



Welcome!

Whether you are searching for a new church home or just visiting, we are glad you're with us today. If you have a prayer request, are looking for more information about the Orthodox Faith, would like to join our parish, or would like to speak with Fr Thomas, we invite you to fill out a visitor's card and drop it in the offering basket as your offering today. We want to get to know you! God bless you!

Schedule This Week

Sunday, December 11
10:00 am Divine Liturgy/Church School
Tuesday, December 13
9:00 am Daily Matins
9:30 am to 12:00 pm Office Hours
Wednesday, December 14
6:30 pm Daily Vespers
7:00 pm Bible Study (Ephesians)
Thursday, December 15
9:00 am Daily Matins
9:30 am to 12:00 pm Office Hours
Saturday, December 17
NO VIGIL THIS SATURDAY
Sunday, December 18
10:00 am Divine Liturgy
Annual Christmas Program (Yolka/Ёлка)

To our Visitors: Holy Communion is reserved for Orthodox Christians who prepare themselves by prayer and fasting. Non-Orthodox visitors are welcome to come forward to venerate the cross and receive the Antidoron (blessed bread) at the conclusion of the service.

Archpriest Thomas Soroka, *Rector*
Deacon Luke Loboda, *Attached*
Deacon John Skowron, *Attached*

Rdr James Wargo and Danielle Bartko, Choir Dirs

Sunday of the Holy Forefathers

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA
OrthodoxPittsburgh.org December 11, 2022

Announcements

➤ Today after coffee hour we will visit some of our shut-in members and greet them with Christmas carols. Everyone is invited to do this good deed for our shut-ins! Please see Deacon Luke if you are interested in joining us!

➤ Women's Night on Friday, Dec 16 at Apteka in Lawrenceville. Please RSVP by Thursday, December 15 to Jessica Krchmar at 412-290-3526.

➤ Our parish has contracted with Kayafas Architects of Wheeling WV to draw up designs for the following projects: solutions to the roof water intrusion, restoration of the domes, adding interior stairs and an elevator for accessible entry to the church and parish hall, and refinishing the parish hall and hall interior lighting.

➤ Please note that our candle desk can now take payments by debit or credit card. If you wish to give donations by debit (we do not recommend charitable giving by credit), please ensure that you have your transaction noted as a donation.

Services for the Nativity of Christ
Friday, Dec 23 10:00 am Royal Hours
Saturday, Dec 24 9:30 am Divine Liturgy
Saturday, Dec 24 6:00 pm Communal Holy Supper
Saturday, Dec 24 8:00 pm Vigil for Nativity
Sunday, Dec 25 10:00 am Festal Nativity Liturgy
Monday, Dec 26 9:30 am Synaxis Divine Liturgy

Prayers

➤ Ill and infirm: *Known to be hospitalized*; (none).
Home: George Shaytar. Natalie Toooh. *Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home*: Eleanor Kovacs, Natalie Popovich, Michael Soroka.

➤ Vigil Lights From Mat. Nancy K. Mell & Gregory Mell for the departed servant, for Dn. Joseph Mell; for the health of family. From Doris M. Wasilko for the departed servants, parents, Charles & Mary; for the health of the Wasilko family. From Charles A. Wasilko for the health of sisters, Doris & Marsha. From Mat. Joni Soroka for the departed servant, Barbara Naiser; for the health of our daughter, Natalie upon her graduation from Kent State University. From John Mahalchak Family for the health of friends & family, Cheryl, John, Gregory, Cindy, Daniel, and Mary. From Tatyana Sechler for the departed servants, Polina, Slava, Luba, Diana, Bruce, Marina, and Georgii; the health of Tatyana, Veronika, Daniel, Tomas, Kristofer, and Andreana. From Richard & Sonia Blaha for the departed servants, parents, Pete, Dorothy, & Betty, and brother, Robert; for the health of family, friends, siblings, and serving soldiers; for special intention and peace. From Nancy Shaytar for the health of husband, George, and family. From Kristie Mertz for the health of Janice & Bill.

Thank You

➤ Thank you to our December donors: from Sandi Tirpak (Bulletin \$60) in memory of Amelia Kuck, (Communion Wine \$40) in memory of grandparents Nicholas, Marie, Frank, and Ann, (Incense \$10) in memory of parents Amelia and John; from Donya Yewisiak (Holy Bread \$50, Altar Candles \$50) in memory of Matushka Olga Soroka.

St Nicholas Church will strive to glorify God through Orthodox Christian worship, sincere love and care for one another, and service to those in need around us.

Holy Forefathers

Receive joy O Forefathers of old, Beholding Christ the Messiah drawing near. Rejoice Abraham, for you have been shown to be the great-grandfather of Christ.

The subject of the blessed Abraham is known as much by the wise men as by common Christians. For the Book of Genesis, written by the Prophet Moses, which speaks of him, is read to be heard by all Christians in the Church, during the fasting days of the Holy and Great Lent. Wherefore we all learn from this book, that our forefather Abraham was from the land of the Chaldeans, and he was a gentile. The Chaldeans were a nation before the Jews. And his father Terah was an idolater. The divine Abraham was also an idolater, but he was not prevented by this from coming to know the true God. Rather, we should say something strange, for the great Abraham even by this idolatry was led to understand the true God.

