm @ 124 Pasquerilla Center	16	St. Anthony the Great Men's Fellowship Breakfast, 9am Sunday School Teacher Meeting, 5:15pm Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions
Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) All Parents' Meeting, 12pm Orthodox Youth Association (OYA, gr. 9-12) Monthly Activity, 6pm	19 Young Adult Potluck, 6pm @ 4817 W. Whitehall Rd., Pennsylvania Furnace (Leathers' Home)	20	Vespers, 5:30pm Confessions		22 42 nd MARCH FOR LIFE (Church vans depart at 6:30am, return by 10pm.) Penn State OCF: Memorial Service for the Unborn & Dinner, 6pm @ Pasq. Meditation Chapel/124	23	Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions
Zacchaeus Sunday Matins/Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am Spaghetti Luncheon to Benefit Penn State Dance Marathon, 12pm	26	Clergy Staff Meeting, 11:45am Women's Bible Study: Becoming a Woman of Excellence, 7pm	Vespers, 5:30pm Confessions	-	29 Penn State OCF: Dinner and Discussion, 6pm @ 124 Pasquerilla Center	30 Three Hierarchs: Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, and John Chrysostom	Choir Rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions
February 1 Publican and Pharisee (Fast Free Week) Matins/Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am Parish Potluck, 12pm Great Vespers/Litiya/	2 MEETING OF OUR LORD IN THE TEMPLE Divine Liturgy, 8am (Hours, 7:40am)	3	Vespers, 5:30pm Confessions	4	5 Penn State OCF: Dinner and Discussion, 6pm @ 124 Pasquerilla Center	6	7 Altar Society Meeting, 10am Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions

Chapel Calendar

All events take place at the Middlecreek Area Community Center (MACC), 67 Elm St. in Beaver Springs., unless where noted.

(MACC), 07 Euri St. III beaver Spin	ings., unitess where noted.
Saturday 3	Sunday 18
Vespers, 6pm	Hours, 9:40am
	Divine Liturgy, 10am
Sunday 4 Hours, 9:40am	Outdoor Great Blessing of Water, 1pm @ Beaver Creek, Beaver Springs
Obednitsa with Holy Communion, 10am Bible Study on I Thess./ Sunday School, 12:45pm @ 350 Old Orchard Dr., Beavertown (Smith Home)	Theophany Gathering and Progressive Home Blessings, following @ 845 Center Ave., Beaver Springs (Lyter Home)
	Tuesday 20
Tuesday 6 THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR	Choir Rehearsal, 6:30pm @ 845 Center Ave. (Lyter Residence)
(Hours/Divine Liturgy,	
7:40am @ Holy Trinity)	Sunday 25
Choir Rehearsal, 6:30pm @ 845 Center Ave., Beaver	Hours, 9:40am
@ 845 Center Ave., Beaver Springs (Lyter Home)	Obednitsa with Holy Communion, 10am
Sunday 11 Hours, 9:40am Obednitsa with Holy Communion, 10am Bible Study on I Thess./	Bible Study on I Thess./ Sunday School, 12:45pm @ 350 Old Orchard Dr., Beavertown (Smith Home) Family Fun Night, 5-7pm
Sunday School, 12:45pm	Tuesday 27
@ 350 Old Orchard Dr., Beavertown (Smith Home)	Choir Rehearsal, 6:30pm @ 845 Center Ave.
Tuesday 13	(Lyter Residence)
Choir Rehearsal, 6:30pm @ 845 Center Ave., Beaver Springs (Lyter Home)	Saturday 31 Vespers, 6pm
Saturday 17	
Vespers, 6pm	

January 2015