

As Many As Have Been Baptized



On December 12th and December 19th, respectively, Holy Trinity celebrated the baptisms of Theodora Hunter (above right) and Aleksander Miller (above left). The baptism of Theodora was a “teaching baptism” which is available on our YouTube channel as the first element of the “Resurrectional Divine Liturgy” stream for December 12. Many years to Theodora and Aleksander! We look forward with joy and anticipation to our next baptism: Jim VanDerlin on the feast of Hoy Theophany, Jan. 6

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

I want to begin writing this month by saying “Merry Christmas” to all, as we are not really done with Christmas until at least Theophany, which is the fulfillment of Christmas. (That is to say, Christ’s birth as a man paves the way for baptism, in which we are “born from above” (Jn 3:3) and “born of God” (1:13). In His birth, Christ joins Himself to us, but in His baptism, He gives us perhaps a greater gift: a tool by which we might personally accept that joining and unite ourselves to Him. Christ’s birth is solely His own, but His baptism is something that each and every one of us can enter into.)

I also want to say a huge “thank you” to all the people of the parish for dealing so charitably with me and with my family during my “paternity leave.” May God reward

each and every one of you for the love you have shown us, for the tasks you took on yourselves, and for all the little things you did around the edges to make sure that parish life continued without much interruption. I also especially want to say “thank you” to Fr. David for covering the Wednesday service cycle for me, keeping even that aspect of parish life intact.

Obviously, the last event that took place before my leave started in November was the Parish Annual Meeting. In my written address for that meeting, I laid out certain challenges that I saw in parish life and some goals that we needed to start working towards. I am pleased to announce that we’re making some progress in these things. Regarding adult education and recurrent

(continued, see CHRIST IS BORN, next page)

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH
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Schedules

	COFFEE HOUR	GREETERS	TELLERS	SERVERS
January 2	New Year Potluck	J. Houser, B. Haupt	K. Cattell, M. Fedkin	All Servers welcome each Sunday. Altar Server Co-Captains: J. Cadman and S. Oleynik
January 9	A. Stickles & J. Miranda	M. Fedkin, K. Bazilevskaya	G. Cattell, M. Fiori	
January 16	Basic Coffee Hour	A. Stickles, J. Houser	K. Cattell, M. Fedkin	
January 23	L. Georgiou & K. Oleynik	D. Swisher, K. Quinn	G. Cattell, M. Fiori	
January 30	Basic Coffee Hour	J. Houser, B. Haupt	K. Cattell, M. Fedkin	
February 6	H. Torbic & A.T. Pelikan	M. Fedkin, K. Bazilevskaya	G. Cattell, M. Fiori	

Christ is Born

catechesis for the already-baptized, I am working on arranging once-monthly speakers to address us on various topics of interests and am pleased to announce that our January speaker will be Fr. Seraphim Reynolds of Williamsport, who will address the topic of the “icon corner” or “home altar.” Once-monthly talks are not really sufficient (in my view) as parish-wide adult ed, but I am excited about this project and hopeful that it will bear spiritual fruit for us. If you have any topics you’d like to hear addressed in these lectures or any particular speakers to recommend, don’t hesitate to let me know. I am also pleased to announce (if it wasn’t obvious!) that our bookstore sign has arrived and been installed, and that Anna is looking for volunteers who might be willing to work a small, regular, weekly shift, presumably on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday. The bookstore doesn’t get a ton of “foot traffic” at this point, but it’s very good for us to have a predictable, regular schedule of availability to the community as an opportunity for witness and ministry. Additionally, our site survey project is coming back online starting this month, we’re in the initial phases of developing a more formalized “website team,” and I will

be having a meeting with the heads of our charitable partner CommonFood later this month to see if there is anything we can further do to aid them in their attempts to assist those who are struggling with food insecurity in our area. So there are a lot of good things happening, by God’s grace, but a lot of things are still in their infancy. I also want to highlight one upcoming January event particularly: on the 23rd after liturgy, we will be having a recruitment fair for the various parish ministry teams. As is usual in parish life, most of the teams really could use more members. I often tell people that it is very important that if one can say “I am an Orthodox Christian” then one can also say “and this is the ministry I do.” Christ gives us the model in the season of Theophany; He came “not to be served, but to serve” (Mk 10:45). Thus, if we are to imitate Him, we must be servants of the Church, servants of one another, and servants of our neighbors. Please consider prayerfully attending the fair, seeking to understand the needs of the various ministries, and participating in one or more of the many projects before us. We are very blessed by the vitality we have in our parish, but vitality and growth are things that take hard work, and ultimately they take sacrificial service. Please consider the question, “what might Christ be calling me to do at this phase of my life?” Christ is born! Glorify Him!■