When the renowned one understood that nothing created is God, and should not be worshiped as God, and having contemplated the good arrangement of things that exist, and by seeing these things which were made, he came to know their invisible Maker. And having come to know Him, he worshiped Him as God, Who upholds and governs all of creation, and designated these things which have come into being to be suitable and orderly. He was therefore ordered by God to leave his homeland and relatives, and go to the land of Canaan (where also Palestine and Jerusalem are located). Immediately he obeyed, without having doubt in his heart, for he had much faith towards God. For this reason he received as a wager for his faith, a son named Isaac who was born to him in his old age, and he became the father of many nations. Isaac was born of Abraham, Jacob was born of Isaac, and from Jacob was born Judah (from whose tribe Christ was born) and his brother Patriarchs.

Hymns and Readings for Sunday, December 11

Tone 1 Troparion (Resurrection)

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews, while the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure body,
Thou didst rise on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world.
The powers of heaven therefore cried to Thee, O Giver of Life:

“Glory to Thy Resurrection, O Christ!

Glory to Thy Kingdom!//

Glory to Thy dispensation, O Thou Who lovest mankind!”

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Tone 2 Troparion (Forefathers)

Through faith Thou didst justify the Forefathers, betrothing through them the Church of the gentiles.

These saints exult in glory,

for from their seed came forth a glorious fruit:

she who bore Thee without seed.//

So by their prayers, O Christ God, have mercy on us!

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Tone 6 Kontakion (Forefathers)

You did not worship the graven image,

O thrice-blessed ones,

but armed with the immaterial Essence of God, you were glorified in a trial by fire.

From the midst of unbearable flames you called on God, crying:

“Hasten, O compassionate One!

Speedily come to our aid,//

for Thou art merciful and able to do as Thou dost will!”

Tone 4 Prokeimenon (Forefathers)

Blessed art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers, / and praised and glorified is Thy Name forever!
(Song of the Three Holy Children, v. 3)

Epistle of the Sunday (Colossians 3:4-11)

When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.

But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.

Gospel of the Sunday (Luke 14:16-24)

Then He said to him, “A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, ‘Come, for all things are now ready.’ But they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said to him, ‘I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.’ And another said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.’ Still another said, ‘I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.’ So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his

servant, ‘Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.’ And the servant said, ‘Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.’ Then the master said to the servant, ‘Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.’ ”

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! (*Ps. 148:1*) Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous; praise befits the just! (*Ps. 32:1*) Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Why did the Word become a Man?

In order therefore that we might be called to eternal bliss from our original bond and from earthly errors, He came down Himself to us to Whom we could not ascend, because, although there was in many the love of truth, yet the variety of our shifting opinions was deceived by the craft of misleading demons, and man's ignorance was dragged into diverse and conflicting notions by a falsely-called science. But to remove this mockery, whereby men's minds were taken captive to serve the arrogant devil, the teaching of the Law was not sufficient, nor could our nature be restored merely by the Prophet.' exhortations; but the reality of redemption had to be added to moral injunctions, and our fundamentally corrupt origin had to be re-born afresh. A Victim had to be offered for our atonement Who should be both a partner of our race and free from our contamination, so that this design of God whereby it pleased Him to take away the sin of the world in the Nativity and Passion of Jesus Christ, might reach to all generations : and that we should not be disturbed but rather strengthened by these mysteries, which vary with the character of the times, since the Faith, whereby we live, has at no time suffered variation.

The blessings of the Incarnation stretch backwards as well as reach forward

Accordingly let those men cease their complaints who with disloyal murmurs speak against the dispensations of God, and babble about the lateness of the Lord's Nativity as if that, which was fulfilled in the last age of the world, had no bearing upon the times that are past. For the Incarnation of the Word did but contribute to the doing of that which was done : and the mystery of man's salvation was never in the remotest age at a standstill. What the apostles foretold, that the prophets announced: nor was that fulfilled too late which has always been believed. But the Wisdom and Goodness of God made us more receptive of His call by thus delaying the work which brought salvation: so that what through so many ages had been foretold by many signs, many utterances, and many mysteries, might not be doubtful in these days of the Gospel: and that the Savior's nativity, which was to exceed all wonders and all the measure of human knowledge, might engender in us a Faith so much the firmer, as the foretelling of it had been ancient and oft-repeated. And so it was no new counsel, no tardy pity whereby God took thought for men: but from the constitution of the world He ordained one and the same Cause of Salvation for all. For the grace of God, by which the whole body of the saints is ever justified, was augmented, not begun, when Christ was born: and this mystery of God's great love, wherewith the whole world is now filled, was so effectively presignified that those who believed that promise obtained no less than they, who were the actual recipients. (*Leo the Great, Pope of Old Rome*)

(Forefathers continued...)

For this reason therefore our God-bearing Fathers and Teachers, have arranged it for today to commemorate the divine Abraham, as the forefather from whom Christ was born. And they delivered this to be reckoned by us, not for a long period of many days, but near the birth in the flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was not done simply by chance, but according to the divine inspiration of the Holy Spirit. For the most good and philanthropic Son of God, made the Patriarch Abraham and his descendants His forefathers according to His human nature. Thus the most divine Fathers rightly deemed for us to celebrate their memory as Forefathers, not long from the Lord's nativity according to the flesh.