

# God Transforms the Wilderness



The Sunday School prays the opening prayers of the Divine Liturgy with His Eminence Archbishop Melchisedek before heading to class. While His Eminence did not announce that he had chosen a new rector, he did provide exhortation and encouragement to the faithful, and he informally met with the Parish Council to discuss next steps. The parish has been officially vacant since January.

A COUPLE OF SUNDAYS AGO we heard the story of the demon-possessed man of the Gadarenes (*Lk. 8:26–39*). In the evangelist’s account, the demoniac is said to be “driven by the demon into the wilderness.” I am struck by that phrase “driven. . . into the wilderness.” The same thing was said of our Lord following His Baptism in the Jordan: “Immediately the [Holy] Spirit drove Him into the wilderness” (*Mk. 1:12*). The wilderness (a lonely haunt of jackals and other creatures though not necessarily a desert place) is significant in Israel’s salvation history. They are sent by God into the wilderness to worship Him after being saved by the hand of Moses the Prophet of God from 400 years of bondage to the tyranny of Pharaoh and the darkness of Egypt, enslaved to the brutish whims of taskmasters who had scourged them repeatedly, forcing families to abort their sons upon giving birth!

(continued, see FROM FR. DAVID’S STUDY, next page)

## Children Raise \$4,000 to Attend an Orthodox Camp Next Summer

THIS JUST IN! On Sunday, November 3, seven children served a Mexican-themed lunch in order to attend an Orthodox summer camp in 2020. Moved by the students’ desire to grow in their faith and a rousing speech by Antiochian Village Camp counselor and parishioner Simeon Acker, generous parishioners had pushed them past their goal of \$4,000 before the delicious meal of tacos, beans, rice, (virgin) margaritas, and spiced brownies was over! The kids thank all those who gave—especially Paul Supko and an anonymous donor who contributed more than \$1,400 each—so that \$400 and \$800 scholarships can be awarded to campers attending for one- and two-weeks, respectively. ■

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## Schedules

	COFFEE HOUR	GREETERS	TELLERS	SERVERS
November 10	L. Georgiou and B. & N. Troyan	E. Bazilevskaya and M. Fedkin	M. Fiori and H. Torbic	Team A
November 17	Russian Ladies I/**	B. Haupt and A. Stickle	M. Fedkin and D. McNulty	Team B
November 24	A.T. Pelikan and H. Torbic**	L. & M. Radonsky and L. Swisher	M. Anthony and G. Cattell	Team A
December 1	J. Miranda and D. Van Duin**	J. Cadman and J. Houser	B. Haupt and H. Torbic	Team B
December 8	I. Andzhiivsky and L. Radonsky**	J. Pettengill and S. Pettengill	M. Fedkin and M. Fiori	Team A
December 15	Russian Ladies II**	D. Patel and R. Patel	G. Cattell and D. McNulty	Team B
<div><div>* Denotes switch change</div><div>** Denotes fast</div><div>Team A: A. Byjovskiy, Z. Cadman, B. Olegnyk, N. Patel, C. Schrauf, J. Swisher, and J. Torbic. Captains: D. Torbic and S. Olegnyk</div><div>Team B: J. Cadman, N. McFarland, S. Patel, D. Stickle, E. Swisher, and L. Torbic.</div></div>				

# Saved Through and From the Wilderness

The wilderness was to be a place and a time of renewal and refreshment as the elect of God Who had made His Covenant of love with them at Mt. Sinai. They were His treasured possession called out from among all the nations of the earth solely because of the Lord’s love (*Ex. 19:3–6; Dt. 7:6–8*).

