

THE TRISAGION

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

The Orthodox Christian Church of the Holy Spirit



CHS Prepares for Full Independence

Brothers and sisters, it is with great joy that I am writing to inform you of the present state of our separation efforts from our daughter parish, the Chapel of the Holy Spirit in Beavertown. After years of careful planning, events are now happening quickly.

Within the last year, His Eminence Melchisedek has given his blessing for the separation, by-laws for the new parish have been formulated and approved, our parish has voted (in November) to permit CHS to seek separate incorporation, articles of incorporation have been drawn up, separate bank accounts have been established, and most-recently, we have received the blessing of His Eminence and the Archdiocesan Council to transfer the 145 N. Kern Street, Beavertown, property into the name of the new "Orthodox Christian Church of

the Holy Spirit." This will include a transfer of the diocesan-held mortgage to CHS as well, so this will no longer be a formal liability of the Holy Trinity parish.

However, we do have one last significant hurdle to overcome in order to complete this process. In order to adhere to our bylaws regarding real estate and to the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, we need 51% of our voting membership to come together and approve the gift (technically a \$1 "sale") of the Kern Street property to CHS. This is a much higher attendance threshold than we have for quorum at our annual meetings, and it will likely be somewhat difficult for us to meet. Therefore, I urge all faithful members of our parish to make extra effort to be present at the divine liturgy (either at Holy Trinity or CHS) on April 7th. At the

(continued, see RECTOR'S DESK, following page)

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH
 119 S. Sparks Street
 State College, PA 16801
 ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT ORG.
 U.S. POSTAGE
 PAID
 STATE COLLEGE, PA
 PERMIT NO. 289

Schedules

	COFFEE HOUR	GREETERS	TELLERS
March 3	C. Swisher, T. Chambers, C. Pellock	M. Fedkin & K. Bazilevskaya	M. Fiori & B. Haupt
March 10	MEATFARE: HTOC pizza	J. Houser & A. Stickle	M. Fedkin & H. Torbic
March 17	CHEESEFARE: Pancakes & Potluck	J. Torbic & N. Quinting	K. Cattell & M. Stickle
March 24	Russian Ladies Group A (Katya F.)*	M. & T. Chambers	G. Cattell & M. Fiori
March 31	A. Stickle, M. Leathers & L. Georgiou*	Leathers & M. K. Oleynik	M. Fedkin & B. Haupt
April 7	Souper Sunday*	M. Fedkin & K. Bazilevskaya	H. Torbic & M. Stickle

■ FROM THE RECTOR'S DESK

Chapel

conclusion of the liturgy, we will have a short, one-item special parish meeting to approve the sale of the Kern Street property to CHS. But since this is an action involving real estate and all of the legal implications that come with that, we will need parish voting members to sign in on the sheets provided to establish a 51% quorum (CHS members inclusive) before we can conduct the vote. If we cannot get the quorum, then we cannot give CHS their property, so it is very important that all voting members make every effort to be in attendance on that day.

After we approve the property transfer and CHS' incorporation is finalized, we plan to have a joint-parish celebration of these things in the late spring, sometime after Pascha. To God be all glory for the growth of His Church! ♦

The agenda of the April 7th Special Meeting is as follows:

- 1) Opening Prayer**
- 2) Determination of Quorum**
- 3) Approval of Sale of 151 N. Kern St. to Church of the Holy Spirit**
- 4) Adjournment**
- 5) Closing Prayer**

■ PRAXIS

Lenten Prayers of St. Isaac the Syrian

May the cross of shame which you mounted for my sake become a bridge to that peaceful abode; may the crown of thorns with which your head was crowned become for me the helmet of salvation on the heated day of battle; may the spit which your face received prepare me to have an open face before the tribunal at your advent; may your holy body which was exposed on the cross crucify me to this world and its lusts by means of love for you; may your clothing, for which lots were cast, tear asunder before my eyes the garment of darkness with which I am inwardly clothed; may the water and blood which came forth from you become for me a document granting liberty from the ancient state of servitude; may your body and your blood which have been mingled with my body remain within me as a pledge that I will not be deprived of the constant sight of you in that realm which has no end; may the mysteries of the faith which I have preserved uncorrupted in myself preserve for me something to glory about on that day when the world is made ready to receive your advent and may they replace there the inadequacy of my ascetic practice.

