

THE TRISAGION

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

Our Journey to the City of God



Fr. David Smith addresses faithful after the Rite of Forgiveness, a service allowing participants to begin Great Lent by forgiving one another so that God will forgive them. The Choir sings the same Paschal canon which will be sung after midnight on April 28.

by Fr. David Smith

IT IS HARD TO IMAGINE we are fast approaching the mid-point of Great and Holy Lent with the Sunday of the Venerable Precious Cross! We are also fast approaching the completion of my third week as your interim priest. My mind still is processing all that has transpired so rapidly over the last couple of months: from “driving Miss Daisy around” (my former job on weekdays) to hitting the pavement full speed with the start of Lent. This wasn’t what I had planned or mapped out. But God has His plans and purposes which we are called upon to trust and to walk-in accordingly one day at a time, one step at a time, ever entrusting ourselves to Him. It is only as we do, we find the peace He alone offers us and the wholeness (*holiness?*) that completes us in His image.

(continued, see FROM FATHER DAVID’S STUDY, page 2)

A Great and Holy Saturday Together!

THE ENTIRE PARISH will celebrate Great and Holy Saturday together—both the Vespers and the Paschal Vigil, the night that is “brighter than the day.” This year, the Chapel of the Holy Spirit’s three-day Triduum (April 25-28) will be modified slightly to include Holy Friday’s Offices of the Passion of Christ (sung on Holy Thursday) and “Un-nailing” Vespers, both at 6 p.m., respectively. Faithful from Holy Trinity will travel to Beavertown on Saturday morning; Chapel faithful will come to State College that night for Pascha. Church-sponsored travel to and from both places is available by calling (814) 231-2855. ■

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH
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Schedules

	COFFEE HOUR	GREETERS	TELLERS	SERVERS
April 7	H. Torbic and E. Chawla*	J. Cadman and E. Miranda**	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
April 21	Russian Ladies*	L. Radomskiy and M. Radomskiy	M. Anthony and M. Fiori	Team B
April 28	PASCHA	<i>All Available Greeters</i>	B. Haupt** and H. Torbic	Team A
May 5	I. Andrzhevskiy and L. Radomskiy	J. Cadman and J. Houser	M. Fedkin and D. McNulty	Team B
May 12	E. George and K. Oleynik	J. Pettengill and S. Pettengill	M. Anthony and G. Cattell	Team A

* Denotes fast
** Denotes switch change

Team A: Z. Cadman, B. Oleynik, N. Patel, E. Swisher, J. Swisher, and J. Torbic.
Team B: A. Buyanskiy, J. Cadman, N. McFarland, S. Patel, D. Stieckes, and L. Torbic.

Altar Server Captains:
D. Torbic and S. Oleynik

■ FROM FATHER DAVID'S STUDY

God is With and Travels Alongside Us (continued from pg. 1)

And, you know, this is very much a theme of Lent, isn't it? Like Abraham of old, God beckons us to follow Him, His voice, His Word, to trust Him Who, in every way, has been made one with us, except for sin. He is the Great and Good Shepherd of both the fertile fields and the barren wilderness, of the mountains of transfiguration and of the valley of the shadow of death. "I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff, they have comforted me." God doesn't promise to necessarily circumvent the valley of the shadow, but to walk with us through it because He's "been there and done that."

It is my joy, my pleasure, my privilege to be allowed to journey with you all! May God—Emmanuel—bless our time in the wilderness together as we journey to Mount Zion and to the City of our God! ■

— Fr. David

Confession Schedule

In order to remain in good standing, parish members fulfill a Lenten requirement of Confession and Communion. Father David is available for confessions at Holy Trinity Wednesdays before the Presanctified Liturgy beginning at 4:30 p.m., as well as Saturday, April 6 and Saturday, April 20 before and after Great Vespers. At the Chapel, Fr. David is available each Saturday with the exception of the above two dates. Parishioners who sought or wish to seek priests from outside the parish to have their confession heard must see Fr. David for a blessing and notify him after it takes place.

Security Team Ministry Forming

With the blessing of Fr. David, a "Security and First Responder" team is being assembled this month. Comprised of parishioners responsible for the health and safety of all who attend Holy Trinity, participants will mostly work behind the scenes to lock/open doors and identify areas of concern for the Parish Council to address. See a deacon for details.