The wilderness was a time and a place to be with God in communion and fellowship, but it became a time and a place of judgment when Israel rebelled against God—for 40 years they traversed the wilderness as a result. And yet, by God’s infinite grace, mercy, divine compassion, and longsuffering, the wilderness was transformed to a place and a time of redemption and sanctification that prepared them—through cleansing and purification—for the Promised Land (*Is. 35:1–10*). The wilderness can be and is a time and a place where God and man meet, where God meets His people to draw them unto Himself, to embrace them in His bosom as a shepherd his sheep. This is one reason why the wilderness was the preferred place for those souls seeking God, who would go out into the deserted places to do spiritual battle with the demons—St. Anthony the Great is a prime example. We find the Forerunner and Baptizer there as well. It is there our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ engages in the spiritual disciplines of intense prayer and fasting, and it is there He engages the devil in a showdown of cosmic import by being tempted in all ways even as we are tempted, and He does so all “for us men and for our salvation” (*Nicene Creed*).

God transforms and sanctifies the wilderness—even the wilderness of this world and our broken existence by His Incarnation, Passion, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension into Heaven! He does this because He loves us! When the devil drives us out into the wilderness, it is to mock us and strip us and isolate us and cause us to feel abandoned by God, lonely and desolate, forsaken beyond belief and hope. In short, the devil’s envy intends

## Annual Meeting Details

*Holy Trinity will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, November 10 following the Divine Liturgy. Nominations are open for Council positions of Treasurer, Secretary, and Building Chair. The appointment of Holly Torbic to complete Jay Rush’s two-term as Vice President will also be voted upon by the assembly. Resolutions must be submitted in writing to the Parish Council for review prior to Synaxis of the Archangel Michael, November 8. **New business will not be considered from the floor.***

*Parishioners in good standing who were registered with the parish as members at the beginning of this ecclesiastical year (September 1, 2019) and who have fulfilled their Lenten obligations of Confession and Communion this year may and should attend.*

## Agenda

- i. Opening Prayer: “O Heavenly King...”
- ii. Establishment of Quorum
- iii. Minutes of the 2018 Meeting
- iv. Dean’s and Interim Priest’s Reports
- v. Treasurer’s Report
- vi. Review and Approval of the 2020 Budget *(see next page)*
- vii. Election of Officers
- viii. Closing Prayer: “It is truly meet...”

to destroy us who are God’s good creation, created out of love to bear the image of God and to ascend to His likeness (*Wisdom of Solomon 2:23–24*).

However, when the Spirit of God drives us out into the wilderness (some translations say “leads” us out), it is *always* for our salvation and sanctification, *always* for our transformation and transfiguration. The wilderness is transformed precisely because God Who is Life and love is there waiting for us! Emmanuel—God with us! God for us!

*(continued, see FATHER’S STUDY, last page)*

## Support *Matthew 25* This Season

Even though it’s darker outside, *Matthew 25* brings light to many who hiddenly suffer in our community. In **November**, the Thanksgiving appeal helps needy local families enjoy a complete dinner. To participate, please see the sign-up sheet in the Narthex; collection will continue through November 24. Monetary donations (to cover the cost of the turkeys) are also appreciated. **December** the St. Nicholas Tree returns to help those whose circumstances make it hard to celebrate Christmas. We would love to have you join our team of volunteers that works behind the scenes to coordinate these drives. Email [matthew25@holytrinity-oca.org](mailto:matthew25@holytrinity-oca.org) or call (814) 231-2855 if you would like to participate.

## Icon Project Status Update

Last year donors subscribed icons to complete the series along Holy Trinity’s north, west, and south walls. The icon of Ss. Stephen of Perm and Kosmas Aitolos was installed earlier this year; Ss. Thekla and Photini should be up by Christmas. The remaining icons—Ss. John the Apostle and James the Great; Blessed Matushka Olga Michael of Alaska; Ss. Maria of Paris and Grand Duchess Elisabeth; and St. Moses the Ethiopian will be installed as Fr. Mark Meholic finishes each one; The anticipated completion date is summer 2020.

## November Bookstore Feature

In 1892, a young man left Lebanon in search of a better life. Coming to America with his newlywed wife, he found work as a traveling peddler before settling on a small farm in central Nebraska. Years later, personal tragedy and an unexpected midnight visit from a saint changed the course of his life. Seeing the desperate need of his fellow Orthodox Christians and heeding God’s call, he would spend the rest of his life traversing the Great Plains as a circuit-riding priest, known to his thousands of parishioners as Father Nicola Yanney. His legacy stands alongside that of St. Raphael Hawaweeny, his mentor, as a seminal force in the American Orthodox Church of our day. *Apostle to the Plains* is now available in the Parish Bookstore for \$19. All major debit and credit cards are now accepted.

