

THE TRISAGION

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

Fr. David Hired as Interim Priest

TO AID THE PARISH IN TRANSITIONING from a long pastorate to what we pray will be another, Fr. David Smith, Priest-in-Charge of the Chapel of the Holy Spirit, was hired by the Parish Council as Interim Priest last month. Father David begins a six-month assignment on March 11, the start of Great Lent.



According to Church best practice, an Interim Priest is a clergyman with parish experience who provides pastoral guidance and support to parishes that are between rectors. He creates an atmosphere for the parish to rediscover its mission, vision, and identity while ensuring the community continues its ministry and outreach, as opposed to “coasting” until the new rector arrives. The Interim Priest is not a candidate for the permanent position; instead his charge is to help the new rector assume his role smoothly and effectively.

Father David will be available for pastoral appointments in his Trinity House office on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. He will hear the confessions of all the members of the parish—Wednesdays at Holy Trinity and Saturdays at the Chapel. Moreover, his position allows Holy Trinity to conduct weekday services such as Annunciation and other Feasts according to its regular practice, including Clean Week, Holy Week, and Bright Week. On the condition of both our local clergy and the Archdiocese, neither Fr. David’s care of the Chapel of the Holy Spirit, nor its current Saturday-Sunday liturgical schedule, will be disrupted. God has planted His vineyard in Snyder County and now is not the time to uproot it, a mere few years before it too can support a full-time priest.

The plan to hire a transitional priest originated as one of three proposals presented by His Eminence Archbishop Melchisedek to the Transition Team during their meetings late last year. As Lent 2019 drew near, this course of action grew in favor as it allows the new rector (who remains known only to God) to move between school years instead of during a time of intense preparation for the Feast of the Resurrection of Christ. Last month, Fr. David sought and received the blessing of His Eminence to serve as Interim. A proposal was then drafted by our local clergy and presented to the Parish Council at its regular February meeting. To aid the Council in making its decision, more than 50 members of the parish offered their feedback at a “Town Hall” meeting that was simulcast live via video and telephone. Hearing unanimous support, Council convened immediately thereafter to hire Fr. David.

The parish asks for your fervent prayers, especially for His Eminence as he vets and assigns the new rector (who will begin September 1); and for Fr. David, who will lead the parish in preparing for his pastorate. ■

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH
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Schedules

	COFFEE HOUR	GREETERS	TELLERS	SERVERS
March 10	BLINI/PANCAKE LUNCHEON*	J. Cadman and B. Haupt	M. Fedkin and H. Torbic	Team B
March 17	J. Cadman and J. Rush*	J. Petrengill and S. Petrengill	E. Ashmore & D. McNulty	Team A
March 24	SOUPPER SUNDAY*	D. Patel and R. Patel	M. Anthony and G. Cattell	Team B
March 31	R. Schrauf and D. Patel*	J. Cadman and J. Houser	B. Haupt and H. Torbic	Team A
April 7	H. Torbic and E. Chawla*	E. Bazilevska and M. Fedkin**	M. Fedkin and M. Fiori	Team B
April 14	Penn State OCF Students**	J. Fryncko, B. Haupt, & L. Swisher**	G. Cattell and D. McNulty	Team A

* Denotes fast

Team A: Z. Cadman, B. Oleynik, N. Patel, E. Scwisber, J. Scwisber, and J. Torbic. Altar Server Captains: D. Torbic and S. Oleynik
 Team B: A. Byganskiy, J. Cadman, N. McFarland, S. Patel, D. Stickers, and L. Torbic.

Quarterly Update from Council by Justin K. Houser

“But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”

– 1 Corinthians 15:57-58

We have indeed been challenged over the past few seasons of our life together. The steady numerical and spiritual growth of our congregation has been tempered by seasons of adversity; most recently, the illness and retirement of our rector, Fr. John, has left us without a pastor to guide us on the “narrow way” which leads to life (*Matt. 7:14*). Like the Apostles in the midst of the raging storm, during this time of transition, we must hold together, not taking our eyes off of the One who can rescue us from sinking in the depths surrounding us (*Matt. 14:30*).

Thanks be to God, our parish remains active in ministry and outreach. At our last council meeting, we learned of an enriching trip taken by some of our OCF students to St. Tikhon’s and St. Vladimir’s Seminaries. Our Chapel mission continues to grow. We sent a delegation to stand for the rights of the most vulnerable among us at the March for Life in January. Despite our challenges, we are maintaining a relatively full and beautiful cycle of worship services, including inspirational preaching, rich fellowship, and celebrations of the Feasts of Theophany (Jan. 6) and the Presentation of Our Lord (Feb. 2).

