

Serving Our Neighbors



Many thanks again to those who came to CommonFoods and boxed meals for their food distribution; this is an excellent way we can “love our neighbor” in the State College area. For more opportunities, please see the News & Notes.

On Nativity: A Spiritual Meadow

St. John Moschus, a 6th century desert father, is best known for his collection entitled “A Spiritual Meadow,” which he prefaces by saying that he has gathered together spiritually beneficial stories, like the various flowers all blooming together in a springtime meadow. Just as each flower has its own virtue, so each quotation or story does; yet, they also fit together into a single, glorious scene. Along this vein, presented this month are a series of scriptural and patristic quotations on the Nativity of Christ – each is unique, yet together they present a beautiful “meadow” to prepare us for the feast.

St. Ignatius of Antioch, Epistle to the Ephesians (108AD)
"Where is the wise man? where the disputer?" Where is the boasting of those who are styled prudent? For our God, Jesus Christ, was, according to the dispensation of God, conceived in the womb by Mary, of the seed of

David, but by the Holy Spirit. He was born and baptized, that by His passion He might purify the water.

Now the virginity of Mary was hidden from the prince of this world, as was also her offspring, and the death of the Lord; three mysteries of renown, which were wrought in silence by God. How, then, was He manifested to the world? A star shone forth in heaven above all the other stars, the light of which was inexpressible, while its novelty struck men with astonishment. And all the rest of the stars, with the sun and moon, formed a chorus to this star, and its light was exceedingly great above them all. And there was agitation felt as to whence this new spectacle came, so unlike to everything else [in the heavens]. Hence every kind of magic was destroyed, and every bond of wickedness disappeared; ignorance was removed, and the old kingdom abolished, God Himself being

(continued, see ON NATIVITY next page)

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH
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Schedules

	COFFEE HOUR	GREETERS	TELLERS	SERVERS
December 5	H. Torbic, A.T. Pelikan	J. Houser, B. Haupt	K. Cattell, M. Fedkin	All Servers welcome each Sunday. Altar Server Co-Captains: J. Cadman and S. Oleynik
December 12	Basic Coffee Hour	M. Fedkin, K. Bazilevskaya	G. Cattell, M. Fiori	
December 19	Russian Ladies	A. Stickle, K. Quinn	K. Cattell, M. Fedkin	
December 26	Basic Cofee Hour	K. Oleynik, D. Swisher	G. Cattell, M. Fiori	
January 2	TBD	TBD	K. Cattell, M. Fedkin	
January 9	TBD	TBD	G. Cattell, M. Fiori	

On Nativity

manifested in human form for the renewal of eternal life. And now that took a beginning which had been prepared by God. Henceforth all things were in a state of tumult, because He meditated the abolition of death.

St. Theodotus of Ancyra, Homily II, on the Nativity (early 5th century)

The God Word even made a childbirth his own, and embraced the Virgin as mother, and entered through a womb adorned with virginity! For God despises none of the things he fashioned, since none of his works is unworthy. All things are good, even very good, if we should see these things as the Fashioner saw what had come to be; for, "God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." Look at all things with unimpassioned eyes, and if you see them as God does, they are "very good." Banish passion and you will understand the nobility of what has come to be....

Indeed, the subject of the present feast is God's becoming a human being; taking the attributes of humanity to himself in order to give the attributes of divinity, making sufferings his own in order to freely bestow impassibility, and secretly entering death in order to grant immortality; and he brought the humanity's own sufferings upon himself, not changing himself in nature, but making it his own by his will; and he does these things very reasonably, intending to save the human being.

Then for what sort of reason has he made humanity's sufferings his own? Because he wished to destroy suffering by suffering and to abolish death by death, and desired to overthrow like by like. He makes the cross his own; he appropriates the slap in the face to himself; he has crafted his own fetter for himself; in order that the sufferings that became God's might receive authority over sufferings. For the nature of God was not injured, for it did not take the sufferings by a change in its own

attributes, and the sufferings received power from God against their like. For henceforth death, as that which came to be God's, abolishes death; and dying looses the tyranny of death, since he was both God and a human being.

St. Augustine of Hippo, On the Nativity (early 5th century)

Christ as God was born of His Father, as Man of His Mother; of the immortality of His Father, of the virginity of His Mother; of His Father without a mother, of His Mother without a father; of His Father without limits of time, of His Mother without seed; of His Father as the source of life, of His Mother as the end of death; of His Father ordering all days, of His Mother consecrating this particular day.