Feast Days this Month

THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM

VESPERS: Sat., April 20, 6pm
(A.T. Pelikan, Litiya Bread; P. Doty, Icon)

MATINS: Sun., April 21, 8:50am

LITURGY: Sun., April 21, 10am



GREAT AND HOLY PASCHA: THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

VIGIL: Sat., April 27, 11:30pm
(L. Radomsky, Icon)



Additional Daily Liturgies:

DATE	TYPE/FOR	PROSPHORA
Wed., April 3, 6pm	Presanctified	OCF
Wed., April 10, 6pm	Presanctified	P. Doty
Fri., April 12, 6pm	Presanctified	Sunday School
Wed., April 17, 9am	Presanctified	OCF
Sat., April 20, 9am	Lazarus	A. Stickers
Mon., April 22, 9am	Presanctified	A.T. Pelikan
Tue., April 23, 9am	Presanctified	A.T. Pelikan
Wed., April 24, 10am	Presanctified	A.T. Pelikan
Thu., April 25, 10am	Vesperal	P. Doty
Thu., May 2, 8am	Paschal	Sunday School



Youth Dedicate Time for Service

The Junior Orthodox Youth Association (OYA) spent a chilly March Saturday staking trees at the Arboretum. Both the high school and middle school groups will meet this month at Trinity House on Sunday nights to grow together in Christ. ■

■ CAMPUS MINISTRY

How Liturgical Prayer Saved My Life

My alarm goes off at 6:30 a.m. this morning. I hop in the shower, get dressed, say my morning prayers, and head off to church for the Royal Hours... The Royal Hours is, objectively speaking, an astonishingly beautiful service, speaking of the immense power and humility of God to become incarnate as a baby boy in order to redeem humanity. [But I feel] none of that beauty.

You see, I have a disease called major depressive disorder. The main symptom of this disease is the inability to feel pleasure and meaning in things that used to feel pleasurable and meaningful. And so even though I am active in the Church and Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF), try to say my prayers every day, and try to pay attention during the services, I hardly ever feel anything positive during them. On the contrary, I spend a lot of my time in prayer internally wondering whether God is listening or not, questioning why He would give me such a screwed-up brain if He supposedly loves me so much.

And yet, the Church proclaims that God is good. The Church tells me that Christ came to earth and suffered in the flesh, being crucified and resurrected in order to destroy death and raise the dead from the tombs. And I really do believe these things with all my heart, even when my brain is telling me otherwise.

I pray because I believe Christ rose from the dead. "I believed, therefore I have spoken" proclaimed King David in the psalms, and so I, too, speak in prayer because I believe (*Psalms 115:10*). This is why the services of the Church are so important to me: they call me to pray even when I don't feel like it, even when my brain is giving me every reason not to. I need the constant call of the Church to "again and again in peace pray to the Lord." I need the reminders that God loves me, even when my brain is incapable of seeing it.

The Importance of Vespers

The recovery by the Church of the true spirit and meaning of the liturgy, as an all-embracing vision of life, including heaven and earth, time and eternity, spirit and matter and as the power of that vision to transform our lives... For, as we have seen, the only real justification of the parish as organization is precisely to make the liturgy, the cult of the Church as complete, as Orthodox, as adequate as possible, and it is the liturgy, therefore, that is the basic criterion of the only real "success" of the parish.

Let the Saturday service—this unique weekly celebration of Christ's resurrection, this essential "source" of our Christian understanding of time and life, be served week after week—then at least the various "expressions" and "leaders" of the parish: committees, commissions and boards, may become aware of the simple fact that their claim: "we work for the Church" is an empty claim, for if the "Church" for which they work is not primarily a praying and worshipping Church it is not "church", whatever their work, effort and enthusiasm. Is it not indeed a tragic paradox: we build ever greater and richer and more beautiful churches and we pray less and less in them?

— Fr. Alexander Schmemmann

God loves you, too. He loves each one of us more than we know how to love. And it is this love, given to me through the Church's discipline of liturgical prayer, that encourages me to pray, even when I can't feel that love around me.

This discipline, I believe, has saved my life on more than one occasion from the dark and self-destructive thoughts that often haunt those of us with depression. I hope that the same love of God also encourages you to pray, regardless of whether you feel that love or not. ■

EDITOR'S NOTE: This article is written by an anonymous OCF student for the National OCF blog (ocf.net/blog). Holy Trinity directs \$3,500 of its annual operating budget to support campus ministry. Thank you.