~From *The Prayers of Saint Isaac the Syrian* (Prayer 24).
Translated by Sebastian Brock.

As my soul bows to the ground I offer to you with all my bones and with all my heart the worship that befits you. O glorious God, who dwell in ineffable silence, you have built for my renewal a tabernacle of love on earth where it is your good pleasure to rest, a temple made of flesh and fashioned with the most holy oil of the sanctuary. Then you filled it with your holy presence so that all worship might be fulfilled in it, indicating the worship of the eternal persons of your Trinity, and revealing to the worlds which you had created in your grace an ineffable mystery, a power which cannot be felt or grasped by any part of your creation that has come into being. In wonder at it, angelic beings are submerged in silence, awed at the dark cloud of this eternal mystery and at the flood of glory which issues from within this source of wonder, for it receives worship in the sphere of silence from every intelligence that has been sanctified and made worthy of you.

~From *The Prayers of Saint Isaac the Syrian* (Prayer 1).
Translated by Sebastian Brock.

■ NEWS & NOTES

Matthew 25: Project Mexico

It is our great pleasure to announce that our Lenten charitable drive beneficiary for 2024 is Project Mexico, an Orthodox Christian charitable organization that operates in the vicinity of Tijuana, Mexico. Project Mexico operates a boy's orphanage that helps raise around 25 orphaned or abandoned boys (at any given time). They also run an extensive homebuilding program to provide housing for some of the poorest and most vulnerable families in their area, as well as running a rescue orphanage for abandoned infants. It is our hope to raise at least \$6000 this year to support Project Mexico, which is enough to feed all of the admittedly-voracious, mostly teenage boys for 6 weeks or to build one housing unit for a needy family. Remembering the mercy of our Lord, God, and Savior, Jesus Christ, please give with generosity!

Support A Mission Trip

It is also our pleasure to announce that our own Abigail Swisher, independent of any thought about a Lenten beneficiary, has arranged for herself to go and work on a homebuilding crew with Project Mexico this summer. The cost to her will be around \$2000, and it is our hope that the parish will be able to cover that cost. Therefore, after we have raised \$6000 in our Lenten Matthew 25 drive, the next \$2000 will be earmarked for Abby, who will be our parish's own "boots on the ground" for Project Mexico in 2024! (After that, any additional monies collected will also go to Project Mexico directly.) Please give generously so we can both support Project Mexico financially and also fully scholarship Abby as she engages in this important work of Christian love and mercy!

Special Parish Meeting – April 7

As mentioned in the main article this month, please plan to attend a very brief parish meeting immediately following Divine Liturgy on April 7. It is very important that we have 51% of our voting members in attendance, as the meeting cannot take place without this. Thank you.

SOUPer Sunday

On Sunday, March 31st the Sunday School students will be hosting a Lenten luncheon for the Matthew 25 Lenten Beneficiary. The luncheon will consist of soups, salads, and bread prepared and served by our students. There will be a free-will offering. Please plan to stay and enjoy the hospitality of our children and support their efforts for our beneficiary.

Bridge of Hope

As we learn in the gospel, Christian love must involve works of mercy to the poor, the stranger, the powerless, and the hurting. It is therefore our great pleasure to partner in this Lenten season with Bridge of Hope, Centre County and to try to assemble a "wrap around" team of six to ten people to support a vulnerable young mother and her child(ren) who are struggling with poverty or even the specter of homelessness. To learn more, please attend the March 17th talk (following the Divine Liturgy) or visit the Bridge of Hope - Centre County website (centre.bridgeofhopeinc.org). And to sign up to get involved, please contact Kyra Quinn (kyraquinn1@gmail.com) or Fr. Ignatius.