It was said of Abba John the Dwarf that he withdrew and lived in the desert at Scetis with an old man of Thebes. His Abba, taking a piece of dry wood, planted it and said to him, “Water it every day with a bottle of water, until it bears fruit.” Now the water was so far away that he had to leave in the evening and return the following morning. At the end of three years the wood came to life and bore fruit. Then the old man took some of the fruit and carried it to the church saying to the brethren, “Take and eat the fruit of obedience.”

Merry Christmas to All!

Fr. Ignatius expresses his sincere thanks to the five donors who pledged to cover his *entire "Liturgical Christmas List"* this December. God willing, we should expect to see blue altar server robes for the Dormition fast, a red altar cloth for Nativity season next year, new icons in June at the feasts of Peter and Paul and John the Baptist, a new icon for the Beheading of St. John in August, and a new Epitaphion ("winding sheet," "burial shroud") for the Theotokos for the Great Feast of Dormition. Glory to God!

K&W Site Survey to Resume

After a long, long, long, COVID delay, the K&W site survey process will begin again on January 27 with a zoom meeting between the parish council and various K&W consultants. It is expected that this meeting will produce a schedule of "charettes" to gather parishioner/"stakeholder" input on the future of our parish's physical plant and the ministries it can/should provide. Please keep Fr. Ignatius, Fr. David, and the parish council in your prayers as we prepare ourselves for these important discussions.

Parish Ministry Faire

On Sunday, January 23, during the coffee hour, we will have a series of brief presentations by the heads of most of our parish's ministry groups describing what their ministry's function is, what its current needs are, and how one can get involved. Parishioners will then have an opportunity to put questions to the ministry heads and to sign-up to serve. For questions in advance, please contact Anna Stickles at anna@grtbooks.com.

For the Record:

On December 12th at 9AM, Theodora Hunter, daughter of Fr. Ignatius and Mat. Seraphima Hunter, was baptized by Fr. Ignatius at Holy Trinity Church. Her godparents are Evan and Elya Kerstetter. Many years to the newly illumined child of God, Theodora!

Sign Up For A House Blessing Today

It's house blessing season again and Fr. Ignatius is very excited about the opportunity to "get on the road" and bless houses throughout the month of January. While certainly not anywhere near the level of a Church "sacrament," the house blessing is a profound annual reminder that all of our life belongs to God. When we have our house blessed, we remember our own personal baptism and reclaim it. And further, we proclaim its implications: that all our life - our possessions, our interactions with those we live with or with our guests, our work, our free time - all of it belongs to God. So let us not neglect this opportunity to reclaim Christ and to be filled with His grace!

Sign-up sheets with time slotting will be available in the narthex and also online starting on Sunday, January 2. For any questions, any coordination matters, or to schedule a blessing for a day and time that is not listed, please contact Anna Stickles at anna@grtbooks.com.

January Adult Ed: The Icon Corner

At 10 am on Saturday, January 15, Holy Trinity will be blessed to receive instruction from Fr. Seraphim Reynolds, pastor of Holy Cross Orthodox Church in Williamsport, on the purposes of, construction of, and spiritual disciplines related to an "icon corner" (sometimes referred to as a "home altar"). Fr. Seraphim will give an expansive "show and tell" style presentation and provide tips for acquiring materials, setting things up, and cultivating a habit of daily prayer. This talk is free and open to all, and we encourage all parishioners and friends of the parish to come and learn with us about this crucial tool in the Orthodox Christian spiritual life.

For the Record:

On December 19th at 9AM, Aleksander Miller, son of Irina Miller, was baptized by Fr. Ignatius Hunter at Holy Trinity Church. His sponsor is Anna Borisova de Valdez. Many years to the newly illumined child of God, Aleksander!

■ ORTHODOX SPIRITUALITY

Prayer Beads (Cont.)

2000 BC. Before beads began to be made from wood, minerals and other materials that required processing, they were made from any suitable objects (for example, dried berries) found in everyday life and strung on a thread.

A distinctive feature of Christian prayer beads is the symbol of the cross, used either to delimit the beads in tens or to end the prayer circle.



