

Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania + Wilkes-Barre Deanery

Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church Williamsport, PA.



*Sunday Before Theophany
St. Seraphim of Sarov*

January 2nd, 2022

Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church

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Scripture Readings:

Epistle: Galatians 5:22-6:2; 2 Timothy 4:5-8
Gospel: St. Luke 6:17-23; St. Mark 1:1-8

A very warm welcome to everyone, and especially to our visitors this morning! Please join us for some fellowship after in the Parish Hall!

Services, Events & Announcements

++ FEAST OF THE THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD ++

**GREAT VESPERS W/BLESSING OF WATERS – WEDNESDAY
JANUARY 5TH @ 5:30PM**

DIVINE LITURGY – THURSDAY JANUARY 6TH @ 9AM

+ Great Vespers – Saturday January 8th @ 5pm

**+ Divine Liturgy - Sunday January 9th @ 10am (Hours @ 9:40),
fellowship following in the Hall.**

+ Compline/Bible Study - Wednesday January 12th @ 5:30pm

Our Giving – Christmas 2021

Tithes/Offerings - \$348.00 / Online Giving - \$825.00
Candle Offerings – \$83.00 / Christmas Gifts - \$890.00
Memorial Gifts - \$100.00

Regarding Holy Communion: Only those faithful who are Orthodox Christians and have **properly prepared themselves** by **fasting, prayer** [i.e., *Prayers Before Communion*], **recent confession**, and who were *at least present for the reading of the Epistle and Gospel* should approach to receive the Holy Eucharist. *We should all be at peace with everyone too.* If you have any questions about Communion, please see Fr. Seraphim. 😊

Why Attend Church? Can God's Temple be Duplicated at Home?

Over the years I have met people who have chosen not to join a church, choosing, rather, to “worship” at home. Some have convinced themselves church is a waste of time, and feel they can be close to God while staying home on a Sunday morning. Others believe none of the churches teach the bible according to their own interpretation, and choosing to worship in the privacy of their own home, assure themselves they won't have to hear any false teachings.

Some people have chosen to stay away from church because of past conflict with a clergyman, or perhaps got tired of hearing pleas for money, and have convinced themselves that giving to a charity is money better spent (in reality, church goers tend to outspend non-church goers in charitable giving).

In truth, God has given us the Church as the very place wherein we can grow spiritually, while enjoying the protection, and the blessings, of being in weekly contact with other believers. Just like an earthly family, we don't always enjoy the presence of other members, but it is often those difficult and uncomfortable moments that help us grow the most. As well, there are blessings that would never be experienced, should we remain apart from fellow Christians.

In Luke 4:16, we read that Our Lord Jesus Christ was regularly in the temple, for “He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom.” It was Christ’s regular practice to go to church, “As he always did on the Sabbath, he went to the meeting place.” If Our Lord Jesus made it a priority to meet together with other believers, how can we excuse ourselves from doing the same.

Perhaps the most important reason for weekly church attendance lies in the fact that it is only in the Church where we can receive Holy Communion, for Our Lord went so far as to say that unless we eat of His flesh, and drink of His blood, we will have no life in us (John 6:53). It is in the reception of Holy Communion where we receive the grace needed to grow spiritually, and where we are empowered to live in all holiness and truth.

Finally, the neglect of corporate worship grieves the Holy Spirit who lives within the individual believer and the Church as a whole, “And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption (Ephesians 4:30)”.

*With love in Christ,
Abbot Tryphon*

Prayers For the Health and Salvation of those in need: Many Years!

Priestmonk Ambrose (Young), Abbot Tryphon, Mitred-Archpriest Nicholas (Harris), Mitred-Archpriest Daniel & Mat. Myra (Kovalak), Archpriest Moses (Berry), Subdeacon Anthony (Affsprung), Pres. Eva (Koutroulelis), Helen Maybo, Paul Beard, Evelyn Chabal, Phoebe Davis, Michael Kuzmiak, Juliana Matusiak, and Phillip Paxos

Prayers for the Newly Departed: Memory Eternal!

*Archpriest Igor Soroka +12/18, Archpriest John Loejos +12/10,
Archpriest John Larson +11/25, and Matushka Anne Pawlush +12/7*