AED Training

Thank you to those of you who helped donate toward the purchase of an AED (automated external defibrillator) for the parish! While we hope to never have need to use it, in April and late in the spring we will provide training opportunities for those interested in learning how it is used. Please look for final dates in upcoming "This Week" emails, and bulletins.

New Ministry: Psalm Chanting

It is our parish's custom that for the privacy of the penitent and the edification of those waiting in line, the Psalter is read during Saturday evening confessions. This is a simple act of concrete love that we can do for one another, and it doesn't really take a lot of skill beyond basic literacy. Please consider joining this ministry and sharing Christ's love with your brethren. Sign up online, or contact Anna Stickles (annastickles4@gmail.com) to learn more.

■ CATECHESIS

Presanctified Liturgy

The eucharistic Divine Liturgy is not celebrated in the Orthodox Church on Lenten weekdays. In order for the faithful to sustain their Lenten effort by participation in Holy Communion, the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is served. The service is an ancient one in the Orthodox Church. We officially hear about it in the canons of the seventh century, which obviously indicates its development at a much earlier date.

On all days of the holy fast of Lent, except on the Sabbath, the Lord's Day, and the holy day of the Annunciation, the Liturgy of the Presanctified is to be served (Canon 52, Quinisext, 692).

The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is an evening service. It is the solemn Lenten Vespers with the administration of Holy Communion added to it. There is no consecration of the eucharistic gifts at the presanctified liturgy. Holy Communion is given from the eucharistic gifts sanctified on the previous Sunday at the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, unless, of course, the feast of the Annunciation should intervene; hence its name of "presanctified."

The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is served on Wednesday and Friday evenings, although some churches may celebrate it only on one of these days. It comes in the evening after a day of spiritual preparation and total abstinence. The faithful who are unable to make the effort of total fasting because of weakness or work, however, normally eat a light Lenten meal in the early morning.

During the psalms of Vespers, the presanctified gifts are prepared for communion. They are transferred from the altar table where they have been reserved since the Divine Liturgy, and are placed on the table of oblation. After the evening hymn, the Old Testament scriptures of Genesis and Proverbs are read, between which the celebrant blesses the kneeling congregation with a lighted candle and the words: "The Light of Christ illumines all," indicating that all wisdom is given by Christ in the Church through the scriptures and sacraments. This blessing was originally directed

primarily to the catechumens—those preparing to be baptized on Easter—who attended the service only to the time of the communion of the faithful.

After the readings, the evening Psalm 141 is solemnly sung once again with the offering of incense. Then, after the litanies of intercession and those at which the catechumens were dismissed in former days, the presanctified eucharistic gifts are brought to the altar in a solemn, silent procession. The song of the entrance calls the faithful to communion.



Now the heavenly powers [i.e., the angels] do minister invisibly with us. For behold the King of Glory enters. Behold the mystical sacrifice, all fulfilled, is ushered in. Let us with faith and love draw near that we may be partakers of everlasting life. Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

After the litany and prayers, the Our Father is sung and the faithful receive Holy Communion to the chanting of the verse from Psalm 34: "O taste and see how good is the Lord. Alleluia." The post-communion hymns are sung and the faithful depart with a prayer to God who "has brought us to these all-holy days for the cleansing of carnal passions," that he will bless us "to fight the good fight, to accomplish the course of the fast, and to attain unto and to adore the holy resurrection" of Christ. The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is traditionally considered to be the work of the sixth-century pope, Saint Gregory of Rome. The present service, however, is obviously the inspired liturgical creation of Christian Byzantium. ♦

From "The Orthodox Faith," (Volume II, Worship, Lenten Services) by Fr. Thomas Hopko

■ HOMILIES

On Prayer, Fasting, Mercy

A homily preached by St. Peter Chrysologos, a 5th century Italian bishop

There are three things, my brethren, by which faith stands firm, devotion remains constant, and virtue endures. They are prayer, fasting and mercy. Prayer knocks at the door, fasting obtains, mercy receives. Prayer, mercy and fasting: These three are one, and they give life to each other.