3) *Lestovka* (from the Russian ladder, see pic above) is a type of prayer beads widely used exclusively in the Russian tradition. The surviving textual and iconographic evidence indicates that this type of beads were used by Ilya of Murom, Venerable Sergius of Radonezh, Venerable Seraphim of Sarov, as well as some 20th century saints, for example, Seraphim Vyritsky.

Lestovkas were widespread before the mid-17th century splitting of the Russian Orthodox Church, after which they were gradually replaced by prayer ropes and remained in use mainly among the Old Believers.

Currently, the Orthodox Christians’ interest is returning to this unusual type of prayer beads. Our convent [St. Elizabeth’s in Minsk] makes lestovkas according to ancient technologies, albeit not in the traditional version, but rather as a modern “adaptation,” with a more customary division into tens. Each segment of the lestovka, called a “barrel”, contains the Jesus Prayer.

Lestovkas can be very small (to be worn on a finger), in the form of a bracelet (with 30 barrels), or long (100 barrels).

Prayer Beads as a Weapon Against Demons

Saint Paisios of the Holy Mountain used to say, “Remember that a good soldier, leaving the trench, always holds a machine gun in his hands. Prayer beads have great power. It is a monk’s weapon, and the knots are bullets that knock down demons.” These words are evidenced by the following story:

Once a monk from St. Paul’s monastery on Athos went to Kefalonia to visit St Gerasimus, who possessed the gift of casting out demons. During the Divine Liturgy, this monk stood at the altar and prayed the Jesus Prayer with his prayer beads. During the service, a demoniac was brought to the church, so that St Gerasim would heal him. Suddenly the demon’s voice was heard in the church, shouting, “Hey, you monk, stop pulling this rope – it burns me!”

Hearing this, the celebrating priest turned to the monk and said, “Brother, pray with all your might that this creation of God may be freed from the demon”.

The demon then shouted even more ferociously, “Hey you old preacher, why are you telling him to keep pulling his rope?! Haven’t you heard that it burns me?!”

Then the monk began to read his prayers even more fervently, until finally the man tormented by a demon was freed from him.

In the words of one of the modern ascetics, a prayer rope is a legacy and a blessing left to us by the holy fathers. Today prayer beads are used in a slightly different way than in antiquity and help not so much in counting prayers as in concentrating on prayer. Sometimes the mere glance at them prompts a Christian to pray. Today this pious tradition is available to both monastics and the laity, making it possible for everyone to grow in prayer choosing the type of prayer beads to one’s preference.■

■ ORTHODOX SPIRITUALITY

The Origin and Spiritual Power of Prayer Beads

Taken from the Catalogue of Good Deeds, the blog of St. Elizabeth Convent, Minsk, Russia. Written by Anastasia Parkhomchik

Prayer beads came into use by Christians as early as in the first centuries after the birth of Christ. For a long time, they have been used for prayer only by monks and hermits. Over time, the positive spiritual effect of their use also made them popular among the laity. Currently, in the Russian Orthodox Church, the use of prayer beads by laity is treated with caution and requires a blessing of a spiritual father. This article is dedicated to prayer beads and the amazing spiritual power that they possess.

Currently, the Orthodox Church uses three main types of prayer beads, each offering a variety of lengths.

1) The prayer rope (Russian vervitsa or broyanitsa in the Balkans; see pic below) is considered the most ancient of them. The first mention of a prayer rope, found in the life of St Pachomius the Great (+348) describes certain uneducated monks using a method of counting prayers by tying a knot on a piece of rope after each prayer. After some time, St Basil the Great (+379) introduced this practice among the monks of his diocese. St Basil wrote, “When reading prayers not from books but from memory, may each monk complete ten rounds on his prayer rope during every midnight office and every matins. <...> Each prayer rope must have one hundred and three knots, with a particular prayer established for each...”



Elder Paisios of the Holy Mountain used to tell a story about a certain ancient ascetic tying knots on his rope to count the number of prayers that he was reading. But the devil kept untying the knots, making the ascetic lose count. Then the monk began to pray fervently to God, asking for help in stopping the devil’s tricks. Soon an angel appeared and showed him a way to tie knots, ‘sealing’ them crosswise nine times, as a symbol of nine angelic ranks. When on the following day the ascetic began to use this method, the sign of the cross stopped the demon, and he could no longer interfere with the prayer. Eventually the prayer rope became widespread in Eastern Christianity. According to some legends, the ascetic mentioned by St Paisios is St Anthony the Great (+357).

