

The Tomb Becomes a Ladder to Heaven



By God’s grace and the generosity of our donors, we were able to purchase a “Theotokos Epitaphios” this year, allowing us to add the Lamentations to the Theotokos and a burial procession to the vigil of Dormition (Aug 14)

Site Survey: August Update

I am very pleased to announce at this time that on July 11 our parish council had its initial planning meeting with representatives of K&W Engineers and Consultants. For this reason, we can now say definitively that the formal visioning process for our future has begun. Our meeting was quite productive, and we were able to identify a number of the positives and negatives in our current facilities situation without K&W even coming to visit the site.

At the meeting, one of the key issues that was brought forward was what we might call the classic “HTOC trilemma:” renovate, rebuild, or relocate? Obviously, the parish council cannot answer that question alone, and perhaps one of the most important things pointed out to us by K&W is that we are not really capable of answering that question at this point.

That is to say, we worship in a highly zoned community, with multiple layers of government having say on what can or can’t be done on properties in this location. Thus, for instance, we are not yet aware of how high we might be allowed to build our structures (cupola included). We do not know if we will be able to merge the two parcels that we own (something which would be necessary if we were to either connect the existing buildings to one another or build a new building that straddled the existing property lines). We do not know what stylistic or physical limitations will be placed on us by the Holmes Foster Historical District. We do not know what percentage of our property can legally be paved or how much green space we are required to have, how far back buildings may need to sit from the property lines, etc.

(continued, see SITE SURVEY, next page)

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH
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Schedules

	COFFEE HOUR	GREETERS	TELLERS
August 7	H. Torbic & A.T. Pelikan	A. Stickle & J. Carrier	G. Cattell & M. Fiori
August 14	Basic Coffee Hour	K. Oleynik & D. Swisher	K. Cattell & C. Johnson
August 21	A. Ashmore & C. Pellock	J. Houser & B. Haupt	M. Fiori & H. Torbic
August 28	Russian Ladies	A. Stickle & J. Carrier	M. Fedkin & C. Johnson
Sept. 4	Potluck	M. Fedkin & K. Bazilevskaya	G. Cattell & H. Torbic
Sept. 11	A. Stickle & J. Miranda	J. Houser & D. Swisher	K. Cattell & M. Fiori

■ FROM THE RECTOR’S DESK

Site Survey (con’t)

In the initial phase of the site survey, which is taking place this month, K&W engineers will visit our church, examine our facilities as they currently exist, and research local codes so that they are able to provide us with clear answers about what actually can be done on our present property. These answers will help to frame our September 17 congregation-wide meeting in which we will seek to lay out a vision for K&W regarding what specific functions we feel like our buildings ought to provide. As I said last month, form will follow function.

At our meeting, the parish council did not set out many concrete ideas for K&W, preferring instead to await the findings of the August survey work and also to try to more fully understand the will of the people in these matters. Nevertheless, I think it is important to put forward some of the ideas that I am aware have been brought forth and discussed in the parish on various levels so that we can be thinking about them as we head toward our September meeting. One issue that has been brought to my attention by a number of people concerns worship space. We are, by God’s grace, back on a growth trajectory, and the spiritual soil of State College is very fertile. We ought to plan – well ahead of time – for what we might do if our weekly attendance rises back to 130, 140, or beyond. Some have suggested that a worship space fit for 200 might be more appropriate for us. Others have suggested larger numbers than that. Another area of concern that I’m sure most of us are aware of is parking. Ideally, we would be able to have ample, well-marked parking spaces for every parishioner and every visitor at all times. This is a matter of hospitality, among other things, and we certainly have had visitors ticketed or towed out of neighboring lots in the last few years because they didn’t understand the rules of our parking situation. Another issue that has been raised is care for the disabled. Restroom access, in particular, is quite poor in our present facilities. This, too, is a matter of hospitality we need to reflect on.

Another concern that has come up frequently is care for the dead and traditional Orthodox funerary practices. What can we do to more worthily bury the dead and care for our grieving brothers and sisters? Ought we to think about having our own cemetery? This is an issue that has been raised by a number of people. Another issue regards Christian education. Should we have a more intentionally-constructed presentation space? Should we have dedicated, purpose-built Sunday School classrooms? Returning again to the realm of hospitality, some have opined that it would be good to have a full commercial-grade kitchen, and others have suggested a large, elegant parish hall to be used not just for coffee hours, but for other appropriate social functions as well. Some of the more truly visionary or even revolutionary suggestions I have heard made involve the idea of building an Orthodox K-12 in the State College area, building a residential OCF apartment complex where our students could enjoy a common social life and participate in a daily cycle of communal prayer whilst they are in college, or building some sort of charitable, medicinal, hygienic, or food-distribution ministry.