■ ORTHODOX SPIRITUALITY

Expect God to Do the Unexpected

God doesn't do things the way we think he should. That theme emerges [when] listening to people explain why they left Christianity based on supposedly intellectual arguments. God doesn't fit our expectations. He is not like us; He is wholly different.

Although not put in exactly these words, the argument goes something like this: If God is perfect and good, he should have revealed himself more clearly, he should have preserved the Scriptures without any textual variants, he should have produced a Bible less open to so many different interpretations (it should somehow be trans-historical and trans-cultural), he should have completely removed evil and suffering right away.

These arguments could be rephrased: If I were God, I would have done things differently. In comparison to our enlightened reason, God's actions are seen as wanting and deficient. Our preferences, wisdom, rationality, and expectations become the standard to which God must submit or be rejected as false and untrustworthy. There seems to be no place left for a humble assessment of the limits and frailty of human ability and rationality.

God often does not do things the way that we as humans think he should. The clearest example of this is Jesus's crucifixion. Paul argues that *"we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men"* (1 Corinthians 1:23–25).

Paul is not embracing blind faith, or anti-intellectualism; he is recognizing the limits of human rationality and the reality that God is not bound to act as we think he should. The crucifixion may have been scandalous to Jews and ridiculous to Gentiles, but it was God's plan to save and restore his image-bearing representatives.

by
Alexander
Stewart

On Holy Scripture and Tradition

If someone wants to be protected from tricks and remain healthy in the faith, he must confine his faith first to the authority of the Holy Scriptures, and secondly to the Tradition of the Church... This is because not everyone understands the Scriptures in the same way... so that it is possible to get therefrom as many thoughts as there are heads. Therefore it is necessary to be guided by the understanding of the Church... What is tradition? It is that which has been understood by everyone, everywhere and at all times... that which you have received, and not that which you have thought up... So then, our job is not to lead religion where we wish it go, but to follow it where it leads, and not give that which is our own to our heirs, but to guard that which has been given to us.

— St. Vincent of Lerins

As you reflect this [Lenten] season on your life, your struggles, your disappointments, your victories, your faith, and your hope, remember that God is God and we are not. Jesus's death on the cross was simultaneously foolishness to the wise in the world, to those who are perishing, and a demonstration of the power and wisdom of God to those of us who believe. He doesn't always do things the way we might expect or wish he would, but when it comes to God, shouldn't we know by now to expect the unexpected?

Faith in God certainly doesn't make us safe (as if we were living in a magical bubble in which nothing bad could happen and we were guaranteed success at every turn), but it does make us incredibly secure. Because He is faithful and good, we can trust and worship without always completely understanding. Christianity did not begin, survive, and expand primarily through intellectual argumentation but through a demonstration of [Christ's power]. ■

EDITOR'S NOTE: Alexander Stewart is academic dean and associate professor of New Testament language and literature at Tyndale Theological Seminary in Badhoevedorp, the Netherlands.

Give Your Best: Join the Choir

Do you know what is the best part of being in the Choir at Holy Trinity?—Belonging to a group of people who desire to give their best to God. The Choir is made up of ordinary people who have ordinary lives and yet share their time and talents for the purpose of glorifying God. Perhaps you have considered singing in the Choir but for whatever reason have put it off. If you might like to sing, talk to Karen Cattell. She would be happy to assess your abilities and to see how you would fit into the team. Email choir@holytrinity-oca.org to learn more.

Choir Workshop Scheduled

Mark your calendars: The Choir will sponsor a choral workshop the weekend of June 7-9 (the week after the Ascension and before the parish patronal feast of Pentecost) with renowned musicians Benedict and Maria Sheehan. Choir members should plan to attend; all others are welcome to come learn as well.

TLC-2 Looking for Volunteers

Holy Trinity's TLC-2 ministry provides meals to families of newborns. Volunteers support young families while mom and dad heal, bond with the newborn, and adjust to life. If you would like to provide a meal to one or more of the four expected births this spring and summer, please contact Corene Swisher at tlc-2@holytrinity-oca.org.

CDs on Sale in the Bookstore

The Parish Bookstore is downsizing its collection of liturgical music CDs. Check the "Sale Item" label on the main display. Most items are half off.