In the course of time, the prayer rope has turned into one of the most important tools for prayer, becoming an obligatory attribute of monastic life and serving as a “spiritual sword” given to monastics at tonsure. In contrast with the monastic practice, lay people should only be using prayer beads for private prayer, keeping them in their pockets if necessary.



2) Prayer beads (see pic above) are also common in other religions, such as Hinduism, Islam and Buddhism. According to some archaeological finds, prayer beads were used as a religious attribute in India as early as

(continued, see PRAYER BEADS, next page)

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
26 Divine Liturgy, 10am LIVE <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i>	27	28	29	30	31	January 1 Divine Liturgy for Circumcision & St. Basil, 9am
			Vespers, 6pm		Great Vespers, 6pm	Great Vespers, 6pm LIVE
2 Divine Liturgy, 10am LIVE <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i>	3	4	5 ✠ Vesperal Divine Liturgy, 9am Vigil of Theophany, 6pm	6 Baptism of Jim VanDerlin, 9am Divine Liturgy for the Theophany of Christ, 10am Great Blessing of Waters, following	7 ✠	8 Great Vespers, 6pm LIVE Confessions, following
9 Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am LIVE <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i>	10	11	12 ✠ Confessions, 4pm-6pm Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following Greeters Ministry Meeting, 7pm	13 OCF @ Penn State, 7pm, Pasquerilla 126	14 ✠	15 Men's Fellowship Breakfast, 9am Adult Ed, "The Icon Corner," 10am Choir practice, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm LIVE Confessions, following
16 Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am LIVE <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i> Installation of new parish council officers, 11:45	17	18	19 ✠ Confessions, 4pm-6pm Vespers, 6pm Parish Council Meeting, 7pm	20 ✠ OCF @ Penn State, 7pm, Pasquerilla 126	21 ✠	22 Great Vespers, 6pm LIVE Confessions, following
23 Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am LIVE <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i> Parish Ministry Faire, 12pm	24	25	26 ✠ Confessions, 4pm-6pm Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following	27 ✠ OCF @ Penn State, 7pm, Pasquerilla 126 Parish Council Zoom Session with K&W Engineers, 7pm	28 ✠	29 Choir practice, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm LIVE Confessions, following
30 Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am LIVE <i>(Hours, 9:40am)</i>	31	February 1	2 🐟 Divine Liturgy for The Meeting of our Lord in the Temple, 8am Confessions, 4pm-6pm Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following	3 ✠	4 ✠	5 Great Vespers, 6pm LIVE Confessions, following
		Vigil for The Meeting of our Lord in the Temple, 6pm		OCF @ Penn State, 7pm, Pasquerilla 126		

Chapel Calendar

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

Saturday 1 Circumcision of our Lord Divine Liturgy 10am; Hours 9:40 a.m.	Sunday 16 Divine Liturgy 10am; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately thereafter, catechesis at 1:30pm
Saturday 1 Great Vespers; Confessions following, 6pm	Tuesday 18 Choir rehearsal, 6pm
Sunday 2 Divine Liturgy 10am; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately thereafter, catechesis at 1:30pm	Friday 21 Akathist to the Theotokos, Nurturer of Children, 6pm
Tuesday 4 Choir rehearsal, 6pm	Saturday 22 Great Vespers; Confessions following, 6pm
Wednesday 5 Theophany Vesperal Divine Liturgy/Great Blessing of the Waters (Indoors). 6pm	Sunday 23 Divine Liturgy 10am; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately thereafter, catechesis at 1:30pm
Saturday 8 Great Vespers; Confessions following, 6pm	Monday 24 "Hats and Blankets for babies" Knitting/Crocheting, 6:30pm
Sunday 9 Divine Liturgy 10am; Hours 9:40 a.m.; Outdoor Great Blessing of Waters (@ the spring in Beaver Springs located @ Spruce St. and Center Ave.), 12pm; fellowship immediately following	Tuesday 25 Choir rehearsal, 6pm
Tuesday 11 Choir rehearsal, 6pm	Saturday 29 Great Vespers; Confessions following, 6pm
Saturday 15 Great Vespers; Confessions following, 6pm	Sunday 30 Divine Liturgy 10am; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately thereafter, catechesis at 1:30pm
	Tuesday, February 1 Meeting of the Lord Vesperal Divine Liturgy, 6pm

Please consult either the CHS website or FB page for schedule changes and/or other information
Reminder: Sign up for House Blessings on the Calendar at CHS!

January 2022

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