Many of these things are possible for us within God’s will, and this is why we are undertaking this process. We need to know what options are feasible for us on Sparks Street and what things are more doable only if we relocate. We need to be willing to “think outside the box” and be creative, and this is something that demands our attention now, not later. Apocryphal or not, it is said that Benjamin Franklin authored the saying, “if you fail to plan, you are planning to fail.” The same can be said in the spiritual life and in the common life of parishes. If we do not set out on God-pleasing paths with Wisdom as our guide, how can we ever expect to arrive at godly and grace-filled ends? May we be blessed of God in this and in all things, and may we truly be a life-giving blessing to all of our neighbors here in Centre County. Amen. ■

— Fr. Ignatius

■ NEWS & NOTES

Elevation and Ordination

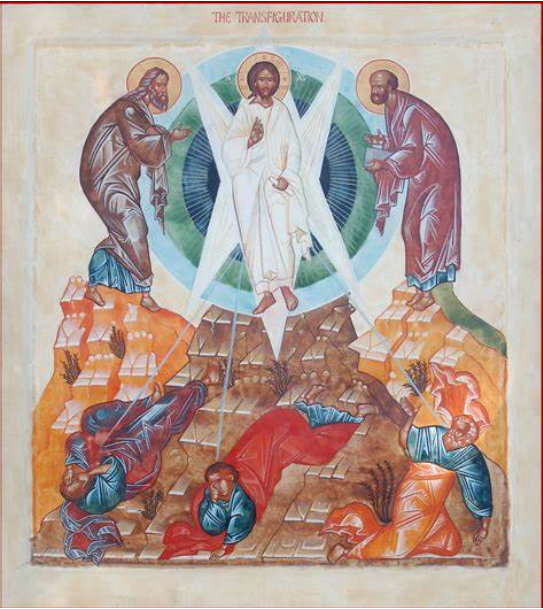
On July 31st, Archbishop Melchisedek tonsured Evan Ashmore a Reader and ordained Michael Stickles a Subdeacon. May God graciously grant these two men and their families many blessed years as they continue to serve God and the community of Holy Trinity.

Adult Education

Reader Alexander Koropsak, a member of Holy Apostles Orthodox Church in Mechanicsburg, will present the adult education for August. He will be speaking on the prefigurements of the Eucharist in the Old Testament immediately following vespers on Saturday, August 20th.

New Catechumen

Congratulations to Christine Wakeman who became our most recent catechumen on July 31st. Please welcome her into our community and pray for her as she begins this journey.



■ ORTHODOX SPIRITUALITY

Dormition (con’t)

seated on the King's eternal throne. Who was the instrument of these infinite benefits exceeding all mind and comprehension, if not the Mother ever Virgin who bore Thee?

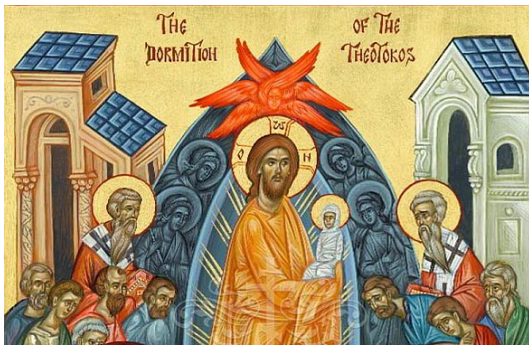
Realize, beloved in the Lord, the grace of to-day, and its wondrous solemnity. Its mysteries are not terrible, nor do they inspire awe. Blessed are they who have eyes to see. Blessed are they who see with spiritual eyes. This night shines as the day. What countless angels acclaim the death of the life-giving Mother! How the eloquence of apostles blesses the departure of this body which was the receptacle of God. How the Word of God, who deigned in His mercy to become her Son, ministering with His divine hands to this immaculate and divine being, as His mother, receives her holy soul. O wondrous Law-giver, fulfilling the law which He had Himself laid down, not being bound by it, for it was He who enjoined children to show reverence to their parents. "Honor thy father and thy mother," He says. The truth of this is apparent to every one, calling to mind even dimly the words of holy Scripture. If according to it the souls of the just are in the hands of God, how much more is her soul in the hands of her Son and her God. This is indisputable. Let us consider who she is and whence she came, how she, the greatest and dearest of all God's gifts, was given to this world. Let us examine what her life was, and the mysteries in which she took part. Heathens in the use of funeral orations most carefully brought forward anything which could be turned to praise of the deceased, and at the same time encourage the living to virtue, drawing generally upon fable and fiction, not having fact to go upon. How then, shall we not deserve scorn if we bury in silence that which is most true and sacred, and in very deed the source of praise and salvation to all? Shall we not receive the same punishment as the man who hid his master's talent? Let us adapt our subject to the needs of those who listen, as food is suited to the body. ■

