

VOL. 26 NO. 11

November 2021

holytrinity-oca.org

# THE TRISAGION

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

## Congratulations, Protodeacon Mark



Deacon Mark Oleynik is elevated to the dignity of Protodeacon by Archbishop Melchisedek during Divine Liturgy on September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Axios! Axios! Axios!

Father’s Annual Address:

Looking Ahead with Thanksgiving

Praise and honor be to our Lord and God, who has seen us through the darkness that characterized so much of the previous year! Praise be to the Father of Lights, who has enlightened us with truth and wisdom and the knowledge of God! Glory be our Lord and God Jesus Christ, who has shown us true love and has Himself renewed us in love! Honor and exaltation be to the All-Holy Spirit, who has begun a new work in us! Glory be to our God unto ages of ages! Amen.

Let us greet the coming year with jubilation, my brothers and sisters, giving praise to God in all things and in all ways. For it is not hard to remember where we were at this time last year. Surely we were facing grave uncertainty from all sides, and the extra-liturgical organelles of our parish life lay largely dead or dormant. At that time, with few exceptions, we met only for worship – and that itself with various modifications and

restrictions. How far we have come! Glory to God, how far we have come!

But let us not now (nor let us ever) think of ourselves as a finished product. We have a long way to go to fulfill Christ’s calling to us in the world and in this place, and we surely still face a great number of challenges, both manifest and unseen. In this past year, we have experienced the revival of some of our educational ministries. Sunday School has returned for the middle and high school age ranges. And our Fall inquirers series has been revamped and significantly expanded. Yet we continue to struggle with adult “continuing education.” There is no recurrent adult catechesis for baptized parishioners in our parish, and this is something that really needs to change going forward.

(continued, see ADDRESS, next page)

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

119 S. Sparks Street

State College, PA 16801

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Schedules

	COFFEE HOUR	GREETERS	TELLERS	SERVERS
November 7	Basic Coffee Hour	J. Houser, B. Haupt	K. Cattell, M. Fedkin	All Servers welcome each Sunday.  <i>Altar Server Co-Captains:</i> J. Cadman and S. Oleynik
November 14	<b>Pre-Nativity Fast potluck</b>	M. Fedkin, K. Bazilevskaya	G. Cattell, M. Fiori	
November 21	L. Georgiou, C. Swisher	A. Stickle, J. Houser	K. Cattell, M. Fedkin	
November 28	Basic Coffee Hour	K. Oleynik, D. Swisher	G. Cattell, M. Fiori	
December 5	H. Torbic, A.T. Pelikan	J. Houser, B. Haupt	K. Cattell, M. Fedkin	
December 12	Basic Coffee Hour	M. Fedkin, K. Bazilevskaya	G. Cattell, M. Fiori	

# Address

As with education, we have taken great steps forward in the arena of fellowship this year. Christ calls us to love one another, but it is hard to love those we do not know personally. The pandemic disconnected us from one another’s lives and placed great barriers between us in terms of fellowship and socialization, and we have surely striven to overcome that this year. In March, we brought back Coffee Hour. In July, Saturday morning men’s breakfasts returned. In August, our Greeters ministry – focused on properly welcoming our Sunday morning visitors – was revived. The Penn State Orthodox Campus Fellowship began meeting in person again in September. And beginning at Pascha, we began to celebrate various annual or occasional picnics, barbeques, and other opportunities to relax and enjoy one another’s company. Still, in all of these things, our fellowship is far from perfect. We need to strive to be a part of one another’s lives organically and not merely at parish events and functions. And there should not be one of us who feels like he has no friends in the parish or has no one that he can speak deeply and personally with. True love in a community is not something that can be mandated or programmed, but it is something that must arise from our hearts as we seek to be lovers of Christ. And truly, if we lack love for one another, we are “nothing,” as St. Paul tells us (1 Cor 13:3).

In terms of mission and outreach, the year past has seen some improvement as well. The Chapel of the Holy Spirit now counts a total of four enrolled catechumens and continues to make progress toward the eventual goal of being a fully independent parish. Beginning in January, our parish bookstore became open to the public during the week on a limited basis. Currently, we are in the process of commissioning a (parishioner donated) sign for the bookstore and working on expanded hours, which will hopefully lead to an increase of foot traffic and the bookstore becoming a tool of evangelism in the community. As the pandemic continues to tail off, it is our hope that we will be able to find other avenues to spread the gospel and invite people into our fellowship

both in the community at large and on the Penn State campus. One area of weakness in this regard that should be addressed is our web presence. Our social media accounts are now currently inactive and our website is in serious need of pruning, revamping, and active management. This is an area where Fr. Alex’s January departure is felt most acutely.