We also work on important improvements, both spiritual and material, for “everything God created is good” (*1 Tim. 4:4*). These projects include the installation of a new HVAC system to improve air quality in the nave, the funding of the future paving of the parking lot with parking rental revenues, the support of a seminarian, and extraordinary support of the Chapel to seed its

Holy Days this Month

THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS

Vespers: Sunday, Mar. 24, 4pm
(E. George, Icon)
(A.T. Pelikan, Litiya Bread)

Liturgy: Monday, Mar. 25, 6pm
(I. Andzhievskaya, Prospkhora)



Additional Liturgies:

DATE	TYPE	PROSPHORA
Wed., Mar. 13, 6pm	Presanctified	OCF
Wed., Mar. 20, 6pm	Presanctified	Sunday School
Wed., Mar. 27, 6pm	Presanctified	OCF
Wed., Apr. 3, 6pm	Presanctified	Sunday School
Wed., Apr. 10, 6pm	Presanctified	OCF

eventual self-sufficiency. Although the acquisition of Trinity House and the special appeal to purchase it is now behind us, much of the mortgage debt remains, and we must plan to fund this through our stewardship beginning next year. These goals were in view when we voted to approve our 2019 budget, and now we must strive to maintain our commitment to them. Because of inclement weather, our stewardship giving was only 53% of budget this past January. Let us look at this as an opportunity for growth and increased faithfulness.

As Great Lent approaches, like the stewards to whom the treasures of the kingdom were entrusted for a season while their master had gone away (*Matt. 25:14-30*), we ought not be fearful nor idle. Rather, as we prepare to be “that servant whom He shall find watching,” (*Troparion of Bridegroom Matins*) let us personally ask the Lord Jesus Christ to show us what more we might offer to Him to sustain our vibrant ministries in this era of transition. When our Lord again sends us a pastor, will our hearts and our parish be prepared for the work which awaits? ■

The Way of the Church is Love by St. Paisios

I once asked someone: “What type of warrior do you consider yourself to be? Christ’s warrior or temptation’s warrior? Are you aware that the evil of temptation also has its own warriors?” A Christian must not be fanatic; he must have love for and be sensitive towards all people. Those who inconsiderately toss out comments, even if they are true, can cause harm.

I once met a theologian who was extremely pious, but who had the habit of speaking to the (secular) people around him in a very blunt manner; his method penetrated so deeply that it shook them very severely. He told me once: “During a gathering, I said such and such a thing to a lady.” But the way that he said it, crushed her. “Look”, I said to him, “you may be tossing golden crowns studded with diamonds to other people, but the way that you throw them can smash heads, not only the sensitive ones, but the sound ones also.”

Let’s not stone our fellow-man in a so-called “Christian manner.” The person who—in the presence of others—checks someone for having sinned (or speaks in an im-passioned manner about a certain person), is not moved by the Spirit of God; he is moved by another spirit.

The way of the Church is *love*; it differs from the way of the legalists. The Church sees everything with tolerance and seeks to help each person, whatever he may have done, however sinful he may be... Someone who is truly in a spiritual state must possess and exemplify spiritual discernment; otherwise he will forever remain attached to the “letter of the Law”, and the letter of the Law can be quite deadly.

A truly humble person never behaves like a teacher; he will listen, and, whenever his opinion is requested, he responds humbly. In other words, he replies like a student. He who believes that he is capable of correcting others is filled with egotism.

A Loving Witness to Neighbors

On February 17, the Chapel of the Holy Spirit (CHS) hosted a Family Fun Night at the MACC (a recreational center in Beaver Springs). Several times a year, the Chapel rents the building for a few hours and invites the members of our community to join us. On each occasion, it gives us a chance to connect with our neighbors who may not walk through our church doors, and we can share a little piece of CHS with them.

With each subsequent Family Fun Night more and more people seem to come out, and at February’s gathering, we had nearly forty in attendance. We always have a competitive game of inter-generational kickball and share a meal together. The kids also had the opportunity to make treasure boxes out of egg cartons.

It was a great evening spent with families in our area. It is so important for us to be active and visible in our community and to plant a seed of the Orthodox faith. This event opens up opportunities to do just that and to spend time in fellowship with and serving our neighbors.