■ ORTHODOX SPIRITUALITY

On the Dormition

This is an excerpt from Sermon 1 On the Dormition, preached by St. John of Damascus (d. 749)

What shall we say, O Queen? What words shall we use? What praise shall we pour upon thy sacred and glorified head, thou giver of good gifts and of riches, the pride of the human race, the glory of all creation, through whom it is truly blessed. He whom nature did not contain in the beginning, was born of thee. The Invisible One is contemplated face to face. O Word of God, do Thou open my slow lips, and give their utterances Thy richest blessing; inflame us with the grace of Thy Spirit, through whom fishermen became orators, and ignorant men spoke supernatural wisdom, so that our feeble voices may contribute to thy loved Mother's praises, even though greatness should be extolled by misery. She, the chosen one of an ancient race, by a predetermined counsel and the good pleasure of God the Father, who had begotten Thee in eternity immaterially, brought Thee forth in the latter times, Thou who art propitiation and salvation, justice and redemption, life of life, light of light, and true God of true God.



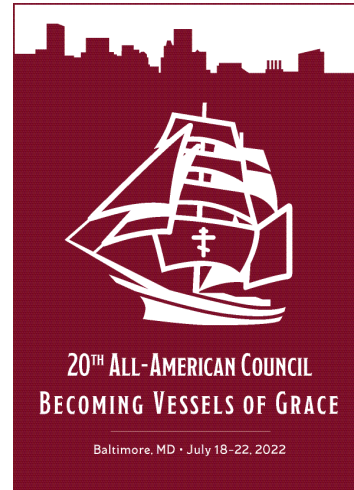
The birth of her, whose Child was marvelous, was above nature and understanding, and it was salvation to the world; her death was glorious, and truly a sacred feast. The Father predestined her, the prophets foretold her through the Holy Ghost. His sanctifying power

overshadowed her, cleansed and made her holy, and, as it were, predestined her. Then Thou, Word of the Father, not dwelling in place, didst invite the lowliness of our nature to be united to the immeasurable greatness of Thy inscrutable Godhead. Thou, who didst take flesh of the Blessed Virgin, vivified by a reasoning soul, having first abided in her undefiled and immaculate womb, creating Thyself, and causing her to exist in Thee, didst become perfect man, not ceasing to be perfect God, equal to Thy Father, but taking upon Thyself our weakness through ineffable goodness. Through it Thou art one Christ, one Lord, one Son of God, and man at the same time, perfect God and perfect man, wholly God and wholly man, one Substance from two perfect natures, the Godhead and the manhood. And in two perfect natures, the divine and the human, God is not pure God, nor the man only man, but the Son of God and the Incarnate God are one and the same God and man without confusion or division, uniting in Himself substantially the attributes of both natures. Thus, He is at once uncreated and created, mortal and immortal, visible and invisible, in place and not in place. He has a divine will and a human will, a divine action and a human also, two powers of choosing divine and human. He shows forth divine wonders and human affections--natural, I mean, and pure. Thou hast taken upon Thyself, Lord, of Thy great mercy, the state of Adam as he was before the fall, body, soul, and mind, and all that they involve physically, so as to give me a perfect salvation. It is true indeed that what was not assumed was not healed. Having thus become the mediator between God and man, Thou didst destroy enmity, and lead back to Thy Father those who had deserted Him, wanderers to their home, and those in darkness to the light. Thou didst bring pardon to the contrite, and didst change mortality into immortality. Thou didst deliver the world from the aberration of many gods, and didst make men the children of God, partakers of Thy divine glory. Thou didst raise the human race, which was condemned to hell, above all power and majesty, and in Thy person it is

(continued, see DORMITION, next page)

■ FROM THE NATIONAL CHURCH

News from the 2022 All-American Council



From July 18-22, the Orthodox Church in America held its triennial coast-to-coast synaxis in Baltimore, MD under the presidency of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon, and the Holy Synod. As with most large Church assemblies, I asked the faithful in advance to pray for a godly, upbuilding, and peaceful gathering. And by-and-large, I can report that this is what happened. Certainly, the All-American Council is very much about corporate decision-making, worship, and fellowship. But it is also very much about self-knowledge. Fr. David, Mka. Brenda, David Swisher, and I learned a lot about what is presently happening in the OCA, and with that in mind, I would offer the following news and insights:
