## ■ FATHER’S STUDY *(cont. from page 2)*

During this time of pastoral vacancy, it can feel very much akin to the wilderness. The devil wants to use this to create desolation and despair in us, to drive us out into this place to destroy the Church. But God is with us! Isn’t that what the Church sings? Isn’t that what *we* sing? ***Let all nations understand! God is with us!***

This time of vacancy can be and is a time of our salvation and sanctification as the baptized, a time and a place for our redemption and purification, a time and a place for spiritual fruit bearing and growth in the Holy Spirit so that when a new Rector after God’s own heart is called to this place (and one will be called in God’s providential time), this will be a congregation renewed and reinvigorated with the graces of God, bearing faithful and enduring witness that God is indeed with us, transforming the wilderness into a divine encounter, lush with His holy Presence! In short, the wilderness will be what we make it to be: a judgment or salvation.

“[T]hanks be to God, Who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ,” says the Apostle. “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, *always* abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that *your labor is not in vain in the Lord*” (1 Corinthians 15:57–58). ■

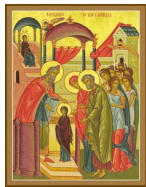
— Fr. David

## Holy Days this Month

### ENTRY OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS INTO THE TEMPLE

VESPERS: Wed., Nov. 20, 6pm  
*(P. Doty, Litiya Bread)*  
*(E. George, Icon)*

LITURGY: Thurs., Nov. 21, 8am  
*(P. Doty, Prosphora)*



### Additional Liturgy:

DATE/TIME	FOR	PROSPHORA
Thurs., Nov. 8, 8am	<b>St. Michael</b>	A.T. Pelikan



■ NEWS & NOTES

All *Ten Thousand Villages* Items 25% Off on November 9

STATE COLLEGE [via *tenthousandvillages.com*] — Ten Thousand Villages, located at 1341 S. Atherton St., carries handcrafted jewelry, clothing, household items, food, gifts for all ages, and much more. All Ten Thousand Villages products are made by fairly-compensated artisans in developing countries. During an event on Saturday, November 9, all purchases made at the retail store will receive a 25% discount. The charity is currently featuring a large selection of unique holiday items for you to enjoy, including Nativity scenes, ornaments, and advent calendars.

Father Tom Soroka to Keynote Archdiocesan Advent Retreat

NEW KENSINGTON, PA — St. John the Baptist Church here will host an Advent Retreat entitled “Spiritual Growth and the Body of Christ” for all members of the Archdiocese from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, November 16. Transportation to the event will be provided upon request by contacting (814) 231-2855.

Join Orthodox Christians on a Foreign Mission Trip in 2020

ST. AUGUSTINE, FL [via *ocmc.org*] — The Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC) here is planning for teams to serve in Alaska (July and August), Albania (March, May, June, and August), and Guatemala (March). Additional teams will travel to Colombia, Ghana, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, and more. Visit *ocmc.org* to learn more or to apply.

Reader Workshop Postponed Until February 2020

SOUTH CANAAN, PA — Hieromonk Herman, liturgical editor for St. Tikhon’s Monastery Press and lecturer of Spirituality and Liturgics at St. Tikhon’s Seminary here, will instead come to Holy Trinity the weekend of February 7-9, 2020 to conduct a rescheduled workshop for all current and prospective readers in the parish. The four-session seminar will be offered free of charge to those interested in chanting in church. More details to come! ■



Chapel Hosts Youth from Holy Trinity for Worship, Fun

Last month the Chapel of the Holy Spirit was blessed to host the middle school class from Holy Trinity, along with their teachers. It is always a joy to worship alongside our brethren from State College, and to have them serve alongside us as well. We are looking forward to the completion of our altar addition in 2020, so that even more of the youth can come along to serve!