— Elya Kerstetter

A person that begins to do something with a good intention and eventually reaches an extreme point, lacks true discernment. His actions exemplify a latent type of egotism that is hidden beneath this behavior; he is unaware of it, because he does not know himself that well, which is why he goes to extremes.

Quite often, people begin with good intentions, but look where they may find themselves! This was the case with the “icon-worshippers” and the “iconoclasts” of the past: both cases were extremes! The former had reached the point of scraping off icons of Christ and placing the scrapings into the Chalice in order to “improve” Communion; the latter, on the other hand, burnt and totally discarded all icons. That is why the Church was obliged to place the icons in higher places, out of reach, and, when the dispute was over, lowered them so that we can venerate them and confer the appropriate honor to the persons portrayed therein. ■

■ CAMPUS AND YOUTH MINISTRY NEWS

Holy Trinity Youth Attend Winter “BeeTreat”

Last month, our Sunday School sponsored eight of our middle and high school students to attend the annual Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania Winter Youth Retreat in Harrisburg. They joined more than forty other youth at the two-day gathering.

The “BeeTreat” was led by Steven Christoforou (Steven was the host of the *Be the Bee* video podcasts) and focused on the disciplines of prayer, silence, and listening. The retreat began on Friday evening with a local woman discussing her inspiring ministry to homeless women and their children. Attendees then prepared a meal for the homeless. After viewing the movie *Up*, it was “lights out” as the kids camped out in the fellow-ship hall and church basement.

On Saturday, following the morning prayers, the students learned techniques on how to engage themselves and others in Christ through the Church. The day was interspersed with ice-breakers, one-on-one personal engagement activities, games, and food. The retreat ended with Vespers. The students were thankful to have had the opportunity to make new friends of their own faith. Here is what they said:

- “It’s good to be in the present.”
- “Relax and be there with God.”
- “There’s no right or wrong way to say a prayer.”
- “You need to be a good listener.”
- “The best place to pray is in a quiet place.”
- “Prayerful relaxation brings you closer to God.”
- “I learned how to have a good conversation.”

Sunday School Kids Have a Great Time on Wheels

The Sunday School had a “fun day” last month going in circles at the Penn Skates roller rink. There were lots of thrills, a few spills, and a whole lot of talent on display—especially during the limbo competition.



TOP: Sunday School students had a great time at their annual Fun Day. BOTTOM: The second- through fifth-grade class prays before baking Holy Bread to be used at Lenten liturgies. Visit holytrinity-oca.org to see photos from these and other events.

Students Bake Holy Bread for Lenten Services

As part of their learning and participating in the sacraments and worship of the Church, students in both of our Sunday School and campus ministry programs prepared and baked prospora (which means “offering”) to be used during the Presanctified Liturgies of Great Lent.

Prospora baking has a rich history. In ancient times, nearly everyone would bake prospora and would bring it to church, where only the best were chosen for the Eucharist. Today, in most parishes (including ours) a group of dedicated and faithful bakers prepare the prospora at home. In the Greek tradition—which our parish follows—there is one large loaf signifying the one Body of Christ. In the Slavic tradition, five small loaves are made recalling the feeding of the 5,000. The holy bread is made in two layers to represent the two-fold nature of Christ and the uniting of heaven and earth. Each is marked with IC-XC NIKA (“Jesus Christ Conquers”) in the center. We thank our students and teachers for giving of themselves to make these special offerings. ■

Help Us Host a Deanery Dinner

The parish has an opportunity this month to provide hospitality on Sunday, March 24 to fellow members of the Eastern Deanery. After Great Vespers and Litiya for Annunciation Eve, we will host a Lenten dinner for our guests. If you love to prepare meals, sides, or desserts, see Deacon Alexander or call (814) 231-2855.

Lenten Bookstore Feature

Are you looking for a way to keep your family engaged in the true spiritual nourishment Lent has to offer? *Tending the Garden of Our Hearts* offers family devotions based on the scriptures for each day of Great Lent, including questions to discuss and ponder and an appendix full of hands-on activities to bring the lessons of the season to life. Whether you use it every day or dip into it occasionally as time permits, this book will help the whole family get more out of this crucial season of the Orthodox year.

Utilize the Parish Library this Lent

On the first three Sundays of March, the Library will again have a selection of books out during coffee hour. Take advantage of this opportunity to pick out books to borrow for Lenten reading. There will even be a selection of Lenten cookbooks to borrow. See Anna Stickle or email librarian@holytrinity-oca.org if you have any questions about the library or how it works.