All His angels worthily praise Him, for He is their everlasting food, nourishing them with an incorruptible feast. He is the Word of God, by whose life they live, by whose eternity they live forever, by whose goodness they live happily forever. They praise Him worthily, as God with God, and they render glory to God on high. May we, ‘His people and the sheep of His hand,’ reconciled to Him by our good will, merit peace in consideration of the limited measure of our weakness. For these words to which the angels themselves gave utterance in jubilation at the birth of our Savior are their daily tribute: ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men of good will.’ Therefore, they praise Him duly: let us praise Him in obedience. They are His messengers; we, His sheep. He filled their table in heaven; He filled our manger on earth. He is the fullness of their table because ‘in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God; and the Word was God.’ He is the fullness of our manger because ‘the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.’ So that man might eat the Bread of angels the Creator of the angels became man. The angels praise Him by living; we, by believing; they by enjoying, we by seeking; they by obtaining, we by striving to obtain; they by entering, we by knocking. ■

Advent Retreat: Surprising Saints

The Archdiocese of Pittsburgh and Western PA will hold its annual Advent Retreat on Saturday, December 11th from 10AM-1PM at St. John the Baptist in Canonsburg. There will be a prayer service at 10AM followed by a light continental breakfast, and then Matushka Valerie Zahirsky will speak from 11AM-1PM on “Surprising Saints: Holy Peoples’ Struggles and Triumphs Can Inspire Our Lives.” The retreat is free, but does require a reservation by December 6th. To register, please call (201) 704-6217 or email frdavidvernak@verizon.net

A Liturgical “Christmas List”

Want to make a special donation to the parish this holiday season? Fr. Ignatius is looking to acquire the following liturgical items to beautify our life of corporate worship:

- English language icons of Sts. Peter and Paul, the Nativity of John the Baptist, the Beheading of John the Baptist, and the Circumcision of Christ (estimated cost - \$50 per icon)
- Blue altar server robes (estimated cost - \$3000)
- a Theotokos "epitaphion" (i.e. "winding sheet," "burial shroud") for Dormition (estimated cost - \$300 and up)
- Red altar table cover for Nativity season

If you would like to become the donor of any of these items, please speak with Fr. Ignatius or Michael Stickles.

Virtual Tour of Bethlehem

Join us on a journey through the Holy City of Bethlehem as we relive the events and places of our Lord’s birth! On Sunday, December 12th at 7PM, join Fr. Ilya Gotlinsky via Zoom for a virtual tour of Bethlehem. Reserve your spot by making a donation (tax deductible) on the F.O.C.A Eventbright page, <https://tinyurl.com/2w5fsczc> All proceeds will benefit the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America’s United Fund.

Calling all Christmas Cookie Bakers!

Do you like to bake Christmas cookies? Add a little Christmas cheer to those in need this Christmas! We are looking for some bakers to make home-made Christmas cookies to add to the CommonFood December food distribution. For more information please contact Leoni Georgiou at leomcfar@comcast.net , or call (814) 280-7599.



*What shall we offer Thee, O Christ, who for our sakes hast appeared on earth as a man?
Every creature made by Thee offers Thee thanks, the angels offer Thee a hymn; the heavens
a star; the Magi gifts; the shepherds, their wonder; the earth its cave; the wilderness, the
manger; and we offer Thee a Virgin Mother! O pre-eternal God, have mercy on us!*

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

The Nativity of Christ: Gospel Accounts

St. Luke, Ch 2

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them. ■

St. Matthew, Ch 1

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name Jesus. ■



Prophecies of the Nativity: Isaiah

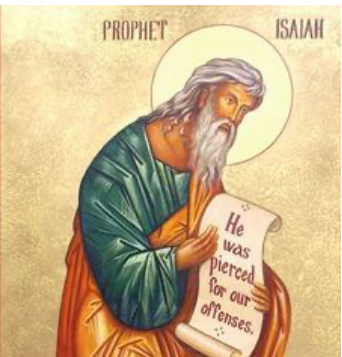
Isaiah Ch 7, 8, 9 (8th century BC)

Moreover the LORD spake again unto Ahaz, saying, Ask thee a sign of the LORD thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the LORD. And he said, Hear ye now, O house of David; *Is it* a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel [“God with us”]. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good. For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings.

Moreover the LORD said unto me, Take thee a great roll, and write in it with a man's pen concerning Maher-shalal-hash-baz [“the spoil speeds; the plunder hastens”]. And I took unto me faithful witnesses to record, Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah. And I went unto the prophetess; and she conceived, and bare a son. Then said the LORD to me, Call his name Maher-shalal-hash-baz. For before the child shall have knowledge to cry, My father, and my mother, the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria shall be taken away before the king of Assyria.