After a time of fellowship, we departed to Ard’s Farm Market in Mifflinburg to partake of the fall activities hosted there. These included a corn maze (Fr. David only got lost three times, but still got out before sunset!), pig races, a petting zoo with sheep and goats, a corn pit for children to play in, a potato cannon, and—for the “adults who still wish they were kids”—a pumpkin cannon that was able to propel its orange ammunition 188 mph! It was a wet day, but could have been much wetter, and we were blessed to have the rain cease upon our arrival at the farm: truly, a gift from God.

We pray that the youth of Holy Trinity enjoyed their visit with us; we certainly enjoyed them! And we pray that many more could come in the months and years to come. During this time of “pastoral search,” we are reminded of the great many gifts that God has provided to both communities, through our bond of mutual affection, brotherly love, and shared service: “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!” (*Psalms 133:1*) ■

— Rdr. Evan Kerstetter

	2018 ACTUAL	2019 YTD <sup>1</sup>	2019 BUDGET	2020 PROPOSED	% CHG.
INCOME					
Stewardship Offerings	\$239,045	\$179,356	\$264,640	\$275,600	4.1%
(Transfer from) Trinity House Phase II <sup>2</sup>	7,540	8,000	10,800	7,200	-33.3%
Parking Income	6,840	5,322	7,200	7,200	0.0%
Appeals Income (e.g., Chapel, Seminarian)	—	1,596	5,200	5,300	1.9%
Candles and Flowers	2,918	2,165	2,800	2,900	3.6%
Miscellaneous (e.g., Interest, Rewards)	1,243	53	550	315	-42.7%
Total Budgeted Income	\$257,586	\$196,492	\$291,190	\$298,515	2.5%
Total Non-Budgeted Income	\$63,211	\$33,081			
TOTAL INCOME	\$320,797	\$229,573			
EXPENSES					
Personnel <sup>3</sup>	\$153,669	\$92,780	\$158,464	\$163,300	3.1%
Mortgage Outlay <sup>4</sup>	28,572	21,429	28,572	28,572	0.0%
Archdiocesan/OCA Assessments <sup>5</sup>	22,190	17,788	25,399	25,743	1.4%
Outreach and Fellowship	16,134	17,737	18,300	23,250	27.0%
Utilities	13,099	10,106	12,330	11,850	-3.9%
(Transfer to) Capital Projects Fund <sup>6</sup>	—	5,322	7,200	7,200	0.0%
Property	5,472	3,496	9,000	7,000	-22.6%
Liturgical	9,084	7,131	7,350	6,600	-10.2%
Office Administration	6,352	4,315	4,875	5,850	20.0%
(Transfer to) Property Reserve Fund	5,000	3,750	5,000	5,000	0.0%
Insurance	3,765	4,364	4,200	3,600	-14.3%
Christian Education	2,137	1,467	3,250	3,250	0.0%
Licenses/Fees/Service Charges <sup>7</sup>	2,258	2,781	2,250	2,300	2.2%
(Transfer to) All-American Council Fund	1,000	1,500	2,000	2,000	0.0%
(Transfer to) Discretionary Funds	1,500	375	1,500	1,500	0.0%
Refurnishings	282	106	750	750	0.0%
Accessibility Improvements	784	—	750	750	0.0%
Miscellaneous Expenses	—	—	—	—	0.0%
Total Budgeted Expenses	\$271,297	\$190,447	\$291,190	\$298,515	2.5%
Total Non-Budgeted Expenses	\$60,887	\$29,000			
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$332,184	\$219,447			
INCOME					
Total Budgeted Income <sup>8</sup>	\$28,098	\$29,506	\$31,700	\$31,700	53.6%
Total Non-Budgeted Income	\$3,033	\$5,760			
TOTAL INCOME	\$31,132	\$35,266			
EXPENSES					
Personnel	\$8,650	\$12,900	17,100	\$28,300	65.5%
Mortgage <sup>9</sup>	3,000	2,250	3,000	6,000	100.0%
Outreach and Fellowship	2,869	1,476	4,000	4,000	0.0%
Operating Expenses <sup>10</sup>	3,743	1,932	3,500	3,000	-14.3%
Utilities	1,834	1,224	2,100	2,100	0.0%
Property	554	581	1,000	1,000	0.0%
Insurance	—	375	500	500	0.0%
(Transfer to) Discretionary Funds	1,500	375	1,500	500	0.0%
Archdiocesan/OCA Assessments	—	—	—	3,300	—
Total Budgeted Expenses	\$20,651	\$21,113	\$31,700	\$48,700	53.6%
Total Non-Budgeted Expenses	\$315	\$7,135			
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$20,966	\$28,248			