In terms of our social ministry, we have had a few highlights this year: our Lenten appeal raised \$10,000 to support the critical work of Alaska’s St. Herman seminary, whose student base largely consists of economically challenged Alaska Natives. We have continued our partnership with Strawberry Fields for their back-to-school, Thanksgiving, and Christmas drives. And we have forged a new partnership with CommonFood, an organization that collects, packages, and distributes food to needy Centre County families, free of charge. However, in spite of these things, I see a lot of room for growth in this area. A parish of our size and relative youth really ought to have some sort of hands-on social ministry going on *every month*. Christian charity is supposed to be far more personal and far more important to us than slipping \$20 into the Matthew 25 box once or twice a year during a fast.

Now, beyond these things, there is much more I could say about what has happened or what I would like to see happen in the year to come. But I will leave off these matters to address a handful of headwinds that need to be spoken of directly. As is apparent to all, our membership has declined significantly in the past two years. Some of this of course is due to happy circumstances: graduations, relocations to be with close family, jobs, and the like. And some of it is surely unhappy for us: transfers birthed in the pandemic, members simply becoming inactive, and even apostasies. But whatever the individual causes, we must acknowledge that we are smaller than we were two years ago. And for this reason, we are not close to meeting the budget we set for ourselves for the 2021

*(continued, see ADDRESS, facing page)*

## Readers of “First Things”

Shelby Bowden (a resident of State College and parishioner at St. George Orthodox Church in Altoona) is starting an interreligious reading group aimed at discussing cultural topics that are addressed in the monthly First Things magazines. First Things is a non-partisan monthly publication that receives articles from some of the foremost scholars in Catholic, Orthodox, "high Protestant," and Jewish circles, with the foremost aim of "confronting the ideology of secularism." We will likely democratically choose a topic for each month and use the First Things articles as jumping off points, incorporating additional readings (religious or otherwise) to help guide and inform discussion. Interested parties should contact Shelby at [ShelbyMBowden@gmail.com](mailto:ShelbyMBowden@gmail.com) for more information and to get on the mailing list.

## Buildings and Grounds Wishlist

Got skills? Wants to be of service? Holy Trinity always has some "odd job" projects that need to be worked on, and we love it when people are willing to volunteer to help! Here are some things that currently need to be addressed around the property:

- the wooden crosses on the front of the church building (facing Sparks) need to be refurbished or replaced
- the back deck and back steps of Trinity House need to be painted
- the "stoop" of Trinity House (facing Sparks Street) needs to be refloored in some manner
- the brick work on the side of Trinity House facing the church needs to be repointed
- various doors around the premises need a new paint job.

If you're interested in one or more of these projects, please speak with Father, Ed Miranda, or a member of the Parish Council.

## Thanksgiving Meal Project

This November, Holy Trinity will be partnering with Strawberry Fields to provide Thanksgiving meals to 25 families struggling with developmental disability and mental health. Please stay tuned for more details.

## “Searching the Scriptures” with Met. Hilarion Alfeyev

This November, St. Vladimir’s Seminary welcomes Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeyev and top biblical scholars to campus for a free, public event centered on Holy Scripture. Join us in person or online November 11 and 12 for the event, Searching the Scriptures, in celebration of Metropolitan Hilarion’s monumental series [\*Jesus Christ: His Life and Teaching\*](#) (SVS Press). Register at [www.svots.edu/events](http://www.svots.edu/events).



### Upcoming Liturgies:

#### ENTRY OF THE THEOTOKOS

- VIGIL: Sat., Nov. 20, 6pm  
(A.T. Pelikan, Litya)  
(A. Stickles, Icon)
- LITURGY: Sun., Nov. 21, 10am  
(P. Doty, Prosfhora)

# Address *(Continued)*

we really need to make sure we don’t let another year pass without a clear plan to expand and enhance our facilities—both in State College and in Beavertown—so that they can be better tools of the critical gospel work to which we are called.