Youth Association March Events

Mark your 5th- to 8th-grader’s calendar for our next Jr. OYA gathering: Saturday, March 16 from 9 a.m. to noon for a hands-on service project at the Arboretum. Participants will bring native wildflowers back to the wooded area known as Hartley Woods. Work clothes, gloves, and shoes will be the attire for the day. The High School group will also meet in March for a game night at Trinity House on March 17 at 6 p.m.

Knitting Ministry Returns in April

The Knitting Ministry at Holy Trinity will take its own hiatus during Penn State’s Spring Break, but it will return to its “first-Monday” time slot next month. Come see us at Trinity House at 6:30 p.m. on April 1.

■ LENTEN DRIVE 2019

“Inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these, you did it to Me”

— Matthew 25:40

Each year on the Sunday of the Last Judgement we hear Christ’s astounding promise that we can minister to Him—show our love for Him—by serving those in our community who are the “least of the brethren.” One specific group Christ mentions is the sick. With His words in mind, the *Matthew 25* ministry has chosen Centre Volunteers in Medicine (CVIM) as the recipient of donations to our annual Lenten appeal.

CVIM offers medical and dental care, case management, and medication assistance at no cost to uninsured individuals in our community who have no other access to health care. Volunteer physicians, nurse practitioners, nurses, dentists, pharmacists, social workers, and a small paid staff provide continuity of care to help patients improve their quality of life and become healthy contributors to the community. Last year CVIM provided an outstanding number and range of services including 2,019 medical clinic visits, 1,979 dental clinic visits, 313 lab visits, 3,533 prescriptions, and 514 case management visits. In the coming weeks we’ll be sharing more about how you can help through monetary donations, donations of office and cleaning supplies to help the clinic run smoothly, and even opportunities for volunteering at the clinic.

Each Christmas we proclaim, “God is with us!” May we continue in the joy of His presence by serving Him this Lent in some of the least of our brothers and sisters in the community. —Melody Thompson

What Donations Can Provide

- **\$500:** One-month supply of diabetes medication
- **\$250:** Medical X-ray for one patient.
- **\$100:** Lab testing for thyroid disorder.
- **\$50:** Dental cleaning and fluoride for a child.
- **\$25:** Thirty minutes of time with a case manager who can help someone make healthy choices like preparing a budget or quitting an addiction.