And he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach *even* to the neck; and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel. Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces; and give ear, all ye of far countries: gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces; gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces. Take counsel together, and it shall come to nought; speak the word, and it shall not stand: for God *is* with us.






























Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations. The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. Thou hast multiplied the nation, and not increased the joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian. For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire.



A Child is born to us, and a Son is given to us, Whose government is upon His shoulder: and His name is called the Angel of Great Counsel, Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, the Father of the world to come: for I will bring peace upon the princes, and health to Him. His government shall be great, and of His peace there is no end: it shall be upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to support it with judgment and with righteousness, from henceforth and forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts shall perform this. ■

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
 28 Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am LIVE <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i>	 29	 30	 December 1	 2	 3	 4
			Confessions, 4pm-6pm Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following	OCF @ Penn State, 7pm, Pasquerilla 126	Sunday School Christmas Caroling, 5:30pm	Great Vespers, 6pm LIVE Confessions, following
 5 Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am LIVE <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i>	 6 Divine Liturgy for St. Nicholas, 8am	 7	 8	 9	 10	 11
Great Vespers, 6pm			Confessions, 4pm-6pm Vespers, 6pm Parish Council Meeting, 7pm ZOOM†	Paraklesis to the Theotokos, 6pm OCF @ Penn State, 7pm, Pasquerilla 126		Men's fellowship breakfast, 9am Choir Rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm LIVE Confessions, following
 12 Baptism of Theodora Hunter, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am LIVE	 13	 14	 15	 16	 17	 18
			Confessions, 4pm-6pm Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following	Paraklesis to the Theotokos, 6pm		Altar Society Decoration, 10am Christmas Play Practice, 4:45pm Great Vespers, 6pm LIVE
 19	 20	 21	 22	 23	 24	25
Sunday School, 9am Baptism of Alexander Miller, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am LIVE Sunday School Christmas Play, 12pm	Divine Liturgy for St. Ignatius, 8am Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following	Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following	Confessions, 4pm-6pm Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following	Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following	Vespersal Divine Liturgy, 9am Holy Supper, 4:30pm Vigil for Nativity, 6pm LIVE	Divine Liturgy for the Nativity of Christ, 9am LIVE
26 Divine Liturgy, 10am LIVE <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i>	27	28	29	30	31	January 1
						Divine Liturgy for Circumcision & St. Basil, 9am
2 Divine Liturgy, 10am LIVE <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i>	3	4	 5	6	 7	8
			Vespers, 6pm	Chrismation of Jim VanDerlin, 9am Divine Liturgy for the Theophany of Christ, 9:30am Great Blessing of Waters, following	Great Vespers, 6pm	Great Vespers, 6pm LIVE
			Vigil for Theophany, 6pm			Great Vespers, 6pm LIVE Confessions, following

Chapel Calendar

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

Saturday 4 Great Vespers; Confessions following, 6pm	Saturday 25 Divine Liturgy for Nativity, 10am; Hours 9:40am
Sunday 5 Divine Liturgy 10am; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately thereafter, catechesis at 1:30pm	Saturday 26 Great Vespers with Litya, 6pm
Tuesday 7 Choir rehearsal, 6pm	Sunday 27 Synaxis of the Most Holy Theotokos Divine Liturgy 10am; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately thereafter, catechesis at 1:30pm
Saturday 11 Great Vespers; Confessions following, 6pm	Monday 27 “Hats and Blankets for babies” Knitting/Crocheting, 6:30pm
Sunday 12 Divine Liturgy 10am; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately thereafter, catechesis at 1:30pm	Tuesday 28 Choir rehearsal, 6pm
Tuesday 14 Choir rehearsal, 6pm	Friday 31 Great Vespers with Litya; followed by Moleben for the New Year, 6pm
Saturday 18 CHS “All Hands on Deck” Pre- Nativity Spruce Up Day, 10am	Saturday 1 Circumcision of our Lord Divine Liturgy 10am; Hours 9:40 a.m.
Saturday 18 Great Vespers; Confessions following, 6pm	Saturday 1 Great Vespers; Confessions following, 6pm
Sunday 19 Divine Liturgy 10am; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately thereafter, catechesis at 1:30pm	Sunday 2 Divine Liturgy 10am; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately thereafter, catechesis at 1:30pm
Tuesday 21 Choir rehearsal, 6pm	
Friday 24 Vigil/Litya for the Nativity of Our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ according to the Flesh, 6pm	<i>Please consult either the CHS website or FB page for schedule changes and/or other information</i>

December 2021

† to join remotely, visit holytrinity-oca.org/zoom.
LIVE this service will be livestreamed on YouTube (visit holytrinity-oca.org/YouTube).