HTOC Knitting Ministry Returns

The Chapel's monthly knitting ministry is postponed until May because of Holy Week, but the companion ministry at Holy Trinity will meet in April and May. Participants lovingly knit/crochet hats, blankets and scarves for those in need. Please consider joining us in fellowship and support! Your skill is helpful, but not a necessity as we will teach. The Holy Trinity group meets the first Monday of each month from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Trinity House.

■ NEWS AND NOTES

OCCIF Helps Orthodox Investors Support Missions

LODI, CALIFORNIA [occif.org] — The Orthodox Church Capital Improvement Fund (OCCIF) and its new Investment Certificate Program provide a way to make funds more accessible to the Church for building projects. Now in its fifth year, OCCIF operates similarly to secular lending institutions, but instead of profiting bank shareholders, money is returned to the ministry's loan pool and then applied to other Church projects. To make its competitive interest rates available to more Orthodox financiers, the minimum one can invest is now \$1,000. To learn more, visit occif.org. ■

For the Record

BAPTISM

➤ **Lena Jane (Nina) Neil**, daughter of Curtis and Stasia Neil, baptized March 16, sponsored by Tanya Roberts and Victor Baskevich. **Many years!**

BIRTH

➤ **Elliot Vincent Ashore**, son of Evan and Amber (Mary) Ashmore, born March 29, weighing 9 lbs. 0.1 oz., measuring 21 inches long. **Many years!**

CATECHUMEN

➤ **Will Baumgardner** (PSU OCF, Russian, 2021) was enrolled into the Holy Catechumenate by Fr. Anthony Roeber at Holy Trinity on March 17. **Many years!**

CHAMPION

➤ **Anthony Cassar** (PSU, Psychology, 2019) won the NCAA heavyweight wrestling title on March 23. He went 30-1 this season. **Congratulations!**

ORDINATION

➤ **Nathan Clausson** (PSU OCF, Religious Studies, 2003) was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by His Eminence Archbishop Mark on March 3. **Axios!**

YOUR GENEROSITY

➤ **\$350 to Out of the Cold** and **\$550 to individuals** last month through the **Matthew 25** general fund. **Thank you** for your ongoing support.