- On the eve of the Council, the Holy Synod elected Bp. Daniel of Santa Rosa as the new ruling bishop of the Diocese of the Midwest – only the Diocese of New England remains without a hierarch at present
- St. Vladimir's Seminary, presently of Scarsdale, NY, is planning on relocating and expanding both its facilities and its educational offerings – it is highly likely that this move will be far away from the Northeast, thus giving us – for the first time ever –

an accredited Orthodox seminary outside of Pennsylvania, New York, and Massachusetts

- St. Tikhon's Monastery has established a one-year residency program for training Church musicians – it is also beginning work on a facility and program to train professional iconographers
- Metropolitan Tikhon has relocated to Washington, DC, and the OCA Chancery is in the process of moving there as well – he becomes the first “Metropolitan of Washington” to actually reside in Washington
- The OCA's clergy pension plan is presently underfunded due to a number of factors – it is possible that there will be an additional 2% increase on the parish contribution to clergy pensions in the future – it was also reiterated that participation in the pension program is mandatory for all full-time OCA clergy and their parishes
- During the Council, the bishops addressed the question of same-sex relationships and gender identity, issuing a strongly-worded but compassionate statement reaffirming marriage as “monogamous and heterosexual” and threatening “ecclesiastical discipline” on any “clergy, theologians, teachers, or lay persons” who teach “against the Church's clear moral position” on the matter – this statement is available on oca.org
- The Diocese of Mexico is raising funds to build a residential seminary, to be named “St. Basil's Academy” – they secured enough funds to begin construction before the end of the AAC
- A general aid fund has been established by the Diocese of Alaska for supplementing clergy stipends, which presently average \$7200/yr in the diocese
- The location of the next AAC is unknown at this point, but it is scheduled to occur in 2025■

— Fr. Ignatius

Holy Trinity Calendar

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
31 Hierarchical Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am)	 August 1	 2	 3 Confessions, 4pm Vespers, 6pm Parish Council Meeting, 7pm ZOOM	 4	 5 Vigil for Transfiguration, 6pm	 6 Holy Transfiguration Divine Liturgy, 9am Blessing of Grapes, 10:30am Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following
 7 Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am)	 8	 9	 10 Confessions, 4pm Vespers, 6pm Parish Council 2023 Budget Session, 7pm	 11	 12	 13 Choir Rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following
 14 Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Vigil for Dormition, 6pm	15 Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos Divine Liturgy, 8am Blessing of the Flowers & Herbs, 9:30am	16	 17 Confessions, 4pm Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following	18 By-Law Committee, 7pm ZOOM	19 	20 Great Vespers, 6pm Adult Ed: "Old Testament Prefigurations of the Eucharist," 7pm
21 Baptism, Andrew Gavrikov, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am)	22	23	 24 Confessions, 4pm Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following	25	 26	27 Choir Rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following
28 Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Great Vespers, 6pm	 29	30	 31 Confessions, 4pm Vespers, 6pm Molieben for the New Church Year, 6:45pm	September 1	 2	3 Choir Rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following
4 Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am)	5	6	 7 Confessions, 4pm Vigil for Nativity of the Theotokos, 6pm	8 Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos Divine Liturgy, 8am	 9 Vigil for Transfiguration, 6pm	10 Choir Rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following

Chapel Calendar

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

Tuesday 2 Choir rehearsal, 6pm	Tuesday 16 Choir rehearsal, 6pm
Friday 5 Transfiguration Great Vespers with Litya, 6pm	Saturday 20 Great Vespers, 6pm; Confessions following
Saturday 6 Transfiguration Divine Liturgy, 10am; Hours 9:40	Sunday 21 Divine Liturgy, 10am; Hours 9:40am; fellowship immediately following; catechesis, 1:30pm
Saturday 6 Great Vespers, 6pm; Confessions following	Monday 22 Knitting/crocheting "Hats and Blankets for Babies," 6pm
Sunday 7 Divine Liturgy, 10am; Hours 9:40am; fellowship immediately following; catechesis, 1:30pm	Tuesday 23 Choir rehearsal, 6pm
Tuesday 9 Choir rehearsal, 6pm	Saturday 27 Great Vespers, 6pm; Confessions following
Saturday 13 Great Vespers, 6pm; Confessions following	Sunday 28 Divine Liturgy; Hours 9:40am; fellowship immediately following
Sunday 14 Divine Liturgy, 10am; Hours 9:40am; fellowship immediately following; catechesis, 1:30pm	Tuesday 30 Choir rehearsal, 6pm
Sunday 14 Dormition Great Vespers with Litya, 6pm	

Consult the CHS website or FB page for schedule changes and/or other information

† to join remotely for Zoom, visit holytrinity-oca.org/zoom.
LIVE Please note that at this time, all services at Holy Trinity are being live-streamed. To watch them online, please visit holytrinity-oca.org/YouTube

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.

August 2022