Although the uncertainties of this year pale in comparison to the uncertainties we faced last year at this time, we must acknowledge that there are still many uncertainties on the horizon. We don’t know what the future will hold for us, but I encourage our young to seek visions and our old to “dream dreams” as the new year approaches (Joel 2:28). If we are open to the Spirit of God and place our lives and our thoughts in His service, many of our parish’s challenges—with education, with outreach, with mercy, with spiritual growth, with finance, and the like—can be overcome and more than overcome. It is my belief that God has great plans for our community, and it is my great hope that the Centre County of the future will be home to many Orthodox Churches, of which we will have been the mother. Those who came before us committed themselves to a path of radical hope. Without any guarantee that they would ever have a priest of their own, they purchased a building in which to pray together and to have a common life of worship. As their spiritual heirs, let us commit ourselves to a similar radicalism. Let us “dream dreams” together and challenge one another to make our common life a more perfect sacrifice to Christ our God, trusting in the promise of the all-wise Solomon, who exhorts us, saying, “trust in the Lord with all of your heart; lean not on your own understanding. In all of your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight” (Prov 3:5-6). Glory to God who holds the future! Glory to God who loves His creation! Glory to God who desires us and desires our salvation! Glory to God who calls us to the unity of one faith and one Lord and one Church! Glory to God unto ages of ages! Glory to Jesus Christ! ■

— Fr. Ignatius

# Hermas *(Continued)*

"Listen," he says; "The rich man has much wealth, but in the things of the Lord, he is poor, being distracted about his riches, and his confession and intercession with the Lord is very scanty; and even that which he gives is small and weak and has no power above. When the rich man then goes up to the poor, and assists him in his needs, believing that for what he does to the poor man he will be able to obtain a reward with God, because the poor man is rich in intercession [and confession], and his intercession has great power with God; the rich man then supplies all things to the poor man without wavering. But the poor man, being supplied by the rich, makes intercession for him, thanking God for him who gave to him. And the other is still more zealous to assist the poor man, that he may be continuous in his life: for he knows that the intercession of the poor man is acceptable and rich before God. They both then accomplish their work; the poor man makes intercession, wherein he is rich [which he received of the Lord]; he renders this again to the Lord who supplies him with it. The rich man too in like manner furnishes to the poor man, doubting nothing, the riches which he received from the Lord. And this work [is] great and acceptable with God, because (the rich man) has understanding concerning his riches, and works for the poor man from the bounties of the Lord, and accomplishes the ministration of the Lord rightly. In the sight of men then, the elm seems to not bear fruit, and they do not know, neither perceive, that if there comes a drought, the elm, having water, nurtures the vine, and the vine, having a constant supply of water, bears fruit two fold, both for itself and for the elm. So likewise the poor, by interceding with the Lord for the rich, establish their riches, and again the rich, supplying their needs to the poor, establish their souls. So then both are made partners in the righteous work. He then who does these things will not be abandoned of God, but will be written in the Books of the Living." ■

## ■ ORTHODOX SPIRITUALITY

# Shepherd of Hermas: The Elm and the Vine

*The second-century “Shepherd of Hermas,” written around 140, has long been considered an informative and useful Christian catechetical and doctrinal document.*

As I walked in the field, and noticed an elm and a vine, and was distinguishing them and their fruits, the shepherd appears to me and says; "What are you meditating within yourself?"

"I am thinking," I say, "About the elm and the vine, that they are excellently suited, the one to the other."

"These two trees," he says, "Are appointed for a type to the servants of God."

"I would gladly know," I say, "The type contained in these trees, of which you speak."

"Do you see," he says, "The elm and the vine?"

# Address *(Continued)*

fiscal year. To those who were paying attention to the fund balance numbers reported in the October *Trisagion*, our general “operating cash” balance has become negative, meaning that we are effectively borrowing from other internal funds in order to pay our monthly expenses. Obviously, this is not a sustainable situation, and I would encourage those who may not be tithing to take up this spiritual discipline for your own benefit and for the benefit of the whole brotherhood. With all of this being said, it should be noted that attendance is significantly on the rise over the last six months, and this likely presages (in God’s good grace) upcoming membership growth for us both by transfer and by conversion.

With this in mind, our proposed annual budget is smaller than the previous year’s by 2%, marking a second year of decreases. Our primary “cuts” to the budget relate to

"I see them, Sir," I say.

"This vine," he says, "Bears fruit, but the elm is an unfruitful stock. Yet this vine, unless it climbs up the elm, cannot bear much fruit when it is spread on the ground; and such fruit as it bears is rotten, because it is not suspended upon the elm. When the vine is then attached to the elm, it bears fruit both from itself and from the elm. You see then that the elm also bears [much] fruit, not less than the vine, but rather more."

"How more, Sir?" I say.

"Because," he says, "The vine, when hanging upon the elm, bears its fruit in abundance, and in good condition; but, when spread on the ground, it bears little fruit, and that [such is] rotten. This parable therefore is applicable to the servants of God, to poor and rich alike."

“How, Sir?” I say; "Instruct me."