Holy Trinity Calendar

All events take place at 119 South Sparks Street in State College, unless where noted. Events listed at **Trinity House** (T.H.) take place at 123 South Sparks Street, in State College.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
March 3 Sunday of the Last Judgment (Meatfare). (No Sunday School) Divine Liturgy, 10am (Third & Sixth Hours, 9:40am) Memorials for Robert Aurand (1-yr.), Anna Graybill (1-yr.) & Luidmila Listvinsky (40 day), 11:30am	4 <i>(No Knitting/Crocheting Ministry)</i>	5 Vespers of Cheesefare Wednesday, 5:30pm	6 Vespers, 5:30pm Confessions, 6:30pm	7 Vespers of Cheesefare Friday, 5:30pm Choir Rehearsal, 7pm	8	9 Forty Martyrs of Sebaste Great Vespers, 6pm
10 Forgiveness Sunday (Cheesefare) Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am Blini/Pancake Luncheon, 12pm Forgiveness Vespers, 7pm OCF National Day of Prayer Service (Hour 5 of 24), 10pm-11am	11 GREAT LENT BEGINS Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete, 7pm	12 Catechesis ("Orthodoxy 2.0"), 9am @ Trinity House Conference Room Homeless Ministry, 4pm @ 217 E. Nittany Ave. Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete, 7pm	13 Confessions, 4:30pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, 6pm Lenten Potluck, 7:30pm	14 Penn State OCF: "Stay to Pray" Dinner at Holy Trinity, 6pm Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete, 7pm	15 Lenten Vespers, 5:30pm Salutations of the Theotokos, 6:15pm	16 Jr. OYA (gr. 5-8) Service Project, 9am-12pm @ The Arboretum at Penn State University Baptism of Lena Jane Neil, 11am Great Vespers, 6pm
17 Sunday of Orthodoxy Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Children's Icon Procession, 11:45am Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers, 4pm @ St. John's, 427 1st St., Johnstown OYA Game Night, 6pm @ T.H. Atty L.	18	19 Catechesis ("Orthodoxy 2.0"), 9am @ Trinity House Conference Room Parish Council Meeting, 7pm @ Trinity House Conference Room	20 Confessions, 4:30pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, 6pm Lenten Potluck, 7:30pm	21 Choir Rehearsal, 7pm Penn State OCF: Dinner and Discussion, 7pm @ 124 Pasquerilla Center	22 Lenten Vespers, 5:30pm Salutations of the Theotokos, 6:15pm	23 Sunday School "Soup-er Sunday" Food Prep., 4:30pm @ Parish Hall Five-Year Memorial for Fr. Alexander Atty, 5:30pm Great Vespers, 6pm
24 St. Gregory Palamas Sunday School, 9am (Locations vary; All classes begin in the Parish Hall.) Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Souper Sun. Charity Luncheon, 12pm Great Vespers with Litiya, 4pm Lenten Dinner, 5:30pm	25 ANNUNCIATION OF THEOTOKOS Vespers and Divine Liturgy, 6pm	26 Synaxis of the Archangel Gabriel Catechesis ("Orthodoxy 2.0"), 9am @ Trinity House Conference Room	27 Confessions, 4:30pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, 6pm Lenten Potluck, 7:30pm	28 Penn State OCF: "Stump the Priest" Night, 7pm @ 124 Pasquerilla Center	29 Lenten Vespers, 5:30pm Salutations of the Theotokos, 6:15pm	30 Choir Rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm
31 Veneration of the Precious Cross St. Innocent, Apostle to America Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Parents Session 12pm Archdiocesan Lenten Vespers, 5pm @ Nevsky Cathedral, Allison Park	April 1 Knitting/Crocheting Ministry, 6:30pm @ Trinity House Conference Room	2 Catechesis ("Orthodoxy 2.0"), 9am @ Trinity House Conference Room	3 Confessions, 4:30pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, 6pm Lenten Potluck, 7:30pm	4 Penn State OCF: Dinner and Discussion, 7pm @ 122 Pasquerilla Center	5 Penn State OCF Spring Service Trip, departs 5pm (returns Sunday, 4pm) Lenten Vespers, 5:30pm	6 Sunday School Teacher Meeting, 5:15pm @ Trinity House Conference Room Great Vespers, 6pm
7 St. John of The Ladder (Climacus) Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am (Third & Sixth Hours, 9:40am) Deanery Lenten Vespers, 4pm @ St. John the Baptist Church, 785 Blaire Rd., Blairsville (Blacklick)	8	9 Catechesis ("Orthodoxy 2.0"), 9am @ Trinity House Conference Room Homeless Ministry, 4pm @ Centre House, 217 E. Nittany Ave.	10 Confessions, 4:30pm 40-Day Memorial for Stephanie Kasales, 5:30pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, 6pm Lenten Potluck, 7:30pm	11 Choir Rehearsal, 7pm Penn State OCF: Dinner and Discussion, 7pm @ 122 Pasquerilla Center	12 Lenten Vespers, 5:30pm Akathist to the Theotokos, 6:15pm	13 Annual Parish Work Day to Prepare for Pascha, 9am-1pm (Breakfast Provided) Great Vespers, 6pm

Chapel Calendar

All events take place at 145 North Kern Street in Beavertown, unless where noted.

Saturday 2 Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions	Tuesday 19 Choir Rehearsal, 6pm
Sunday 3 Last Judgment (Meatfare) Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Fellowship and Study of the Orthodox Faith, following	Friday 22 Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm Lenten Potluck, 7:30pm
Tuesday 5 Choir Rehearsal, 6pm	Saturday 23 Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions
Saturday 9 Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions	Sunday 24 St. Gregory Palamas Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am)
Sunday 10 Forgiveness Sunday (Cheesefare) Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Forgiveness Vespers, 12pm	Monday 25 "Hats & Blankets for Babies" Knitting Outreach, 6:30pm
Friday 15 Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm Lenten Potluck (i.e., Bread, Soup, and Salad), 7:30pm	Tuesday 26 Choir Rehearsal, 6pm
Saturday 16 Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions	Friday 29 Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm Lenten Potluck, 7:30pm
Sunday 17 Sunday of Orthodoxy Hours, Divine Liturgy, and Study of the Faith, 9:40am	Saturday 30 Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions
	Sunday 31 Veneration of the Cross / St. Innocent of America Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Fellowship and Study of the Orthodox Faith, following

March 2019