Fasting is the soul of prayer, mercy is the lifeblood of fasting. Let no one try to separate them; they cannot be separated. If you have only one of them or not all of them together, you have nothing. So if you pray, fast; if you fast, show mercy; if you want your petition to be heard, hear the petition of others. If you do not close your ear to others you open God's ear to yourself.

When you fast, see the fasting of others. If you want God to know that you are hungry, know that another is hungry. If you hope for mercy, show mercy. If



you look for kindness, show kindness. If you want to receive, give. If you ask for yourself what you deny to others, your asking is a mockery.

Let this be the pattern for all men when they practice mercy: show mercy to others in the same way, with the same generosity, with the same promptness, as you want others to show mercy to you.

Therefore, let prayer, mercy and fasting be one single plea to God on our behalf, one speech in our defense, a threefold united prayer in our favor.



A fresco of St. Peter Chrysologos

Let us use fasting to make up for what we have lost by despising others. Let us offer our souls in sacrifice by means of fasting. There is nothing more pleasing that we can offer to God, as the psalmist said in prophecy: A sacrifice to God is a broken spirit; God does not despise a bruised and humbled heart.

Offer your soul to God, make him an oblation of your fasting, so that your soul may be a pure offering, a holy sacrifice, a living victim, remaining your own and at the same time made over to God. Whoever fails to give this to God will not be excused, for if you are to give him yourself you are never without the means of giving.

To make these acceptable, mercy must be added. Fasting bears no fruit unless it is watered by mercy. Fasting dries up when mercy dries up. Mercy is to fasting as rain is to the earth. However much you may cultivate your heart, clear the soil of your nature, root out vices, sow virtues, if you do not release the springs of mercy, your fasting will bear no fruit.

When you fast, if your mercy is thin your harvest will be thin; when you fast, what you pour out in mercy overflows into your barn. Therefore, do not lose by saving, but gather in by scattering. Give to the poor, and you give to yourself. You will not be allowed to keep what you have refused to give to others. ♦

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.

All services at Holy Trinity are currently being live-streamed. To watch them online, please visit holytrinity-oca.org/YouTube



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
25 Publican and Pharisee Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Ed Miranda's Retirement Celebration, noon	26	27	28 Confessions, 4pm Vespers, 6pm Adult Ed, "Sacramental Rigorism," 7pm	29	March 1	2 Choir Rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following
3 Prodigal Son Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am)	4	5	6 ✠ Funeral, Elen Thatcher, 11am Vespers, 6pm Matthew 25 Meeting, 7pm	7 ✠	8	9 Sunday School Teacher Mtg, 5pm Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following
10 Last Judgment/Meatfare Chrismation of Juliana & Zlaja Memovic, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am)	11	12	13	14	15	16
17 ✠ Forgiveness/Cheesefare Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Bridge of Hope Presentation, noon Forgiveness Vespers, 6pm	18 ✠	19 ✠	20 ✠ Confessions, 4pm Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm Lenten potluck, 7:30pm	21 ✠	22 ✠	23 ✠ Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following
24 ✠ Sunday of Orthodoxy Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) Icon procession, noon Vigil of Annunciation, 6pm	25 ✠ Annunciation Vespersal Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, 6pm	26 ✠	27 ✠ Confessions, 4pm Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm Lenten potluck, 7:30pm	28 ✠	29 ✠	30 ✠ Choir Rehearsal, 4pm Souper Sunday Prep, 4:30pm Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following
31 ✠ St. Gregory Palamas Divine Liturgy, 10am (Hours, 9:40am) "Souper Sunday" Charity Luncheon, noon	April 1 ✠	2 ✠	3 ✠	4 ✠	5 ✠	6 ✠ Choir rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following