FOOTNOTES

1. through Sept. 30. • 2. Funds from the Trinity House Capital Campaign are used to offset the mortgage payment. • 3. includes compensation budgeted for the new rector (salary, benefits, relocation expenses, etc.); actual compensation to be determined. In the meantime, the Interim Priest, the Acting Administrator, and visiting clergy receive a stipend from the rector’s compensation line-item until the position is filled. • 4. includes both interest and principal payments. • 5. includes Holy Trinity’s contribution to the annual Archdiocesan assessment (\$28,443). In 2020, the Chapel will tithes its prior-year income toward the payment (\$275 per month). • 6. Parking income is transferred into the Capital Projects Fund for future lot enhancements. • 7. includes electronic payment convenience fees and the cost of background checks for all clergy, teachers, and volunteers who have direct contact with children. • 8. In 2020, Holy Trinity’s outreach category includes \$6,300 of Chapel support (\$3,300 for the Priest-in-Charge’s stipend, and \$3,000 in matching support for the Chapel’s refinanced mortgage; see footnote 9). • 9. The Chapel will apply for a new \$150,000 mortgage (0% APR at \$500 per month for 25 years), which will pay off the existing mortgage and finance a new 24’-by-12’ addition for its sanctuary. • 10. For comparisons, “Operating Expenses” includes Office Administration, Liturgical, Christian Education, Furnishings, and Snow Removal.