*(continued, see HERMAS, after calendar)*

pay reductions for positions held by Mat. Seraphima in 2021 (Communications Coordinator and OCF Chaplain), a large reduction in our financial assistance to the Chapel of the Holy Spirit, and a reduction of our expenditures on the OCF and other ministries. Unfortunately, the effect of these cuts is greatly reduced by a significant rise in our diocesan assessments and a more realistic approximation of how much payroll tax we owe the government.

Another headwind that we face is the stalling of our physical plant visioning process. Although we had signed an agreement in 2020 with K&W Engineers and Consultants to begin a formal planning process, they repeatedly delayed the beginning of this process, and due to our own financial uncertainties we have not followed up with them on it since last winter. However, this is something that will need to change in 2022, and

*(continued, see ADDRESS, after calendar)*

# 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
31 Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i> <b>LIVE</b>	November 1	2	3	4	5	6 Altar Society, 10am  Choir Rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm <b>LIVE</b> Confessions, following
7 Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i> <b>LIVE</b>	8	9	10	11	12	13 Archdiocesan Assembly, 9am Men's fellowship breakfast, 9am  Choir Rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm <b>LIVE</b> Confessions, following
14 Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i> <b>Annual Parish Assembly, 12pm</b>	15	16	17	18	19	20 Vigil for the Entrance of the Most Holy Theotokos, 6pm <b>LIVE</b>
21 Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy for Entrance of the Most Holy Theotokos, 10am <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i> <b>LIVE</b>	22	23	24	25	26	27 Choir Rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm <b>LIVE</b> Confessions, following
28 Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i> <b>LIVE</b>	29	30	December 1	2	3	4
5 Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i> <b>LIVE</b>	6	7	8	9	10	11 Men's fellowship breakfast, 9am  Choir Rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm <b>LIVE</b> Confessions, following
			Confessions, 4pm-6pm Vespers, 6pm Orthodoxy 102, 7pm Confessions, 7pm	OCF @ Penn State, 7pm, Pasquerilla 126		
			Confessions, 4pm-6pm Vespers, 6pm Orthodoxy 102, 7pm Confessions, 7pm	OCF @ Penn State, 7pm, Pasquerilla 126		
			Confessions, 4pm-6pm Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following	OCF @ Penn State, 7pm, Pasquerilla 126		
			Confessions, 4pm-6pm Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following	<i>Thanksgiving Day</i>		
			Confessions, 4pm-6pm Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following	OCF @ Penn State, 7pm, Pasquerilla 126	Sunday School Christmas Caroling, 5:30pm	Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following <b>LIVE</b>
			Confessions, 4pm-6pm Vespers, 6pm Parish Council Meeting, 7pm <b>ZOOM</b> †	OCF @ Penn State, 7pm, Pasquerilla 126		

# Chapel Calendar

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

Tuesday, November 2 Choir rehearsal, 6pm	Sunday 21 Divine Liturgy 10am; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately thereafter, catechesis at 1:30pm
Saturday 6 Great Vespers; Confessions following, 6pm	Monday 22 “Hats and Blankets for babies” Knitting/Crocheting, 6:30pm
Sunday 7 Divine Liturgy 10am; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately thereafter, catechesis at 1:30pm	Tuesday, 23 Choir rehearsal, 6pm
Sunday 7 Great Vespers with Litya – Synaxis of the Bodiless Powers of Heaven, 6pm	Saturday 27 Great Vespers; Confessions following, 6pm
Tuesday 9 Choir rehearsal, 6pm	Sunday 28 Divine Liturgy 10am; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately thereafter, catechesis at 1:30pm
Saturday 13 Reader's Great Vespers, 6pm	Tuesday 30 Choir rehearsal, 6pm
Sunday 14 Divine Liturgy 10am; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately thereafter	Saturday, December 4 Great Vespers; Confessions following, 6pm
Sunday 14 Annual Parish Meeting via Zoom, 12pm	Sunday 5 Divine Liturgy 10am; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately thereafter, catechesis at 1:30pm
Monday 15 <b>**Nativity (St. Philip's) Fast/Advent begins**</b>	
Tuesday 16 Choir rehearsal, 6pm	
Saturday 20 Great Vespers with Litya – Entrance of the Most Holy Theotokos, 6pm	

Please consult either the CHS website or FB page for schedule changes and/or other information

## November 2021

† to join remotely, visit [holytrinity-oca.org/zoom](https://holytrinity-oca.org/zoom).

**LIVE** this service will be livestreamed on YouTube (visit [holytrinity-oca.org/YouTube](https://holytrinity-oca.org/YouTube)).