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
31 Veneration of the Precious Cross St. Innocent, Apostle to America Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am (<i>Hours, 9:40am</i>) Parents Session 12pm Archdiocesan Lenten Vespers, 5pm @ <i>Nevsky Cathedral, Allison Park</i>	April 1 Knitting/Crocheting Ministry, 6:30pm @ <i>Trinity House Conference Room</i>	2 Catechesis ("Orthodoxy 2.0"), 9am @ <i>Trinity House Conference Room</i>	3 Confessions, 4:30pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, 6pm Lenten Potluck, 7:30pm	4 Penn State OCF: Dinner and Discussion, 7pm @ <i>122 Pasquerilla Center</i>	5 Penn State OCF Spring Service Trip, departs 5pm (<i>returns Sunday, 5pm</i>) Lenten Vespers, 5:30pm Salutations to the Theotokos, 6:15pm	6 Sunday School Teacher Meeting, 5:15pm @ <i>Trinity House Conference Room</i> Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following
7 St. John of The Ladder (Climacus) Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am (<i>Hours, 9:40am</i>) Deanery Lenten Vespers, 4pm @ <i>St. John the Baptist Church, 785 Blaire Rd., Blairsville (Blacklick)</i> OYA (gr. 9-12) Activity, 6pm @ <i>T.H.</i>	8	9 Catechesis ("Orthodoxy 2.0"), 9am @ <i>Trinity House Conference Room</i> Homeless Ministry, 4pm @ <i>217 E. Nittany Ave.</i> Parish Council Mtg., 7pm @ <i>Trinity House Conf. Rm.</i>	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 @ <i>122 Pasquerilla Center</i>	12 Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, 6pm	13 Annual Parish Work Day to Prepare for Pascha, 9am-1pm (<i>Breakfast Provided</i>) Great Vespers, 6pm (<i>No Confessions</i>)
14 St. Mary of Egypt Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am (<i>Hours, 9:40am</i>) Deanery Lenten Vespers, 4pm @ <i>St. Nicholas Church, 108 N. 3rd St., DuBois</i> Jr. OYA (gr. 5-8) Activity, 5pm @ <i>T.H.</i>	15	16 Catechesis ("Orthodoxy 2.0"), 9am @ <i>Trinity House Conference Room</i>	17 Confessions, 4:30pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, 6pm Lenten Potluck, 7:30pm	18 Penn State OCF: Dinner and Pascha Prep. Night, 7pm @ <i>Trinity House Atty Lounge</i>	19 Vespers, 5:30pm	20 Lazarus Saturday Hours/Div. Liturgy, 8:40am Altar Soc. Decorating, 11am Choir Rehearsal, 4pm Youth Pascha Wksp., 4pm Great Vespers w/Litya, 6pm Confessions, following
21 PALM SUNDAY Matins w/Palm Procession, 8:50am Sunday School/Palm Prep., 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am Myrrhophores Practice, 12pm Bridegroom Matins of Holy Monday, 7pm	22 HOLY MONDAY Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, 9am Bridegroom Matins of Holy Tuesday, 7pm	23 HOLY TUESDAY Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, 9am Bridegroom Matins of Holy Wednesday, 7pm	24 HOLY WEDNESDAY Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, 9am Matins of Holy Thursday/ Holy Unction, 7pm	25 HOLY THURSDAY Vespers/Divine Liturgy of St. Basil, 10am Penn State OCF: Dinner at Holy Trinity, 6pm Matins of Holy Friday (12 Passion Gospels), 7pm	26 HOLY FRIDAY Royal Hours, 10am Altar Soc. Decorating, 12pm Myrrh. Flower Prep., 12pm (Unnailing) Vespers, 4pm Matins of Holy Saturday (Lamentations), 7pm	27 HOLY SATURDAY (<i>Vesperal Divine Liturgy, 10am @ CHS. Rides depart HTOC, 8:30am</i>) Baptisms/Chrismations, 9pm @ <i>Narthex</i> Paschal Vigil, 11:30pm
28 GREAT AND HOLY PASCHA: THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST Matins/Hours/Divine Liturgy, 12am Blessing of Baskets/ Festal Meal, 2:30am (<i>Agape Vespers, 5pm @ CHS</i>)	Bright Monday	Bright Tuesday	May 1 Bright Wednesday Paschal Vespers, 5:30pm	2 Bright Thursday Paschal Divine Liturgy, 8am (<i>Paschal Hours, 7:50am</i>)	3 Bright Friday Annual Men's BBQ, 6pm @ <i>Trinity House.</i>	4 Bright Saturday Great Vespers, 6pm
5 St. Thomas Sunday Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am (<i>Third & Sixth Hours, 9:40am</i>) Sunday School Egg Hunt, 12pm @ <i>Holmes-Foster Park</i>	6	7	8 Vespers, 5:30pm Confessions, following Parish Council Meeting, 7pm @ <i>Trinity House Conference Room</i>	9	10	11 Great Vespers, 6pm

Chapel Calendar

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

Friday 5 Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm Lenten Potluck, 7:30pm	Saturday 20 Great Vespers with Litya, 6pm
Saturday 6 Great Vespers, 6pm	Sunday 21 PALM SUNDAY Divine Liturgy with Palm Procession, 10am (<i>Hours, 9:40am</i>)
Sunday 7 St. John Climacus Divine Liturgy, 10am (<i>Hours, 9:40am</i>) Fellowship, following	Thursday 25 HOLY THURSDAY Matins of Holy Friday (12 Passion Gospels), 6pm
Tuesday 9 Choir Rehearsal, 6pm	Friday 26 HOLY FRIDAY "Unnailing" Vespers of Holy Friday, 6pm
Friday 12 Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm Lenten Potluck, 7:30pm	Saturday 27 HOLY SATURDAY Vespers and Divine Liturgy of St. Basil, 10am (<i>Nocturns, Paschal Matins, and Paschal Divine Liturgy, 11:30pm @ HTOC</i>)
Saturday 13 Chapel "Spruce Up", 10am Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions	Sunday 28 GREAT AND HOLY PASCHA: THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST Agape Vespers, 5pm Agape Dinner, following
Sunday 14 St. Mary of Egypt Divine Liturgy, 10am (<i>Hours, 9:40am</i>) Fellowship, following	Saturday 4 Bright Saturday Great Vespers, 6pm
Tuesday 16 Choir Rehearsal, 6pm	
Friday 19 Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm Lenten Potluck, 7:30pm	

April 2019