# Holy Trinity Calendar

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

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
27 Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am)	28 Orthodoxy 101, 7pm @ Trinity House Conference Room	29 Choir Rehearsal, 7pm	30 Confessions, 4:30pm Vespers, 6pm Adult Study Group, 7pm @ Trinity House Conference Room	31 <b>St. John (Kochurov) of Chicago</b> OCF at Penn State: Dinner and Discussion, 7pm @ 124 Pasquerilla Spiritual Center	November 1	2 Archdiocesan Assembly (all day) @ Mingo Junct., OH. (Our delegation will depart at 6:30pm from HTOC on Friday.) Great Vespers, 6pm
3 DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME ENDS, 2am (turn clocks back one hour) <u>Matt. 25 Thanksgiving Drive Begins</u> Sunday School, 9am EST Liturgy, 10am EST (Hours, 9:35am) Mexican Luncheon to Benefit Camp Scholarships, 11:45 @ Parish Hall	4 Knitting Group: “Hats and Hugs Made with Love,” 1pm @ Wyndtree Court Commons, Bellefonte Orthodoxy 101, 7pm @ Trinity House Conference Room	5	6 Confessions, 4:30pm Vespers, 6pm Adult Study Group, 7pm @ Trinity House Conference Room	7 Great Vespers, 6pm <b>NEW TIME</b> OCF at Penn State: Dinner at Holy Trinity, 7pm @ Trinity House Ministry Center <b>NEW TIME</b>	8 <b>Archangel Michael</b> Divine Liturgy, 8am (Hours, 7:40am)	9 Great Vespers, 6pm Orthodox Youth Assoc. (gr. 9-12) Baking Party, 7pm @ Parish Hall
10 Sunday School, 9am (All classes begin with prayer in the Parish Hall) Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:35am) Parish Annual Meeting, 12pm	11 Orthodoxy 101, 7pm @ Trinity House Conference Room	12 Penn State OCF at Homeless Ministry, 4pm @ Centre House, 217 E. Nittany Ave. Choir Rehearsal, 7pm Homeless Ministry, 4pm @ Centre House,	13 <b>St. John Chrysostom</b> Confessions, 4:30pm Vespers, 6pm Adult Study Group, 7pm @ Trinity House Conference Room Homeless Ministry, 4pm	14 <b>Apostle Philip</b> OCF at Penn State: Dinner and Discussion, 7pm @ 124 Pasquerilla Spiritual Center	15 <i>Nativity Fast Begins: Omit meat &amp; dairy (all days), and fish (most Mondays through Fridays, and Dec. 20-24).</i>	16 <b>Apostle and Evangelist Matthew</b> Great Vespers, 6pm
17 Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:35am)	18 Orthodoxy 101, 7pm @ Trinity House Conference Room	19	20 Confessions, 4:30pm Great Vespers with Litiya, 6pm <b>NEW TIME</b> Confessions, following (No Adult Study Group)	21 <b>ENTRY OF THE THEOTOKOS</b> Divine Liturgy, 8am (Hours, 7:35am) OCF at Penn State: Dinner and Game Night, 7pm @ 124 Pasquerilla	22	23 Great Vespers, 6pm <b>Confessions</b> , following
24 <u>Matt. 25 Thanksgiving Drive Ends</u> Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:35am) Orthodox Youth Association (gr. 9-12) Bowling Night, 6pm-8:30pm @ Northland Lanes, State College	25 <b>Matthew 25</b> Thanksgiving Drive Inventory, 9am @ Parish Hall <b>Matthew 25</b> Thanksgiving Drive Purchasing, 4pm @ Walmart Supercenter, 1665 N. Atherton St.	26 Choir Rehearsal, 7pm	27 Confessions, 4:30pm Vespers with the Prayers of Thanksgiving, 6pm (No Adult Study Group)	28 <b>National Day of Thanksgiving</b>	29	30 <b>Apostle Andrew the First-Called</b> Great Vespers, 6pm
December 1 <u>Matt. 25 “St. Nicholas (Angel) Tree” Drive Begins</u> Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:35am) (No Sunday School)	2	3	4 Confessions, 4:30pm Vespers, 6pm Adult Study Group, 7pm @ Trinity House Conference Room	5 Great Vespers with Evlogitaria (Gifts) for the Children, 6pm <b>NEW TIME</b> OCF at Penn State: Dinner at Holy Trinity, 7pm @ Trinity House	6 <b>St. Nicholas the Wonderworker</b> Divine Liturgy, 8am (Hours, 7:40am)	7 Great Vespers, 6pm

# Chapel Calendar

All events take place at the new building (145 North Kern Street)  
in Beavertown, unless where noted.

Saturday 2 Archdiocesan Assembly (all day) @ Mingo Jct., OH Reader Vespers, 6pm	Tuesday 19 Choir Rehearsal, 6pm
Sunday 3 Divine Liturgy, 10am EST (Hours, 9:40am EST) Fellowship and Study of Orthodox Spirituality, following	Wednesday 20 Reader Vespers for the Entrance of the Most Holy Theotokos, 6pm
Saturday 23 Great Vespers, 6pm	Saturday 23 Great Vespers, 6pm
Tuesday 5 Choir Rehearsal, 6pm	Sunday 24 Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Fellowship and Study TBA, following
Saturday 9 Great Vespers, 6pm	Monday 25 “Hats and Blankets for Babies” Knitting/Crocheting Outreach, 6:30pm
Sunday 10 Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Parish Annual Meeting, 12pm (via teleconference)	Saturday 30 Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions
Tuesday 12 Choir Rehearsal, 6:30pm	Sunday Dec. 1 Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Fellowship and Study TBA, following
Saturday 16 Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions	Tuesday 3 Choir Rehearsal, 6:30pm
Sunday 17 Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Fellowship and Study of Orthodox Spirituality, following	

November 2019